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Fri, Feb 24, 2023 9:37AM 35:34

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

transsexual, people, child, women, partners, genitals, years, s&m, intersex, parents, understand, boy, clitoris, doctors, book, sex, barbie, transgendered person, sexual, groups

SPEAKERS

Jimmy Carper, Sarah DePalma

00:03

De Reem things can only get better.

S Sarah DePalma 00:06

I love that song. That's

00:07

for James and everyone else out there too. I am because that's a great song. Isn't that song? That I can get you going? I always carry that one with me. Yeah, I was just

S Sarah DePalma 00:20

feeling down and out that song to get you up man. I agree with that

00:24

and he came out as bisexual to the guy who does the rain.

S Sarah DePalma 00:29

Well, a good singer. Anyway, there you go. These next the next two cuts that we're going to do here are from Pat Khalifa. Good now Pat Khalifa is an s&m writer extraordinaire she was a advice columnist for The advocate for 10 years



00:47

10 years I mean she for she gave man gay man sexual advice



S Sarah DePalma 00:52

yeah and and as on quite a friendly and knowledgeable person about the a transgender community



00:59

shakin, right pornography, or she can write serious studies. She



S Sarah DePalma 01:04

can write everything from vanilla to academic works to s&m to everything in between. Yeah, she's really quite amazing. So what I wanted to do is I wanted to go to the first the first two cuts above PAC Leafy and then we'll come back and explain what was going on. So you'll understand the last tip. Oh,



01:22

gosh, I've got to interrupt right here because we just got a phone call from John. Okay, and John happens to be James his boyfriend. And he called to say, I love you.



S Sarah DePalma 01:37

Oh Cupid lives in this studio tonight. Honey, I



01:43

told you things can only get better. That's right. You can keep it loose



S Sarah DePalma 01:47

in this suit. I love it. Romans in the making. All right. Are we going to do some bodice ripping here? No. No. Is it the always using those those bottoms represent his turgid Member What the hell is that? I know, I don't know. Why don't they just say what they mean Quit fooling around anyway.



02:15

02:10

pulsating manhood straining to be free.

S

Sarah DePalma 02:19

Yeah. Yeah, we heard when the other day and I had to stop and think and I decided that somebody just did. They were talking about her palpitating breasts. I said prestone palpitate. They made a lot of things. But that word artistic license. They don't know what they're talking about. Well, that's great. And with that note, let's go pack LeafyIsHere

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02:48

Oh, okay. That's what we're doing. Okay, here goes.

S

Sarah DePalma 02:57

Let's talk about this this book, the politics of transgenderism. On first of all, what brought you to this subject? Well, I've been writing

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03:03

about transsexuality ever since I published my first book, which was sophistry, sophistry was a sex manual for gay women. And in that book, there's a chapter explaining what the sex reassignment process is for someone who's moving in a male or female direction. And in that book, I took the position that some transsexual women are lesbian identified, and they ought to have a right to participate in our community without being harassed or excluded in any way. And that book, of course, was very controversial. It was published in the late 70s, when sex wars and feminism were just starting to get really hot. You know, over the years and advice columns, and in various articles and magazines and things I've I've been an advocate of transsexual rights. Just because I think it's part of a larger politic I have around sexuality, which is, I guess, based on the idea that sexual variation is normal. And that as a species, we don't understand a whole lot about our sexuality largely because sexual exploration is so stigmatized that we we tend to censor ourselves before we can even be aware really of our own desires. And that what we ought to do if we want to live in a better world is to support each other for reaching that point of sexual truth, whether it's about our gender identities, or what we might desire when it comes to sex with a partner or what our fantasies might be. And so, yeah, this book is actually the result of many, many years of research thinking about the topic talking to folks in the community. And it's, you can probably tell that by the number of

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Sarah DePalma 05:00

Got this book do you didn't put this book together in a week this thing is just loaded with footnotes from everywhere. Actually, it



05:07

took about two years to put the actual text together. And that cliff press was very patient because it did come in quite late. But they were accommodating because of the they understood that it was a quasi academic work that did take a great deal of research.



S Sarah DePalma 05:24

Where I was really interested early in the book, you were telling the story about your Barbie dolls. Yeah, in I just thought that was wonderful. Want to tell the audience a little bit about that?



05:36

Well, it's one of those moments in childhood that you look back on when you are an adult, and you develop a somewhat deviant identity. And you're kind of looking for where did this all begin? I figured out when I was a little kid that Barbie and Ken could wear each other's clothes. And this was a really important moment for me, I can still remember sort of the moment when the light went on in my head, and I said, the same size. One of Barbies formals and tied him up with this scratchy twine that my mother had for time packages, and put him back in the box. And then dressed Barbie Epping Kemp's clothes and gave her a little haircut so that she was ready for adventure. And since my mother refused to buy me a second Barbie doll, so that the two of them could have adventures with each other. I paired Barbie up with my troll doll whose name was shamrock because he had a she had like green wild hair. And so they ran around. And the games that I played with them had to do with them trying to rescue Ken, because he had been kidnapped by evil people who were torturing him. And Ken never did get rescued. But Barbie and her little sidekick had a lot of fun. I think it's it actually points out something that's more serious, which is that there is a pretty strong connection or an overlap for some of us between gender dysphoria and living in the world as gay people, and certainly not everyone has transsexual or who's a crossdresser is also gay. But I do think that that connection has kind of been weakened in the last five or six years by a more mainstreaming trend, and gay and lesbian politics. So another reason for writing this book was to try to build a bridge between those two communities and say, you know, we have some experiences in common that we really didn't need to talk about more.



S Sarah DePalma 07:29

I thought you really did a great job in that chapter because it is hard to discuss people like Janice Freeman in still remain lucid



07:41

unchain because I think that when we are afraid of people who are different from ourselves, we tend to see them through biased eyes. And I'm sure that from where she's sitting, all of the nasty things she had to say, sounded perfectly true. But I have seen transsexual women in the lesbian community come under incredibly fierce attack and almost to a woman, they respond with a lot of dignity and with a lot of calm, you know, they don't respond and kind they don't

lash out. And I don't, I just can't, I don't get why there's this level of fear and hostility. I mean, I, I just see transsexual women as being folks who have gone through some very difficult stuff in their life, who are trying to have the same things in life that I or any other woman would want. And they feel like they're sisters to me, you know. Certainly their life history is not identical to mine, but we have enough in common that we can really share. And frequently I think transsexual women are very politically aware of what the issues are facing us. So I don't know. I'm just really baffled by Raymond's hatred. And I find it really unclear encouraging to feel like in a younger generation, some of this stuff is changing.

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Sarah DePalma 09:06

Okay, now, if you don't know who Janice Raman is that she was talking about? Well, I don't Janice Freeman wrote a book called The transsexual empire. One of the most hateful vitriolic pieces of work I've ever read about transsexual I remember you talking. This would be I would compare this to a mind come aimed at transsexuals. This is a full spiteful, mean, vindictive woman who sees transsexuals as being an incredible threat to women in women hood, spends an entire book trying to tear train sexuals down as men in dresses and continuing with male energy, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. And it was her logic much of her logic that allowed things like the Michigan's women's Festival, where they would not allow transsexuals in because they say they that the transsexual is carried male energy, whatever the hell that was in January with the male privilege continuing the male privilege and, you know, was only for women born women like transsexuals. Warren, you know, exactly in but they that's what they believed. And so I want to explain all that because this next piece pack Cliff he's going to talk about feminist attacks on transsexuals, and why she thinks feminists have gone after transsexual so much. And I point this out too because Pat Khalifa is not popular with feminist, she is in favor of s&m, she's in favor of pornography. She's in favor of transgendered and feminist, generally, you're against all those things exactly. And so I want to make sure that you understood when pack LiFi goes on to this next piece, what it is that she's talking about. And then finally, the last one that she's taught, I asked her, because she developed a whole chapter on the partners of transgendered people. Wow, I asked her, Why did you do that? Almost no one else does? Well, she's gonna explain her answer to that. Right. So those explain the next two pieces, we'll go ahead and go to those. Please define the chapter about the partners of transgendered people.

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11:09

My favorite,

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Sarah DePalma 11:12

ever there's a group that has been overlooked and left out. That's it. And you did a great unit, what made you decide to do that, because so many books, they tell all these great things about transgenders, and the partners never get mentioned once. Yeah, it's kind of weird.

Ω

11:29

I mean, I think part of that is because part why that has happened is because the the first wave of gender scientists tell people that what they were doing through sex reassignment was

of gender scientists tell people that what they were doing through sex reassignment was creating men and women. And so the assumption was that post reassignment, a transsexual man, or a transsexual woman, would be fully equipped to just go out and get a partner like anybody else. And of course, that's not exactly true, because the reassignment process does have its shortcomings. And also, just because it's crazy making to leave your history behind, when you're trying to have an intimate relationship. You know, I think that most of us want our partners to know where we've been, and how we've come to be the self that we are in the present. And I've always thought that actually there, there is such a thing as a person who is attracted to folks who are differently gendered, and that there's no label for that sexual orientation. And I certainly wouldn't call it a fetish because I don't think it's dehumanizing or objectifying. I think it's a genuine interest in an appreciation of someone who has gone through some kind of transformation in their life around gender. And I consider myself to be one of those people. And one of the reasons why I read the book was because I had a bit a year long relationship with someone who was female to male, although he does not consider himself to be male, but considers himself to be third gendered. And so I really felt like partners had their own special concerns. And in fact, I think a whole book could be written about that.

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Sarah DePalma 13:12

Yeah, I think so too. I know Phyllis Frye in her wife, Trish, have been married for 26-27 years, something like that. I know of a number of other folks who are in a similar category. And in my own case, so Lori, and I will be excuse me six years for us in October. Well, thank you. But the point that is going to make is I really think that the partners of the transgendered people are the heroine heroes and heroines and all this, because the changes the adaptability, they have to have just astounds me.

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13:48

Well, it's very difficult. And once again, in my private practice, as a therapist I work with, sometimes I'm privileged to work with couples who are going through the transition process, but it's very difficult to sustain a relationship through that larger change.

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Sarah DePalma 14:05

Well, it really is.

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14:07

It's also hard, I think, especially to support your partner when they are in between genders, and where they're likely to be read as either male or female by people on the street. I mean, our society is just so intolerant of gender ambiguity. And so partners of course, have legitimate concerns about safety and about, you know, economics is it going to be possible to keep a job how are we going to keep our livelihood together? And I think there's also a lot of emotional changes that go along with just taking hormones that can be hard for partners to understand.

o

14:07



Sarah DePalma 14:43

Oh, yeah, I got I got for a while where you can say good morning to me, you know, it's we



14:50

very common you know, that with estrogen comes a lot of emotions become more labile. And, yeah, completely understand. Annabelle, but then your partner is going, Okay, what did I do wrong? Exactly. I think it's also hard to deal with, with the social climate. I mean I, for women partners of transsexual men, who may have started out in the lesbian community, it can be very difficult to lose membership in the lesbian community and to feel isolated. And to then, you know, try to figure out, well, who, where are we going to go for friends, you know, to spend social time with other couples? You know, it's just difficult to have what is basically a lesbian identity and then try to turn it into a heterosexual identity. And I think that's the reason why a lot of partnerships don't endure through transition, is because the transition demands to greater change, and in the partners understanding of himself or herself.



Sarah DePalma 15:54

Oh, yeah, we've had, we have a number of a large part of our audience, our wives of cross dressers. And interestingly, when we talk to them, the first question they'll ask is, does this now mean, I'm lesbian, you know, and so the whole idea that you might have to change his sexual orientation and the misinformation that's out there, I think any any of the, the partners or transgender people who stay in fight their way through maintain families, I just think they're stunning individuals.



16:22

And they're every bit as much a part of the transgender community as the folks who are actually going through transition. You know, I think that's exactly the point you raised is why it's important to focus on gay politics as well as on transsexual politics. Because the fact is that yes, if you're a woman in a relationship with another woman, that is a lesbian relationship, it may be a very different kind of lesbian relationship. But certainly, that's how other people are going to perceive you. And so it's one example where homophobia is really not going to be your friend. And you have to, I think, be prepared to do some personal work to adjust your attitudes around that.



Sarah DePalma 17:04

She's exactly right about homophobia not being your friend. That's where Lori and I go someplace. We don't make any attempt to hide our relationship, we'll hold hands and we do as we want. And we're very well aware that we are being perceived as a lesbian couple, and frankly, don't give a damn right. But not everybody can or will. Not everybody can or will be able to handle that. And our attitude is, so what if they don't like it don't look to handle that, on top of all the other changes that come with being the partner of a transgendered person. It for many, many people is just too much. It is tough. It is to have to say honestly, it's very rare that the partner of a transgendered person stays for it all.



18:00

You know, we were talking in the first half of the show about changes in a crossdresser from maybe just lingerie to the full deal to maybe going out and the effects that has on wife and children. Right. And isn't this kind of similar?



S Sarah DePalma 18:24

It's only more severe. Yeah. Oh, yeah. Spades. Yeah. Because here, you're talking about not not Gee, darling, I want to be able to dress in women's clothes. is G darling, I want to become a woman just like you. I'm pretty tough. Yeah, yeah, really, really hard. And I was really pleased with Pat Khalif. He has spent the chapter talking about this stuff. And I really highly want to recommend her book. It's called the politics of transgenderism. But believe me when I tell you we're not talking about politics here as in, you know, Monica Lewinsky. With her semen stain, yeah, never heard of dry cleaning. We're talking about politics as in all the things that are involved in the making of being a transgendered person, or the spouse of a transgender person, very, very wide, beautiful book, highly recommend it. No, we're running out of time. I want to get these last few pieces. Okay. We have three pieces from Cheryl Chase, who is the director of the Intersect Society of North America. They don't run very long. Okay. And then there's a we're going to follow that there's a quick group discussion on s&m And I want there's a comment Jimmy made then I'm determined I want to get this. But Jimmy knows which one it is. So we're gonna let the next four pieces just go ahead and run first three are from Charile chase. The last one is from a group discussion. We had an s&m. regular listeners of after hours have heard To make a discussion about issues involving intersex people, we've talked about Pat Kilifi. His book, it at some length, we have discussed some of the issues that Pat Kilifi has brought up surrounding gender in gender issues. We've had Kate Bornstein on the program. So I'm very honored to have Cheryl chase with us. Cheryl is the director of the Intersect Society of North America. Cheryl, welcome to after hours.



20:31

I'm pleased to be on with you.



S Sarah DePalma 20:33

Thank you. I do I always like to start out with very basic kinds of things so we can bring the audience up to speed. For those who are not familiar with this issue, explain what intersex is.



20:45

Intersex refers to people who are born with sexual anatomy that doesn't meet cultural expectations of what girls look like, and boys look alike. So oftentimes, that means that a child is pretty much a girl with a large clitoris, or a boy with a small penis, or a penis that doesn't see

at the end. But it can also mean bigger differences, like the genitals might look something in between male and female. But it's hard to say whether this is a very small penis or very large clitoris. What doesn't happen is that people are not born with two sets of genitals.

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Sarah DePalma 21:27

So they're born with genitals that have any abnormal appearance, I guess for lack of a better description,

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21:33

we like to say unusual or atypical.

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Sarah DePalma 21:36

Okay. Now what happens then they're born with with genitalia, and it doesn't fit this societal norm. So what happens next is the doctors go to the parents or, or how is that good handles out?

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21:49

Well, since the late 50s, it's been medical policy to say that having a child with an unusual unusual genitalia is just simply unacceptable and that parents could not accept or love as a child. In order for the parents to take the child home, the child has to be made to look quote normal as fast as possible. And doctors treat this as a psychiatric emergency. And of course, the psychiatric emergency is on the part of doctors and parents, the child is not in any distress. And they actually compound the parents distress significantly, the parents are likely to be upset when their child is born with something unusual. But then the doctors by making it into an emergency really compound their confusion. And essentially, they say that every child has to have, quote, normal looking genitals. And in order for that to happen, they're going to perform surgery. The other policy that they have is they claim that they can make any child into any sense, but that they're not able to surgically create a convincing penis. So they create, they turn almost all the children with ambiguous genitalia that they need into girls and they remove their clitoris.

S

Sarah DePalma 23:14

Okay, no way that they can turn any child into any sex that desperately that's a claim. And so so so basically, they they choose the sex this person is going to be

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23:30

they tell the parents that, in fact, they've used scientific techniques to discover the child's truth. But when they speak to each other, they make it clear that they're choosing effects that

based on surgical convenience,

S

Sarah DePalma 23:47

they can choose the child's true sex. Now there must be a million transsexuals all over the country who are living proof that's a bunch of nonsense. Well, I don't understand it. Okay, so it's I'm trying to get make sure they get to understand this. So the child is born with with mixed genitalia or, or a genitalia that doesn't present in the usual fashion. And the doctors go to the parents say, we're going to turn this child into a girl. Well, they don't see

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24:15

it that way. Because then the parents would say, what are you crazy? They tell the parents, okay, this is basically a disaster. And if we leave your child like this, they will never have a happy life. And no one will love them and all the children will keep them. And for instance, if you raise this child with a small penis, as a boy, you won't be able to pee standing up and everybody will tease them they'll commit suicide. So your child isn't really a boy your child is really a girl and we just need to do a little bit of minor plastic surgery to make the genitals look more normal. And your child will grow up to be a normal heterosexual female, sexually functional and The problem will be entirely solved by surgery.

S

Sarah DePalma 25:04

Wow. That

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25:07

is very open transsexual that whole concept just blows my mind. Not only that they also tell the parents that they shouldn't really tell anybody this and they should they keep the parents ought to lie to their family and to their friends about what's going on with the baby.

S

Sarah DePalma 25:27

Well, let's talk about the parents of intersex child for a moment. I mean, they're being they're being given this information by by doctors in there basically given this guideline of how to raise an intersex child. Now what happens at some point, the intersex child says, hey, look, you know this, this isn't working for me. And then then what happens?

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Well, doctors don't actually tell parents that the child is intersex they perfectly avoid using that word. In fact, medical literature insists that they should never tell the parents that their child is intersex. So they'll tell the parents for instance, that their child is grown has an overdeveloped clitoris, but not intersex or their child is a boy who has a underdeveloped penis, but not

intersex. And they tell the parents that if they've printed, the doctors have chosen to find the child the girls usually do. They'll say as long as you treat her like a grown believe that she's a girl, she will be a girl. And we actually actually create a situation where if the child develops a male identity, the parents are going to resist that and the doctors are going to resist that. And the child says I don't feel like a girl. They'll say that's all don't worry about everybody feels like that. And if a child says, I don't want to take these hormones that are giving me breasts, they'll say, Oh, you have to and nobody will love you. Don't take these. Oh my god. You know, they really are Compounding the problem at every turn.

S

Sarah DePalma 26:58

You know, that's mind blowing. You know, I mean, I was raised as a boy, I was told I was a boy. I was conditioned as boy none of a tuck. I mean, what hutzpah? True I'm sorry that it's just mind blowing to me. Have they never heard of transsexuals? And transsexualism has never occurred to them that that kind of theory is nonsense.

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You know, the people who do this are extremely sexually conservative or even ignorant. They only deal with children. And they're not. They don't have a lot of experience with adults. And I think they refuse to see adults who've had these things done to them. So they basically are just doing what they've taught what they learned in medical school and what they've always done. And it's hard for them to come to the realization that what they're doing is wrong. If they if they understood that what they're doing is wrong, they would have to face up to how much harm they've done to people over years and maybe decades in your career.

S

Sarah DePalma 28:07

I wanted to ask you to I know we were just talking a little bit about that. APAC cliffy 's book. I'm always curious when a person is portrayed in a book was it was her depiction of what was written here? Is this accurate?

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28:21

I think you have to refresh my memory on that. While she talks about your own personal history in she talks about your own that the fact that you had a clitoris to me and she accurate on that. I was born with what's called ambiguous genitals and doctors and my parents completely freaked out. My mother was kept dated for three days while the doctors decided what they're going to do with me. After three days, they decided to call me a boy but a congenitally deformed boy who was a freak, and sent my parents home and wouldn't speak with them again after that. A year and a half later, my parents found their way to a different set of doctors who specialized in fixing intersex children. Those doctors decided that it wasn't truly a boy, but I was truly a girl. And the only problem was this large clitoris sticking out and so they removed that and told my parents that I was actually a girl that my parents should change my name from a boy's name to grow up in it sounded similar, so that I wouldn't notice they had done that

to keep diapers on nice, I wouldn't notice they had removed my clitoris and that they should move to another town and not telling me when where they went, and that they should come through all their possessions and eliminate the evidence that their son had ever existed. Oh

S

Sarah DePalma 29:36

my goodness. And so how did you come to learn about what actually transpired?

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29:42

Well, the there were more hospitalizations when I was eight years old. With abdominal surgery and genital inspections and fingers in my rectum and in my vagina and X rays and general photograph And as I came to understand a little bit about human sexuality, in my adolescence, I also understood that my genitals mutilated I have no clitoris, and no inner labia genitals like African Women's genitals that have been corrected. And when I tried to figure out who had done that doctors asked for help, actually tried to prevent me from figuring it out. It took me three years to overcome that obstruction. And when I finally obtained a little bit of the medical records from my hospitalization as an infant, I learned by reading it on records that I had been a boy, and my sex and name had been changed, and everyone had hidden it from me.

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Sarah DePalma 30:51

Oh, my God, I couldn't have helped your family relations. Ne

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30:56

i wasn't able to speak about that until almost 15 years after I discovered it. My emotional breakdown. And when I did speak about it, my family essentially rejected me and stop talking with me.

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too, just like Jimmy was talking about earlier about the importance of a sense of community. I think that's what's happening here is number one, these organizations, I think, really kind of help people learn to feel better about themselves. Right? They think a lot of times I heard you use the word kinky up earlier. And I take that as a good as a good connotation, but many people don't.

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Jimmy Carper 31:39

Everything, Ella has a kink. Okay. Yeah, yeah.

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Sarah DePalma 31:40



Saran DePaima 31:43

And I think a lot of people come to these groups, and if nothing else, they get the feeling a little better about themselves that GE, they're not the only ones number one. And number two, there are a lot of other people who like what they do. And number three, it's okay. To have fun with it. You know, I



31:58

think the overwhelming theme too, is a sense of acceptance that you have, yeah, when you when you go to these groups, it's like, oh, cool, I really am normal.



32:09

Whatever they leave to actually find people that that actually encouraged that side as opposed to trying to stifle it actually wanted to share their knowledge and, and help educate me and anybody else that comes around with, you'll find that there's so many people who have so much knowledge of safe play that they want to share with people that all you have to do is ask and you're just gonna get this overflow of information. Exactly. It's already there too much information, but I love to teach and I think everybody else here does too. And, and we'd rather teach ourselves than to have someone learn the wrong way.



32:45

Exactly, exactly. I agree with Morgan. Patient is a big focus of all of our groups. And a lot of people once they get into these groups, they realize that they have opened a door into their sexuality that they can never close again. So they feel part of the community. They know that that support is always there for them to learn new aspects of the Fetish new aspects of their own sensuality or sexuality and go further with it. Have to suppress it but I've always been doing yeah, I've always



Jimmy Carper 33:15

been impressed with the educational aspect of s&m groups. I'm a gay man and you know, when I came out into the community you know, there wasn't any sucking one on one just wasn't any educational aspect at all period. And then there's who isn't really that's what I really appreciate about s&m groups that isn't needed only in the gay community



33:50

that's how I learned was okay, we may hold that as our next seminar and



34:04

let's let's talk about safe safe.

 Sarah DePalma 34:09

Shimmy sucking 101.

 34:14

mean, I just didn't know how else to say it.

 Sarah DePalma 34:17

Oh, it's now you see, folks, if you missed those shows, you need to start listening in more often because you get to miss comments like make sure you tune in next month.

 34:28

That's right. I mean, that's nutshell, we didn't. Anyway, you've been listening to after hours queer radio with attitude on KPFT Houston and ke O 's College Station. Big Daddy j is here and the red eyes special is gonna come right at jet in about two minutes.

 Sarah DePalma 34:50

Just remember what we usually say as our as we leave here when decorum becomes repression. The only dignity free people have is to speak out. Good night y'all.

 35:02

And in the background you're hearing sweet mama cotton and the sugar daddies with don't want no man

 35:14

welcome to the radar special but I'm your host Big Daddy j and this is KPFT 90.1 in Houston ke o s 89.1 in College Station, the sound of Texas and the blues