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SPEAKERS

Greg Gordon, Larry Bensky, Harvey Milk



Larry Bensky 00:42

Back here live in Washington for the 1993 march on Washington for lesbian, gay and bi equal rights and liberation. I'm Larry Minsky, our co host K. Clinton is up on the stage. And Bert Whalen has once again left us but we are not alone. Venus, we have hardly heard your voice on this. Indeed. You've noticed.



01:05

I want to ask you being relatively young activist here. How has it been used? It's been your first national?



01:13

Yeah. Yeah, it was my first it is my first. I'm no longer a virgin. But um, what happened was I ran into a fellow who I went to high school with, and it was the first time I ran into a gay person from my past. And that really made my day and bed again. He gave me the dish and all the other people that I went to high school with who is who, who have since come out of the closet. And that was very, that was very positive for me.



Larry Bensky 01:40

Because that here in DC that you went to high school, I



01:42

went to high school, Atlanta, Atlanta, Atlanta.



01:45

And when did you come in?



01:47

I was about 12. We have 12 years ago.



Larry Bensky 01:50

We have listeners down there in Atlanta and WR f g, I'm sure. Hi, mom.



01:55

I want to ask you as a 24 year old lesbian here. Is it easier for you now? Did you have much problem? Was it hard coming out in your high school?



02:06

No, I asked people pretty much had me pegged. And I got picked on a lot. But it wasn't I didn't I don't think it was very hard. Once I had the support of my immediate family. And of course, sexuality was never first and foremost in my life. And it was it was never the one thing that I always concentrated on. I mean, being a woman and being a black woman. I have many more things to think about besides my sexuality



02:35

when you were in high school, and what year um, I



02:37

came out in 87.



02:38

Okay, just interesting, because 87 was the year that Pacifica carry the the last March on Washington here. And it's wonderful to note that the people who were marching here were providing leadership and role models to people like you. And now here you are doing the same thing for people who are in high school.



Larry Bensky 02:55

We should also say that in those years, Pacifica had maybe 10 or 15 stations that were taking these broadcasts now we have 50 or 60 stations across the country today who are joining us. So that's very encouraging to momentarily. We are going back to the stage here in Washington where we'll hear that statement from President Clinton.

 03:13

I think it's interesting now people are listening by a video to a statement by Senator Ted Kennedy, who thought that it was important for him to at least bring give us a video of his thoughts. There are a lot of senators who couldn't care less than are out of Washington.

 Larry Bensky 03:30

We have with us on the phone now reporter Carlotta Walker, who is with a group called Homo punk somewhere back in that huge crowd Carlotta? Yeah, this is

 03:43

a good thing. They've got dropped out of trash cans that fell everywhere and they're homeless.

 Larry Bensky 03:52

Where are they from? What city

 03:54

to be for? Well over a lot of people.

 Larry Bensky 03:58

And where are you in that March? By the way? Is it left is the last contingent left from the assembly point. Yeah.

 04:04

I walked up from there on Pennsylvania Avenue. Interesting side. A lot of music going on.

 Larry Bensky 04:17

Are people distressed at all that it doesn't seem as if they're going to be able to get to the rally if their way in the back where you are.



04:23

People are very peaceful. People who are kind of lounging and just waiting to hear their original assigned numbers waiting to leave. When they accidentally go off in the wrong direction. There are a few marshals present, and they just kind of guide them in the right direction. There's also very little police presence at all. So everything is just very low key and in terms of tension, but very Festivus and you know what their right side that was very interesting was a life that that fear is a half life and it's very much that kind of tone here.



Larry Bensky 04:59

Okay, her, let her walker stay with it. And we'll be hoping to get back to you and hope to see you here before this March is over. All right, thank you. Carla Walker WBI Pacifica station in New York joining us from deep in the crowd. And now we will go to the podium to Nancy Pelosi, the congresswoman from San Francisco whose district of course includes the Castro district of San Francisco, Nancy Pelosi, introduced by Kate Clinton and lesbians



05:26

in the military. In Congress, Miss Pelosi is the author of legislation to prevent the spread of AIDS. And as a strong supporter of the gay and lesbian Civil Rights Act. Please welcome Congresswoman Pelosi, you will be reading a message from President Clinton.



05:52

What a beautiful sight you are. Thank you very much for coming to Washington. Do I see a lot of Californians out there? How back from San Francisco. It is one of the highest honors of my political life, to deliver this message from President Clinton to this March. If I may just take a personal moment to begin and say in 1963, as a very young person, I was at the civil rights march on Washington, with some of you older folks in the audience. And in 1987, many of us were here together on the first march on Washington that we are repeating today. I consider the opportunity to deliver the message from President Clinton a great honor and a compliment to the district I represent. But frankly, we deserve it. Our district has been hard hit by the spread of AIDS. Over 10,000 people have died in my district from a one of them this weekend. My staff member hmm Sanchez. In addition to that, our district has been on the forefront in the fight against discrimination against people who are gay and lesbian.



07:28

One of the reasons that I'm very proud to deliver this message is because



Larry Bensky 07:33

as you can hear in the background, there's a demonstration going on in the front row as Nancy

as you can hear in the background, there's a demonstration going on in the front rows as Nancy Pelosi is speaking people are loudly chanting and waving sign saying where is Bill? Where is Bill? Nancy Pelosi,

 07:46

Bill Clinton is the first president to send a message to the March. Don't forget. It's not that Bill Clinton is standing here, but that he is standing up for the end of discrimination to gay and lesbian Americans that he is standing up to end the ban on lesbian and gays in the military. And that he sent his budget message with full funding for Ryan White. At the dedication of the Holocaust Museum the other day, President Clinton said in effect that people in the Holocaust were murdered because of who they were, how they worshipped, and who they loved. For this reason, I am proud to bring you the message from the President of the United States, Bill Clinton, the message welcome to Washington, DC, your nation's capital. During my campaign, and since my election, I have said that America does not have a person to waste. Today, I want you to know that I am still committed to that principle. I stand with you in the struggle, free equality for all Americans, including gay men and lesbian Americans. In this great country, founded on the principle that all people are created equal. We must learn to put aside what divides us and focus on what we share. We all want the chance to excel in our work. We all want to be safe in our communities. We all want the support and acceptance of our family and friends. Last November, the American people sent a message to make government more accountable to all its citizens, regardless of race, class, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. I am proud of the strides we are making in that direction. The Pentagon has stopped asking recruits about their sexual orientation. And I have asked the Secretary of Defense To determine how to implement an executive order, implement lifting the ban on gays and lesbians in the military by July 15. My 1994 budget increases funding for AIDS research, and my economic plan will fully fund the Ryan White Care Act. Soon I will announce a new AIDS Coordinator to implement the rhetoric recommendations of the AIDS Commission reports. I met nine days ago with leaders of the gay and lesbian community in the Oval Office at the White House. I am told this meeting marks the first time in history that the President of the United States has held such a meeting. In addition, members of my staff have been and will continue to be in regular communication with the gay and lesbian community. I still believe every American who works hard and plays by the rules ought to be a part of the national community. Let us work together to make this vision real. Thank you, Bill Clinton, President of the United States.

 11:21

Nancy Pelosi.

 Larry Bensky 11:25

Nancy Pelosi, the congresswoman from San Francisco reading that message from President Clinton to I must say a very tepid response from crowd here. Helene and Venus.

 11:38

Interesting. We are situated backstage, we really can't see the crowd. We can hear we can hear

them. And they have been chanting Where's bill? Where's bill? Very upset that he is out of the nation's capitol today.

L

Larry Bensky 11:51

He didn't say anything in that statement that he hasn't said before. He's in favor of human rights and justice and equality and peace, freedom and blah, blah, blah. I guess I kind of expected perhaps he would name the eight czar or do something to get the crowd interested in behind them been?

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12:09

Yeah, I just really wanted to come at that. You know, not too long ago, the to McFeely from the Human Rights Campaign fund, spoke and human rights campaign fund is one of the most foremost leaders of this fight, I guess for gay and lesbian rights. And he

L

Larry Bensky 12:27

was strongly supportive of President Clinton. Mr. McFeely, was

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12:29

he Yes, it was and I was employed by the Human Rights Campaign fund for about a year and a half. I just thought that, you know, after after two McFeely spoke to people from NAACP also spoke as well. And I thought that that relationship quite interesting, as it was my experience, as I heard him speak about discrimination and what have you. It was my experience at the Human Rights Campaign fund that that's that's not that's not really what what the right camp human rights campaign fund promotes, because my experience was very racist. And I worked for a racist organization and what way there were no black people or any other people of color, and high paying positions, power positions. There were all like, servant type positions. And there were there, there were no black or people of color directors.

L

Larry Bensky 13:26

It was thrash and Helene Rosenbluth. We are now being joined by Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi who just read that statement from the podium. And we welcome you, Representative Nancy Pelosi to Pacific as nationwide broadcast. And of course, you're being heard back in your home constituency via KPFA in Northern California. You didn't exactly get a standing ovation after that statement was read the crowd seemed somewhat underwhelmed in response. Well, you

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13:54

sound that way. From here. It sounded okay to me. You know, what you hear is? There's so

many people out there you can find whatever you want and the audience and I think there was a good support for President Clinton out

 L Larry Bensky 14:05

there. What about the chant of where his bill where his bill that was to be expected? And

 14:09

that's what this is. It's a demonstration. And as I said, there all kinds of folks here and I, you know, I've said in my remarks that in 1963, as a young person, I was at the civil rights march on Washington. President Kennedy was not at that March, he met with the leaders of the March before the March, a few days before the March. And isn't that tradition that Bill Clinton today, in for this March met earlier? With the organizers of the march and is standing up for the principles that are being demonstrated for today?

 L Larry Bensky 14:42

Would you have preferred that he at least address this gathering by telephone, as President Reagan and Bush did repeatedly to the anti abortion rallies that happened here in Washington? Well,

 14:51

I think that now I have an opinion on that. I mean, of course, I would have loved for him to have done that. But I don't think that there's any slight to this Since March that he did not, I think this March is what it is. We who are advocates, and I come from that mode having been here, as I said, As long ago as 30 years, have to know that we have our role, and the President has his role. And as long as the president is sending us a budget with full funding for Ryan White, and is asking for lifting the ban on gays and lesbians in the military, and is supporting the ending of discrimination against gays and lesbians in civil rights for all Americans, that's what's important. As I said, up there, it's not whether he's standing up here, it's whether he's standing up for the principles that we care about. And he is,

 15:36

what kind of support will he get in the house? On which subject on the subject of funding funding? Oh, I

 15:42

think we'll do fine in the House of Representatives. On the funding issue. I sit on the Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Health and Human Services Subcommittee of appropriations. And we were obviously pushing from there to get full funding. Usually, that's where we make

the fight. And instead, where our job was made easier by the President of the United States sending it over in his budget,

 Larry Bensky 16:02

David mitzner, who, you know, was our guest earlier today on this specific broadcast. And he said that the difficulty in naming the so called AIDS Czar was not so much that a person could not be found clearly they're qualified people, but that the administration did not have have not yet have a strategy for what that person would be doing your way of funding implementing that strategy. Would you agree with Mr. Mixon his analysis? Well,

 16:27

I think that every one of any person who is appointed, has something that they bring to the table. Some people are have scientific background, other. Others have a business background or advocacy background. And it's important, you just can't say, well, we'll do this person. Because when you choose a person, you're choosing a path for that person. So I think that I think they have excellent people that they are choosing among I don't, I think that the person will be named soon. And I don't use this as a problem. I think that it's important for us to know where we have problems, and know where we have our friends. And Bill Clinton is a friend on these issues, he will name and age czar it will be a person who will bring a great deal in the fight and complement what else is going on. In it, it'll be a person will be part of the National Domestic Policy Council, or person high ranking in the White House, and somebody far more influential than has ever been envisioned before for this position.

 17:26

Yeah, I would just like to say that as a dissenting, gay or lesbian voice, I agree with you. And I don't I don't I think that Bill Clinton has been a very good friend of the gay community. And and the leaders of the gay and lesbian movement would have you believed that lifting the ban on gays in the military is the foremost gay issue and age. And it's just not the case. And I just want to thank you for your presence and for and for sending us those messages.

 17:57

I appreciate your saying that. I think he's he's, I don't think going to be participating in any marches. So as I said, this should not be considered in any way a slight because I don't believe he'll be participating in any marches. And this is such a celebration. It's such a huge success. And it's doing what it's supposed to do show support for these issues.

 18:17

You'd say that, we need to take a look at where the problems are. Where do you see the problems? Well, I

 18:23

do think that we'll have, we'll have some problems on ending the ban, we have, that has to be a decision that we make as a country. We just can't win that by one. But we have to persuade the American people about that, and put that issue behind us. I always say to my colleagues when I'm trying to get a vote from them on this issue, if it comes to that, in preparation for that, what would you say if all the gays and lesbians in America said in time of crisis we will not serve? I mean, you'd be appalled. Right. And also that many Americans service first of all, the gays and lesbians are in a military service. So it's an it's an elementary question of whether they should be there. And in addition to which one we fight. In battles with our allies, gays and lesbians are in the Armed Services of those countries freely and openly.

 Larry Bensky 19:13

Thank you very much, Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi for being with us here today. Congresswoman Pelosi represents San Francisco or at least a good part of it. And the United States Congress and was the one who read President Clinton's rather anodyne message to this crowd here today, which she seemed to think was that's the kind of sounded like to us back here.

 19:37

Yeah. What are we talking about?

 Larry Bensky 19:40

We were talking about you as you had started talking about what you thought was racism within the Human Rights Campaign fund. And we were interrupted by having Miss Pelosi, of course, was only momentarily available, but go ahead. Yeah,

 19:52

I really think it's a dangerous liaison that the Human Rights Campaign fund has formed with the NAACP because I think it's the NAACP You knew just how extensive the racism was not only throughout human rights campaigns, with generally with white gays and lesbians, I don't think it was necessarily a liaison that they would have would have so readily.

 Larry Bensky 20:14

We have with us now on the telephone Our reporter in the field, Julie Dresden, who is with the Oregon and Colorado delegations who were towards the head of the march. So, presumably, they arrived already as the March stepped off over three hours ago. Julie,



20:27

are these two contingents where we are so enormous, it's unbelievable. And it's not just people from Colorado or Oregon who are marching with people from all over the country has joined behind the mark behind a banner that says Colorado ground zero, the hate state and lots of people carrying signs that say, Boycott Colorado, very spirited Welcome to those troops, and an extremely spirited and emotional welcome earlier this afternoon to PFLAG parents and friends of lesbians and gay people were crying and hearing as a lot of older folks walked in with a banner saying I love my gay daughter and I love my gay son. And I spoke to several of the parents who are here from Eugene, Oregon and Maryland and as far away as Oregon and California who just wanted us to know that, that they think that their their gay kids are their most well adjusted of all of their children, and that they feel that the rest of the world is crazy that they're the same one and that they hope that the world will begin to recognize the rights that are due their children.



Larry Bensky 21:26

Thank you very much, Julie. Thank you very much Julie Idris and we'll get back to you later right now we're gonna go back to the podium where Melissa Etheridge, author of plumbing and other things to hit single bring me some water is about to sing something maybe even that hit single hope Nancy Pelosi was listening still because that's a resounding cheer. Melissa Etheridge singing to this enormous crowd here in Washington DC you're hearing it on Pacifica radios broadcast.



21:59

I just want to tell the Los Angeles audience out there that Los Angeles which was number I believe 30 Were already Larry check on that for me somewhere, somewhere in the 30s out of 98. They just got here, folks, estimates from the Los Angeles contingent are that there are 800,000 people from Southern California alone. KPFA Hold on there, folks. We'll let you know what San Francisco gets in and we'll see what we can do for you



Larry Bensky 22:24

are these estimates. So who knows what's accurate or just hundreds of 1000s of people here? We have no idea how many maybe somebody is doing a helicopter count tomorrow. We're joined at this time by Nadine Smith. Tomorrow we'll find out from the helicopter pictures that the CIA usually takes a crowd like this. If somebody has asked us to Nadine Smith, welcome to the Pacific broadcast. Thanks. I'm Larry and I'm gonna be bills over there. He welcomes you to Nadine Smith is it's been a long day. I bet it isn't. It isn't nearly over yet. Washington National co chair of this March co chair of the lesbian and gay delegates caucus at the 1992 Democratic National Convention and we're gonna ask you to wait 30 seconds longer before we speak to you because we need to take a 32nd break now for our stations to identify themselves. This is specific as continuing coverage live coverage of the 1993 march on Washington for lesbian, gay and bi equal rights and liberation. We'll be back in 30 seconds this is KPFT Houston. Welcome back to Washington DC the enormous rally continuing not even half over yet. And we'll be here for another two and a half hours to bring it all to you up until six o'clock Eastern time. Three o'clock West Coast time. Nadine Smith, welcome to Pacifica. I know your hometown

fans are listening and WM NFR affiliate in Tampa, Florida, Florida. I read somewhere tell me if this is true or not that you were in on the founding planning of this march two years ago? Is that correct? Well, actually,

 24:16

the the planning for the March really has evolved from lots of discussions and lots of different communities, discussions on whether we should march on Hollywood or march on our state capitals or, you know, march in a variety of places, including Colorado. And so it's hard to say when when the talk about when to march and why we should march and how we should march really happened but a lot of people have been involved very early on

 Larry Bensky 24:45

why April 25 1993 in Washington DC with all those choices of dates and times and places. Why here why now?

 24:53

Well, actually, I mean, in terms of the date, the significance wasn't so much, you know, April 25 As it was, what day did we feel? You know, in terms of the different organizations? Could we bring the most people here, and you have to remember that when organizing for this really got off the ground, President Bush's popularity was at its peak in the midst of the Persian Gulf War. So there were certainly a great deal of belief that he would be reelected and a great deal of despair over that fact.

 Larry Bensky 25:24

Who is it that started talking about the million people I saw that start appearing early? And I said to myself, whoa, because you know, what happens to marches that make predictions like that the media are very quick to try to shoot them down or say, Aha, they didn't have a million, there's only 750,000. So maybe it's not as popular. We don't know yet. How many people are here? Certainly lots. But why did that million figures start to come out?

 25:47

Well, you know, we are grassroots organizers. And anyone who goes through the consensus process knows how long and tiring those those types of discussions can be. Said I imagine we were all just pretty tired and punchy that night and said, What the heck, let's put out a press release. But you know, we're also you know, like the cocky boxer that says, I'm gonna knock you out the third round. I feel very, very confident that the numbers today has exceeded anything anyone's ever seen before. Well, it

 Larry Bensky 26:15

 Larry Bensky 20:13

certainly seems that way from here, but we don't have a very good vantage point. And as I say, only aerial photographs, if they're variously interpreted, we'll find out for sure. How much does it cost to put something like this on who pays for it?

 26:26

Well, the budget that we talked about, was a \$800,000 budget. And I'm sure when everything settles down, we probably will have exceeded that. And the money has come from the 510 \$15 contributions that people fold into three pieces of paper and have mailed to us. One woman sent her \$500 part of her tax return \$500 and said, until she had full equality under the law, she'd only pay part of her taxes. So people from all across the country really have supported this. It hasn't been major donors or corporations.

 Larry Bensky 27:03

No, it rarely is not like this. I see you, you have one of the T shirts on I don't know how many official teachers here. A one that a lot of people are buying is I can't even march straight, right? Is this a large part of how you're fundraising for this to the sales of souvenir items?

 27:21

Oh, absolutely. You know, the donations and the contributions and the the ads that we ran pro bono have really, really paid off. And as I said, it's a true grassroots organizing effort across the country.

 Larry Bensky 27:39

I would be remiss in my duties, if I did not tell you that there are a lot of people, especially back where I come from in Northern California who are upset that the word transgender is not included in this March. And they were very vocal at a townhall national broadcast that we did a few weeks back on the issue of gays and lesbians in the military. What about that? What about the inclusion of transgender people?

 27:59

Well, actually transgender the term is is is included in the march. Speakers are speaking on the issue.

 Larry Bensky 28:05

I don't see it on your T shirt.

 28:07

Yeah, well, I mean, it's included in the platform items and discussion. But as I said, we had a consensus process. And going through that process, the decision was made to include bisexual, the decision was not made to put the name transgender in the title. And in fairness, I have to say that I mean, whatever the the outcome of that anyone who organizes for the March, you know, ought to defend that that process. But there was a great deal of discussion, especially from drag queens, who did not want to be identified as transgender, that found the term objectionable identified as gay men. And, and in fact, were equally vocal about the word transgender being included in platform items. So I think there's a lot of education that has to go on around the issue. And it started here, and it'll go forward.

 29:03

Nadine, it's a pleasure to finally meet you. It was it was a girl asked you earlier about why April 25th 1993. And it was brought to my attention yesterday by some Native American to spirited people, or gays and lesbians and bisexuals that the initial proposed date was October of 92. And that a lot of them and a lot of gays and lesbians rallied against that because it was the anniversary of Christopher Columbus and what that meant for a whole lot of gays and lesbians to be marching on Washington. Right during that that time and oh, that

 29:39

was absolutely, yeah, that was absolutely a factor also, to do the, we didn't want to conflict with the names project, displaying of the quilt. There are a number of factors. There's

 L Larry Bensky 29:49

also an election coming up a month, right there was there was an election.

 29:53

There were just a host of things that you know, in taking them all together April 25. Like came out to be the date that everyone seemed to be pretty much okay on. I think the students aren't weren't real thrilled, I think is pretty close to finals. But so anyway, that's that's how the day came about, but certainly with respect to other constituencies.

 L Larry Bensky 30:15

Well, the weather certainly cooperated with you. You have a beautiful day here today. And congratulations on the turnout, which is enormous without putting a quantified figure on it. And we'll be hearing from you later on from the podium, really proud to get down to that point, about two hours you're scheduled to speak.



30:30

Yeah, I think I'm gonna go lay down somewhere.



Larry Bensky 30:34

I could imagine you'd be very tired. Thank you for joining us Navy and smokey. Thank you, the organizers of this March one of the people who helped put it together, and who was here with us today watching her dream, and everybody else's dream worked on this come true. We want to go now to the podium where actress civil Shepherd is addressing the crowd.



30:59

We can't afford to lose respect for one another or ourselves because we all need each other. We need to give respect and receive it just because we're human beings.



31:14

I have a family member who is a lesbian. But I'm not here just for her. I love America. But I'm not here just for my country.



31:30

I would hate to think that if I loved a woman, I would experience discrimination in my work. I would hate to think that if I loved a woman, my children would experience discrimination. I would hate to think that if I loved a woman, others would think I was a different person. I am the same person with the same strengths, talents, weaknesses and vulnerabilities regardless of my sexual choices. It is a simple matter of justice. I deserve the same rights as everyone else. Regardless of who I choose to love and so do you.



32:21

Our whole nation should know by now that it's not the gender of the person you love that matters. It's the quality of the love between you. Our country is now honored and always has been honored by the presence of dedicated sailors, soldiers and fliers of all sexual persuasions, preferences, orientations, choices, whatever you want to call it. Yet we have wasted precious billions of dollars court marshaling competent and courageous women and men who have bravely served. Even more importantly, we have wasted precious human resources. We cannot afford to do that any longer. When I told my family, I was marching. My 13 year old daughter, Clementine came up to me and she said Mom, I want to march with you.



33:25

There was my proudest moment as a parent, it was like maybe I done something right. Unfortunately Clementine got sick and couldn't come. But she wanted me to come up here and

Unfortunately Clementine got sick and couldn't come. But she wanted me to come up here and tell you I want you to tell her mom I have strep throat and I'm with them and spirit

 33:51

Clementine and I both wish every one of you love, prosperity and equal rights. Thank you so much.

 34:03

Syrah, Shepherd, several Shepherd, we approach 100 movie stars. This is the movie star that says I don't care. It's more important than anything I ever want to do. Several Shepherd,

 Larry Bensky 34:16

civil Shepherd up on the podium back here in the Pacifica dusty passage right next to the stage and behind it we are rejoined by Kate Clinton after her moment of triumph. Fame up there on the stage and Jack valinski also joins us now his co host. Jack is the host of Lesbian Gay voices on KPFT Pacific radio in Houston, Texas, and co chair of gay and lesbian Pride Week in Houston for the past 11 years. Welcome back, Kate and welcome to you, Jack. Okay, Clinton, first of all, what's it like up there?

 34:49

It is. We can't say see if humanity right No, no. But that's what it is. It's from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It's terrific. It's amazing and It's very, very active. It's, you know, people are milling around, as again, it's like old home all week everybody's talking to each other. I think they get a little dazed in the sun. We, I should have told them to put their sunscreen on and drink their beverages. But they're very happy crowd and they're still coming in. We're still coming. Have you been getting reports from the dikes and the bikes?

 Larry Bensky 35:21

Yeah. Don't you wish you could sell tickets for this one must be somewhat larger crowd than you're used to having for some of your performances for

 35:27

me for every last one of these people, but the thing is, I don't have to go to their individual cities.

 Larry Bensky 35:33

Welcome here to see you Jack Valinski Welcome Houston

welcome here to see you, jack. vainski. welcome. houston.

 35:38

It's great to be here. And I'm glad we finally brought some of our weather up here.

 Larry Bensky 35:41

Yes, this is definitely Houston, Texas, warm and warm and humid rather, Jack we were in Houston, many of us from Pacifica last summer for the Republican Convention, a very different type of event from today's here in Washington. And at that time, overt homophobia was tried out as a political message by the Republicans. I think it's fair to say, and it didn't seem to fly they backed off at somewhat during their campaign nationally. Anyway, how about in Texas? Well,

 36:12

I think part of the thing, what you saw in Texas was that they were very afraid the HPD and Houston Police Department just saw all these activists coming in from all over the country, which are a little bit more vocal than they are in Houston. And that sort of scared them. And in fact, there was an investigation on those things. And of course, the local cops said there's nothing wrong. We have a struggle in Texas, we definitely have a struggle, but it's we do have state organizations and we are working together.

 Larry Bensky 36:38

What's the Texas turnout here today at the March did you try to find them in this enormous crowd?

 36:43

We found them earlier we talked to some of them. It's my understanding that every plane seat was sold. Coming from like Thursday up Continental Airlines was announcing welcoming everybody going to the March because it's a hub point in Houston to bring them up here. There is a busload of people coming also a lot of people drove people that I've seen all over, but we know not everybody's up here.

 Larry Bensky 37:03

Now there are probably a few people left in Texas listening to

 37:08

me hear me two queens left in Manhattan

me hear the two queens here in Manhattan.

 Larry Bensky 37:12

And queens. Oh, fabulous. We're going to be going back to the stage momentarily where Martina Navratilova is going to be speaking to this crowd when she does so. But right now I believe they're showing another one of those videos.

 37:27

So this is Ruth Paul.

 Larry Bensky 37:29

Okay, does not make

 37:31

drag queens that we're very excited about. If I could comment on the hair.

 Larry Bensky 37:35

Yeah, why don't you describe what

 37:37

hair is built? The hair is big. Many when there's a driving drumbeat now.

 37:47

It's a red, white and blue

 Larry Bensky 37:48

outfit. Tremendously patriotic.

 37:50

This guy or gal, it's a pronoun problem. Oh, nobody. This first image phablet is ringing drag. This March is also about bisexual transgender issues. And this may give a crotch shot here.



Larry Bensky 38:07

We'll do radio, we're just gonna go live to the stage maybe this is lip sync and that's why it doesn't sound so good. We got a problem with the sound once again from the stage. So



38:27

right now it's DC is burning. These these



Larry Bensky 38:31

people are sitting in the crowd. Of course, people



38:33

now this is this is this is drag has just been it's like been embraced by the American culture was recently on our city, Ohio for the biggest drag performance last night he was down at the post office building for hours and people were mobbed and getting in there. I don't know if it's the year of the woman a lot of the roles that were you know, that women were supposed to have their best done by men these days.



38:55

You know, that was really interesting. You're walking in Washington, you not only saw men and men and women and women, but you saw a lot of women and men together that were definitely part of our community. And I think we're beginning to transform and we're getting to work together more than we have in the past.



39:10

I think one of the things is we've learned how to work together through the unfortunate and horrible mayhem of the AIDS crisis. Gays and lesbians have been working together. And it's really, you know, it's not over we're continuing to work. Well, that



39:23

was really interesting is that the women really helped out the men during the AIDS crisis. And now men are seeming to support women in the lack of their health care that the government is looking whenever they do testing or anything like that women are excluded.



39:35

Right? I always found it interesting that when women went off by themselves, they called it you know, separatism women went up by themselves they called a congress

 Larry Bensky 39:46

RuPaul who we can't bring you visually or actually even in audio manner because of the

 39:52

wild thing happening

 Larry Bensky 39:54

down bodice is red and white stripes like that's a very big

 39:59

platform shoot As our own director is going nutty over here and

 Larry Bensky 40:03

the blue and white bra and

 40:06

Larry, it would look good on you

 Larry Bensky 40:08

try that on up there. Thank you very much. We're gonna do a little earlier today, there was a video shown here, actually right before Nancy Pelosi spoke about one of the pioneers of the Lesbian Gay Freedom Movement in the United States. And that would be, of course, Harvey Milk of San Francisco, one of the first people to call for this kind of a march on Washington, but unfortunately didn't live to see it happen. I knew he was a friend of mine and lived in his district. As a matter of fact, his spirit is with the first of these marches definitely pervades his hearts as well. We have the support from Greg Gordon of Pacifica station KPFK in Los Angeles.

 Greg Gordon 40:46

He was one of the first openly gay elected officials in the United States. And in 1978, one of the first community leaders to actively support on national march on Washington, his term of office lasted less than 11 months cut short by an assassin's bullet. And we can only imagine the

potential impact he might have eventually had on the national political scene. Today's march on Washington is part of his living legacy. If you don't know who he was, a long overdue introduction is an order. I'm thinking about the ones who come in I wish.

H

Harvey Milk 41:42

I'm Harvey Milk. I'm a supervisor in San Francisco. The game movements about the day the Board of Supervisors themselves are sworn in the tradition is every supervisor gets up and says a few general words and introduces their family there. And the first words out of my mouth was, as you know, I am gay. That has never been spoken before in any legislative body in this country. And I said that there's a state law that says gay people cannot legally be buried. But there is no state law, or law or any place in the universe that says two people cannot love each other. And I like to introduce my lover. After I got elected, I got the phone call, I knew I'd venture to get quite a few of them. One was from a 17 year old child in a small town in Minnesota, and the boy is handicapped. And the boy's parents found out he's gay. And they want to put him into this and that boy needs help. In the gay Moon is about the letter I got from Southwest Africa, when you read about a gay person getting elected here. And that person has hope. And that 17 year old kid in Minnesota has hope. The legislators and the executive offices be they the local supervisors would be the statewide run your life and they spend your money. I know the power I have as elected official in the city. It's incredible, restricted by the charter of what I can do or I can't do before Can I do it? The well to do those who have made it if they want to stay in the cause and so forth, fine, but get their checkbooks out of the closet, get involved and realize who the common enemy is. Unfortunately, within the gay community, we have such a class distinction and racism within the gay community and sexism within the gay community. Because some people think that Bank of us when it comes down to it, we all do the same thing. whoever is listening if we don't start helping the 19 gay people that just gave him a gay fighters who will get up and not take it. Sit back. We're gonna be in trouble. There's got to be a lot more Harvey Milk's This has got to be the too many young kids in rural towns in Minnesota. So let's pass

L

Larry Bensky 43:54

a case and the happy sad circle. And that feature was produced by this way out it's Greg Gordon and Los Angeles Music from the ones who aren't here by Bill McKinney. Ones who aren't here are the milk principally among them. But I'm certainly not the only one. Someone who is here has just come up on stage as it begins to cloud over here blessedly and the heat is slightly relieved. Here is Martina Navratilova.

i

44:36

I am not going to cry. Don't even try. Thank you. I'd like to speak to you today about recycling. No way. That's that's next week. I'd like to. I'd like to welcome you all, and salute you for being here. What our movement for equality needs most In my not so humble opinion, is for us to come out of the closet. We need to become visible to as many people as possible so that we can finally shatter all those incredible myths that helped keep us in the closet. Let's come out and let other people see read heterosexuals. Let other people see what for the most part straight and square and normal and sometimes boring lives will lead. Let's come out and dispel

the rumors and lies that are being spread about us. Let's come out and set everybody straight, so to speak. Our goal is not to receive compassion, acceptance, or worse yet tolerance, because that implies that we are inferior. We are to be tolerated, pitied and endured. I don't want pity and do you. Of course now, our goal must be quality across the board because we can settle for nothing less. We deserve nothing less. labels, labels labels. Now I don't know about you, but I hate labels. Martina Navratilova, the lesbian tennis player. They don't write Joe Montana to heterosexual a football player do they? Know one, one sexuality should not be an issue one way or another one sexuality should not become a label by which that human being is identified. My sexuality is a very important part of my life. A very important part of my being but it still is a very small part of my makeup a very small part of what creates a whole human being. In any case being a lesbian is not an accomplishment. It is not something I had to study for or learn or graduated. It is what I am nothing more and nothing less.



47:06

Now I did not spend over 30 years of my life working my ass off trying to become the very best tennis player that I can be so that I can become Martina the lesbian tennis player let's labels are for filing labels are for bookkeeping labels are for clothing labels are not for people.



47:24

Being homosexual, heterosexual or bisexual is not good or bad. It simply is. So now we are here today so that one day in the hopefully not too distant future we will be referred to not by our sexuality but by our accomplishments and abilities. For example, Melissa Etheridge the incredible rock and roller. Yeah. Barney Frank, the congressman from Massachusetts, Dave, pull out the baseball umpire k.d. Lang chanteuse extraordinaire Joe Zuniga soldier, US Army period. All these wonderful people and many more have come out of the closet, each and every one had something to lose by that action. And each and every one could have made excuses not to, but they didn't, they came out. So now I urge all of you who are still in the closet to throw away all those excuses. Instant find all the wonderful Reasons Why You too should be out. Believe me in the long run the good will far outweigh the bad. Because if we want the world to accept us, we must first accept ourselves. If we want the world to give us respect not to look at us with shame, we must first be wanting to give ourselves respect. We must be proud of who we are. And we cannot do that while we hide.



48:56

I believe that the biggest strongest weapon of our movement for equality is visibility. And the best way to get it is to come out. Yes, publicity of any kind talk shows, articles, movies with positive gay characters. That all helps tremendously, but it is impersonal. By coming out to our friends, family, employers and employees. We make ourselves personal, touchable, real, we become human beings. And then we have the opportunity to show the world what we are all about happy, intelligent, giving loving people. We can show our moral strength, dignity and character. We can share our joy and sorrow or happiness and pain. We can just be I urge you to come out. Encourage your friends and lovers to come out and be proud and be true to yourself. And as the song says, Don't worry, be gay. Thank you.

 Larry Bensky 49:52

Martina Navratilova treated with an enormous Ovation by the enormous crowd who On stretch from the stage which is at about Fourth Avenue here Fourth Street rather and goes all the way to the Washington Monument and well beyond.

 50:11

People. Now taking a picture of the craft.

 Larry Bensky 50:16

You didn't have to do that you got in your memory K Clinton take place here with Larry Pinsky and Jack Valinski , the crowd waving enormous rainbow banners. And also a big Canadian flag was up there a while ago,

 50:30

and very, very up and down crowd, they're up in there cheering they're doing the way they're dancing. It is, I guess, the essence of gay.

 Larry Bensky 50:38

Well, it better be the essence of gay back at the end of that crowd because they haven't left the march start yet last time.

 50:44

And the daytime has been idling this whole time. I hope

 Larry Bensky 50:47

not for the sake of air pollution in the district. But we'll find out later on. We have a reporter back there at the end of the march and she'll call us as we watch this on video monitor here. We can see the enormous size of the crowd and possible estimated size. Of course, the prediction of 1 million may or may not have been true. It's certainly big enough to fill every street it is 1 million. 1 million 2 million person who put us over the top. You're putting us over the top. We're going to pause now for a break and for our stations. Well you know after three, four hours, you get the hang of this thing. You're listening to Pacific radios 1993 March on Washington for lesbian, gay and bi equal rights and liberation and we will be back in 60 seconds and you're listening to KPFT Houston