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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

called, people, knew, houston, thought, transgender, montrose, transgendered, gender, transsexual, book, started, desperation, patrol, clothes, grew, lived, jackie, resources, issue



00:01

struck by that? Well,



00:04

it's true that women have more options than the kind of clothing they're allowed to wear. But it has certain very specific manifestations. I mean, what you observed is what's called the menswear look. And that is a particular type of fashion which is tolerated. But up until about 10 years ago, it was not tolerated. And there are lots of parts of the country where it is not tolerated. The pinstripe suit is someone who has a look that a particular crossdresser female crossdresser, I know, really enjoys. And when he comes to the big city, he stops in a public restroom puts on the suit comes into the city. And then when he's on his way home back to his rural neighborhood, he stops and takes it off, because he is afraid to be seen in a suit in the town where he lives because of the fear of violence. So there are these fashions, which can be worn in big cities, or in particular neighborhoods, that would not be accepted in other parts of the country. And that's something that you need to be aware of when you're traveling. Each location has its own particular standards about what men and women are supposed to look like. And if you don't meet that standard, you are vulnerable to harassment.



01:21

Well, Gary, that's all the time that we had for this segment. I have often said on this program, that it's been my view for a long time that the men in many ways really have much tougher than the female part of the community. And it's an issue that I'm going to keep bringing up on the show because I think it's an issue that really needs to be discussed. We'll be back with Gary in just a little bit and we'll be talking about the true spirit conference. And some of the ways that deplete the the politics of the FM movement is finally starting to come forward. Gary, thanks a lot. Okay.



02:00

Hi, this is Glenn Holt, the president of Q patrol. to patrol is a nonprofit corporation operating volunteer citizens watched patrols in the greater Montrose area. We've been a visible and

successful deterrent to crime for the past five years and we want to do even more. This is your invitation to join us one night a month walking, rollerblading, bicycling or driving for your community. Or if you prefer send us a tax deductible donation. Every penny donated to queue patrol goes directly to putting patrols out on the street. We're out there for you, but we can't do it without you. So call today and say you'll donate to queue patrol called five to wait safe that's 52872332 patrol is affiliated with the Houston Police Department's citizens on patrol program



03:00

and Rue pol junk go breaking my heart. Um, as Dee said, it's very interesting combination not say listening to that. It's one that



03:09

works. Oh, it works great. Works great. Previous to



03:13

that we had a Jimmy Somerville by request. And you know, I'm old enough to remember when the Supreme is did that. So? Oh, well, I guess I'm giving me my age tonight.



03:26

Yeah, I'm, I'm old enough. I don't even remember the Supremes. They came after my time. Thank you. There's a word for people like you



03:36

can't see it on the web and the air. Let's just say it begins with B sounds like an edge.



03:45

We just got a phone call from someone a few minutes ago, who is struggling with the issues of of gender. And wanted me to talk a little bit about my experience with it. And if there's something that I am guilty of on this show, it is that sometimes I forget that although I've been dealing with this issue for years, that to the listeners, it's new, that there are every show that we do. We've got listeners who have not heard us before. And so if you've heard us heard me talk about this before, please forgive me this is I guess let me let me back up a little bit. One of the reasons I do this show once a month is because I continue to hear from transgender youth. They're 14 15 16 years old. They're listening to us on Walkmans. Or they're listening to us with radios tucked under the pillows. And I get phone calls and we get notes from them saying, If my parents knew I was doing this, they would kill me. But thank God you're there because I thought I was insane. In one no do the show from time to time we get calls like I just had from someone who says, I'm struggling with this issue. I don't know. It doesn't make sense to me.

Can you start from the basic? Can you start from the beginning and workup? And so for those of you who have heard me talk about this before, please forgive me. This is this is aimed at those who are out there like our caller, who say, What do I do? And that's really the reason I continue to do the show. It's something that never ceases to amaze me in Houston, which is one of the hotbed of transgenderism that there are, there are people out there who hear the show for the first time and are struggling with it on their own. So that's, that's who I'm talking to here. The first time I realized or began to think that I, that I was transgendered, because I didn't know what the word was. I was five years old. My mother tells me that she remembers very clearly that I went to her. And when they when I was five and said, Mom, I want to be a girl. How do I do it? I don't remember doing it. But I she remembers it very clearly. But growing up, I knew right away that something was seriously wrong. But I grew up in a very small town in Connecticut, the kind of a place that thought that Joseph McCarthy was a hero. We were taught that gay men were doing the dirty old men in raincoats who hung around restrooms waiting to a cost little boys are our sex education was taught in the basement of the gym, literally, in the basement of the gym in a back room in the dark. It gave you a wonderful image of what sex was, needless to say. But all through this time period, I knew something was wrong. I used to lay in bed at night. And I used to pray that God would send a lightning bolt and fix me. I knew I wanted to be a girl. I didn't know what it was called. But I wanted it. And yet, I struggled so hard to overcompensate for that I did couldn't let anyone know that was what I wanted, you know. So I was the captain of my tennis team. And I was still a shortstop on the baseball team. And even though I'm five foot four, I played basketball. And I was just yeah, it's just you know, a little masculine little, little guy and I grew a mustache. And, boy, you know, exactly how old or even tried to smoke a pipe. I mean, I was just desperate to be masculine. Because inside I knew I was a fraud. And the only thing that really kept me sane through all of those years, I had a friend named Adrian, I can use his name on the year now because he's since passed away. But God bless him. Adrian was a crossdresser also. And exactly how we connected I don't know, I guess it was osmosis. But we used to go I used to go over to his house. And his mother somehow knew that what we were doing was important. She used to actually help us get into her clothes, taught us how to do makeup. I remember very clearly as a high schooler, but I just thought it was the big deal because it we would walk the streets at one o'clock in the morning and mother's clothes just thinking we died and gone to heaven. But it's also an indication of how much was really wrong. For a long time off, though, I used to wonder why my parents didn't send me to a psychologist or psychiatrist. Because my mother couldn't keep me out of her clothes. She literally had to put a padlock on the closets. But of course, in retrospect, I guess I'm glad my mother didn't send me because in those days, I probably would have gotten electroshock therapy and I'd be drooling now. So I guess in retrospect, I have no complaint about that, really. But it was very bizarre situation. And I grew up in an Italian American family where boys grew up to get married and have babies that's in they presented grandkids to their parents. And that was the ultimate thing you could do. And so I followed right along in that pattern. You know, I got married and I thought, well, this is great. And we had a daughter. And the whole time I'm thinking to myself, but I'm a fraud. And I took some incredible while I look back on its amazingly stupid risks. I remember going into Kmart and buying lingerie and then going to a public park, switching clothes in the in the car and sitting in this laundry array in a public park just out of sheer desperation. It was just I can't I can't even begin to describe the the loneliness and the guilt and the shame and the fear. It was the most overwhelming thing that I think was just I just take my word for it. I just don't have words. And all the time I thought I was crazy. So happened one night, I was driving to to Houston I was going to a I was attending college at Texas a&m at the time. I was driving to Houston and I happen to hear the Larry King show on and some am station God knows where it was from. And they had she he had to transsexuals on the program. And for once it was a program where they didn't make transsexuals out to be nuts, Larry King played it straight, and let them talk. And as they talked,

it all connected. It was like God said, Okay, this person's had enough, let's get the information here. Now. I actually pulled over to the side of the road, because I didn't want to lose the signal so I could hear the whole show. And by the time I got to Houston, I knew. But knowing what you are, and being able to do something about it is not the same thing. And so I was still married, and desperate. By now my wife couldn't keep me out of her clothes. And we had been trying to make a series of compromises, none of which really work. And as I guess you can probably figure it out by now that ended up in divorce. And I moved to Houston and didn't really know how to connect. I was desperate to meet these people but didn't know how in so happened. I picked up a gay magazine here actually, I think it was *twit* and Jackie Thorne's phone number was listed in *twit* with a with Jackie Thorne is well known as gender community. And but she had rented a little ad. It's the I forget the wording now, but it was long lines of are you transgendered? Or do you think you are, please give me your call. And so I did. I called Jackie and, and Jackie was kind enough, she came to my house where I lived in the heights at the time. And we met, and we chatted, and I grew ever more desperate. And one day I called Jack into the tip, I gotta get out of this house, what do I do? So Jackie showed up with a wig, and some clothes, and took me to a dry ass meeting. Now try Yes, didn't turn out to be the right place for me. But she also introduced me to GCTC with Gulf Coast transgender community. And that did turn out to be the right place. And once I hit the ground, I just never stopped running. It was as if I had spent 40 years of my life preparing for this moment. And the minute I hit the ground, it was Honey, I'm making a beeline. Within two years, I had gone from not knowing anything about transgenders to going on hormones, having all of my male clothes yanked out of the house, dropped them off the Salvation Army and saying I was gonna go cold turkey by God, they killed me, I was going to do it. Within a year of that, I'd become a national transgender rights leader. So from the time that I hit the ground running I went from, from not knowing anything at all to in three years becoming the president of the of its time America being being gay will actually was five years. But I mean, I just hit the ground and never look back. Now, the reason that I'm telling all this is first of all, because they had a caller who wanted to know they're struggling with this issue. Instead of the caller, I want to say a couple things, we need to do a station break, and then maybe D will share a little of her story. First of all, the struggle that you're going through, we understand it, we have heard it. And believe me, we have heard it in all kinds of places and we've lived it, we have lived it. You are not crazy.



13:32

You may or may not be transgendered. But there are organizations in this city in Houston, that you can get in contact with where you can meet others like yourself. You there we are very lucky in that there are at least three very good therapist and that I know of two that I'm actually acquainted with who who could be of help. The Montrose Counseling Center is very very knowledgeable about transgenders. Especially if you're new and you're not sure even if you are transgendered, I highly recommend the Montrose Counseling Center. They work on a sliding scale so that you don't have to invest money you probably don't have anyway. And I don't even I it's hard to know even what to say to a person that's right at the beginning, because every story seems somewhat different. But the one thing they all seem to have in common is the desperation. It's this overwhelming, all encompassing desire. I attempted suicide twice out of desperation over this issue, and I hardly know a person who hasn't. And yet, this is a different era than when I grew up. You don't have to it doesn't have to be that way in More. Today there are transgender political rights organizations there are transgender, just about anything that you want. So you don't have to be alone. If you're alone now you're alone by choice. And yet I understand that the fear of stepping out and meeting your first transgender person is unbelievable. Let me do a station break and I'll continue this. This is KPFT

90.1 FM in Houston, and ke O 's College Station at 9.1 on the FM dial learning. I am Sarah dipalma. And sitting with me tonight is de Mikkeller. Hi there. What I wanted to say is I've told this story on the air before, but maybe it will, it will help people relate to this. When I was going to Texas a&m, I thought that perhaps I thought I was gay. And I didn't know any gay people didn't had never actually knowingly met a gay person. And so I saw I saw an ad in the paper that said that gay student services was going to have a meeting, they were meeting at the Unitarian Church. And so and it was ignite very much like tonight was bitterly cold. And I had Buick whose heater didn't work. And so I drove to this meeting and pulled up in toward the back. And watch people go in because I want to see what gay people look like. Now I realize how stupid that sounds to many of you. But it shows you something about the desperation, ignorance, and how it can drive you to do amazing, amazing things. In so I finally got the nerve and said, Well, gee, they look pretty normal to me. They don't have horns or tails or anything. So I went to the I decided to go in and when I went in, as luck would have it, they had somebody who was standing at the door. And I started to walk by and he stopped and said hello. And I freaked out absolutely freak when running out the door screaming. And I'm sure the man, you know, he last thought I lost my mind. It was three months before he got up the nerve to go back. And when I went back the next time he recognized me and stopped me and said, I don't mind the fact that you left. But did you have to be so loud about it? Well, his name was his name was Tom Johnson. And the two times are for those of you were in College Station, the two times I know are legendary in College Station. But they were my beginning in my role models that showed me that it was possible for gay and lesbian people to be healthy, loving, independent human beings. And they probably did more for my self esteem than any two people I know, outside of my life partner. So that desperation, I understand what you're going through for the caller. It is extremely scary. And I know there have got to be times when you think you're losing your mind. Hang in there. It's and you were asking about Dr. Cole. Yes, I know he's expensive. If you're not ready to start with \$110 are \$120 now or whatever it is he charging these days. Start with the Montrose Counseling Center. They're very, very good. They're very inexpensive. They do know what they're talking about. Do you want to talk about aluminum?



18:13

Well, my story is a lot the same. Knowing early in life that there was something different I never thought it was wrong. I just knew I was different. Also, because I went through, I started grade school in the 40s. That's hard to believe



18:38

he looks pretty good for 100 folks.



18:42

Come on. But I wanted to be a girl. At the same time, I knew that it was absolutely impossible. Sir surgery hadn't been publicly announced or developed or anything yet. It was just flipping impossible. So I resigned myself at a very early age to never being able to do this. Yet, so I went through a 49 years of life being mildly too greatly frustrated, reasonably successful as a male, but never really being satisfied. And it was it was finally after, after my marriage broke

up after my daughter grew up and moved away. And then finally after I lost my job, I didn't have anything more to lose. I said, Okay, now's the time. Well, from then on, it went a little faster than Sara's. From the time I first met another transgendered person Oh, it was less than six months before I had my name legally changed. I still can't believe I did that. And part of it was, then I'll put in a plug here. Dr. Cole helped me get in touch with my inner feelings. We explored very deeply very quickly as to what I really did feel. And I was able to figure out quickly, that by going, I ought to be a girl. And since then, it's been just absolutely wonderful.



20:43

Something I was just thinking about, as you were talking is, I think something we should probably tell this caller. And that is, there is so much involved in this in this is such a huge, huge issue. Please don't try to swallow it whole.



20:58

Oh, no. What my feeling is, if you think you're transgendered, you probably are. But transgendered is such an incredibly broad term that encompasses so many, many types of behavior, so many, many roads to satisfaction, that you you need to very carefully explore where you fit in the transgendered world. And that can take a long time for most people.



21:33

I would really encourage anybody out there, regardless of your age, if if you think that you are transgendered, and you have these issues, nibble away at this. If you're on the internet, for example. Just simply use any web pointer and use the word transgender. I tried it today and got 1000 things that came up. Oh, yeah, there are resources out there now that I could only have dreamt of when I was younger, I would have killed for their kind of resources there exists now.



22:07

As everyone pauses because, okay. Yeah, there are there are a lot of resources. Some of them aren't any good. Some of them are out and out wrong. So you have to use internet resources with care. But there's an awful lot of stuff out there. And if you need help, getting started. Probably the GCTC would be one of the better organizations to call. I don't recall their number offhand. I should,



22:51

but you know, I didn't bring it with me tonight.



22:58

There is one number I do have memorized.



23:01

If you call di at the Transgender Law conference, you'll get to the number GCTC.



23:05

The number there is SRS TG LC, and if you count better than you spell, it's 7778452. Or you can reach me by email. I see T lep@aol.com. And I don't I don't have a whole lot of time to do a lot of counseling on the on the spot, but I can at that point, I can direct you to other places. Okay,



23:38

we're gonna try and put Beth on the phone. Let's give this a try. Beth. Are you there? Well, hello. Hi, there. Hi, Beth.



23:45

I figured I was listening to perspectives and I've got yet a different one. Okay, go ahead. All right. Well, just real quick here and following up what we were just talking about, I can give the tax number if you want to, well, that's good. Taxes, the Texas Association for transsexual support. And we're open to people who are are transsexual or are thinking they might be you know, when I are exploring that sort of thing. The phone number there is 8275913. If you'd like the post office is P.O. box 142. In Bellaire, Texas 77401. And our internet address is at tats at gender web.com I'm sorry, gender web.org or G. And one of the good places to start with is that that site <http://www.genderweb.org>. You'll find quite a bit of resources there.



24:46

Yeah, there are so many resources that are on the net. There are so many resources available in Houston. It is not difficult to connect into the gender community in Houston if you want to. But Um, I mean, you're I know your story and what yours was like, and I know you went through a lot of the same stuff, the fear, and it was, you know, I really feel for people who are at the beginning of this, because I know what what a process it has been.



25:15

Oh, yeah. Well, it's interesting that you and deeds both mentioned taking a fairly fast road through things. I've kind of taken the opposite course. Yeah, that's right. And I had long known that, that my, my self concept was that of a girl at the time, you know, at that young age. But somehow, I just instinctively knew that this was not something we talked about among, you know, families. You know, nobody ever said, Hey, don't talk about this, but it was definitely something you knew not to do. So all of us from a very early age have this this stigma that

we've learned somehow, and it's hard to get over, it really is. But for me, believe it or not, in all places. My first contact with resources was I was in the public library, in a fairly small suburb of Cleveland, and was looking on one one section of shelf and science books turned around faith. Just as a matter of coincidence, face to shelf opposite me that happened to be medical. And there on the shelf was a book called transsexuality in the mail by Dr. Edwin Karani. And I just kind of like my eyes bugged out. And it's like, he mean, people actually write books about this stuff. You know, this is this great taboo, right? Nobody's gonna talk about this. And here there was a book on it. Well, now I'll tell you that got me searching the the readers guide to periodicals and the card catalogs and back in the late 70s and early 80s. I was amazed to find out how much stuff there was out there, just in the local public libraries.



26:58

Well, one of the books that I've often recommended is good book called The Uninvited dilemma. Yes. Yeah.



27:04

That that I recently read, I was trying to get a hold a copy of it before Christmas to give to my grandmother who's interested in in in reading books about the subject. Now that someone in her life is affected, really, but I wasn't quite able to get that in another new book that's recently come out written by I'm kidding, the reference here just a second. Yeah, it's called true selves, understanding transsexualism for families, friends, co workers and helping professionals. It's by Chloe and rounds Lee and Mildred L. Brown. At smelly Brown, who's a counselor in the San Francisco Bay area. I know quite a few of our clients. And I have heard good things about the book. But I've yet to chase that down too. And once again, if you've got the internet@amazon.com Their website is where I found this information.



27:56

Today, today, it's in almost all of the bookstore is the gay and lesbian bookstores and across rows in particular, if they don't have what you want on transgender issues, they'll get it just ask. I mean, this sincerely. They're wonderful folks over there crossroads in anything you want. Just let them know they'll find it.



28:14

Well, sorry. You have to remember some of us aren't living inside the loop. Oh, that's



28:17

true. That's true. I forgot this life. By the way. I tell Teresa, that I did not get a good copy of the show. And neither did Jimmy. So it looks like our last show has gotten lost.



28:29

No, it hasn't. I've got a good copy of your last show. Oh, bless your heart, at least up for the first hour and a half of my tape



28:34

ran out. And we were having transmitter problems that night. And I did not get any kind of reception whatsoever.



28:39

I got reasonably good reception. Any any case. So we were talking about resources. A strange coincidence occurred. I like fall in love with my best friend. And you know, this will cure me I'll do that like getting married thing and having a family thing. And I think all of us have had thoughts of this will cure me about one thing or another. I know a lot of people who have gotten into this purging where you decide, oh, I'm going to give it up. I'm going to throw all my stuff out and give it at cash. I'm never going to do it anymore.



29:11

I actually set mine on fire.



29:14

I never quite I've just there was something about I'm squats you see. And there's something about throwing up perfectly good close. up in the attic, you know, and that lasted for over maybe weeks, maybe days. But in any case, they don't work. I mean, if you really, really feel that this is in your heart, it's not going to go away just by hiding things or putting things away or even burning them.



29:45

If you feel that you're transgender is something you really need to deal with, because it's not going to go away and how do you deal with it? Well, in the case of the caller, my suggestion is that they start with the Montrose Counseling Center. Well, just just the mere fact is Being able to say I think I'm transgender



30:02

it talk to somebody anyway. Yeah. And that was so hard for me. And like I said, the late 70s and early 80s to find anybody who knew anything about it. Well, you know, like I said, time when I figured that what I really needed was a family. Well, you know, what I got out of it was somebody who I love very much, and someone who loves me, and we have a family together

with two wonderful children. And you know, it has nothing to do with being a guy or being a woman or anything like that has to do with the love we share. So that didn't cure me. But, but, but I ended up with with somebody I loved and, and totally coincidentally, one of our closest college friends. But two years after I graduated in the year that this person was supposed to have graduated, sent us all a letter explaining how that they just were going to have to like disappear since they were starting to live as a woman full time.



30:58

Interesting. So your best friend turned out to be transsexual. And



31:02

it took me about three months to track her down because she was trying to woodwork. And it was and you know, she changed names and change cities and change jobs. And it was rather hard to drag somebody down once they do all that, but it can be done. My first words out of my mouth were well, we've got more in common than we ever thought we did. any inkling about the other? Yeah. Well, but it was her it was that first contact with somebody that really changed my opinions of life. Because I, you know, to a certain extent, bought the idea of of the media's presentation that transsexuals these weird people that, I don't know, maybe maybe were involved in prostitution, or at least stripping and all these things. And it's not necessarily true for everyone. I mean, sure, there's, there's some transgendered people that are into that. Sure. There's a lot of straight people too. So it doesn't matter. That's not an issue here. The issue isn't what you do for a living, it's who you are inside.



32:04

Well, that's exactly right. We have to get going, Beth, what I'm glad that you call and tell Teresa that I said, thank you very much for paying for being on the show last time. Yeah. All right. Thanks a lot. Good luck. Bye, bye. Well, listener, I hope that we have addressed at least some of the questions that you may have. When you're at the start of the process, it looks like such a gigantic ball of wax, that you don't think you can go around it under through it, or any which way. But it's not quite like that. And the first step is gathering information. Whether you do it at the library where they do it from the internet, your second step would be to seek counseling, but I always say this to you. If your counselor says to you, this is something I can cure, do not walk, run out of there, that is trouble with a capital T on transgenderism is not something one cures is something one learns to cope with, and deal with. And if there's anything that I have tried very hard to do on this show, and I guess maybe I should mention this, and we're gonna go some music. I get calls from people and letters from people who say that they view me as a role model. And I've told Jimmy before, that I find that very frightening, actually, in some ways that I never started out to do the show to be a role model or, or even to be a role model. On the other hand, I was been very lucky that I knew people like the two times in College Station, and that I met people like Jackie Thorne, and others who were, who were good role models, and who showed me that being transgender is not a death sentence. It's not the end of the world. It is not unhealthy. It is not unclean is not on more immoral, that one can

be transgender, living a happy, healthy, wonderfully productive life. If you can find the courage in yourself to deal with it. And I really want to leave on that positive note as we go to some music, that being transgender means you have a lot of work to do, but it's not insurmountable.



34:24

In fact, you're one of the luckiest people in the world.



34:28

Yeah, and I know that's gonna sound strange to anybody that starts out new because they say, how could that possibly be? It's a curse. It's, well, we all started out thinking that and what we found out was, We're the lucky ones in many ways. Try Yes, Rory has a phrase that they use called Gender gifted. And for a long time, I thought that was most stupidly absurd idea that ever heard of, until I began to feel that way too. And now I sort of understand what they mean. So anyway, we have I have a piece of music queued up and ironically, the piece of music that is queued I swear to you I put this on before we begin this conversation with phone caller is by a person named Frank. And believe it or not, the title is called. I enjoy being a girl. I swear to you sheer coincidence, but we'll go. We're gonna go to some music when we come back. We're gonna go to some more the interview with Gary Bowen.