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SPEAKERS

Sarah DePalma, Jimmy Carper, Dallas Denny

 Sarah DePalma 00:04

This is an opportunity. This is an interview I have been looking forward to for some time, we are getting an opportunity to speak with Dallas Denny and she is the executive director of Aegis. And I think first of all, I explain what Aegis is.

 Dallas Denny 00:18

Aegis is the American educational gender information service. It's a clearinghouse for information about transgender and transsexual issues.

 Sarah DePalma 00:27

Okay, now, it's a clearinghouse who uses this Clearinghouse.

 Dallas Denny 00:31

Well, we're nonprofit, and we send free information to anyone who requests it. We also recently became a membership organization, and anyone is eligible for membership.

 Sarah DePalma 00:44

Now, if you're a listener to the show, you've heard me talk before about one of the Mac, a magazine that they published called chrysalis. And I've talked about it because it was one of the few places where I have been able to go to get unbiased information about hormones, about surgeons, and about some occasionally about their success rate. It's some place to get information, other than talking to the surgeon themselves, who of course, have a vested interest in the answers they give you. How did you get involved with this?

D

Dallas Denny 01:13

Well, I'm transsexual myself, and I didn't have the opportunity to speak to another transsexual person till I was 40 years old. So I did a lot of self exploration, basically, without being able to compare notes with another transsexual person. Also, there was really nowhere I could go in terms of other kinds of support that I would have had with any other issue. Like parents and physicians and school counselors and ministers, I sort of had to blunder through it myself. So I dedicated some portion of my life and making sure that as few other people as possible would be in the same situation.

S

Sarah DePalma 01:55

Well, now, if you're up in a small town, it's pretty hard to get information regardless. And we get letters from people who live in small towns in they say to us, thank God, I found your show, I thought I was the only one. How do you get your message out that some of the people in places that are in hold on power?

D

Dallas Denny 02:14

How would they learn about you? Well, as many ways as possible, and that's a real problem. One of the problems is that many sources that we could use, will not carry ads about gender issues, usually, because they really don't understand. But we take advantage of free advertising and reciprocal advertising whenever possible. We're active on the internet, we're working on an FTP site. And hopefully, we'll have a worldwide website soon. We try to get our name up on television shows and radio shows, so that people can write for information and there is a community and once people sort of blunder into it, or find that there's a lot of support available. And even if you live in a rural area, we usually in most cases, there was one instance of someone in one of the most northern northeast provident Province of Canada, it was like 1500 miles from the nearest place we could locate. Usually, we can find something within a reasonable driving distance of someone so that they can find the support group and medical assistance as they need it.

S

Sarah DePalma 03:29

Now, what kind of information would you be able to give if someone called you in for example, and said, Well, I think I'm transgendered. And I need information about hormones, or, or surgery or whatever? What kind of information can you provide for them?

D

Dallas Denny 03:45

Well, really anything general or specific that they asked for? Our whole focus is on giving people information so that they can make wise decisions. We're not interested in making their decisions for them. But we want them to understand what their options are. Many times people don't. Sometimes people think they want sex reassignment surgery. And after some discussion with them, you find that that's not really what they want. It's something that they think they

have to have, in order to express themselves in a feminine mode or in some cases in a masculine. So we can give them an in general information pack that lets them become aware of some of those issues if they want in depth searches of the literature. If they want specific information, if they want referrals, we can do that we have a huge bibliography of over 5000 items. We have a large database of services and we can help people find the resources that they need.

 Sarah DePalma 04:48

One of the things that I get asked often when I go to classes is about the whole concept of gender. Where does gender come from? You know, is it nature is it nurture? Do you provide classes? Do you provide information for teachers and for classes? And that sort of thing?

 Dallas Denny 05:05

Yes, we do locally we do. We've done a lot of speaking in Emory University, our operation is based in Atlanta. But we do a lot of educational mental health professionals of physicians, as much as possible throughout the whole country. Obviously, our budget doesn't allow us to, you know, to fly on site in all cases, but many times, we can put people in contact with someone locally, who can then provide one on one services, like speaking in, and like, support of any kind.

 Sarah DePalma 05:41

Now is very interested, I've been reading a lot of your stuff online, and have been very interested in that the ages is walking a, a very neutral line about surgery and non surgery. By that I mean, you're you're what you're working real hard to get straight information out, I've learned that oftentimes, the worst place to be is in the place of telling the truth? Do you find that you're taking an awful lot of criticism from both extremes?

 Dallas Denny 06:06

Well, we get flamed on the internet fairly regularly. And it doesn't matter. Really what we say it's, in fact, I think that's general, generally true the internet, no matter what your position, you're going to find someone who's violently opposed, including if you're neutral about something. And I think you have to learn in the in that instance, I think that there are different social conventions at work, then in society, at large, people need not be polite, and frequently aren't polite on the internet. But the information is nevertheless out there. And usually after posts and counter posts from people about an issue, for instance, we recently post a medical advisory telling people who are considering surgery that they might consider electrolysis in the area that that may be inside, after surgery, male to females and someone said, That's not true. Where's our data? So we published we, we posted some data. And in general, people said, well, you know, obviously, this is a real problem.

 Sarah DePalma 07:10

Why don't you just go out somewhere to the person who blame that's one of the things that I enjoy about your organization, too, is that it's one of the few places where you can go and get information about surgeon? How did the surgeons feel about your organization? I know I've read some things. For example, you've written about you wrote about one clinic where you disagreed with their other the way they did or did not give hormones. How did the surgeons and the clinics feel about you putting things out that they may not want said, it's very interesting.

D

Dallas Denny 07:43

I have, as I said, recently, there was a conference in LA in which, for the first time, ones transgender or transsexual credentials were as important as one's academic credentials. And I happen to have both kinds of credentials. So I have been able to, to work with the same tools, as as professionals do, because I am a professional. And so I have done a lot of publishing and in journals and, and in being members of professional member of professional organizations. And in general, I think for the most part, I get the same respect that I would get, because of my academic credentials. And they have a hard time not giving you that simply because I have transsexual credentials as well. And when someone has a problem with that, then it's real apparent that it's their problem and not my problem. In other words, you know, you can invalidate everything I say simply because I'm transsexual.

S

Sarah DePalma 08:50

One of the things that we've talked about on the show in the past, as we've talked about the Harry Benjamin society, in some of the standards of care. Now, I know you've written a lot about that, in one of my complaints has always been that the the Harry Benjamin society set the standard of care for transsexuals without asking us what we think about it. And that's slowly getting better. How did you get involved with the whole concept of standards of care?

D

Dallas Denny 09:16

Well, in the first point, I wasn't aware that they were there when I needed to know about them. And I felt that it was very important if there are rules that one side in, in sort of an adversarial relationship and let me say that that many times going to therapy. If one is transsexual is an adversarial relationship, because one is dependent upon the goodwill and permission of the caregiver to have access to medical treatments like hormones and surgery. I just felt it was really important that if there are some rules, everybody needs to know what they are. And let me say that I think there do need to be some rules. I think free access to hormones and surgery would make A lot of people very unhappy and probably a lot of people very dead. On the other hand, the standards of care which are minimal standards have been, in many instances, caregivers clinics have, have used the standards, and over interpreted the standard so that it's almost impossible to get those medical treatments. And that's why we object to is when, especially when people are basically dishonest with their transsexual clients and promising things that they won't deliver or set ridiculous criteria to get that kind of treatment. For instance, many times lifestyle choices are mandated and have been in the past not so much now. But it still happens. To get access to medical treatment, one has to make certain lifestyle adjustments. And that means include divorce in may include a change in your sexual

orientation, it may include a change in your occupation, it may include the way you that you have to dress and present yourself in public, usually like a Barbie doll, if you're male to female, and like Ken, if you're female to male, those are those things are just ridiculous. They're there. They're rooted in a lot of sexism and bias. And we've been very interested in making the treatment community aware of these problems. And you know, I think, in most cases, they've adjusted quite well, I think it wasn't really their fault. As much as the that was sort of the way everyone was looking at gender a few years ago.

S

Sarah DePalma 11:36

It wasn't that long ago, that if you went to a therapist, and the therapist discovered that you were going to end up in, for example, a lesbian lifestyle, then they would not sign off on your surgery. So things are slowly getting better. But not everywhere, I would just read about a place in Canada, I guess I can say the Clark clinic, where they are under intense heat right now for some of the things that they are requiring transsexual do, which are just way out of the line and anybody else.

D

Dallas Denny 12:04

Well, there are some clinics recently, two people at the Clark in fact, Dr. Dickey, and a weird blank on the name, Maxine Peterson, published an article in Archives of Sexual Behavior and they surveyed all the gender clinics, they were able to locate and found out that some clinics still have those kinds of expectations. And well, not expectations, that's a poor choice of words, they mandate these kinds of changes for transsexual people, like you know, you will sleep with a man or you will have a, your gender neutral name, like cat or Chris won't work with us, you have to, you know, call yourself by more feminine or more masculine. So things still have a long way to go.

S

Sarah DePalma 12:59

And one of the things that has come up, as well, as there's been a controversy about the idea of, we have a street kid in Houston, for injecting street level hormones. And it's become a controversy, at least in Houston right now, as to whether we wouldn't be better off being able to meet these kids and at least in a position to at least be getting prescription hormones anyway. Because the consequence of them shooting street level hormones is they end up with AIDS, they're sharing needles. Have you heard any discussion about this with anybody in the community at all?

D

Dallas Denny 13:31

Yes, we have. And we think we think it's a real issue. If you're a physician, and someone comes to you, and they've been on hormones. And obviously, if you don't give them hormones, they're going to find them, and they'll probably be from the street, and they probably will be at risk for sharing needles. If your physician sworn to do no harm, what's going to do more harm, to deny them the hormones or to follow the standards of care, which are meant to protect people from harm and say, you must first see a therapist over a 90 day

period, someone in that situation first, is unlikely to see the value in a therapist and to even if they did, would likely be unable to afford it. And I think the danger of having one set of guidelines for everybody is that some people really get deserved. And this is an example of one population that really, I think, is forced outside regular treatment lines by these kinds of rules. So I think something that is more flexible needs to be written and obviously, a short document like the standard here won't address all those issues. For that reason, we're going to be publishing a book called recommended guidelines for transgender care. It's authored by John Israel and Dr. Donald Tarver, who both work extensively with transgendered and transsexual people in San Francisco. And that will be our first book by our new new arm, which is a publishing house called Sullivan grass, named after Lee Solomon who was a female to male transsexual who was himself denied surgery because of its sexual orientation he preferred man. And we helped to address some of these issues so that the individual who's out there treating transsexual people will have some clue about how to respond to these to this very diverse population of people.

S

Sarah DePalma 15:39

The other part of the controversy, and I bring this up, because we've had several calls to our show about it. We've had people who call us and said, Well, after I found out what it was the therapist wanted me to do. I just learned a line play the game because what the heck the end objective is to get the surgery. In the afterwards, they'll say, Well, you know, I was able to fool these people and slide through the cracks. Do you get a lot of calls like that? Did you have you heard a lot about this?

D

Dallas Denny 16:06

Well, it's documented fairly clearly in the literature. Um, Kessler and McKenna did a book in the I guess it was the late 70s, or early 80s, called gender. And they documented much of this and Boland also documented it in her doctoral dissertation, which was published in book form as in search of the transsexual rites of passage. Also, Sandy stone wrote about it in a now famous essay, called The Empire Strikes Back opposed transsexual manifesto. And it's true, you know, if, if one is, is desperately desiring medical treatment, and there are excessive restrictions on access to those treatments. And if you are honest, you don't get those treatments, what are you gonna do? You're gonna lie? Is it because you're a liar? No, it's because the system needs to be fixed. And one of the problems that we've seen is that clinicians because they're part of the system had been blind, to the way the system works. And that's why anthropologists and sociologists have shown so much light on the subject, in their writings, and that's what we're trying to bring to the treatment community is sort of getting them out of their tunnel vision, so that they can reevaluate what's going on because truly, things have changed.

S

Sarah DePalma 17:29

Now, I know you get you're in a situation, you get a lot of phone call, I read some of the things that you said on the internet, and you get a lot of phone calls from people who are really desperate for help. If there are if they are, as many of our listeners are, if they're new to the gender community, or if they're young, if we get a lot of listeners who tell us they're 15 1617

years older, listen to us, with their radios tucked in their pillows. What advice would you give to them? What would you tell somebody that was young and is just desperate to find the information?

D

Dallas Denny 18:01

Well, first, I think you have to take care of yourself. I was dealing with this issue at age 14 and 15. It was the south it was the early 1960s. And I judged that it would be catastrophic To be honest, and I had I had to conceal it. And if you're in a situation in which you may be physically abused or institutionalized, maybe you need to keep it on your hat for a little while but I would urge you to structure your life in such a way that you can deal positively with your gender issue and that is so that you can talk about it with people so that you can act upon it wherever it may lead you and find as much information as you can even if you have to read it at night under the covers with a flashlight, get the information that you can obtain. Read it learn as much as you can so you can make smart decisions.

S

Sarah DePalma 18:56

These if these people need to reach your organization if they would like to get some information, how can they contact you?

D

Dallas Denny 19:04

Well on the internet, for those who have computers, and our online our addresses Aegis at mind spring.com. Our telephone helpline number is 404-939-0244 Our address is Aegis post office box 33724 Decatur, GA 3033. We'll be happy to send you information. Keep in mind we're a volunteer organization. We have a very low budget. It may take us a little while to respond. But in general, we get back pretty promptly. Our budget is small, you know, please call us evenings when we're in. It's difficult for us to return phone calls.

S

Sarah DePalma 19:59

Well, I'm I'm going to say something about Dallas Denise, she may not even remember this. But a few weeks ago, we had a person in jail in the city of Houston. And we needed information about the imprisoned in transgendered in jail in a hurry. And we faxed Dallas Denny, and we asked for help. And we got a response back from her in about 10 minutes. And there are not many men that many organizations that I can recommend to people who call when they call here and they say I need the information in any straight information. How do I get it? I'm real pleased to say that the Aegis is one of the places that I do recommend with confidence. And I want to let you know, unaired. I really appreciate what you're doing.

D

Dallas Denny 20:39

Well, thank you very much. I'm fine.

S

Sarah DePalma 20:41

Thanks a lot. And thank you for coming with after hours. Thank you. Glad to be in. Dallas, Danny is an impressive individual. Oh, yeah, I've got about it. Let me give us some of the information that she gave again, first of all, the name of the organization is called Aegis. If you want to send the mail, go get a pencil and a pen. And I'm going to give you some of the info. I'm going to give you some reference information. Because people email me all the time and they say, well, Sarah, you have all the stuff that you never sure what it is like, you haven't been listening your show much heavier. So let me tell you again, all right, it's H E, G, i s ages Aegis snouted, whatever you want to. Okay, and their address is P O Box 33724. Decatur, GA zip is 30033. And their email for those who have it is Aegis H E. G, i s at mind spring. That's one word mind spring.com. Now there is one other reference that I wanted to give. I've had several people contact me and say, Where can I find transgender books? Where can I get transgender information? Well, you can get some of it through Aegis because they are the repository for the National transgender Library and Archives. So that's one good place. However, they are limited. So let me give you the name, address and email address have someplace that I know for a fact that if they ain't got it, you can't get it. This is called the Ingersoll ginger center. Ingersoll. Now this is located in your get your pen and pencil here 1812 East Madison, suite 106. Seattle, Washington 98122. And of course they do have an email address is there anybody who doesn't these days, their email address is Ingersol in this case Ingersol at AJlcyon.com Ingersol has got most in depth listing of transgender books I have ever seen. And they will, they will send you just about anything you want. They have huge listings on the internet. And Aegis also has a bibliography one of the most complete bibliographies I've ever seen transgender books. Wow, transgender literature. And there's one other source that I will give you here and this is the Renaissance group. Oh yeah. Joanne Roberts is a Yeah, her own publishing company. And consequently, she has access to a lot of other publication type information. And they can be reached there. It's called renaissance and you can spell it just like the Renaissance Fair. Renaissance and they're located at 987 old eagle, school Road, old eagle school road. Suite 719, Wayne, w a y any Wayne, Pennsylvania 19087. Or if you're going to contact them by email, it's been Salam, bn, sa l em at CPC n.com. I know most of the folks at Renaissance I've spoken with them on the phone. I've met them in person. They're very, very good, very knowledgeable. They have wool, tons and tons of stuff available. So if you're one of those people who say well, I've gone to the bookstores, and I can only find one or two books.

J

Jimmy Carper 24:44

Yeah, that's what I'm gonna say. What about local areas? Like Like, what Crossroads crossroads?

S

Sarah DePalma 24:51

Yeah, Crossroads is best. By far they make the most concerted effort to keep stuff. They really do. It is part of their philosophy upon Send them over there. That's very nice. Oh, they are. And then the new location.

J

Jimmy Carper 25:04

Yeah, well, next to Blockbuster, yet no, next to Hollywood Video, Hollywood, thank you. So now across the street from Charlie's and they've, you know they've added new neon to that to that building it's just absolutely beautiful inside they have a coffee bar.

S

Sarah DePalma 25:23

They really made a concerted effort to get transgender information transgendered stuff, if if if they they will be had ordered stuff for you Yeah, there'll be there, they're very good about ordering things for you, all you have to do is tell them what it is that you want, if you don't know what it is that you want, and contact some of the other resources that I gave. And they will be able, you you know, anybody that's on the internet today, if you can use web pages, you can find anything in the world that you want. It's not like when I was growing up. It's not like when I was growing up where you know, you there was no such thing there was nowhere to go. Today, if you have access to the internet, you have access to a computer, you can buy anything, you can download it and it's all great. Amazing. You just have to know where to look. So i That's why I'm always trying to give people email addresses for any course is we call them on the internet snail mail addresses.

J

Jimmy Carper 26:19

Yeah, well, the gay and lesbian switchboard has a page. And they're doing a lot of they don't, we don't have a lot of our information up on the on the switchboard homepage. But we're doing our best to get-.

S

Sarah DePalma 26:39

links, links, links,

J

Jimmy Carper 26:41

I'm not a computer person. Go to board meetings, and I hear this and so we're linking with other people so that, you know, when you're you're trying to find out something on the on the computer, or on the web, you'll probably, you know, maybe go to gay. And from there you'll find gamers game switchboard. And from there, you'll be able to find links to many other areas.

S

Sarah DePalma 27:05

I brought up the word transgender the other day, and it brought up 532 separate web pages. No kidding. 532 right. So so go to the website, you can find anything when I was growing up. It wasn't you couldn't find the word transsexual in the dictionary right now. It's 532 web pages. So things have changed. You know, it really is. I also want to just briefly mention something that that Dallas and he talked about the interview. And that was something called the Harry Benjamin standards of care. Oh, yes. Now, I downloaded standards of care today. Oh, and those are on AFGE webpage Internet, and which is another transgender organization. And I'm not going to go through here because this is dense reading, you want to go to sleep, read this stuff.

But the one thing that I would say is anybody who is a transsexual, or is thinking about being a transsexual, audit downloaded, so that you know what the therapist know. One of the things that Dallas Denise said in the interview is that it's one of the problems with going to a gender therapist, is they know what the rules are, and you don't know well download Benjamin standards of care and then you'll know what the rules are, too. And you'll know if you're being lied to good idea you know it's just that simple. So I'm not going to sit here and read this is like 30 pages, but I mean we don't have time oh no, no, but I just wanted to make it where it is available in so I guess we should probably go to some music when we come back I think Jimmy has some things he wanted to-.

J Jimmy Carper 28:47

Yeah, we aren't we have some people to say Oh, that's right. We have someone else to say this is we are this marathon you know at 5265738 and we have people taking your calls.

S Sarah DePalma 29:00

This is just like the fastest show I just looked up and realize it's 10 minutes-.

J Jimmy Carper 29:04

Yeah, so my god I know Do we have time for another piece of music?

S Sarah DePalma 29:08

Yeah, well squeezing in real quick and then we're gonna come back and talk. Okay, Okay.

J Jimmy Carper 29:16

Whoa Wow, that woke me up. That's Brettschneider lead singer for V 50 twos openly gay and that's all because new album called just spread called with the lyrics-.

S Sarah DePalma 29:31

On this are clearly this is clearly an s&m song. Yeah, sure is. Very interesting. Well, boy that woke me up. I thought, you know, I'm getting a little bit sleepy here. Not anymore. Jimmy, you said you hit some stuff.

J Jimmy Carper 29:45

There are things Yeah, I wanted to mention that. In the voice of this week. We mentioned a couple of things in there. But in the country kitchen section, there's a recipe for fruit pizza and that is That was sent in a Yeah, yeah. Well, you take like crescent dough and in a can and then

you flatten it out and you, you bake it. Then you mix some cream cheese and sugar and then spread that all over it and then slice fruit. And that was sent in by our own big Roy. Okay. Yes. And I want to say hi out there to Tom Richards. I know he's listening. And I hope you're okay. Yeah, yeah. Some people haven't seen you in a while time and they miss you. Yeah. We have some thank yous to say too. We have a thank you. Yes, we do. For Debbie who called in with a nice, nice pledge of support for after hours.

 Sarah DePalma 30:51

And Debbie, your your dad told us who you are. And and I'm glad that you're listening. I Debbie is the first time listener and by golly, Amazing. You're amazing a play. Yeah. Very nice.

 Jimmy Carper 31:04

Thank you. A couple other things I want to talk about real quickly is is good luck to Mr. venture in Allen Wagner. And Mr. Texas drummer Dawn woods as they compete in the Mr. Gulf Coast drummer at the Dallas eagle on May 18. Oh, the smell of low Yeah, both of both of those guys have been on this show. And they're both wonderful one, that one that puddle one. And 10 by 10 is 10 short plays by 10 New playwrights is on it's on the stage at Stages Repertory Theatre starting July 12. Call 707 5194 for times and reservations and, and a couple of those are done by queer artists, local authors, who this is like 10 minute plays short 10 minute plays by local authors that they put on every year 10 by 10, they usually have 11 or 12 of them, but they're really good and several of them are queer. I mentioned 10% review that's playing the Red Ribbon Reading Room. Okay, now that's that's a library for people with AIDS, to just go hang out and read gay literature in sort of like Christian Science Monitor Reading Room, only better. Yeah, they're still looking for donations of books, CDs, tapes and such for their free room for PWA's library, call Steve at five to 669 40. For more information, pumped up on art. That's where stars have sent in their shoes, and they've been decorated and will be auctioned off. That's kind of neat. Yeah. That that will be at a reception June 21. At Jags if you would like more information, please contact Scott Lewis at 5219123. around Scotland row, Scott Lewis is handling that and he's been getting lots of stuff. I want to forget youth out there. Want to talk about a new magazine that's on the books understands now. It's called X Y magazine. It's really nice. It's really slick. It's really rather just for teens. It's more for like, Guys.

 Sarah DePalma 33:35

You were saying it's very male.

 Jimmy Carper 33:37

It's very male oriented. There's not much in there for lesbians, but it's very slick. It's like it's like a teen version of the advocate without the news. And, and in lots of pictures.

 Sarah DePalma 33:47

We just have a minute to go. Oh my god is that that's it. Well it DEF is County. Very busy.

we got three minutes to go. Oh my god is that that's it. We're at 257 in County. You know, before before I really want to be sure, let's make make sure that people understand. This show is here for you. And you can certainly give us a call here at the station. And and if you would like to leave me an email, my email address, is it a that's it's time a miracle, but in this case is useful. Is it a at mail? Dot Phoenix, just like the city.net so it's ita@mail.phoenix.net if it wasn't mail? Oh, yeah, ma i L Okay. Yeah. And so if you would, if you would like leave me email if you have any comments about the show, please do. We're at 258 and it's time for us to go.

J

Jimmy Carper 34:41

No, not yet. We've got three minutes actually. Oh, cool. And I wanted to mention that the people who donate food Oh, yes for the volunteers here at KPFT during marathon and Whole Foods, the willow crest Westheimer location, Amy's ice cream at 59 Sheppard, who I love their ice cream. Oh, Amy's Ooh, the high bagel shop brings bagels over every day. They're South Sheppard and Ermis. Restaurant north, Jennifer Franklin, and the Barnes and Noble It's Sugar Land. So if you know those folks, you might want to give them a little, you know, because they helped us out. That's another way of helping KPFT Hey, we'll take it. Yeah, you bet we'll take and this you still want to give your show of support for after hours and KPFA the numbers 5265738 We still have operators sitting by.

S

Sarah DePalma 35:41

We sure do. We're about to head out. We have Annie Lennox queued up and he will be doing mama It is after all mother's dead is is poor. I don't leave here with the traditional thing from it's time texted, I always say yeah, when decorum becomes repression, the only dignity free people have is to speak out. Good night and thank you for listening to After Hours.