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Wed, Mar 22, 2023 1:51PM 44:05

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

ftm, men, transgender, issues, people, male, transgender community, female, talk, woman, finding, conference, community, point, feminists, surgery, gary, chest, violence, transgendered

## SPEAKERS

Dee McKellar, Sarah DePalma

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00:01

And they would say, we want to add services to the transgender community. How do we learn? How do we go about opening it up?



S Sarah DePalma 00:12

Which is very interesting. Attitude is the exact opposite of what you hear in many places. Yeah.



00:16

But they understand that particularly college kids who are struggling with their basic identities may have gender issues, in addition to sexual orientation issues, and they really want to help these folks out. So we're getting a lot more presence on college campuses.



S Sarah DePalma 00:40

Well, and I've made the argument on the show before that a gay and lesbian person is transgendered. We all know that Yeah. And and but in everything. I think the National Gay Lesbian taskforce is starting get it. A Jimmy brought in an article from the advocate. Very interesting article. Yeah, I read that. And it was interesting, because this person in the advocate got it. And it was kind of funny reading that article, because it sounded like that. They've been listening to this show, all these years and been hearing us say it, and they finally ended finally connected. So I thought that was



D Dee McKellar 01:17

kind of interesting. Well, that that may have been, and

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Sarah DePalma 01:21

now Melinda Paris is gone. Yes, that changed things. Melinda Paris was the executive director of the National galas Task Force, in case you don't know, she has decided to move on to other things.

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01:32

Carrie Labelle was her deputy, and is just basically moving up one chair. There's a change. There's a different personality involved. I don't expect there to be I have not seen yet any change in direction.

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Sarah DePalma 01:52

I'd be kind of surprised. There are there are there more and more in in big places, and in small places around the country. So many connections are getting made and everyone is getting to know each other as PCs. I would actually be kind of surprised at the end gITF made a drastic change. Unless their money suddenly dries up.

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02:13

Yeah, but I'm not sure what their funding sources are. I suspect it's from a lot more. Not so wealthy people.

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Sarah DePalma 02:22

That's my understanding is that they can be much more grassroots. They're organized a lot different. Yeah, human rights sample.

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02:28

So it's a different setup. But they're, it's just wonderful to work with those folks. And with the people who come to Creating Change Conference. It's great. It's great.

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Sarah DePalma 02:40

Now, Jessica exhibit Well, are we talking about the Creating Change Conference series that that happened later?

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02:46

Well the creating change was the November conference they always run it over the Veterans

Well, the Creating Change was the November conference, they always run it over the Veterans Day weekend.

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Sarah DePalma 02:52

Okay. I was gonna say because as what the what they did is I understand it is in gITF and ran two conferences last year, basically. One was unemployment issues, as I understand it, yes. And then the rain creating change, which was later in the year

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03:06

creating change they do every year. The the employment issues thing, they were running for a while. Now the organization in San Francisco that's been actually doing it is taking over full responsibility it they have grown to the point where they can do the conference on their own now without the management of the of the task force.

S

Sarah DePalma 03:33

Well, it's one of the things that's interested me as about the way politics has changed. There was a time when when no Nash when no gay lesbian organization would even mention the word transgender. And when the end gITF did this conference, I noticed that they had the word transgender, all over it everywhere. Interesting. They are changing. Yes, except in Texas.

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03:56

Yeah. The Creating Change Conference is 2020 500 people in one hotel for three or four days. And it is an incredibly intense experience. They may have 20 tracks of workshops. So at any given time, you've got 20 workshops, you could be going to or just other things and it's it's really sensory overload but it's it's a very supportive atmosphere everybody there is a worker they're very few posturing types. They're

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Sarah DePalma 04:44

one of the things that that has interested me too, is the the when transgenders speak at the some of these conferences, they they're taken seriously. When I first started attending these conferences, they thought we were something of a joke. and I don't get that so much, at least not at places like creating change,

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05:04

not at Creating Change, not at anything the task force does. And for the most part, not at anything done by the National Gay Lesbian Law Association, right? The NL GLA who runs the lavender law conference, which is one of the other places I went to this year. Do you when you talk to people locally? Are they surprised to find out the transgenders are so involved in so

many, quote gay lesbian groups all over the country? Are people should I people still surprised by that? To some extent, we have a strong exclusionist weighing in the leadership of the Houston community, and people who hear only those voices. And I'm not gonna get into names. But people who hear only them do

 Sarah DePalma 05:59

carpet draw sent. Among others, oh, I've already Garcia I can say to

 06:07

there, there are organizations in town that specifically exclude us from their mission, from their name, from their purpose,

 Sarah DePalma 06:18

you meet you meet like the Gay Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. Not that I'm trying to point out any names. I just thought I would mention some names.

 06:30

This is a strange role for me being diplomatic is true. Obviously, we continue. Anyhow, the Law Association, the lavender law folks actually kicked off the national level inclusion. Two years ago, they passed, unanimously passed a resolution saying that transgenders should be included in all gay lesbian community activities. And they backed it up with backed up their words with actions. And in fact, there are transgenders now on their board of directors. There will probably be more in the near future. transgender topics were integrated into many, many of their workshops. And they get it, they get it.

 Sarah DePalma 07:34

I think part of the reason the the people that so many people from Houston or from Texas that I've met, don't know the transgenders are involved nationally is that many of them don't know, their own gay and lesbian organization. Many of the audience met much of the audience may not have ever heard of the National Gay Lesbian Law Association, they may not even know these folks exist. And so of course, they don't know the transgenders are included in these because they, they don't know much about their own organizations. Well,

 08:02

of course, that organization, that's an organization of lawyers. Now, there are a number of Houston attorneys that are active in that organization, including some who have had somewhat exclusionary notion notions in the past. It's kind of fun talking to them at a at a lavender law conference. But it's, you know, that's that's the way it goes. We keep keep making inroads here

and there. We're getting our proceedings now into a number of law school libraries around the country. We've got law professors, writing on transgender legal issues, and it's because of the lavender law conferences.

 Sarah DePalma 08:55

This is KPFT 90.1 FM in Houston, and ke O 's College Station 89.1 on your FM dial you're listening to after hours. I'm Sarah dipalma. And with me tonight is Dee McKellar

 Dee McKellar 09:11

Dee McKellar yes

 Sarah DePalma 09:12

That's right, Jimmy is a little under the weather and so he's not here this evening. And okay, we can continue now. Now we're legal. Okay.

 09:20

Okay. Finally, the, the probably the most interesting conference I went to all year was one where we didn't do any presentations. And this was the female to male conference in Seattle.

 Sarah DePalma 09:37

Perfect timing leads right into Gary, excellent. And

 09:41

great folks. Very interesting. Problems and topics. First off, it was refreshing just just to go to a conference and pick out some workshops to go to and sit back and listen and learn and Uh, by golly, we've got a lot to learn about those folks.

 Sarah DePalma 10:03

Yeah, we do. In fact, I want to go to a piece of music and we come back. Well, it will set up the interview with Gary Bowen. Good. This next artist is another person that Jimmy turned me on to I had never heard of this person before. And now that I have, I wonder why I didn't hear him. This person is a new book out and I'm talking about gene County, formerly known as Wayne County. Very interesting picture of Jane and on this, there are most of the songs that I have heard on this we cannot use on the year. So we won't, but this particular one is is kind of

interesting. I like this lot. This is called Wonder Woman. And we'll let the lyrics just speak for themselves on it. Oh, well Wonder Woman. Okay, so you thought you were going to go to sleep? No, no, no, no, no, we don't allow it too early.



11:05

Much too early. We got four hours left to do into it into



**Sarah DePalma 11:10**

the at least. That's when the Jane county now Jane County, as Jimmy tells me is sort of the How can I put this god person of punk radio of punk music.



11:25

That's what I've read



**Sarah DePalma 11:26**

far more for far more well known in Great Britain than she is here. We're, we're, I don't know for whatever reason. Let's talk a little bit about the females male issues. Before we get well before we go to the interview with Gary Bowens Catan talk about that. And I want to start by saying that I tried very hard to get a local, female to male person to come on the show tonight to talk about the issues. And I went over 20 Which is not surprising, actually. Good. 20 is surprising. Um, you have no idea how hard it was to come up with 20 people reach. And when I did, it was kind of like what do you want in your mind. The female to male community is far more closeted than the other than their counterparts. But that is changing in many other places in the country. James Green, who was one of the leaders of the new female to male movement, James Green was one of the CO writers of the ordinance in San Francisco to protect transgenders Spencer Berg stat, is on the board of the Transgender Law conference that has been well known throughout the country. And the person that we're going to be going to here in a minute name is Gary Bowen, Gary is the chief cook and bottle washer of the American boys network. That's Bo yz, boys network. And more and more, we are finding that the men are coming out of their closets and saying, Hey, wait a minute, we want we not only want to be part of the progress that transgender community is making, but in some cases, we'd like to lead it. And I think it's about time.



13:22

Yeah, it is about time. Their issues are somewhat different. The environments that they that they exist in are different. It's not a mirror of the male to female experience at all. And they have some, some rather interesting problems as a result.



**Sarah DePalma 13:51**



Sarah DePalma 15:01

One of the things that they one of the big problems and this, at least as far as I have been able to do to ascertain the one of the biggest problems that the men have, is a lack of, of knowledgeable, adequate care. And talking to some of the men here in Houston, most of them don't know one another. In fact, nearly none of them knew one another. And that's the second time that I've come across that there's tremendous isolation. Consequently, many of them are seeing doctors who know very little about them. It's not like we're, Dr. Cole and Galveston sees some of the females males, a few. But the costs involved for the FTM is actually much higher than it is the other way around.



14:40

If they're going through surgery, yeah. On the other hand, the surgery, the genital surgery that's available to them is



Sarah DePalma 14:52

terrible, frankly, it's butchery. Yeah, it really is. I can't put it any other way. It's barbaric.



14:58

So They have a much greater percentage of people who never get genital reconstruction. They get what they call top surgery or chest surgery, which is extremely important as a first step, and painful as the devil. Well, sure, but not as bad as wearing a binder all the time,



Sarah DePalma 15:21

the audience may not know what we're talking about,



15:23

okay? The typical female to male is a female, hence with breasts. And it's tough to pass as a male when you've got large visible breasts. So short of surgery or a double radical mastectomy, what they do is they bind those things down literally, basically a large ace bandage or something similar to wrap around the chest, to hide their their natural contours and make them look more manly. Well, that's very uncomfortable, it's very hot,



Sarah DePalma 16:08

just imagine going to eight or nine hours work a day like that.



16:12

And you can't, it's going to show under a t shirt. So you live in a warm climate, you can't strip down to shorts and a T shirt the way the other guys can. And when you go to the beach, you damn well can't take your shirt off. So they have a lot of difficulty there. So that that's why the chest surgery is really important. And the problem they have there is surgeons are used to taking off breasts, but they're not used to leaving an attractive chest behind neck, right. And so finding somebody who can do it without leaving huge scars, and also provide a reasonable contour, for a male chest is very difficult. There are very few plastic surgeons who really have that capability. Even though surgeons all over the country regularly do mastectomies for cancer patients.

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Sarah DePalma 17:15

Yeah, because we're not talking about the same thing here. I mean, this person wants to be a live as a male, which means this surgery has to not only be good, it has to look good, right? You can't

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17:25

just lop the whole thing off and leave an ugly scar, you got to leave the nipple, and maybe cut it down in size, you got to have scars that are not obtrusive. And the shape is extremely important. A lot of the guys have to go back for a second, fine tuning on the shape.

S

Sarah DePalma 17:51

And the guys also face a lot of criticism from feminists where there are lots and lots of women that will I wouldn't have gone to talk to classes about this, for example, lots of feminists will say to me, Well, these you know, they're just trying to assume male privilege is if anyone would go through all this to assume any kind of male privilege, such as it is these days.

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18:14

And then when they get the privilege, they don't know what to do with it. Seriously, if you haven't been socialized as a male, you don't you don't have the same understanding of how to play the aggressive games. That's right. And so they get into these positions of privilege. And they don't know the rules. Now when we get into the privilege into the positions of submission we don't know the rules either but as female as male to females. We have problems with the rules, but we're just assumed to be bitchy.

♂

19:01

Okay

♂

19:03

the guys really have a hard time learning the aggression and the control and the

the guys really have a hard time learning the aggressiveness and the game playing and the competitive spirit they mail thing of making everything competitive, you know belching is a competitive sport. That's a very strange email.

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Sarah DePalma 19:30

Well, and it also undercuts the lie the other part of the myth that I hear, which is that female to male transsexual is doing it because they can earn more money. You know, suddenly if you become a man, you're going to earn more money. Well, most of the female to male transsexuals I've met were fairly small to begin with. So they're going to be fairly small men after they've made their transition, which limits their work, their work capability in many cases in In the costs involved are so high. And the process is so difficult. Anyone who thinks that they're doing this to achieve a higher income just doesn't understand what it's about. Yeah, it's one of those myths that's persistent just isn't true. just isn't true. Anyway, Gary Bowen is a wonderful, wonderful spokesman. And with that, I'm going to attempt to get this to work the first time. And let's see if I can get this real. I haven't used this reel to reel in a while. So bear with me, folks. This is Gary Bowen of American boys network. For those of you who have just turned in, you are listening to KPFT radio 90.1 FM in Houston. This is after hours, queer radio with attitude. Tonight, we're having a very special interview. And this is what Gary Bowen, Gary bone is with a group called the American boys network. i He is leading the charge leading the pack in the creation of a conference called true spirit. And I'm proud to say that I know Gary and Gary is one of the leading voices in the females male transgender movement. Gary, welcome to after hours. Alright, glad to be here. Let's start out telling folks a little bit about female to male transsexual. I have found that even when I go and talk to other transsexual groups, it's almost always exclusively the other way around, it's male to female. And there are a lot of people even in our community that will tell you that ft. M's are essentially mythical figures and don't really exist, I imagined you must get kind of tired.

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21:49

Well, unfortunately, it is not just the transgender community that have that feeling. It's awesome media in the medical profession. And I have met transgendered surgeons at the surgery and MTF, who didn't even know what an FTM was or how to help me or make a referral or anything. So I think that dispelling the myth is the first thing here, we do exist. And we do have needs, we do need physicians, we do need support, we have families and friends who are concerned about these issues. And I think, I guess we can just acquainted with the fact and help them keep it in mind that they could be meeting an FTM and not even knowing it and just be aware of the possibilities. That's step number one right there

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Sarah DePalma 22:34

was very interesting. I was recently at a get together with tactical, a tacticals office and he runs the gender clinic in Galveston. And for the first time in a long time, I can remember seeing some some of the men there. And they finally were getting an opportunity to present their added deer their eye some of their issues. And I think for for a lot of folks, some of the females males, it was the first time that ever met any of the other half of your community. And I'm glad to see that finally happened in your clinic. You finding this happening more on the East Coast and other situations too.



23:11

Yes, I haven't traveled on the west coast. So I really don't know how it compares to the east coast. But hearin on the East Coast, you tend to have a more mixed group of people, both in terms of F to Amazon, and to F as well as crossdressers and transsexuals and minority members as well. The Deaf transgender Alliance, for example, is being started here in the Washington, DC area. There's a lot of communities that have traditionally not been thought of when you say the word transsexual or transgender, and they are really an important part of community. So this visibility issue is something that FTM grapple with, but so do a lot of other kinds of transgendered people as well.



S Sarah DePalma 23:56

Alright, well, now let's start talking about some of the issues, because the issues that the men have are often not the same as the issue that the transgendered women would have. And one of those right off the bat, I would think, is the lack of availability to therapists to have any knowledge that so



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finding a knowledgeable therapist is a challenge for everybody. And getting access to any kind of medical care, whether it's for gender therapy, or gender transition, or even routine health care is rather difficult. There are a lot of problems that transgender people have when they're accessing the medical services. And that's one of the things that I was very shocked to discover when I surveyed my membership is a very large minority about 30% have had seriously bad experiences dealing with the medical establishment. And I don't know how that compares to the experiences MTF. But certainly access to appropriate humane Even if I care whatever nature is a challenge for many FTM



S Sarah DePalma 25:05

no one when an actor goes in and sits down with a therapist and says, Listen, I had this issue, and I need to discuss it. Do you find that the men tend to get blown off a lot to do you have a difficult time finding therapists who will take it seriously?



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Well, it depends on the individual also, if, for example, a person has been living their life as a heterosexual woman, then she is very likely to not have those concerns taken seriously. And very common for such a person to be diagnosed with depression or adjustment disorder or some such thing. They have the whole gender thing ignored. There's this myth that if you're attracted to men, you can't be a transsexual. So there are very few of those after EMS actually accessing services. And that's one of the things that, you know, I'm personally attracted to men. And that's one of the things I like to bring up that there are people who are attracted to

Wim and attracted to men and attracted other transgendered people. And we need to recognize that they really are transsexual or transgendered, and that they are entitled to access services. But you know, there's this prejudice in the medical community, that if a person transitions is going to end up being lesbian or gay, then you shouldn't let them transition because, you know, it's wrong to be homosexual. But if you start off coming from a lesbian starting point or a gay starting point, then if you transition, you will end up being a heterosexual and then that's okay. And that's a bias that we all face. Fortunately, Louis Sullivan, who is the founder of ft and international in 1984, won the right for gay identified FTM to transition. Unfortunately, that message has not trickled throughout the medical community. And that is a point that has to be constantly reiterated and educated both to service providers and to members of the transgender community.

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Sarah DePalma 27:16

Okay, now, let's talk about some of the physical issues is my understanding. And you can certainly correct me if I'm wrong here, that if, if an FTM decides that, yes, they do, in fact, one start toward the, toward the road down the road towards surgery, that often one of the first things they get told is that they need to do a hysterectomy is that sound?

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27:36

Well, I don't know if it's one of the first things but it's certainly a very important step, there are a number of steps in making the physical transition. One of the steps being taken testosterone, that's usually the first thing that's done, hysterectomy is usually left pretty far down the line. Then the second step would be chest surgery to have your breasts reduced and the nipples reshape so that you have a maximal chest. And then the third step would be hysterectomies. And the fourth step, which many of them do not undergo is the genital surgery.

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Sarah DePalma 28:09

Now, I've talked to quite a few that asked me and many of them spent an awful lot of time with their breast, basically taped to their chest. And I understand their reasoning for doing it. But that's a there's something that that is the female half of the transgender community probably doesn't know and would probably be unwilling to deal with it, even if they did No. It just seems like just seems like the whole process that the men have to go through seems almost pumped.

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Well, I am certainly concerned about some of the quality of care and practices that that result from not having appropriate care. Finding the breath is very important for many FTM it's a safety issue, whatever the consequences of your health is, and there can be some negative consequences. Enhancing as a man is important, because if you're a woman who attempts to pass fail, then you can be subjected to harassment and violence. Let me give you an example. If an M to F goes into lady's room in his cloth, what happens is an upset woman will complain to a security guard and security guard escorts the FTM officers don't use the women's room. What can happen to Nast M, who uses the men's room and gets clogged is they might get beat up or

rate. You know, the security guys are not going to be called therefore for their own personal safety at the end often feel that their lives depend on passing successfully and that means finding the breath

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Sarah DePalma 29:48

well for the audience who doesn't know clocked is this passing being able to pass just wanted to try they understood that right? Okay. Now you have done a lot of research on violence against Man, that that really is a huge issue, isn't it?

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Yes, it is. Again, I've surveyed my membership. And I found that 80% of my members have been subjected to physical assault. And this usually happens to them when they're young, when they're young adults under the age of 21 are in their teens. When they reach adulthood, the violence drops off a lot. But it's still a very common experience. And the severity of the crimes that have been committed against people was absolutely appalling. And I'm talking about being held at shotgun point and the rate, kidnapping, multiple assaults. It really turns your stomach, this is extremely difficult thing for me when I did this survey, and all these stories can point out to me, and all these people would tell me that if they reported their assaults, they experienced negative personal consequences, either was dismissed, they were blamed, nothing was done. I mean, the person who has held the shock and point went to the police, and they said, Okay, you'll be out on the street tomorrow. So what do you want us to do? And I really think it's very important that all transgender people participate in the survey that gender public Advocacy Coalition is undertaking, as Deepak the short, they're attempting to access the nature and surveillance of violence against the transgender community. And, you know, this reminds us something Martin Luther King said, he said, we can't make white people like us, but we can make them stop killing us. That's my goal. I want this the mainstream, to stop destroying.

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Sarah DePalma 31:41

That's something that I've been very heavily involved in here in Texas for a long time as lobbying for hate crimes protections for transgender people. And of course, once again, the National the the state gate lobbying group has put forward a hate crimes bill that would not include transgenders. And it's one of the great points of anger for me, because I hate crimes against transgender issue is a problem, I think, for everyone, but it does seem that the violence against the men is somehow worse. It's almost as if society says, Well, okay, the women are, you know, you can kind of laugh at it. But a woman who tried to pass as a man, there's some, some step over the line about assuming privilege, or something that seems to bring out make violence that much worse, I've never quite understood it.

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Well, I've actually given some thought to that issue. And as a path as a man, I discovered that there's a sort of ritual confrontation that many males engage in which they establish their dominance and assess one another. And it's really, really juvenile that guys want to know

where they are in the pecking order. And when a woman who is attempting to live as a man, panting as a man engages in these conflicts, he doesn't know that this is just a ritual behavior, and therefore doesn't respond appropriately, and therefore becomes a low status man. And people at the bottom of the social scales get picked on and harassed and harmed in various ways. And being able to successfully negotiate these challenges is very important for passing and being accepted as a man in the men's world. And it's unfortunate that men are subjected to this kind of testing this constant proving of their manhood. And so the fact that FTM just objected to this violence is a manifestation of what we expect a man to be, you know, look at sports, etc. Men are supposed to be big, tough, strong and violent. And then asked him, generally speaking as a smaller, lighter frame, and if they haven't been on testosterone very long or haven't been working out, then they aren't necessarily as muscular as a person who was born male and has gone through all this physical training and development. And therefore, an FTM has this big gap to cover in order to be able to successfully fit in and be accepted as a real man. However, the particular group defines

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Sarah DePalma 34:18

that whenever a real man or real woman is still trying to figure that out. Let's talk a little bit about the way aft M's fit into the transgender community. Now for a long time, the female half of the transgender community just basically didn't think the men existed in one the men did show up at the at the at, for example, a group meeting. The men tended to be ignored, almost treated as if they were interlopers. And it does seem like that is finally at last, starting to change. Won't you talk a little bit about the way after AMS fit into the transgender community the way they fit into in the past and where it seems to be going down?

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Well, in the past, the transgender community was very fragmented and have a heterosexual crossdressers. Over here, you'd have the transsexual, there at the end of the race. And there wasn't a very good communication. Now you're seeing a much more inclusive concept of community in which the different elements of the community are starting to work together. In coalition, you still have groups specializing in particular topics. But they're seeing that we have common issues like hate crimes like employment discrimination that we can work together on. And as people meet and work together, they learn more about one another's issues. And they realize that the similarities are more important than the differences.

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Sarah DePalma 35:52

Well, it's been very interesting. I know, for example, the Transgender Law conference has been working very hard to get to get the men involved in men have, are starting some of their own conferences now, which is really kind of exciting. It does. It's just amazing to me. I, for example, give you an example here in Houston, I tried to do get put together a show on FM's, and I wanted to bring several men into the studio to discuss their issues. In every single person turned me down, I was over 11. And it just sort of brought home to me the fear that they, it seems to me the fear level in the male community was higher than it was in the female, female portion. Does that sound right to you?



36:38

I think so there's several issues behind that. One of which is the fact that there's not very good services for FGM. Therefore, being able to find that EMS is difficult. And, or another element, a lot of guys, because of the danger of violence, etc, are absolutely against any sort of public appearances, because they did not want to be identified, they don't want it to come back on them. And first, third part FTM are not treated well, by the media. The almost the only time you see Afghans in the media is when they've robbed a bank, or they're accused of a sexual crime of some nature, or you have these lurid headlines like you know, a woman whose husband because he turns out to be a woman. And, you know, as penances don't want any part of that. They don't want to be held up as some kind of free come on strong city. And even when they're dealing with a transgendered interviewer, there's still that fear that media is just exploiting them in a negative way. And it really takes a good personal rapport and a long, long relationship between an empath and an FTM for that FM to get to know them and trust them enough to do that sort of thing.



S Sarah DePalma 37:57

Well, yeah, that's what I found here, also, and I noticed, for example, we have several local organizations, for transsexuals, and every once in a while, we'll see I will have man show up. But they very seldom come back for a second time, which is a kind of discouraging, and it's often made me wonder if there was something that the groups were doing wrong, or if it's, the men feel isolated.



38:20

I think there's two important points here. We need to take a break. Can we hold on just a second here? Sure.



38:33

Well, there's a couple of reasons. One of the points I want to make is you may have transmitted engineer meaning that you don't know it, to transmit after they've been on testosterone for a while most of them passed very well. And you may see a new man in a meeting and assume that he is seeking to become a woman, when that is not the case. And a lot of these guys come to a meeting, we'll encounter that assumption, not corrected, because they just don't want to have to deal with the whole problem of educating a bunch of clueless people about FTM. And so then they'll go away and come back. And that's something else that will also happen even when somebody is out as an FCM, who comes to meetings, if they are the only or one of the few F two M's there. Again, they end up having to educate the organization about F two M. And that's not what they want. They want a support group. They want somebody to help them understand what they're going through. And especially if a person is new to the transgender issues, they can't educate you about FDM because they don't know themselves. They come looking for answers. And if they get questions, then that doesn't work for them.

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Sarah DePalma 39:42

What was something else I was going to ask you about? Last year, I tried to put together a show on FDM. And I was shocked to find I made 20 phone calls to just some of the men in our community. None of them knew another app to em. And I was really shocked by the in isolation, it's still fairly common.

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40:03

Oh, yes, I would say that that is probably the rule rather than the exception. I am frequently first FTM that many of these transgender people have met. And I really try and do a lot of outreach. And I connect with people, a lot of remote communities and throughout. They don't know anything, because there's no easy way you can find this information. I mean, if you're in India, at the very least, you can go into a dirty bookstore, and there are these kinky magazines in the back rack. And you can look at that and go, Oh, I must be a transvestite. And you can get those magazines, you can use those personal ads and read the advertisements, and you have some connection. But there's nothing like that for an app to have. If you have questions about these issues. There's no place to go and look. And it's one of my goals with the American boys is trying to get that information out there as much as possible. So that person can't go to the library and find information, which currently, they usually can

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Sarah DePalma 41:05

we ask you a little bit about the way the feminist community reacts to demand. I have discussed this issue with quite a few feminists over the years. And they often say things to me like, well, you know, the guys are just trying to get they're trying to be men so they can get paid, be paid more, or they're just trying to be guys so they can get assume male privilege. And I know you must have heard a lot of that. How do you respond to that kind of kind of criticism?

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41:36

Well, I'd like to point out that there are a lot of men who did not have male privilege. And for an FTM was not raised up to privilege, acquiring that privilege is extremely difficult. As I mentioned earlier, there's that kind of dominance game that men play. And if you have not been socialized in that, then you aren't trained to survive and succeed at that my experience with FTM, that they are, generally speaking, economically disadvantaged. And that while there are some successful FDM, being an FDM is something that's going to cost you and you're going to end up losing not only male privilege, you're going to lose your female privilege, massively. Feminists don't talk about that there are certain prerogatives that women have, and Afghans give up those prerogatives. without necessarily being able to obtain male prerogative, that's an extremely difficult situation, because you're not accepted by the men, you're not accepted by the women. And it takes a lot of personal strength to be able to learn how to deal with that, and to develop the skills necessary to overcome those kinds of barriers. And that's a challenge that can take a lot of years to me. And so when feminists speak very dismissively, they don't understand. They don't understand how what things are like for men in general, women don't understand what things are like for Afghans in particular. Now, I am a feminist, I support

feminist ideals, I believe in the equality of the sexes. But I think that there's a lot more that we have to understand about how the sexes interact, before we can have a level playing field for everyone.

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Sarah DePalma 43:24

Well, it occurred to me the other day, as it happened, I was at a mall and I saw a female coming down the street in and she was wearing a pinstripe suit and a tie. And I thought now it's very interesting, because all of a sudden, she has the privilege to dress like a male in even in some cases to act like a male. But if I, if a if a FTM did that the criticism that they would get would be incredible. And it occurred to me what a double bind Afghans really seem to be in, in in I was just kind of struck