

gcam_ah_19950610_t1_02_edit

📅 Thu, Dec 22, 2022 3:38PM ⌚ 41:47

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, transsexual, gender, lesbian, transgendered, kate, transgender, women, book, called, question, interview, talked, outlaw, houston, day, asked, folks, hate crimes bill, city



00:01

Two days later, Thursday night, I got home about 1030 After some activities down in this part of town. And lo and behold, they were waiting outside for me the as I got close to the apartment, they jumped out around the corner of the building. One of them held a knife to my neck. The other one, the one with the bandana, waved the gun around in front of me, they wanted my purse. And we talked about it a little bit. And basically, I finally said, Hey, what do you guys really want is my money, right? Because I had a whole bunch of other stuff. You know, I'm like any other woman I carry more junk in my purse than any reasonable person should. And I certainly didn't want to part with it and wasn't going to do them any good. So they said, Yeah, we'll take the money. So I got my wallet out and didn't have much money in it. I only had a \$20 bill



01:03

transexuals your poor folks.



01:05

Well, and it was several days after payday. So that was getting low. Well, that wasn't quite enough. We argued a little bit give us the rest of it, where they thought I would have any more money, I don't know. And in the course of that discussion, the guy said something about bleeping man wearing a dress, which told me that in the earlier encounter, they had detected from my voice that I was a former man. Well, I wasn't going to straighten them out on the details. And partly by then they'd grabbed the person grabbed the wallet anyway and took off.



01:57

You're probably lucky you were not raped.



02:01

I'm lucky in a whole lot of way. You're lucky to be alive. I lost my driver's license, my social

security card and \$20 and not a whole lot



02:11

else. Now. How did the police handle this? You report this? Oh, absolutely.



02:15

Absolutely. Both times I called the police out. I want to thank HPD the officers in both calls were extremely courteous, extremely helpful. No trace of discrimination against me. They, they figured, hey, here's somebody who has suffered a loss. And let's investigate it and see what we can find out. And now they addressed me as ma'am all the way through. Up until after the second encounter when I after I'd finished telling the officer everything that happened. I said, Oh, one more thing. I would like this listed as a hate crime. And he said, Okay, ma'am, on what grounds? We can do that. And I said, Well, it's because I'm a transsexual. The guys had talked about a man wearing a dress, and I'm convinced that's why they came back. Sure. First time it was was a chance thing that was let's face it, partly my fault. Second time, they came back for me, because they perceived me as a man wearing a dress. And then the cop was funny. He said, Okay, sir, we'll write it up. Which gave me a great opportunity. I said, Hold it, hold it. When I teach classes out at the police academy, which I occasionally do. One of the things I tell people is, if a person is wearing a dress, please say, ma'am. And he said, Okay, ma'am.



04:06

You probably didn't know the difference between transsexual transvestite or anything else, you know,



04:10

but, but he was he was trying to do his job. He was trying to follow the guidelines. He was trying to be courteous to me, and I appreciated that. So yes, there are hate crimes. There are people who target transgendered people. I personally have been targeted. I was damn lucky to get away with no physical injury. But since since then, I have had police escorts to the door when I get home after dark.



04:45

The Well the point that I wanted to make, at least in this sense, is that we've talked on the show about the El Grl hate crimes bill and the bills in order to have been covered under that bill. You would either have to have been gay or have been perceived as gay. And in this particular instance, neither is true. So this assault would not have felt, if not had been covered under that hate crimes bill. That's correct. So if you want to know where my passion comes from, and why it is that I am fighting and will continue to fight to have transgendered people

included in hate crimes legislation in the future, this is the answer. This is why we're doing it. In D, I want to thank you for coming in. You have anything more you want to saying me you want to say anything more sponsor spectrum before you go? Y'all come out?



05:37

Good? Nope. Next week, Sunday, Astro Arena, be there?



05:41

And D and I will also both be at the law conference, the 14th through the 17th. So, Jimmy, we you have anything you want to go with here? Yes.



05:52

Yes, yes. They said something twice. That really got my goat, actually. Because she said, Well, it was my own fault. And he's standing sitting there with the door open, you are in your own home. I mean, thank you basic, right. I don't care if you were



06:20

I enjoyed that right for two years. Because I did feel comfortable. I don't feel comfortable anymore.



06:31

But you've got to feel comfortable in your own home. The



06:33

thing is work hard for it. The thing is that you shouldn't be blaming yourself. That's true. That's that was the part that bothered me. Yes. And I think that's what God is saying to us.



06:42

You know, I was sitting down with the door open. Hey,



06:45

I didn't say it was my fault. I said it was hurt. partially my fault.



06:51

That's a slight improvement, but not much. Back down at all. That's exactly right. Okay, well, D Thanks a lot for coming in with on this show. We have talked about this. And we've talked about this. Wanted to make sure that people have that, that people hear, hear it in, keep hearing it, because we've got to we've got to get the message through to folks that transgender people have got to be included in the hate



07:22

crimes. That's right. And I do have a special song for this occasion. Okay, it's off of a brand new CD called this way out. It's queer artists doing songs about everyday problems. And this is a group called Eclipse. And the title of the song is city of fear.



07:48

City of fear by Eclipse new music and you're hearing it on after hours queer radio with attitude on KPFT Houston and ke O 's College Station. Brian, I



08:02

want to set up this interview with Kate Bornstein. I have had the opportunity to correspond with Kate over the internet for quite some time. And we have become we really become friends. So when I had the opportunity to interview Kate in studio, there was no way I was going to pass up that opportunity. Mm hmm. Well, let me tell you, I consider myself a an activist, and I believe I am. But Kate Bornstein is a fairly large woman, she's 510, something in that ballpark. She came in wearing a top hat. So I mean, she, she Yeah, I mean, a top hat. Yeah. Honest to God top hat. So what Top Hat she's now six to six, three, probably. She's got a complete, blank, completely black outfit. And she's wearing black leather gloves on both of her hands. And my first reaction when I looked at her as I thought she fell out of a fairy tale right at the cat and the cat in the hat or something like that was my first reaction. And we, we sat out and we sat out in the lobby, and we talked for a few minutes. And I discovered very quickly, that in person, Kate is much more of a handful than she is on the telephone. It's been a long time since I've interviewed somebody and found myself saying what did I get into? Once we got in studio, this interview is not rather than talk about the book, I thought it'd be interesting to talk about Kate. So it was this interview is basically to activists just chatting about what it's like to be public. How we get perceived as being public, what we agree and what we disagree on. It's a real unusual kind of interview. It's two friends, just chatting and people get to listen in. It sounds like fun, and I think the result is fun. I listened to this tape the other day, and I thought well, the audience is really going to get an earful. So folks with that in mind, we present to you Kate Bornstein, the author of gender outlaw on men, women and the rest of us. Well, this evening we have an unusual treat. On our show. We have talked about Keith Bornstein several times. We've quoted from the book several times, and we have done a telephone interview with Kate Bornstein. But today, she is in studio right here in the deep in the heart of Texas, even the heart of Texas. So, gentle listeners we have with us, Kate Bornstein, the author of gender outlaw on men, women and the rest of us. It is really fun to meet you.



10:37

It is a pleasure to meet you after our last interview. I've been looking forward to this.



10:41

You have no idea how much mail and how many phone calls I've gotten about that interview. People were calling us when she couldn't be on again. Would you play that again? So we did we put it on the year a second time. The only interview we've ever done, that would be aired twice. Wow. So I thought you'd like that. Let me start off by talking. I know that you were just in Kansas City. Yeah. And you were doing the speak out about Brandon Tina. Now if you would tell the listeners who Brandon Tina was and why you were there. Brandon, Tina.



11:11

It's hard to put a label in the same way. It's hard to put a label to well, how exactly would you label Billy Tipton? For convenience sake, I'll use my terms. I have no idea no one they'll know what words he would have used for himself. I would call him a female to male transsexual man who lived in or settled into Humboldt, Nebraska, which is a few miles outside of Falls City. About two years ago, just before Christmas, he was brutally beaten and raped at a party. He reported his attackers to the police. At which point the police discovered his prior female identity and released it to all the newspapers locally. Claiming on and on what you can call it you can call it a net as far as I'm concerned. And that was a quote from the sheriff, the sheriff at the time. His attackers had warned him that if he was to go to the police, they would come back and kill him. And sure enough, a week later, that's what they did. They tracked him down to a place he was hiding just before he was going to leave town up in Humboldt and came in stabbed and shot him and shot. Two other people who were in the house innocent bystanders. The first of his murderers was brought to trial a year ago was convicted of murder in the first degree and two counts of murder in the second degree. Second murder. I have to say alleged murderer since we're on the air. The second alert the second alleged murderer, John water is currently up for trial and a group of transgender activists and lesbian activists went up to fall city to the courthouse to do a memorial vigil. That's, that's where we were.



13:09

Now some of the people that were there. I know we hit and Ricky and Welch's was there was one of the cofounders of transsexual minutes. Correct. And Leslie Feinberg, I



13:16

believe, and many Bruce Pratt, yes. And they had a speak out.



13:20

And the reason I bring this up is because from time to time on our show I know the listeners

And the reason I bring this up is because from time to time on our show, I know the listeners have heard us talk about hate crimes. And we just recently had a hate crime here in the city where one of the board directors from the Transgender Law conference, was attacked at knifepoint outside for an apartment. But thankfully, she was not injured. But I wanted to bring it to people's attention that when we talk about these things on the show, that we're not making them up, these incidents are real and often very brutal.



13:48

I think we all have our own war stories. I mean, I don't know if you've been attacked, physically, I have several times been held at knifepoint. And it's all too real. What I think the problem is and what I think we really need to come together on is the fact that a hate crime is not going to get national attention unless two people who were not hated happened to be killed at the same time. My heart goes out to those two people I learned about their lives. I walked through the crime side, I talk with their friends. And that's more of it in that small town. But the fact of the matter is Brandon, Tina's death would have gone unnoticed if it was solely Brandon Tina, who was killed? Well, I



14:23

also wanted to point it out, because I have had people call me from time to time about different authors that we've given the show and they said, Well, how do we know that they're not just profiting from the community? And I wanted them to know that you're not just profiting from the community, you are part of the community. And that's important for people to know that.



14:41

Yeah, it's like when Holly Hughes Holly uses one of my heroes. She's this lesbian performance artist and she was accused of writing lesbian plays to cash in on the lesbian theatre craze, right? Yeah, I'm gonna like cashing in on the, the transsexual craze that's sweeping America. Yes. Yeah,



15:01

okay, let's go on to some lighter topics now, we've talked about about your book before and several people call in they said, well, they wanted to know what what was it? What is it like to be on a book tour? And that that that was an interesting question. You were telling me where you were going from here. Once you give the listeners a sense of what what this is like,



15:20

Okay, I just arrived in Dallas yesterday. Dallas. That's what it's like. Yes, I was in Dallas yesterday, today's Houston. Tomorrow's Minneapolis the next day Chicago, and I go to Seattle, then I get a two day break. And then I go to Vancouver, British Columbia back to Seattle than a

two day break. And then at San Francisco, Santa Rosa, Denver, a two day break then New York, Miami, Atlanta, DC and Philadelphia.



15:46

And this is all this is all emotional. One city a day back, right?



15:49

Yeah, I don't get paid for this. I mean, sure they cover my expenses. But I'm losing out, you know, like worktime doing this



15:56

all I wanted to make the listeners aware if you couldn't afford the hardcover copy of gender outlaw it is now in paperback. You have no excuse.



16:03

Not only is it now in paperback, but they let me what was really cool is they let me read an afterword to the paperback, the vintage paperback edition, which kind of covers some questions that I didn't even think to respond to. Until the first book tour. And questions people people sent me email. I just love that. My email address by the way is outlawed gal, one word outlawed gal@aol.com. And because people would send me questions, you know, I was able to say, Okay, there's some stuff that needs to be added to the book. And there's some stuff that needs to be corrected. And that's all in the paperback edition now.



16:36

Well, and so go out, you can, yeah, Kate is going to be at a crossroad books this afternoon. And I know the book is available in other bookstores throughout the city. So get out there put out your money. It's worth reading. I wanted to ask you about something else. Because I know this been my experience. Whenever I do interviews with so called straight reporters, whatever they are, yeah, I get asked some of the most absurd questions. And I occasionally want to shake them and say, Are you from our planet? Are you positive? And I wanted to ask you, what kind of questions do you get? Because your book is is really unique? Do you have any concept that? Well, they



17:13

asked me a lot of orgasm questions. Yeah. And then I'm really get asked that one a lot. And I think, you know, that's, that's a legitimate thing to ask. Because, you know, there's, there's, there's a heck of a risk with folks going through genital conversion surgery to lose some

sensation down there. And people want to know about that people. I mean, sex is such a driving force in the culture, isn't that?



17:37

Yeah, it really is. I see. No, I never would have thought that that would have been the first question everywhere I go. The first question I always get is what bathroom do I use? It's a running joke with my with my life partners, whether that will be the first or second question that comes up.



17:49

Oh, that's so funny. I



17:50

don't get that one anymore. That's the first or second question that can count on all the time. Now, I've been contacted by some, some TV talk shows, and they won't take me up. And the reason that they won't is when they find out that we're doing serious politics. They're not interested right. Now, I know that you you've done some television talk shows. And now in fact, I just saw you on the show, I guess it was about two weeks ago. For our guests who are folks, our listeners who have never been on a talk show. Tell them what happens and how that how you end up on a show.



18:20

Well, the selection process is really very interesting. I get I get a lot of calls, to be on a lot of talk shows, you know, I'm a transsexual, lesbian, right. So, you know, I get a lot of calls and I just forward them on to some friends of mine because I think it would be a real mistake for people to get the idea that there's one transsexual lesbian out there. I mean, really, the first time I got asked about this, and there were all the people there saying, I proposed the show I said how about a show on transsexual lesbians and three executive swiveled their heads to me and they said, You mean there's more than one of you? And they were serious that were really serious about da Hello. So they don't have pretty much a clue. So you got to when you if you get asked to be on one of these things, you got to take responsibility for educating. Usually they have a plot in mind or a hook in mind. Recently I was asked to be on one show that I turned down because I had bad feelings about and sure enough it was not that good. I even forget the name of it was out of New York City. They want sensational stuff they'll want to know you know about rave about murder they'll they'll bring on people who want to go head to head with you now. Some of the larger shows I would certainly trust I would trust her although I would trust Donahue certainly Oprah and set the some of the some of the larger shows Joan Rivers was like major, major coal that



19:44

I saw that show, but I saw that it was very interesting because I had this the person the show

I saw that show her I saw that it was very interesting because I had this the person the show that called happened to have been I can't think of his name right now. I'll have it come to me in a moment but Jerry Springer had been jurist We're here. And I talked to the producer for about 20 minutes. And she finally said to me, well, but you're doing serious thing. And I said, Yeah, we're testified in front of the state legislature. We've helped to write two separate laws with vault with hate crime. She said, Oh, that's old news. Last night, and that was the end of the conversation.



20:19

Yeah, yeah. What I find is that they respond if you really want to be, you know, on one of these things and get your point across and show them you've got an amazing, you know, sense of silliness and humor about you. I mean, I do, and I liked that I liked that, you know, like doing that. And then once you're on the air, you can pretty much say a lot. You can pretty much say a lot. And I was just realizing that this is a fun part. Because like if they come after you and they're very likely to one thing you can always do is flirt with them. And very, doesn't matter when a man or a woman you just are you asking me that because you're interested in me.



20:54

I saw you do that on one of the show was on now. It was a female host. Yeah. You asked her that jet was Jenny Jones. Jane Whitney Jean Whitney. There we go. Yeah, that's and I actually fell off the couch laughing.



21:07

That was true. Because they get they go quiet and you use that time to get your message in. I mean, we've got to learn to be media savvy. And that's that's part of it.



21:15

In the book, trans transgender nation, Gordian Mackenzie pays you a terrific compliment. Oh, because she talks about how you have learned to control the interviews and not let them control you. And she considers that a giant step forward.



21:30

Sarah, it's such a relief to be on this show. Well, you taught me during this interview. I didn't know I can let my guard down here. You're not gonna worry about it. I know. You know, I know you. I like you. I know. You know, the folks that are listening are family. So that's important. Yeah. Yeah.



21:48

Well thank you. Appreciate it. I want to let's get back. I want to talk about the book a little bit

Well, thank you. Appreciate it. I want to let's get back. I want to talk about the book a little bit. For folks who tuned in a few minutes late. We're talking to Kate Bornstein, the author of gender outlaw on men, women in the rest of us knew in paperback from vintage. There you go. Now on this show we've had we've had Martine Rothblatt on the show. We've had Gordian Mackenzie on the show, we've had you on the show, we plan to speak with Ricky Wilkins while she's here in June. We're going to try and get Lesley Feinberg on the show. And it strikes me that we have seen a genuine gender movement. Do you get that same sense in



22:23

that blow you away? Who would have ever figured Yes, absolutely. Yes. There's a sense of when, when we were at that little courthouse in, in Fall City, Nebraska, and they were 5060 people in a town about the whole population was under 4000. And there were 50 or 60 of us lining up in front of the courthouse and wait, we realized where we were from. And we were from all the all these different states. We were from Ireland, we were from different places. And we said, oh my gosh, it's starting to happen. It's really starting to happen. It's starting to come together. And I think that the more we build coalitions amongst ourselves, you know, the more we put aside the differences and and focus on, you know, well, what what do we have in common? Besides, you know, like whacking off certain body parts? You know, I mean, I mean, like, we cannot build a coalition based on that. We have to base it build a coalition on how does that affect our lives? How do we get how do we live our lives as transgendered people? What do we do about the people who laugh at us in the streets? What do we do about the people who hold us at knifepoint? Right? And how do we respond to that, and if we can say, we're going to build a coalition based on loving strength, then I'm part of her.



23:34

We are here in Houston, we have something coming up called spectrum 95, which is kind of a kind of a an economic development thing. And as part of that, all for the first time ever, all the gender groups in our city, brother, they were dragged, where the trial sorority all came together. And as a result of that, we've discovered that we have transgendered youth who are developing age because they're injecting street level hormones. Yes, ma'am. We've we've discovered there's not a single homeless shelter in city we'll take an openly transgendered person, right. And none of that would happen if we couldn't hadn't learned to put our egos at the door. Yeah. And I wonder if we'll ever learn to do that nationally.



24:11

I just think, you know, like, I keep going, Gosh, isn't that far fetched? But I mean, look at look at what we're doing right here. Right now. We're on, you know, radio, you know, your transgendered radio host, I'm a transgender author. What is this? I mean, you know, the thought that I was when I was when I was waiting, you know, going through my change or before I was going through my change the reason it took me so long is the fear of being found out. You know, oh my gosh, my gosh, that is so old, isn't it?



24:42

What you know, that's funny because I was gonna ask you about that question of being is out in this public is I am I get some real strange reactions. No, you let you



24:54

get real strange reactions because you're so cute.



24:57

I will. Okay, no, I Don't know what to say? No,



25:01

I didn't mean it that way. I just meant it for real. Sometimes the flirting is real, but I promise you



25:09

what I was going to ask what would



25:12

you put your clothes back on young lady?



25:16

What I was going to ask you, I think what we started with, what kind of reactions do you get? Because you're you're very bold. You tell people straight out? How do people react to you?



25:27

Oh, gosh, what a question. I mean, it depends. Like when when I first did the Donahue show, I remember this. We were walking through the New York the morning after it, it aired. And there were these truck drivers. It was like early early morning, we're talking like 630 in the morning and in the streets blowing the truck drivers. And they were honking and honking in Hong Kong God, geez, you know, we're gonna have to deal with this. But they were lean enough. You go you was really great. We saw you on television. Whoa, you know, and I think you know, people, people like it when you stand up. I mean, that's one thing I like about this country I'm real scared about is being squashed by you know, Newt, which I think is a perfect name for him. Newt. Kind of like salamander is creature. But Newt and his gang, you know, are trying to take that kind of celebration of freedom and strength away from us. I'm really scares me but But I think being out being bold about it, having you know, a laugh about a quote, yeah, it's kind of a hoot, isn't it? People like that. And they respond well, to it. Most of the responses Very good.

With a bad response to me has always come when I've tried to keep it down when I've tried to pass when I've tried to lie, which is what we're counseled to do, which is what we've been counseled to do. And you know, breaking that mold, you know, that's, that's something, having the courage the first time to say yum, transsexual. That was scary. Still a little bit sometimes, you know, like living up, I live in Seattle now these days, right? And having to, you know, like, become, you know, that tall woman on the street, you know, because it's a small town and. And as word gets out, and out and out, you know, you start seeing the little looks head your way and the people laughing and you go, Oh, geez, we're gonna do all this again. You know, but yes, we do over and over and over. And that's how we're going to do it nationally. To get way back to your old question.



27:23

One of the questions that got put to me by somebody here in Houston, they say, well, is Kate, is she a revolutionary, or role model? And I thought that was a pretty interesting question, though. Didn't ask you.



27:35

I really hope I'm neither. I see. You know what I'm doing. Now, when I did this, this this thing with Brenda, Tina, we did this speak out thing I realized, I'm really not one for politics, not not direct politics. I'm saying my work is obviously political. And I know that, but I don't think you know, you know, like, deal wolves. Your wolves. Okay. You know, the thing about alpha wolf and beta Wolf, you know, the alpha wolf is the leader and the you know, and they they kind of pee all over everything in market territory, and they're really cool. And they're really strong and, and they know how to lead right? And then there's beta wolves and what they knew is how to provide service. And I think I'm a beta Wolf. I've never been comfortable leading. I'm not comfortable leading when people say how does it feel to be a spokesperson for the transgender movement? I go, Well, I'm not a spokesperson, and the movement is too young to have one anyway. I am not I do not see myself as a spokesperson. I see the publication of gender outlaw as a landmark. But I'm certainly not a path blazer other than by circumstance. What I'm saying and gender outlaw has been coming up through the ranks in so many transgendered people. For the past few years. I was able to give it voice, but that doesn't mean I That's my theory, or anything like that. It just means that okay, that one's out there. That one's out there. There's a lot of people who disagree with what I say and gender outlaw still.



29:10

Sometimes it gets interpreted. Interestingly, too. I did an interview for a newspaper here about two weeks ago and for some reason, my sexual orientation fascinates people. I don't know why I have yet to figure this out. But anyway, she asked my sexual orientation. Well, she asked me and I said it was Omni sexual. And she said, What? Yeah, and I said, Well, I love people where the character and their ability in genitals are unimportant and I've never seen a jaw drop quite that far. Why did it matter?



29:40

Well, you know the you know, like Sophie B. Hawkins, you know, the singers Yeah, rock star. She's coming out on all these magazines and she's omnisexual and pretty much for the same reason. You know, what does genitalia matter? After all,



29:52

that's exactly what you love people with the genitals, right? Do you get you get that kind of genitals are fun. Well, they can be but you know, Hello people for their genitals, you know, no, no, no, no.



30:03

But it's a nice side benefit. I've never seen one on the side, though. You know?



30:12

Come on, this is Family Radio, I can see what I'm wanting to say.



30:16

Something else I was gonna ask you. Surely I know, you must do a lot of calling the show. You must do a lot of interviews in places where people have never really seen transsexuals. Or at least you know more than before they've got these preconceived notions, because I get that all the time. Yeah. How do you handle that? When people look at you, oh, that's a transsexual?



30:36

Yeah, well, recently, it was really fun. And recently, I was on this book tour. And the woman who is my driver for that day, they give you a driver, it is so funny because they know where to get you to. Because you have to like eight interviews a day, and they have to drive you from one to the next. Next Next. And so this woman is my driver is like, almost as tall as me. And we were just talking about, you know, what does it mean to be a tall woman because I'm nearly 511. I'm a little over 511. And you know, she was just about that same height. And so we went into this like radio station. And all these people kind of flocked around her and said, Kate Bornstein. Welcome, welcome, welcome. And I'm standing there going, good that they were just read and she's she was really confused by that. We talked in the car afterwards. Well, what did it feel like to be mistaken for a transsexual? She said, you know, that happens frequently. You know, a tall woman, a woman with large hands a woman with a deeper voice. What we that people get mistaken for transsexuals? And I think that points to how constructed an identity we are. And how constructed an identity woman is as well, for that to be criss crossing like that. I was a deep philosophical point. I hope you decided.



31:50

It just occurred to me that you're going to places where there are not a lot of open transsexuals in Houston, we have a lot of open transgender people, but most cities don't. And it just dawned on me that for a lot of people, you must be the first person the first transsexual live ever knowingly met.



32:08

Right, exactly. I'm glad you use that terminology. Because that's it. Yeah.



32:12

So it must be very strange for them. And for you.



32:15

Yeah. Yeah. Well, you know, like, it's funny, because like radio show hosts or something like that, I'll be sitting them they still look, they look at me and look at me, because they have permission to stare because they don't have, you know, a television front. And they have to look at me across the table anyway. And they'll make slips, they'll say, well, now when you were a little girl, and then go on, and I'll just kind of, or if I talked about, you know, having been married three times, and they'll say, well, well, what what were your husband's like, and your, and they get really confused, because what they see on there is, you know, here's something really interesting, you know, the biggest criticism that I've been getting recently about the book, and this is becoming from coming from mainstream as well as transgendered. And recently, I've been seeing this on the internet. How can Kate Bornstein call herself a gender outlaw when she looks like a woman? Undergoing what's excuse me, you know, what am I supposed to look like? This is like saying, you know, like, there's this is what happened in the women's in the lesbian movement. In the 70s, there was a politically correct androgynous look, and you couldn't be femme. You know, I am a firm transsexual, and this is what it looks like. And I really enjoy it. If that means I'm passing, well, that's in the eye of the beholder. I really never think I pass and then make no effort to but I certainly am femme. I'm a strong femme. I am a femme top. And I really enjoyed the game.



33:37

You know, it's fascinating to me, I subscribed to several gender lists, sort of, so to speak on the internet. And they're having a huge argument right now, about about a transsexual invading women's space. And I finally got real disgusted with this and said, somebody has to define woman's space to me. Yeah, I'm still waiting for the answer. In your book, you can't define you. You don't define men or women, in which I thought was part at least partly the point of the book. And I raised the question to them on the internet and said, we'll define men or women to me, and they're still trying to do



34:13

things. I think, I think now a lot of people have accused me of saying, Oh, you want to do away with men you want to do away with women that will do away with gay men and lesbians? And no, no, it won't. There's always going to be men, there's always going to be women. Those are two valid genders. What I object to and what I've heard a lot of my transgendered brothers and sisters object to is that those are the only two there. Yes. All right. So there will always be men who love men and women who love women, there will always be women, I think. But there's always more than women, or less than women are different than women. And I fall into one of those categories. I think of the different from women as the one I fall into.



34:49

Well, we're talking to Kate Bornstein, the author of gender outlaw. I was going to ask you about that as how you handle the criticism is I have learned over the years that the minute you take a stand that makes you a walking target. And I know you since you address just about every subject, everybody else is scared to death. Surely you must have you must have had, you must have gotten a lot of criticism, as well as a lot of praise. How do you handle the criticism? Do you just basically sad Well, so what?



35:19

Oh, I wish I was that advanced or that evolve, it hurts it hurts way deep, especially if it's coming from, you know, family, which is where it usually comes from. It affects me really, really hard. And I guess it's part of his beta wolf thing again, it's like, I'm really trying to be of service. And if what I'm doing doesn't help people, then I really got all my gosh, what do I do now? And I start rethinking my position. It's one of the reasons I wrote the afterword for the paperback edition. Because I said some things I regret having said, people pointed some stuff out to me. One of the things is I land really, really heavy on therapists in that book, and a couple of therapists that came up to me really hurt saying, hey, no, not all of us do that. There's some of you, some of us who are really cool. And oh, my gosh, you right? After we talked, and so I withdrew that and modified my statements in there. The original text is still in there. So you can see what a jerk I am, you know? Arrogant I am. But no, it hurts a lot. And I've gotten a bunch of threats. As a result of the stance I take people in our community. Oh, absolutely. When I was still in San Francisco, I had to enlist my number because I was getting threatening phone calls. And then threatened to do an action to demonstrate when I was performing, I was performing a new piece and and I was actually going to be on stage with Leslie Feinberg doing a benefit. And they were going to disrupt that. It was Leslie who was able to talk them out?



36:55

What were the objecting to



36:57

my, I was trying to moderate IBM have a hold of moderate position between the transgender activists who wanted in on the Michigan Women's Music Festival, and lesbian separatists who want to transgender activists out on the Michigan Women's Music Festival, I can kind of see

both points very, very well. I said, what you need to do is sit down and talk both of you. And here's some points. And they said I was collaborating with the enemy and set the movement back 100 years and call me a Nazi. And I'm Jewish, I am not a Nazi.



37:31

We probably ought to explain to the listeners at the Michigan's women's the Michigan Women's festival has been a point of controversy for quite some time. They have a policy, which is a women's festival for women only meaning if you had to have been born female, as I understand that, right, that essentially right? Yeah.



37:50

And my contention now is, I think that for both lesbian separatists, lesbian activists, transgender activists, transgender separatists, that this is a waste of our time. I think, Well, I think we're, you know, we can no longer afford to bicker amongst each other. We really cannot, not in light of Newt Gingrich, not in light of what's his name, the Christian coalition, and they're new they have this Ralph Reese and groundbreaking commandments, yeah, the the contract with the American family. You know, our sociological clock is ticking. And it's time we give birth to a new culture, and one that includes all of us. Many verbs, perhaps put at the best, she said, we need to have a coalition of lesbians, gay men, transgendered people, and the women's movement. And that covers all the bases in terms of sex and gender. And we better do that we better do that fast. We need each other. I need all the amazing work that the lesbians and gay men have done. In order for me to come out of my closet without being totally afraid. I need the work of the women's movement that allowed me to go through my gender change, go into being a woman move out of being a woman and be something else. And the women's movement, and lesbians and gay men. They need you, Sarah, they need me. They need all of our brave transgender brothers and sisters to get some flexibility into this and to dismantle the system that's kept our oppression in place for so long.



39:21

Well, I hope they learned that because we've really been struggling with that here in Houston. And in in in Texas, in general.



39:31

I heard I heard this nasty rumor. And this is Tell me tell me I heard it wrong. There's something in town called a lesbian and gay Political Caucus, right? That's right. Political Caucus means you know, like, Alright, there's a political agenda, right. And they don't want transgender people in this.



39:47

That's right. That's right there. They are afraid we're going to cost them votes. Very interesting, interesting perspective. Isn't it?

interesting perspective, isn't it?



39:56

I have rarely,



39:58

rarely left spin speechless. Gosh, oh gosh, I have nothing smart to say about that. I am stunned. I'm sure when



40:06

the political comes after them that they will. I'm sure when the political right comes after them and they need allies. I'm sure we'll try to keep that in mind.



40:14

Well, I really I really, I hope there's a couple of folks listening from that. We mean, you no harm were will destroy you will take away votes from you. I'm kinda cute. You might like me. And she is too.



40:33

I know that you have to get you have to get to a booksigning. Before you go. I want to ask you what's next for you. Last time I talked, you said you was working on a new book.



40:41

I'm working on two new books now. And really, I've got a follow up to gender outlaw that's about I'm about to start to write. And that'll be out in about a year and a half I believe from probably from Routledge, but we're not sure. And it's called My gender workbook. I love the title already. Since I've been on tour, people are going okay, Kate, okay. Okay, we get this theory about being outside of gender. But how do you do it? How do you live without gender in the world? And I can give you the answer, or you can buy the book. And the answer is really, really simple. And I mean, this I'm not being snide or flip about this, I look for where gender is, and I go someplace else. Because I think gender is a big waste of time. And it's kind of based on that principle of how do you learn to fly, right? You just hurl yourself at the ground until you miss. You know, and then that's it. It's a very zen kind of a thing. And this book will explore where gender comes from in the culture and how to avoid it. And it'll have like, mazes and cut out dolls. It's a real workbook. It's gonna be fun. The other book I'm working on it