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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

son, gay, alison, write, mosaic, tyler, lesbian, rodney king verdict, houston, pledge, melting pot, told, knew, allison, people, verdict, work, song, joe, community

SPEAKERS

Bruce Reeves, Greg Gordon, Jewel Gray



00:01

And a large contingent of people gathered there just all kinds of people. And there was, of course, a clear presence of queer nation stickers on leather jackets and silence equals death T shirts. Of course, beyond that point, it's almost impossible to track down who did what to what building because it was when rioting and looting breaks out, it's no longer possible to keep track of anything. There were nearly 400 people arrested here, of course,



Greg Gordon 00:31

we have to also distinguish between the people that were enraged, and we're demonstrating from a political perspective, and people looting, they were taking advantage of a situation for people working for people in our society that saw an opportunity and went for it and didn't want to deal with the morality of whether stealing something from a store that had been broken into was right or wrong, they just joined the party.



00:52

Sure, I think everybody recognizes that the problem, of course, is that what in our society creates a situation that the only way you can have clothing or a stereo system or food is by looting. That's, of course, the bigger problem. I kept thinking throughout this whole thing of the John Donne line of the death of any man diminishes me send not to know for whom the bell tolls, tolls for thee. And that we've begun to realize that when that bell rings, whether the person is black or Asian American or Hispanic or white or female or whatever, that that bell is ringing for us as



01:35

well. Brother to Brother, Brother to Brother, Brother to Brother, Brother to Brother,



01:43

this is a six one pill, reminding you that you've tuned into this way out the international gay and lesbian radio magazine.



02:01

Ombre Whelan for this way out, speaking now with Dorothy beam, the mother of Joseph beam, who died in 1988 from AIDS and had been editing a book of black gay poetry and prose and is continuing her son's work. Now, you knew that your son was gay before he died?



02:23

Oh, yeah. Oh, yes. In fact, when Joe wanted to write in the life, and I said to him, Joe, the world is not ready for this kind of a book. Why don't you write children's store? He said, and he said, Mother, I'm not into writing children's stories. I have to write what's on my heart.



02:43

How did your family react to Joe sexuality?



02:47

Well, to be honest, his dad still hasn't related to it. Well, when he when we were told, of course, right away, I embrace my son, because that is my son. The fact that he was gay did not take away any of the love of that I had for him. In fact, I felt now that I knew he was gay. I had to offer him even more support. financially, emotionally, he had to have this support, because it's a very rough world out there to be an African American, to be in the mail and to be gay. That's it. That's a triple whammy. And he needed my support.



03:25

Dorothy, are you a church going woman? Do you have a good relationship with a religion of some kind?



03:31

Oh, yes, I'm on a Baptist, I have been baptized in the Baptist Church.



03:35

Was there a duality there between your work for the gay community and your Baptist beliefs,

or your Baptist



03:44

Church, homosexuality is not discussed and not in my church, it might be in other churches, and it just never came up. And as a young person, going through the Sunday school and the Byp, you and the worship services that we had, there was never any cost. Well, there might have been but they didn't bring it up while I was there. But I reconciled myself to the fact that my son was gay. And it was my job as a parent to try to educate my own church and my other parents, that being gay



04:19

is God's will. And how did they react to that? Well,



04:23

they weren't they didn't react to kindly they would quote the strict scripture to me, and tell me that God said this about homosexuality, and it is already written in the Bible, that these things should not take place. And then I remind them that since God made everybody in his own image and his own likeness, Surely these people who are gay or lesbian, are humans the same as the what we call the straight people,



04:52

and what is the nature of the work that you do today?



04:55

Well, I consider myself an African American mother who's Gay Activists, I'm sort of taking up where my son left off. I'm involved with the AIDS of foundation, the Gay and Lesbian Task Force. I'm involved with assisting with counseling. I'm also involved in doing work with the Interfaith Council. I'm studying with them, and I'm having meetings so that I can go out and tell the story about the gay and lesbian population from from the standpoint of a mother's view.



05:30

And what sort of counseling do you do? It's groups of



05:32

parents, really, it's groups of parents who have gay children, and they want to know how I accepted my son's gayness, how I dealt with it, and what I can say to them to make their child's

coming out of healthier and wiser, so that they too, can look at it from a different standpoint, because it is traumatic. It's a traumatic experience for a parent to have a child say that he's gay or lesbian. Sure, especially after going on a number of years in the parent never knew.



06:07

A young friend of mine said that he had been able to process this information over 18 or 19 years, and his parents got it all in a matter of seconds. Yes. And it's quite a Whammy, especially if they don't suspect at all.



06:20

Most parents don't. I was one of the parents who didn't know anything either. I knew my son was a good son. I knew he studied hard in school. He did excellent work. But But again, this was something that would never came up.



06:35

Dorothy, your son died, Joe beam died and you went to visit his apartment and go through his belongings. What did you find?



06:45

I was amazed. My son kept excellent records. Of all the people he wrote for he could corresponded with people who had written him articles for in the life and people that he had written in prisons, and all around the United States, and out of the country. Now that really surprised me up a London on Darice of the Third World countries, I had no idea that he even knew people in those



07:15

areas. And what was the nature of the correspondence with these people, a people were



07:19

sending in our holes that they wanted to include in the book, also, or they were just writing him friend letters, they were having problems, and they didn't know what to do about it. And they wanted suggestions from him. And they really wanted help.



07:33

So you would decided to take on the task of finishing his work.



07:38

And the life was completed in 1986. The work that was left unfinished was Brother to brother.



07:45

So you were going through these numbers you you focused on ethics, Hemphill, you didn't know him before, right



07:52

net, well, I knew of him as a writer that Joe visited in Washington, that's really all I knew. But as I went through the correspondence, and Joe kept a file on everybody, I found that he and Essex had been great friends together. And he lived at Essex apartment when he visited Washington, which was quite often and Essex road conditions and several other books of poetry that my son had. And I knew that this was the person that I should get to help to finish the book.



08:29

I wish I could have been a fly on the wall when YouTube first got together.



08:33

Well, as my husband said, all the time, you have taken s6 Hempel away from his mother, he has a mother, you cannot do that you you're treating him. My husband said he's like a son to you. And six was warm. He was very sensitive, highly educated, very verbal, went about his work, and did so many little things for me, you know, he'd go to the store for me, he'd cut the grass, he put out the trash. I mean, those are things that your son would do. Essex and I worked like a hand in glove. It was amazing that we met each other. And it was like we had been knowing each other for years. And that was the first time I had ever seen him in person. And the day Essix came, we hugged. And one thing I remember when we were talking from Washington, he's in his beam, may I bring my cat. I said, by all means, bring your cat. The cat's name was raw, and raw came and settled in like he had been there for years. So even the cat enjoyed being there was just a very pleasant experience. So you grew together like that? Yeah. As they said, We bonded the assets. Myself, the cat, my husband, there was a bond there between the four of



09:51

us. You are wonderful, and I really appreciate you being here. We've been talking with Dorothy beam mother of Joseph beam, Darth Thanks so much for being with us



10:00

and once again it was my pleasure for this



10:03

way out ombre Weiland in Philadelphia.



Greg Gordon 10:10

Thanks for tuning into this way out the international lesbian and gay radio magazine this week Cory Dubin, Andy Friedman go with Gallagher, Michael patrollers, Greg Hanson, Keith Clark and Bert Weiland contributed program material. Thanks also to Dave Buell Sweet Honey in the Rock, Tom Petty and the new Miss Alice stone lady society orchestra performed some of the music you heard, and Kim Wilson composed and performed our themes.



10:36

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Greg Gordon 10:50

We'd also love to hear from you with any comments, suggestions or questions you might have are just a listener. You're out there listening right to this way out, Post Office Box 38327 Los Angeles, California 90038.



11:05

This way I was produced this week by Greg Gordon



Greg Gordon 11:08

and Cindy Friedman. And we thank you for listening on WSU Iowa City KF AI Minneapolis St. Paul and MGR Momo, among others and for supporting your local community radio stations, stay



11:20

tuned.

B

Bruce Reeves 11:22

And of course you're listening to after hours here on KPFT 90.1 FM in Houston. We are in the middle of our membership drive, and we'd like to ask your support. If you find this way out. And the after our show, something that you listen to on a regular basis. Colin pled some money to the station, pledge some money for after hours and KPFT tell us that it does mean something to you. And then we're important to you. That number is 526-573-8526 KPFT. And of course we're looking for Tada via con Thomas from singer in the storm. And that was Holly near and basically it's a song about who has hidden the flowers along the boulevard and we would like to dedicate that song to Felix Garcia who passed away on May the fifth. Felix was a very good friend of our community who was on this show a number of times and it was a longtime member of MS camp America. He had been a dancer with the Diana show or Board of Trustee the monetarist Activity Center. He was glues Mr. Barley in 1988, which was when I first met him. Felix also co chaired the Houston march on Austin and 89 the Bali 89 committee team Houston 90 and the Houston Lesbian Gay Pride Week 91 And so, Felix that was for you, because you you were a friend. And this next song is for a friend from Jimmy Somerville.



13:21

El Paso's multicultural for women. Ben brings its international fast rhythms and soothing lyrics to Houston Saturday, May 23. The event is scheduled for 7:30pm in the century room at the Stouffer Presidente del hotel, six Greenway Plaza east. Also appearing will be los vientos, a local group performing folkloric music of Latin America.



13:53

Tickets on sale at Pueblo to people 1985 was great and Inklings bookshop 1846 Richmond Avenue. Don't miss this dynamic and rich musical experience, May 23. The soaring concert is sponsored by Hugo in conjunction with estimating winter on Asuna.

B

Bruce Reeves 14:19

And of course, you're listening to after hours here on KPFT 90.1 FM in Houston. We are in the middle of our membership drive. And we would like you to call and tell us that you support public radio that you support listener sponsored radio because that's what we are. Jewel and myself and Judy and everyone else that are up here. Two or three weekends out of the month are here because we enjoy radio and we enjoy bringing public radio to you. We get no financial compensation from being members of KPFT and we've just gotten a very nice donation from Jerry right now. And Jerry says he's sending out a challenge. Sorry, he's sending the challenge to all united cab drivers to pledge \$10 a month. So we would like to issue that pledge. So give us a call at 526-573-8526 KPFT. Michael Callen from his Purple Heart album and we are in wartime. And of course we are in wartime, there's lots of different wars going on right now the war we've got going on here at KPFT is a war to raise money. We need to hear from you at 526-573-8526 KPFT. We've almost made her go for the night, but we need to make her go for last week to give us a call and pledge your support. Of course, one of the other wars that's ongoing in our community, is that against gay and lesbian violence, and we're going to be talking about the Paul Broussard case a little bit more in just a little while because the verdict came in on that. But the war I want to talk about right now is the one that happened in LA about a week or

two ago, when the Rodney King verdict came in, after going home from the show last weekend, and finally awakening, some reasonable time and finally fighting with the Chronicle till I got my newspaper. It was not a good day, I was finally able to read Linda Eller B's column. And it's it's a little long, but I think it says a lot. And I just want to read it because I know it really made me think the verdict was a day old when the network called How fast can you put together a TV program that explains the Rodney King verdict and subsequent writing to kids ages eight to 12? Excuse me, to my mind, the question was, how do you explain this mess to kids at all? How do you make sense out of that, which seems to make no sense even to grownups. Like many Americans, I was confused by the verdict and what we'd come to think of as the Rodney King trial. Although Rodney King wasn't on trial, or wasn't supposed to be, how do you watch that videotape and not conclude that at least some excessive force was used. The man was at 56 times and at one seconds, and the rioting. Well, writing always confuses me. I called Allison a wiser woman. Allison and I had been friends for many years. We work together when I was at NBC News traveled together laughed much cried some, Alison and Rob have a six year old son Tyler. This month, Alison is scheduled to give birth to another son who will be named Cooper. Allison was less confused than I but sadder, understandable. Alison, her husband and their sons are black Americans. That morning, Alison told me Tyler had been playing in their front yard. Across the street. Some teenage boys were goofing around making noise teasing one another the way teenagers will. Suddenly Tyler ran into the house crying. When Alison asked him what was wrong. He said he was scared of the teenagers. I don't want them to shoot me. And I don't want the white policeman to shoot me. He said. I asked Allison, what she told Tyler when he said that. I wanted to tell him that the black kids will never hurt him. And the white cops won't shoot him. I wanted to but we've told our kids so many lies already beginning with the one about the melting pot. You know, America the melting pot how we're all equal all the same. Even kids, no, this isn't true. We're not a melting pot. We're not the same. We're certainly not all equal. We should be a mosaic. And a mosaic. There are all these little parts and pieces that are so different from one another, but put them together and they make one beautiful picture. Call that picture our world or what our world should be. But we don't celebrate our differences. We don't and that's too bad. Recognizing their diversity, sharing their diversity. That's how tolerance has developed melting pot, my eye. What did you tell Tyler? I told him there was a man who was driving very fast and the policeman pulled him out of his car and beat him. I told Tyler, everybody was real mad about how he was beaten. But the policemen were put on trial and the jury decided they weren't guilty. How did you explain that? I told him the jury did what it was supposed to do. The law says you can't convict someone if you have a reasonable doubt about their guilt. The policeman said they hit Rodney King because he was trying to hit him. And none of the people on the jury was black. I told Tyler see these people see these things based on their own experiences. The people on that jury live in a community where many police officers live, but very few black people. The doubt existed in their own heads and it existed because how far apart we are. I asked her what she told Tyler about the riots. I told him they two existed because of how far apart we are, and have been for some time now. Did you tell Tyler that one day we may not be so far apart? I've been thinking about my father, my dad said made so many promises about how it would be different for us. And even more different for our kids. And it's not white people who think my son is cute six will think something else 10 years from now. So I'll make my son's no promises, but I hope probably any projection that does not conclude that we will be a racist society for years to come. It's not realistic. It takes a long time to put together a proper mosaic but I guess hoping is as good as way as any to pass the time until then. And so it goes and of course that was lender lbs column from last Sunday's Chronicle.



21.00

1 21.00

Okay, I do.

B

Bruce Reeves 21:11

And Anna she, she makes a good point. And actually, I guess her friend Allison makes several good points, but to think of the world not as a melting pot, but as a mosaic. And we're a part of that mosaic too. And what a different workplace it would be if we could develop tolerance in this world so that we can all live in peace and harmony.

J

Jewel Gray 21:36

Yeah, and like a mosaic, every piece is unique and individual but it takes every single piece to make the entire picture, the entire mosaic, so we have to we have to be tolerant of our brothers and sisters and and accept them for who they are where they're at.

B

Bruce Reeves 22:00

That's true. So we are in the middle of our membership drive. We'd like to hear from you. Our number is 526-573-8526 KPFT. This next song was at Tom asked us to play when he called in and made this pledge earlier in the evening. It's called homophobia, and was such a fitting song to follow such a stirring article