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SPEAKERS

Barry Forbes, Greg Gordon, Lori Clark, Cindy Friedman, Juan Palomo



Cindy Friedman 00:02

And that's Deidre McCullough, everyday heroes and heroines that's the title song from her album everyday heroes and heroines Good evening. It's 14 minutes after seven o'clock you're listening to lesbian and gay voices on World Radio 90.1 FM. I'm Cindy Friedman sitting in for Jack Valinski and joined by Lori Clark. Hi, Lori. I just want to clarify briefly that sent KPFT's Cindy Friedman, that's yours truly is a different woman from KPFK is Cindy Friedman, who produces this way out now that that settled, we'll move on with some of the important things we're going to be covering in this half hour. This wasn't a monumental week on my town. Roberta Achtenberg was confirmed by the United States Senate to be Assistant Secretary for fair housing and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The highest ranking queer nominated to government office by President Bill Clinton, and the first openly gay or lesbian nominee to face required Senate confirmation, but not before a highly acrimonious floor debate with North Carolina Republican homophobe Jesse Helms, leading the attack against the quote, damn lesbian and strong support voiced by two members of the Senate Banking Committee which had approved the nomination a few weeks earlier. Committee Chair Donald regal of Michigan and the Senate's first African American woman member Carol Moseley, blanc run of Illinois.



01:21

[Glory, Glory by Leah Zicari plays]



Greg Gordon 01:59

on May 24. As this program is being distributed, the United States Senate is expected to vote on the nomination of Roberta Eichenberg for the job of Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. Action berg is the first open lesbian named for a major job by President Clinton requiring Senate confirmation. Senate conservatives led by Jesse Helms have

threatened to block confirmation. With excerpts from the Senate floor debate featuring senators Jesse Helms bank and committee chair Donald regal of Michigan and Carol Moseley Brown of Illinois. Mark Beavis has this report.



02:32

It was easy in the Senate Banking Committee last month, Roberta Achtenberg breeze through with a vote of 14 to four, the issue of her sexuality came up only briefly. But conservative Republican Jesse Helms of North Carolina is not a member of that committee, and so did not have a say during the confirmation hearings. He has, however, made his feelings about the nominee known and he is expected to continue his efforts on the Senate floor. Chair recognizes senator from North Carolina,



02:57

we have crossing the threshold into the first time in the history of America that a homosexual or lesbian has been nominated by a President of the United States for a top job in the United States government. Now, I don't know how the votes gonna come up. But I do know that any senator who assumes that this is just a ship passing in the night, he better prepared to have a good explanation when he gets home and confronts his constituents. My opposition is not merely because she's a lesbian. It is because she has been a militant activist demanding the society accept as normal, as normal, a lifestyle that most of the world's religions consider MRO in which the average American voter instinctively finds repulsive.



03:52

But she's a pushy, demeaning, demanding, she is a mean, mean spirited, that call it gay bashing if you want to. I don't call it that.



04:05

I call her standing up for America's traditional family values.



04:12

Senator from Michigan, Mr. President, before the senator leaves, May I just ask you to pose a question to him. There was a story in the Washington Times on May 6, and it attributes a quote to you and I just want to know whether it's an accurate quote or not. And it says here's how the paragraph directly from the paper reads. Mr. Helms said he would try to block the block denomination when the full Senate brings it up, quote, because she's a damn lesbian. I'm not going to put a lesbian in a position like that if you want to call me a bigot fine, end of quote. And my question to you, is that an accurate that is largely Correct.



04:52

04.04

I'm not sure about the dam. But everything else I know is accurate. And I'm surprised Is that the Distinguished Chairman, or welcome this nominee without a word of wonderment about her career or about her lifestyle or anything else? As a matter of fact, I was there. I thought you were heading to the Queen of England. Before you.

05:15

I'd like just a simple yes or no.

05:17

Which president, I will go ahead and answer it again. And again. And again. I don't know what the Senator is trying to prove. It's accurate, as I recall, except for the use of the word Damn. Very good, very well, I may have said that Senator and make what you will have that.

05:35

Frankly, I find it a very disturbing statement. I'm not inserting the word, bigotry here that comes out of the quote. Now you can study the documents of this country, in terms of the Bill of Rights, the Constitution, all of our founding documents. And we do not make differentiations. On the basis that I think is being suggested here today, as to who can serve and who can't serve, and who is a full citizen, and who is not a full citizen. If you're a citizen of this country, you have an obligation to serve. And if you're qualified and you step forward, you ought to be judged on the basis of your qualification. Not skin color, not ethnic background, not sexual orientation. I don't like the quote in the Washington Times. I think it's distasteful. I think it reflects poorly on the United States Senate. That's not the standard we ought to use around here. So better country than that. I'm very fortunate on this committee, as we all are to now have three new members of this committee who are women senators. I've served in the Senate when we didn't have any women senators. I think we're a better Senate, when we really represent the whole country, and where everybody has a fair chance and an equal chance to participate. And that's just one illustration. Senator Carol Moseley Braun, who is also a member of this committee, has been the first person in effect across the color line, which should not exist in our society, but does to come here as an African American woman to the United States Senate. And I'm just proud of the fact that I feel privileged to be here at a time when that happened.

07:26

senator from Illinois. Thank you, Mr. President, I rise in support of the nomination of Roberta Achterberg. I was pleased to be able to vote for her in the banking committee, and I'm proud that I will have an opportunity to cast the vote in favor of confirming her on the floor. Mr. President, Miss Oxenberg. And President Clinton knows that we are a multicultural, pluralistic society. And they know that the American dream of opportunity is for all of us. And not just some of us. We are African American and Polish Americans and Hispanic Americans and Irish American and Asian Americans and Greek Americans. We are female as well as male. We are

gay and lesbian as well as straight. One reason for Bill Clinton's victory was that he recognized that we are all Americans. And he therefore campaigned to bring us together rather than to drive us apart. Mr. President, I am frightened this afternoon because I sat on this floor and listen to the debate. And I'm frightened to hear the politics of fear and divisiveness and of hatred rear its ugly head on this Senate floor.



08:31

gay rights activist David mixed near was not surprised.



08:34

I think the surprise would have been as Jesse Helms had in the post denomination because Roberta Eichenberg is indeed a pioneer. She is the first lesbian or gay person who has opened ever to go through the confirmation process.



08:47

Although mixing there has not actually done any vote counts. He doesn't believe opposition to act and Berg will mount to her losing the confirmation.



08:54

I think it's gonna be very hard for people like Senator Dole or Senator Katherine bomb or Senator Pressler to oppose her simply because she's a lesbian, and at the same time, continue to their opposition to the military because I think it will truly point out where they're coming from that it's not national security, that they're concerned about that outright opposition to gay and lesbian people. And so I think it's gonna be very difficult for some of those people to oppose this nomination.



09:21

If I can. Berg is confirmed she will become assistant secretary for fair housing and equal opportunity. She will be in charge of eliminating discrimination in the nation's housing markets in Washington, this is Mark Beavis.



Lori Clark 09:32

In this is Lori Clark with lesbian gay voices. Cindy and I were discussing a few things and I just wanted to pass on the news that the sodomy statue retained in the newt state penal code. A joint committee of the house senate members voted Monday to retain section 2106 of the Texas penal code, the state sodomy law thereby handing a bitter defeat to or Representative Glen Maxey, pro lesbian gay lobbyists, the House version of the legislation returned 2106. But the Senate version struck down the law. This was the first rewrite of the penal section 20 years

and we lost. And some good news on that side, though is sailor, Terry heavy was convicted to life in prison for his beating of radioman, Alan R. Schindler. They described the trial I heard that on the news today, and it was pretty graphic, pretty violent. The guy's defense was that he was drunk. And it was tester tester on that had made him get really upset. And they found out some information along the way that actually he had hated him for several years before knowing he was even gay. So it's just an excuse

 Cindy Friedman 10:42

me, gay activists have been disappointed in the way the trial went, because they never really discussed the treatment of homosexuals on that ship or any other ship and the United States Navy and they felt like they kind of tiptoed over that important issue. And of course, gays in the military is still a very prominent issue in the news right now. Representative Barney Frank came out with his compromise suggestions, and many gay activists are not in favor of that. And of course, the latest thing from Bill Clinton is a suggestion of the sort of, don't tell anyone mentality, and many activists are upset about that as well. But one thing seems to be for sure, Senator Nunn is not going to budge. In his opinion. One thing that's been so interesting to watch with this, Laurie is that we still have polarities, we still have one group of people who is not going to budge. And at the other end of that polarity is another group who also don't seem to be willing to budge. I really don't know how that's going to continue. But I know it's going to be very prominent in the news and it affects all of us in this country.

 Lori Clark 11:45

Well, wrapping up this, we have coming up and interview with Lee Virgilio and Barbara Irving about lesbians and safe sex in an interview with Mary who talks about her views of erotic film watching and you're listening to lesbian gay voices.

 12:01

On behalf of a staff of volunteers in the 1000s of listeners, just like you who enjoy World Radio 90.1 FM KPFT wants to thank all of you who made pledges during our spring membership drive. And if you haven't already done so take a moment and send in your pledge check today. If you have any questions about your pledge, call our membership department at 526 4000. And thanks again for helping listener supported KPFT remain the thoughtful alternative in Houston radio.

 12:28

Rebecca and I went camping, we made camp who spent some time eating, we were laying down by stream and all of a sudden there were shots. My arm exploded, Rebecca was hit twice and started to bleed to death. tempted to carry her clothes on successful, the entire walk out of the woods, I believed myself to be hunted. My name is Claudia Brenner. We were identified as lesbians by a stranger with whom we had no connection, he will spend the rest of his life in prison. But Rebecca who was 28 years old, is gone.



Lori Clark 13:05

Homophobia can kill, education is the only lasting weapon against bigotry, which is why the lesbian and gay public awareness project wanted you to hear and think about this message.



13:18

For more information write us at Post Office Box 65603 Los Angeles, California 90065.



Lori Clark 13:25

This is Lori Clark with lesbian and gay voices speaking with Mary, you're going to do a series I'm planning to do a series on lesbian sexuality, and we're gonna take the diverse aspects of lesbian sexuality and talk to different kinds of people. Tell me a little bit. Tell me a little bit why you watch a rhotic film?



13:46

Well, first of all, it's not like I watch them every day. It's just something I do for a nice change of pace. It's an escape, I guess, is what she could say you sit down, you watch a few films, and you can almost kind of laugh at them. But you learn to find the better films instead of the ones that have no plot, you know, get some that have something that appeals more to the feminine side, because it's not all visual stimulation. You want a little bit of a storyline in there.



Lori Clark 14:16

Is there lesbian films?



14:19

Oh, yeah, there's a lot of them. You can walk right into a video store and say this is what I'm looking for. You know, I'd like to see a film with two women in it. And they know right, where to go and give it to you.



Lori Clark 14:29

Is there some that caters specifically for lesbian fantasies?



14:33

Yeah, but there's very few, very few of you. They're more from a man's perspective.



Lori Clark 14:38

So can you get a different feeling when you see a mat one for the man's perspective and one from the Women's? Can you tell a difference in the storyline or however it's laid out?



14:47

The ones I've seen? Yeah, you're gonna see more of a storyline a little bit softer side if it has a lesbian slant to it, you know, made for lesbians versus made for men. I'm there I guess They're there for the hardcore stuff. And I don't think women are women aren't like that.



Lori Clark 15:06

Okay, what? What started you watching erotic films



15:12

change of pace. You get tired of the same old thing. You have to keep life interesting. It wasn't it was when I was with my lover. And it's just something we explored to try and keep our relationship alive and keep, keep things exciting. And I grew to like him. Do you remember your reaction? The



Lori Clark 15:31

first time we saw one?



15:32

I enjoyed it. But I was surprised at myself. Why were you surprised? Because I wasn't raised in the type of environment where I thought I would enjoy it or that that would appeal to me. But I guess I'm open minded enough that I was willing to try it. And I said, I was surprised when I did like it.



Lori Clark 15:50

So after you saw your first film, and you were surprised that you like it? Did you think that it was an environmental? I guess, would you say it was environmental? Or would you say it's instinctive on a sexuality as far as viewing visual stimulation?



16:05

It's instinctive, I think the environmental pressures would force you more not to like it. Because

you're raised to believe that that's unhealthy behavior, and that you should not be attracted to that type of entertainment. So I think if you do like it, it's your instincts coming out. It's pushing the environmental away from you.



Lori Clark 16:27

You think women it's women were raised not to like it? Obviously, it's not true for men, because men are trained to That's right, really appreciate this kind of visual simulations, right? So we will How old were you give us an idea of the age when you first started? Huh? 2323 So you'd be watching for a while? Have you taste refined over the years?



16:47

Oh, definitely. Before you know, when you first start, you don't really know what you're looking for. You're afraid to ask for certain films or the types of things that you want to see in films. So you just go and grab one off the shelf, you know, and you don't get very lucky that way.



Lori Clark 17:04

And now you're just brave enough to go up and ask for what you want. Right.



17:07

And then I have friends that watch pornos as well, and they say, Hey, I saw a good one the other night and then we you know, trade titles. Ah,



Lori Clark 17:15

where could a lesbian who wanted to go watch films in the city go get something that that would suit her more to the lesbian point of view then Forman's.



17:25

Um, just about any place, I guess there I have a video store that's right down the street from me. Hey,



Lori Clark 17:31

thank you very much for exploring this side of lesbian sexuality with us. This is Lori Clark for Lesbian Gay voices.



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Cindy Friedman 17:51

Susan Herrick on lesbian and gay voices on World Radio 90.1 FM KPFT in Houston. Good evening. It's 736 and Lesbian Gay voices continues. I'm Cindy Friedman sitting in for Jack Valinski. And cohosting is Lori Clark and Lori will interview introduce our two guests.



Lori Clark 18:14

We have with us Barbara Irving and Lee Virgilio. They work with AIDS Equity League Foundation, and they do safe sex parties. They also happen to hosted a workshop at the Texas let's main conference last weekend called a new way of loving in the 90s. And we're glad to have them here with us, Barbara, I understand that you'd had a pretty wild workshop at TLC.



18:37

Yeah, it was it was a it was pretty interesting. We had a lot of people who, who asked really pertinent questions, it was good to have people come out that were really serious and wanted the information. And across the board. That's what we're getting. Basically, we've been told that we're not at risk. People know that we are and they're beginning to ask those important questions. And with the AIDS equity League, the development of the of the lesbian AIDS Project, we hope to be able to produce educational materials for our community.



Lori Clark 19:06

What kind of programs are you doing for the A, the lesbian project?



19:11

Well, first of all, a little bit, the age equity League was founded on the premise that people have a right to a voice and the decisions that ultimately affect their lives. And basically up until this point, lesbians haven't had that choice. We haven't. We haven't been included in the in the information or the data or any of those things. And so the lesbian AIDS Project was formed so that we could ask those questions and upfront a question. The first question was, well, what about lesbians and HIV and AIDS? And when we attempted to find out, the things we found out, were that there were no studies done on the lesbian population that lesbians were taught we're being told that they were not at risk or it was insignificant risk and, you know, any risk is significant one lesbian with HIV. That That makes a big deal. friends



Lori Clark 20:02

understand the CDC doesn't even consider you a lesbian if you've had sex with a man over 90 After 1975, or something along that line. That's correct.



20:09

That's correct. And within our society, the way that we're raised until we're, we're older, we do become involved with men, because societal pressure, we do that or just out of interest. Some people think, you know, well, I gotta find out now, it's not really what I wanted, I am indeed a lesbian, but that one contact will put you in a heterosexual category and drops you right out.

L

Lori Clark 20:33

So what are some of the risks that a lesbian takes when she does have sex and how to protect herself?

o

20:41

Oh, I guess that's for me leave Virgilio here. I think that we've missed the boat in not telling women that they are definitely at risk at not as high as high risk perhaps, but certainly at risk. And it is one as Barbara said, out there, that's more than we want. I do safe sex workshops around the country, and most recently with the executive League, and we're teaching women to have fun with rubber gloves, condoms that can be cut open and used in lieu of dental dams. I've had a problem with selling dental dams to the lesbian population. When you buy a box of dental dams, which are hard to find, you then end up having a little sign on the box that says this product is meant for dental use only. My thought is if the dental associations were really interested in helping keep women safe, they would say it has been tested and proven to be safe for transmission of HIV or protecting HIV transmission of HIV. Well, there's

c

Cindy Friedman 21:43

probably the public relations aspect of that they don't want to be associated with having condoned in any way, lesbian sex, right? Well, what's the popularity of the safe sex parties where you go into people's homes and do this presentation, which teaches them ways of having safe sex? Well,

o

22:01

we do sort of a comedy routine because we decided that didactic presentation was pretty boring for everybody, right? So we bring out all of the whips and chains and all the goodies and we bring them into your home and show you how to use them safely and effectively.

c

Cindy Friedman 22:18

Thank you very much. Excuse the little bit of technical difficulty. We now welcome you on microphone, Lee's Virgilio and Barbara Ervin, please continue we're talking about safe sex parties for lesbians where you come in and explain to them ways of having fun and having safe sex as well.



22:36

We arrived, invited hopefully into your home, bring with us whips, chains, and all kinds of goodies and show you how to use them safely and sanely. And hopefully very effectively. We've had a lot of success when people have been coming back asking lots and lots of questions, questions that I think should have been out there a long time ago, the answer should have been as as you know, Far Gone is the old mosquito story. And we don't believe that mosquito story. But we do know that women are getting HIV infection and we know lesbians are passing it on to one another. STDs, sexually transmitted diseases alive and well in the lesbian community



L Lori Clark 23:13

are some of the more common questions that you're asked to so that people can have them answered for them now,



23:18

we still get questions about what we think about saliva. Kissing is French kissing dangerous. We don't have anything to indicate that it is they've had such small amounts of the concept, the AIDS virus in and saliva, they had a hard time identifying it. So probably not unless you have you know, open cuts or



23:46

0092. And you can call in and leave a message and we'll contact you. It's very important that you have this information, we think that everybody should have it. If you're interested, call us we think that a real study needs to be done that that accurately assesses lesbians risk of HIV infection, we'll send you the brochure, it tells you who to write, and and to get them to do this study. I think that if enough of us write in and say our lives matter, do it. Okay, that's very important. Education about HIV and AIDS and all sexually transmitted diseases because it is documented that we transmit all of them back and forth to each other. HIV is an STD. I mean, it is sexually transmitted. We have to admit that. Okay, that's the biggest first step. And the other thing is that safe sex barrier protection, it needs to become the norm. Okay. It's It's okay, if anybody can make it fun Lee Virgilio can and you guys should really give us a call.



L Lori Clark 24:43

If they want to call you who should what number should they use?



24:47

It's 8710092.



24:50

If there's any women out there that are interested in getting tested, I'd like to suggest that you call Planned Parenthood at 5298844 or the Montrose clinic where they We'll both both agencies will do anonymous testing. They asked for donations. If you don't have it, they will still test you as they care to define anonymous testing for the people. Anonymous testing means that you come in there, they asked for no name, they asked for no identification. They may at most ask for your date of birth only so that they have a means of identifying you somehow, so that they can give you your test results back. But there's no way of identifying who you are. The insurance company can't find out your boss can't find out. It makes it very safe.



c Cindy Friedman 25:29

Thank you so much for coming by this evening and sharing this valuable information. And my guess is that Lori and Jack will invite you back again. Right. Thanks



25:39

so much. Sure.



c Cindy Friedman 25:40

It's 11 minutes. Oh, sorry about that. 11 minutes before seven before eight o'clock time, warp Time Warp, and we're going to hear a little piece of music from Sweet Honey in the Rock. It's a beautiful song about the AIDS quilt. And then Lori and I will sort of wrap up the events that have occurred this week as it affects all of us on lesbian and gay voices on World Radio 90.1 FM. Sweet Honey in the Rock On World Radio 90.1 FM KPFT in Houston, this is lesbian and gay voices. I'm Cindy Friedman sitting in for Jack Valinski this evening, and Lori Clark is here as well. And we have about four and a half more minutes left in this program. At eight o'clock, we go live to London for a wrap up of the news from the world service of the BBC. And I just want to take a moment and thank all those listeners who recently became members of KPFT. And just a reminder that for us to remain on budget for the year we have to deposit \$60,000 In listener support before June 1, as of today, about \$22,000 had been processed. So if you made a pledge, please fulfill that pledge. And we thank you very much. Lori, there's a few items in the pride calendar from the Wildenstein calendar. That would be great if you could share with the Lesbian Gay voices listeners,



L Lori Clark 27:10

we want to talk about a few things that are happening the Lone Star classic as softball tournament. Teams from Atlanta, Birmingham, Long Beach, New York and San Francisco, have made plans to come to Memorial Park that will be Saturday the 29th. Also, the 31st is the deadline for the Pride Week parade. That's the last day to submit an application for the Pride Parade without a penalty. And you can fax that to 529 1223 All right, Houston, Texas, box 66071 Houston, Texas 77266. further on down in the month of June is going to be a benefit for children with HIV who are HIV positive for AIDS sponsored by archway gallery, the Children's Museum, critical care America and KQU II. And there's going to be a preview of the artwork

created on our at our trade gallery at 5:30pm. Saturday, June 5, and then the actual auction will happen 7:30pm June 26 at the Children's Museum at 1000 1500 bins so please, if you're interested is certainly worthwhile cause

 Cindy Friedman 28:15

great. One little wrap up our guests this evening, Lee Virgilio and Barbara Ervin just wanted to clarify when they talked about the lesbians safe sex parties that their definition includes a lesbian is simply a woman who has sex with women, whether she's also bisexual, or what other other forms of sexual expression are in her life. If she has sex with women, then this is an important factor for him to

 Lori Clark 28:38

know about the stop and visibility that we so easily claim. It's true,

 Cindy Friedman 28:42

it's true. And I also want to mention that the new issue of our magazine is out. And it's the gay pride issue. It's their first anniversary issue. And one of the special features is a photographic essay, in which photographers on March the 19th of this year were told to go out and photograph gay America. And the piece is called A Day in the Life of gay America. And there are photographs from all across the country of gay people. There are farmers and lawyers and mothers and young people and athletes and just people as they are, as we all know, that's one of the goals of Lesbian Gay voices is that we are people we are everywhere we are everything. And highly, highly recommended. Also, the interview you heard earlier this evening with Michelangelo's Signorelli. That part of that book is excerpted in that issue and I understand he is now recently joined OUT magazine as a contributing writer. And so that's out as well. Anything else happening this week, Lori that want to mention?

 Lori Clark 29:48

No, not really. So what tell us about some tidbits of news. I know I understand you have some news items.

 Cindy Friedman 29:52

Well, I was just just just to recap on the gays in the military issue which keeps coming up again. President Clinton was on CBS So, this morning yesterday and he said that, quote, most Americans believe if you don't ask, and you don't say and you're not forced to confront it, people should be able to serve, which also still brings us back to just don't mention it, you know, let's just not talk about it, which is certainly the opposite. Goal and philosophy of many, many people who believe like Harvey Milk said, the more people who come out, the more people will see that people are people and they'll get over their fears.

L

Lori Clark 30:31

I heard a very funny comedian talking about banning gays in the military. And they were saying, you know, we should all just promised we should all just say we're gay because no one would have to serve in the military. It's kind of funny to hold Yeah.

C

Cindy Friedman 30:44

I like the idea of just straight white men getting respecting gay people and banning the military. This is lesbian and gay voices on World Radio 90.1 FM KPFT and Houston for Lori Clark and yours truly, Cindy Friedman, stay tuned for the BBC followed by off the clock with nori Nori,

L

Lori Clark 31:02

starting to theories about lesbian sexuality. And to start off, we'll be Mary, who tells us about her feelings about erotic films,

C

Cindy Friedman 31:10

that and women's music will also be coming up in this hour. And we'll be doing women's music this week. That's right. I'll be hosting the women's music portion this week as well sitting in for Mary Helen. So we're all kind of helping each other out. And coming up in this half hour one Palermo's interview with Pat Gandy.

L

Lori Clark 31:28

Okay, and KPFT wants to thank all the listeners who recently became members on World Radio 90.1 FM, in order to remain on budget for this year. KPFT must deposit \$60,000 in listening support before June 1. As of today, \$21,000 273 have been have been processed. So have you made a pledge during the recent membership drive, and have not fulfilled that pledge? Please do that as soon as possible. We need your checks. And thank you so much for becoming members. What's the model with all?

J

Juan Palomo 32:05

This is Juan Poloma on lesbian and gay voices on KPFT World Radio. Just by way of introduction, those of you who don't know on my normal life, if I have a normal life, I am a columnist for the Houston Post. And for fun, I do things like this. This is my first live interview on KPFT. So this might go kind of choppy, but bear with us. And I think we have a very interesting interview today. We have with us Pat Gandy who is the co chair of the lesbian and gay rights lobby, and Cecily Wynn, who is the vice president of agora, which is a new gay PR group. But that's not what we're going to talk to them about. What we're going to talk to them about is the recent issue or the latest issue of the Texas observer. As some of you may not be familiar with the observer, it is probably the premier liberal magazine in the south aid has been an institution in

Texas for quite a while it is sort of that is where Molly, Ivan's got her start and a number of other very famous writers. And it has been a very liberal voice in the state of Texas and in the country. It is nationally recognized. But until recently, it really had not done very much on lesbian and gay issues. But thanks to Pat and Cecily, that has all changed the two thirds of the May 21 issue was devoted to lesbian and gay issues. It has 13 stories, either stories, or columns or book reviews, or editorials related to lesbian and gay issues. It is a very, very interesting magazine. I strongly urge everybody go out and get a copy. And we'll tell you where to get a copy soon. But first of all, let me welcome, Pat and Cecily, I'm glad you're here with us.



34:02

Happy to be here. One.



34:04

appreciate this opportunity.



J Juan Palomo 34:06

Tell us how this got started. Where did this idea come from?



34:09

Well, I will start off on that. Sometime after the election in November, I began to feel that perhaps with the new administration coming into Washington, that there would be a great deal of backlash against gays and lesbians because the gay and lesbian agenda nationally was going to be pushed, I knew that we were going to we're having some important issues come up here in Texas. So I sat down and wrote a letter to the observer, in which I virtually pled for them to do some stories about our community and about the fact that we needed civil rights. You just like we were the last of the minorities, the disenfranchised, disenfranchised disempowered, who did not have full civil rights. And, and wrote a long letter about that. And so to cut it down now, they, they invited me to come up to Austin and talk to him about it. And Janet Cohen and I went,



J Juan Palomo 35:26

who was Janet Cohen?



35:27

Yeah, Cohen is another member of the LG RL board. And we were we were in Austin for a board meeting that weekend and had breakfast with the editor and assistant editor of the magazine and sort of fleshed out things. What was

J

Juan Palomo 35:41

the initial reaction? Was there any resistance? Was there skepticism? Or were they were they scared of doing this?

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35:46

No, they were just sort of like, oh, I never thought of this. I never thought of this before, you know, didn't know this was a problem. Actually, they were very easy to talk to and get along with. It was just that they hadn't thought about it. And so you know, it's sort of it sort of validates a feeling of mine that oftentimes we don't get things because we don't ask, or we don't insist.

J

Juan Palomo 36:08

Now, there's something unique here in that most magazines, most editors are very reluctant to turn over their magazines, to somebody else from the outside. And this is exactly what happened here. Is it not?

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36:18

Yes, they did. They, they said look, you can you can start to plan some stories. And we'll have somebody and actually what Cecily, and I did then was just sort of, okay, they started giving us a carte Blanc. And I don't know whether they're all they don't have a big staff to organize all this. So if we're going to get everything in, we're going to have to organize it ourselves. And so Sicily can tell you a little bit about that.

♂

36:48

They were extremely agreeable to letting us suggest stories and get the riders to do them. And I just thought it would be a good idea to get the stories to them in first class shape. And so I did some of the preliminary editing on them and worked with some of the riders here in Houston, such as the Reverend Ralph Lasher. And a nice Parker, and Debbie Moore. And I'm sorry, Debbie, Debbie Moore and Connie hunt. Connie Morin day behind I'm sorry, apologize to both of you. But they we had some really fine writers in the community. And they all did a splendid job on this issue, and very proud of them. And we sent the stories to Austin and most of them got in I apologize to those who didn't make it. But like any publication, they can't print everything just because of lack of space. Or they just I think if they printed it all, the issue would have been twice as large. But that's pretty normal with the publication as you know that not everything always gets in

J

Juan Palomo 37:43

what what is your general impression, your reaction to what you see now you're holding in your



37:49

I'm extremely proud of it, I couldn't be more pleased with the issue. I wish all the stories could have gotten in. But I think everything that got in was just splendid. And I think all the aspects of our lives are covered in that. I think it'll have a tremendous impact. And I was very proud to play a role in that I did the publicity on it, not only locally, but nationally, we mailed out about 100 magazines and press releases about the issue all over the country to TV, radio, and all the magazines and syndicates in the country, as well as liberal TV shows such as Northern Exposure with gay characters. So I think down the road, we're going to see some impact from this issue.



Juan Palomo 38:31

What Why is it important that people outside of the state know about this because you'd like for them to emulate? What would you call it?



38:39

Not so much that, I think, to me, the most important and I say that with emphasis, the most important story in the issue to me, is Reverend Lat Ralph lashes article about gays in the Bible. To me it is the most untold story. Most people in the country, even those who support us, somehow have this notion that the Bible condemns gays and lesbians. According to the last Newsweek poll, about 53% of the people in this country do not accept the gay lifestyle. And I hate that word. But of those 33%, I would about half of them are the religious right, and they're never going to support us. But the other half those 25% I wanted to target them. And I want to begin a national debate on the dangerous myth that the Bible condemns gays and lesbians, because this is a myth that's used against us. This is a myth that kills people, literally people kill people, people, gays are killed because bubbles are out there saying, Hey, God hates gays. I read it in the Bible. Well, it's just not true. And we're even afraid to take on this issue. And until we do, we're never going to convince those 25% that we can reach that the Bible does not condemn us. You know, we have to take that on. We can't just concede it and we often do. And so That's why I got interested in this project. And Reverend Lasher wrote a really fine article and I hope everyone reads it. Because many people in our own gay community believe that the Bible condemns us and it's just not true. You know, we beat up on ourselves, we become alcoholics. And a lot of it is traced back to our upbringing. We were taught that the Bible condemned us that God hates us because we're gay. And it's just not true. And more and more biblical scholars agree with that because more and more accurate translations of the Bible are coming out. And one of these days that point is going to get across and I want to help that that story be told



Juan Palomo 40:35

Mrs. Juan Palomo with lesbian and gay voices on KPFT will radio we are speaking with the Cicely Wynne and Pat Gandy who are responsible for the latest issue of the Texas observer, which is devoted almost exclusively to lesbian and gay issues. I was going to ask both of you to listen to

tell us a little bit about your favorite article in this issue. So you've already told us that so maybe fat can you tell us why?



40:58

Well, I don't know that I have a favorite one that I solicited personally was the was the article about the lesbian out in West Texas. My name is my name born to be a Baba but my name is Lucille. Now that's a very good one I the woman that wrote it is anonymous. However, I know her personally and and it's a great I told the observer that it was our answer to Molly IV, it was she was the gay and lesbian answered to Molly and she, she has that that humorous, punchy way of writing about things. And so let's do that.



J Juan Palomo 41:37

From from reading this. I think Molly has something to worry about. You might get some? Yes, I think so. There's a little bit more about some of the other articles, which what people expect to read here.



41:47

Well, I'm one of one of the other articles with the editorial, for example, that the editor wrote, I was very interested. In fact, that's one of the things that I had asked that they do to not a gay person. The editor is straight guys force. I know. And he wrote, asking for the rest of the liberal community to start paying attention to gay and lesbian civil rights. That was, that was a particular thing that I asked for us. And well either prep my letter asking for it, or you right one, so he did. So I really want to thank him for that. I really enjoyed all of them. And, and they all had they all different in different ways. And, and they all contributed to that overall picture which you asked Cecily, about whether she would like it to be emulated. And I would, I would like for everybody all over the country to do the same sort of thing in their own community.



J Juan Palomo 42:51

I assume you went to the Texas observer because you expected it to be the most sympathetic to such a request. But can you envision, say Texas Monthly doing anything like that, or any other the other mainstream publications?



43:05

Yes, I'd very much like to I went to the observer first. Because I thought, well, you know, nothing ventured, nothing gained. And I've been a lifetime subscriber to the observer. I was, in fact, at the meeting in Austin, when the observer was formed back in 1950, something when Mrs. Randolph put up the money to buy the old state observer and the Austin, whatever it was some other newspaper. And so I'm familiar with the observer. I've read it all the years of my my political life, and I knew that they should do what they did. And if they didn't, then we're gonna have to do a lot of Hill races.

J

Juan Palomo 43:41

Are we preaching to the choir here, though, or there's still a lot of a lot of work to be done, even among liberals who we expect to be your natural allies here.

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43:49

Yeah, I think there's a lot of work to be done among liberals who we expect to be our natural allies, there are people who want us to, in fact, one of the points I made to the editors was that that too many are liberal, too often, our liberal friends want us to remain in the closet or just not, not say too much or not demand too much, because they don't want to have to deal with it. They don't mind. They want to be magnanimous with this, but sometimes their religious scruples aren't they're like, Okay, we'll be we'll be open minded, and we'll be liberal about it. Or we'll be you know, look, we'll be fair on the spot. Yeah. But but don't put us on the spot. Don't Don't don't confront us.

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44:29

Don't mention the Bible. Yeah.

∅

44:31

Yeah. And that.

J

Juan Palomo 44:33

Okay. What has been the reaction that you've gotten so far, especially among some of your liberal, non gay and lesbian friends?

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44:42

Well, I haven't had time to get a reaction very much. I haven't been able to dealing with so many other things that have come up with the legislature and session and with spending time doing some other things. I haven't had time to check back with them but I'm kintu

J

Juan Palomo 45:00

Do you see this the possibility of this being an annual issue with the text of liver?

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45:04

I would hope so. And I would hope also that since their consciousness has been somewhat raised that they will be doing articles more often now and now that the gay and lesbian community knows that they will do this sort of thing. There should be articles submitted to them.

J Juan Palomo 45:21

Well, I certainly hope we see a lot more of this and I would hope that you too, would be continued to be involved in and maybe edit any future editions like this because you certainly have done a wonderful job again, we have been speaking with Cicely Wynne and Pat Gandy who put together the latest issue of the Texas observer on lesbian and gay issues. This is Juan Palomo for lesbian and gay voices on KPFT World Radio.

c Cindy Friedman 45:44

Thank you one. It's 26 minutes after six o'clock you're listening to World Radio 90.1 FM KPFT in Houston, lesbian and gay voices. Good evening. I'm Cindy Friedman sitting in for Jack Valinski tonight, and coming up in just a few moments we'll be featuring some women's music. I'll also be sitting in for Mary Helen this evening, who has the evening off. And coming up a little bit later in this hour an interview with Michelangelo Signorile, author of the new book Queer in America, stay tuned. Lesbian and Gay voices continues on 90.1 FM

o 46:22

this is a point of pride a minute of gay and lesbian history. Gays and lesbians in the military fill headlines today, but the controversy goes back centuries. gays have been in the military and lead army since Alexander the Great 2200 years ago, in May 1782. During the final years of the American Revolution, a woman named Deborah Sampson disguised herself as a man took the name Robert Shurtleff, and enlisted in the Continental Army. She served proudly for a year and a half before being wounded and discovered she received an honorable discharge from General Henry Knox at West Point in 1783. And Deborah Sampson received a full army pension for proudly serving her new nation. This has been a point of pride, written by Mike Cheswick, A public service message of the gay and lesbian switchboard of Houston.

o 47:17

On behalf of the staff, the volunteers in the 1000s of listeners, just like you who enjoy World Radio 90.1 FM KPFT wants to thank all of you who made pledges during our spring membership drive. And if you haven't already done so, take a moment and send in your pledge check today. If you have any questions about your pledge, call our membership department at 526 4000 and thanks again for helping listener supported KPFT remain the thoughtful alternative in Houston radio.

c Cindy Friedman 47:52

Well that's Jamie Anderson. The out song actually. I believe it's called no closet. Yes that's

Well, that's Jamie Anderson. The last song actually, I believe it's called No Closet. Yes, that's what it's called. And this was the portion of lesbian and gay voices where women's music is featured. I'm Cindy Friedman and Mary Helen will be back next Friday evening. This is the time of year it's sort of the season of the women's music festivals. And next weekend starts the whole season. Actually, there's a few this weekend but next weekend is the 19th annual National Women's Music Festival. So I thought it'd be fun to feature some of the women who will be performing at that festival. Jamie Anderson is one of the artists and coming up next, Susan Herrick, who is a singer and songwriter from the Pennsylvania area will also be featured at that festival. And this is from her album *truth and the lie* on World Radio 90.1 FM KPFT in Houston. Melanie demore her brand new CD that's the title song *share my song*. Melanie demore will be one of the featured performers at the Michigan Women's Music Festival this summer. And it'll be held in August she will also be conducting the gospel choir at Michigan. And that's a beautiful CD. And before that Alex Dobkin and this is from a 30 year saga compilation album called *Love and politics*. And before that Susan Herrick from her album *truth and the lie* those two women will be performing next weekend in Bloomington, Indiana at the National Women's Music Festival. It's 643 in Houston, Texas. You're listening to lesbian and gay voices on World Radio 90.1 FM. I'm Cindy Friedman. Mary Helen. We'll be back next Friday evening and coming up next Lucy blue Tremblay from her album *tone dress*. Lucy blue Tremblay is performing this weekend in Kerrville. And she does a beautiful balance of performing at the Women's music festivals and performances to a more feminist audience as well as performing in a lot of the traditional folk festivals across the United States and in Canada as well. And this particular song *two lives*, speaks to a lot of people who are attempting to balance the various issues and lifestyles that are important in their lives in all of our lives, mostly blue Tremblay on lesbian and gay voices on KPFT in Houston. Lucy blue Tremblay yeah, there's the applause there's applause and some people are lucky enough to be at Kerrville this weekend, and they'll be able to hear her live. You've just heard her on lesbian and gay voices on World Radio 90.1 FM AIDS activist Michelangelo Signorile, gained national attention when he disclosed the homosexuality of Publisher Malcolm Forbes, and defense spokesperson Pete Wilson, who now by the way is a reporter for NBC. This outing of public figures is the major focus of his book *queer in America*, which Signorelli discusses with World radio's Barry Forbes.

B

Barry Forbes 51:33

You've just published a book called *Queer in America: Sex, the Media and the Closets of Power*. Now, tell me the truth? Do you really think that most people open the book and look the first plate page, or they went directly to the index and see if they're listed,

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51:45

I think most people went to the index not only to see if they're listed, but to check on their friends to check on people they may have slept with. I mean, check on some famous people they're interested in.

B

Barry Forbes 51:55

The reason I asked that, of course, because you're most known as being a person who has a certain not created, outing, but has been most associated with outing in America.



52:07

Yeah, it's something that sort of has followed me in the last few years. I've really been at the I think, at the center of the debate over outing,



B Barry Forbes 52:17

we'll talk more about what outing is and what the implications are. But first, my reaction to the book was, it's several different books, you admit right up front, that you're gonna be writing in several different styles. And in reading the book, there are several different styles which lead into different kinds of information, several different books. Right off the bat, there was pretty much in the first part of the book, it was pretty much of autobiography about where you came from, and what you're all about. And I was really taken that you would be as open as that to really discuss, you know, where you came from, how you came to believe the things you believed, just quickly, you yourself was in your you were in your own closet, weren't you when you were in high school?



53:02

Yes. And I felt it was important to really talk about that. Because when you when you want to put forth an ideology of the closet, I think the only way to do it is almost to write in three different styles to tell your own personal story of the closet, and then to look at other people's closets. And then to look at it in a more academic way. It's, it's something that, yeah, when I was young, and growing up, I had that, that horrible feeling that I was something that I wasn't supposed to be, and was trying to be something else and was being forced by everyone around me to be that and that's the closet that started, you know, for me, it was the age of five years old.



B Barry Forbes 53:42

And also within the closet, you admitted to actually abusing that role by harming other people who are gay, particularly Anthony Larocca, who was a classmate in high school,



53:53

right? When I was young. I was targeted as a faggot. You know, at a very young age, I had that, that special bonding with with the girls that, that so many gay men talk about, and I hung around with the girls most of the time, and boys are taught by their parents that any boy who's different in that way is a faggot. And they will beat him up and kick him and you know, we call them these names. Not even knowing what that is, but but told that that's something that they must attack. And so my way of reacting to that, well, I reacted several different ways, all of which were self destructive, but one one way was to beat up other people who were called faggot and Sissy and queer, so that I could prove I wasn't that. And so I became a gay basher to prove I wasn't gay.

B

Barry Forbes 54:42

So you had real insight into what some of the people were going through that you later claimed to write about.

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54:49

Right, the way I see it, and you know, it wasn't until I wrote the book, in a way that I suddenly saw the connections of why I was doing what I do today, but the way I see it, the people, so many Many of them who I study and analyze today, you know, they are protecting their closets. They never reached that point where they said to God, look at what I'm doing, you know, they're still beating people up. But now they're, they're members of Congress. And to prove they're not gay, they're voting anti gay, or they're forcing everybody who works with them to stay in the closet so they can protect their closet. And so it's something that you see happening on a grand scale across the country.

B

Barry Forbes 55:28

You became more comfortable yourself and Brooklyn College in New York, then went on to the School of Communication at Syracuse University and finally landed a job as I guess, working as a gossip columnist or purveyor of gossip for a company in New York,

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55:40

right I when I had graduated, I wanted to go into journalism in New York, but the field was so competitive that you had to take whatever you could get. And I wound up working for a publicity firm that surfaced gossip columns got its clients into the columns, and I learned the entire business of entertainment publicity and and gossip and the and how the media in this country creates an aura about public figures and that aura does not include homosexuality glamorizes and glorifies heterosexuality and keeps homosexual public figures invisible. One of

B

Barry Forbes 56:15

the most during passages of the book highlights the change from being a gossip columnist or publicity person and a partier into being taking the first step in activism. I could just like to read this one passage. It was electrifying chills ran up and down my spine as I watched the protesters and then look back at Ratzinger you were at a zap for the Catholic Church, as I recall, right in Cardinal Ratzinger right. Soon, anger swelled up inside me. This man was the embodiment of all that had oppressed me all the horrors I had suffered as a child. He was because of his bigotry that my family, my church, everyone around me, had alienated me. And it was because of his bigotry that I was called faggot in school. Because of his bigotry. I was treated like garbage. He was responsible for the hill, I didn't do it. He in His kind were the people who forced me to live in shame in the closet, I became livid. I looked at Cardinal Connor who had buried his hand his head in his hands, and I recognized the man sitting next to him. He was O'Connor spokesman and right hand man, Father, Finn, who had been the Dean of Students back at Monsignor Farrell school. A vivid scene flashed in front my eyes. The horrible

day when I was in the principal's office talking to the principal, the guidance counselor and the dean the day they threw me off because I was queer. I look back at Ratzinger mais burning a powerful surge within my body. The shouting had subsided a bit because some of the brothers had gotten in front of the room to calm the crowd. The police had arrived in karting with the protesters suddenly jumped up on on the marble platforms and looking down, I addressed the entire congregation, the loudest voice I could, my voice rang out as if it were amplified. I pointed at Ratzinger and shouted he is no man of God. The shocked faces of the assembled Catholics Turn to the back of the room to look at me, as I continued, he is no man of God, He is the devil. Who, you're angry, anger finally boiled up. And that's what caused you to get active and act up.



58:06

Yeah, I started to make the connections, you know, and I think it takes people to make the connections for their own life, their own personal experience, and with what was going on and what was going on in the larger culture. I saw how the church had been so clearly involved in forcing me to live in shame and fear.



B Barry Forbes 58:26

From there you went to become a writer and out week, it lasted what a year, year and a half as an publication just about two years, who years. And once again, you are involved with some very angry politics, you called out week, your weekly fix of anger. And finally, a Vanity Fair editor Kevin sessions call what you are doing tantrum politics, a lot of anger from held up all these places. What has it done for you?



58:58

Well, I think that anger for me personally and I think for the entire movement of can be and has been very cathartic anger can also be very destructive. And we see that all the time but but it also it's very cathartic and galvanizes the like minded and for me it was about expressing that anger and and and galvanizing all those people who felt that too when I wrote the column, I felt like I was not only writing to a certain group of people who were who were reading it and were really feeding off of it. It was their fix of anger, but I felt like I was riding with them in a way we were all screaming collectively, and galvanizing ourselves and I think anger has that effect.



B Barry Forbes 59:40

But this time, you were at out weak and that's when you really rose to national prominence in outing. I think your first article was outing Pete Wilson and Malcolm Forbes, Malcolm Forbes right answer he had died. Okay. Could you define outing what is outing in your



59:57

mind? Well, to me outing the word is De nada, not a good choice. And it was, of course, chosen by Time Magazine which was trying to define something they thought was bad and it has

by Time magazine, which was trying to define something they thought was bad, and it has a very violent connotation. It's very active, and it sounds like wilding or any other word that's used to define something bad. I see outing simply as reporting, I feel the word should be called reporting. More accurately, Gabriel Rotella, my editor at Out week had decided that he would like it to be called equalizing, because what it really is about is equalizing the discussion of homosexuality, to heterosexuality of treating homosexual public figures, the way we treat heterosexual public figures and about talking about people and their sexuality when it's pertinent to the story. We constantly talk about people's heterosexuality when it's pertinent to a story, but even when someone's homosexuality is pertinent, the media puts on a pious veil of privacy. And I think a lot of that is just latent homophobia on their part,

B Barry Forbes 1:00:59

you spent a good part of the book defending your outing. Why is that?

1:01:03

Well, I think that in the entire debate, over outing over the last two years, we were presenting the problem, the solution without presenting the problem, which is the closet, and I felt that I needed to do justice to this entire issue because the media had completely distorted our views had to completely simplified this entire issue and just said, it was crazy, fascistic, McCarthy's stick, you know, Babel, and we weren't doing a good job ourselves of trying to break through that because we were not really presenting the problem, which is the closet. And I think that in the book what I tried to do is to show the closet in all its complexity and the damage it does not just to the person in it, but sometimes how those people can be damaging millions of people and in that sense then outing becomes one of many solutions and it's it becomes more tangential to the larger issue which is the closet.

1:02:16

k.d. lang one of the many artists that are part of KPFT World Radio 90.1 FM's new midday music lineup, the sounds of Texas in the world come to the airwaves nine to three every weekday, many familiar voices and a couple of new hosts for you a unique blend of music, the sounds of Texas in the world on World Radio 90.1 FM.

1:02:43

Say

C Cindy Friedman 1:02:55

well, we're back for the second hour of lesbian and gay voices. And the interview you just heard was KPFT is Barry Forbes. Speaking with author Michelangelo Signorelli, author of the new book, queer in America. I'm Cindy Friedman sitting in for Jack Valinski tonight, and I'm joined by Lori Clark. Good evening, Lori.

L

Lori Clark 1:03:13

Good evening. How are you today?

C

Cindy Friedman 1:03:14

I'm good. How are you tonight? Fine.

L

Lori Clark 1:03:16

And let's talk about what's coming up in the next hour. Okay. We have some information with Lee Virgilio on with a foundation about safe sex for lesbians.

C

Cindy Friedman 1:03:29

Okay, we'll be hearing the wrap up from this way out in just a few moments a wrap up of issues affecting lesbians and gays around the world. We'll also hear about the history making event that happened this week when the first openly homosexual was confirmed by the United States Senate to a federal cabinet post and we'll hear some testimony from the Senate floor about the confirmation of Roberta Achtenberg as an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. That and more coming up in this hour of lesbian and gay voices on World Radio 90.1 FM.

W

1:04:08

I'm Brian Nunez and I'm Cindy Friedman with news wrap a summary of some of the news in are affecting the lesbian and gay community for the week ending May 22 1993.