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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

lesbian, switchboard, years, call, women, gay, queer, work, houston, man, training, person, psychiatric hospital, hear, sit, song, hours, great, week, pretty

## SPEAKERS

Kay Harper, Greg Gordon, Bruce Reeves, Jeff Mackey, Jewel Gray, Lucy Chappelle, Cindy Friedman

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Kay Harper 00:02

on and you can leave a message there. And we'll call you back to get the information that we need.



00:11

D is the switchboard doing any kind of training, or training within the training classes about dealing with victims. And I've been, you know,



Kay Harper 00:23

actually, the training, you really don't what we teach switchboard volunteers to be switchboard volunteers, you don't really need any additional training to deal with a victim of the hate crime. Because the issues and and stuff are the same things that we had on other phone calls. Basically, the only difference between 5293211 just plain old switchboard call and a five to 99615 Hate Crimes call is that we're gonna be asking some real specific questions on a hate crimes call. Just



01:04

like, um,



Jeff Mackey 01:09

like a lot of the specifics of the incident, we'll have to get a lot of, of the more minut details in place, time place. Description,



01:23

and you turn this information over to



Kay Harper 01:26

it is collected and turned over to a national clearinghouse that I believe feeds into the FBI.



01:35

And the importance of this is you never think it'll happen to you.



Kay Harper 01:39

Yeah, you never think it'll happen to you. And we want to have a place where a gay or lesbian person who's been the victim of a hate crime can have someone who who is gay or lesbian to talk about this with because No, no, no slight to the police. Well, they are not necessarily sensitive.



02:05

I mean, some of them are just not equipped to deal with it. Yeah, but some of them are



Kay Harper 02:09

not not willing to deal with it. Right. And we are and that's why we're there but that's that's still brand new, and really hasn't gotten off the ground yet. I mean, it's there but it hasn't really flown it hasn't tested its wings yet right. So



Jeff Mackey 02:30

but this will be a part of training we will be discussing the hate crimes project and you will be more and more incorporated into training. I will say that the basic way we will deal with calls will be the way we deal with all calls but a lot of the forms and things will be different and some of the issues we will be dealing with



Kay Harper 02:52

yeah but I'm what we're here to plug is training training. Yeah. I want to talk about something I know more about



03:02

okay. God let me let you Oh,



Kay Harper 03:06

I bet Oh, one thing that came up while we were listening to the song in the interim was what happens if you've been a switchboard volunteer in the past and went away and have decided that you've done whatever you needed to do and it's time to come back to switchboard come home come home yes come home please. We can use all the people we can have ever seen pass through



03:29

our door so what does a person What does a person



Kay Harper 03:33

do when when he she has been away and wants to come back? He she had called switchboard I liked that inclusive. He she today that's that's not proper. That's that's he she had a singular English



Bruce Reeves 03:51

teacher is gonna say he she it is. Mine English



Kay Harper 03:55

teacher is probably not listening to the show. Thank goodness. I'm sure I've used wrong grammar somewhere along the line. But as a returning person, all that person has to do is to call the switchboard. And, you know, we'll obviously ask who you are, and how long ago you you went through training and and when you you quit being a volunteer, quit being an active volunteer with a switchboard. And we'll set up what needs to be done at that point. It depends on how long it's been since you've been involved with switchboard and what your status was when you left. So call is is the answer. And the




Bruce Reeves 04:39


number is





Kay Harper 04:40


5293211.


 **Bruce Reeves** 04:43  
And you got training coming up next weekend starting Friday starting


 **Kay Harper** 04:47  
Friday night. And the way to sign up is to call again. Again is to call whatever get my English teacher right


 04:59  
sorry It's okay.

 **Kay Harper** 05:01  
You're looking at me like I'm doing something weird.

 05:04  
I love you. No, you're fine. You're fine. You're fine. This is after hours of continuing tradition on Pacific as KPFT Houston 90.1 FM. And our guests tonight are Jeff Mackey and Kay Harper, the gay and lesbian switchboard. They've got a training class coming up next weekend, if you'd like to sign up for training class, this switchboard is a great organization to spend your time with, they only ask for three hours a week,

 **Kay Harper** 05:30  
three hours a week for six months after you finish your training.

 05:33  
And that's no time at all. Because you know, you sit at home and eat more chocolate and like sit in front of that TV then, you know, three hours, right? Yeah, of course, other things that are so important. The

 **Bruce Reeves** 05:46  
number for switchboard again is 5293211. And I'm sure if you want to call in the next 10 or 15 minutes that Kay and Jeff will be glad to stick around and talk to you and the number here is 526-573-8526 KPFT.



06:06

Is there anything else that you guys would like to add? Before we say Adios. Adios. Sign up for trading sign up for training. It's real important. Yeah, because it's a portrait local switchboard. Right since there are so many of them not. Is it safe to venture to say that the switchboard is somewhat like KPFT being a nonprofit and really dependent on its volunteers



Kay Harper 06:33

very dependent on its volunteers. I was going to say that people are a little different. Yes, we tend switchboard tends to be maybe not quite as as eclectic, eclectic. I mean, we are but we are not certain about that. We're not quite as far ranging in our collectiveness.



06:50

scepticism,



Kay Harper 06:52

excuse me, we're



06:53

back to semantic consciousness on the switchboard. Yeah, so



Bruce Reeves 06:59

And just in case, somebody's out there with their pencils, what are the other dates for switchboard for this year, if they can't make it next week,



Kay Harper 07:05

okay, if you can't make it next weekend. The next training class we'll have will be on March 20, starts on March 20. And it'll be the 20th 21st 22nd. And the 28th. And 29th. switchboard training is five days, it's 34 hours, which is a lot of time, we know. But we also cover a lot of information in that time. And, but you get out at six o'clock on the weekends, you have plenty of time to go play and do all of the things that you like to do on weekend evenings or



Bruce Reeves 07:39

go home and take a nap. So you can come back to KPFT and do radio or



Kay Harper 07:44

some of us are not doing training and KPFT at the same weekend, which is, you know, like forethought, because of course, I will be back eventually to my own show and teach you about or talk to you about things that teach you but talk to you about trading class after the march one is June 5, starts June 5, it's the fifth through the seventh and the 13th and 14th. August 14 through 16th 22nd and 23rd. And then November 6 through eighth 14th and 15th. And that's all the way through the end of 92 training classes.



08:23

Okay, well, thanks for coming.



Kay Harper 08:26

I'm glad we could make it. Yes. So



08:27

am I



Kay Harper 08:30

thank you for asking us to show up.



08:33

Oh, sure. You're great. Thanks for coming. Mensa, K Harper and Jeff Mackay of the gay and lesbian switchboard. And



Bruce Reeves 08:39

that number is 5293211. So sign up for class.



08:44

You'll never know who you'll meet there.



Kay Harper 08:46

This is true. There are some very fun people at switchboard.

this is true. There are some very fun people at our board.



08:49

That's right. And this is after hours on KPFT Houston and we're going to take a break and we'll be back. Does after hours. We're back. Hi.



Bruce Reeves 09:03

And of course one of those carts was Cindy Friedman with the one to three show, which is on Monday through Friday from one to three. And Cindy does have one of one of those five days, I think I think they actually have five different I was one one every day. But Sunday will be our special guest coast. Special guest host next week as we dive into marathon and hopefully she'll be playing some of her music for us and we're gonna have a good time, I'm sure. So, Marathon is coming up in the next two weeks. We're going to be coming to you like we do three times a year and asking for your support, to support after hours. If you listen to after hours every week. You know, there's things on after hours that you can't get anywhere else in the community. We play this way out which will be coming up at 130. It's a 30 minute news segment out of our parents station in Los Angeles. I'm, which usually has some good news for the week and lots of wonderful fun and exciting commentary and including lots of fun and exciting Christmas carols during the holiday season. Jerry bowls. If you if you keep up with Christmas and all those fun and exciting things, this is the 11th day. So we may play the 12 days of Christmas for you a little while.



10:27

You may just have to like, you know, shake that tree one more time. Or kiss whoever you kiss.



Bruce Reeves 10:35

I know my roommates about to shoot me because she's been ready to take the Christmas tree down for Well, four weeks anyway.



10:42

Now. You say she I don't understand. And you know, before I before I came out, I really didn't understand. You know, men caught me saying she



Bruce Reeves 10:51

or girl or woman is looking at her. Like a real girl yesterday. Yeah, really? Yeah. She's on the phone out in the lobby answering phones.





11:02

But you're serious. I'm serious. Okay, so it's you weren't just



Bruce Reeves 11:05

the right. The right. The right girl hadn't come along yet. But right, man, right. Whatever.



11:14

Thank you, dear child.



Bruce Reeves 11:17

18, whatever. Who knows?



11:20

Are you having fun? Yeah,



Bruce Reeves 11:21

yeah, I'm having fun. This is fun. It's fun to sit in this chair. I'll let you sit over here sometime.



11:31

Anyway, weeks to come on after hours. bring you lots of exciting things once again. 130. This way out with Greg Gordon Lee Chappelle



Bruce Reeves 11:40

and our guest next week, we'll be seeing D Friedman. She's a ball of energy. She's very weak following that. Hopefully, at worst, we'll have an interview with everybody fired on tape. And at best, we'll have her live here in our studios. Her boss, she is the current Executive Director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and she will be in town for a whirlwind tour of about five days, starting that Saturday, which is two weeks from now. And so it's it's gonna be looking good. And then Kay OB and the week after that, and I forgot what she said she was doing already. She's gonna pan out on us and she's gonna film out on us. And it's we like to have the women's side on on after hours as well. And we normally like to have a male and female co host but tonight that's not I'm not quite the girl that



12:36



that I asked on that girl. Speaking. Speaking, speaking of that, girl, she I could lie to you and say she has laryngitis. But honestly, we just couldn't get our schedules to coincide. That happened get enough stuff worked out. That's true. One of these days. I hope that somebody a mystery will be sitting right over there.



**B** Bruce Reeves 13:01

Wouldn't that be special? That would be very special. Whatever happened to the church lady she used to call? Yeah, I



13:08

know. Long time ago. I think maybe she didn't pay her phone bill or something.



**B** Bruce Reeves 13:15

She moved that spirit card No. Well, we're giving the only



13:24

120 After 120 and KPFT. Houston, I think we're going to do some music and coming up at 130 Is this way out with Greg Gordon and Leisha Chapelle, and all those wonderful people. And always folks who put that together, it's great. Here's Romanovsky Phillips from the CD fitting the flame and one of the enemy and KPFT Houston.



**B** Bruce Reeves 13:51

And that was Cheryl Hill. You're Jane Berry. And then lavner playing the piano from the first very, very first album that when produced called Women Don't spit and holler. And that was the song. I did something good today. And of course, we sort of play in that because marathon's coming up next week. And, you know, we really want you to do something good and feel good about yourself and dig deep into your pockets and find some money you can send to the station sometime in the next two weeks because marathon thrill important to us. Also, if you've helped us out with marathon before and you'd like to come answer phones for us. We'd be that'd be great. You can go ahead and call us now at 5265738 and tell us when you'd like to work because we'd be glad to have you help. That's right. So I love that album. It's bad quality and it's



14:48

and it belongs to you.



B

Bruce Reeves 14:49

It belongs to me. That's right. It was I had I had to beg Lynn for this apple. Did you realize you know Lynn, I know Lynn personally produced her in concert in Houston. One so many, many years ago, wow. But she said, Only for you this is out of print, there's only a few left. And they sound like they were recorded underwater. But I still liked the songs. And I hope you will too. And there's several songs on there that are really neat. But, and I've encouraged her strongly to think about re recording some of them. And actually, I think her last, her CD does actually have a couple of the songs from this album on it. So, but it was it was a play, and I think it'd be wonderful if we could do the play sometime in history. That'd be neat. But



15:34

that would be awesome.

B

Bruce Reeves 15:36

It'd be real different.



15:38

It would be real different. And like, where would you stage?

B

Bruce Reeves 15:42

Oh, who knows. But if Joe Watts is listening, maybe he'll, he'll hear me and we can figure out how to get the script from I'm sure when surely mine has a script, I don't know. I need to call and ask her that.



15:54

Absolutely.

B

Bruce Reeves 15:55

Could be fat could just be wild. But, of course, there's all kinds of wonderful things that happen in our community, we usually have gay and lesbian theater, at least happens every year during Pride week, if not more often, we usually have some things. So you want a little more often than that. And with that little card in your hand, say,



16:17

Oh, I'm about to tell you something. I bet you don't. Well, I hope I'm going to tell you about something you don't know. I hope so, or tell you there something that you don't know, all of

something you don't know, I hope so, or tell you there something that you don't know, all of you, all of you. Well, there's going to be a sale of artwork to benefit AIDS. Mark Coyle. I'm really familiar with Mark Coyle. He's a local artist. He's donating 10% and 50% of the price of his works to benefit the AIDS causes. His artwork is displayed currently the venture in on South Main. Let's see. So well, I don't know when this is I guess this is just currently going on?

B

Bruce Reeves 17:02

Maybe. So we'll look in the little book here and see if we can figure that out.

U

17:08

And you know, there are always other things going on and like diverse works. And, you know, really, really let me see grassroots organizations, even though that I wouldn't want to say that bar is a grassroots organization. But, you know, occasionally the Houston bar owners do get together and do something good rarely, but you know, sometimes they do. And we're going to dedicate, I think a whole show at some point and see if we can get as many of the Houston bar owners on as possible. You know, it'd be great. Yeah, that would sure be a surprise. bar owners there are. I don't know what to find out.

B

Bruce Reeves 17:45

That's true. Because I know some of the owners own many bars. That's right. And I'm sure some of the bars only have one owner. So it's a logical logistics situation, but we will figure that out. Meanwhile, it's 130. So that means it's time for this way out you are listening to after hours on KPFT 19.1. FM, Houston

U

18:08

concerns me. But otherwise, I find that much more together, much more dedicated, much more comfortable with him.

U

18:15

Rebecca and I went camping, we made camp. We spent some time eating, we were laying down by stream, and all of a sudden there were shots. My arm exploded, Rebecca his head twice and started to bleed to death. tempted to carry her clothes on successful. The entire walk out of the woods, I believed myself to be hunted. My name is Claudia Brenner. We were identified as lesbians by a stranger with whom we had no connection. He will spend the rest of his life in prison. But Rebecca, who was 28 years old, is gone.

L

Lucy Chappelle 18:54

Homophobia can kill. Education is the only lasting weapon against bigotry, which is why the lesbian and gay public awareness project wanted you to hear and think about this message. For

lesbian and gay pride awareness project wanted you to hear and think about this message. For more information write us at Post Office Box 65603 Los Angeles, California 90065.



19:20

I came out practically in the Dark Ages. I'm talking 25 years ago, before Stonewall. First they took me to church and all the people in the church made a circle around me and they prayed over me. And when that didn't work, they had me committed in a psychiatric hospital. I stand up here and I talk about The L Word and publicly call myself a lesbian because it is who I am, no matter who I sleep with or don't sleep with. If I am never sexual again. If I am totally promiscuous. I am a woman who loves other women.



Lucy Chappelle 20:08

Welcome to this way out the international lesbian and gay radio magazine. I'm Lucia Chapelle.



Greg Gordon 20:13

And on Greg Gordon, we've got something unusual and something special for you to close out what has been an extraordinary year and to begin what will probably be an exciting new year. Later in the program, you'll hear a rebroadcast of the L word, a performance piece by IO, Femi for lion which earned this way out the 1991 Silver real award for ongoing news and public affairs programs featuring cultural diversity from the National Federation of community broadcasters. Over the next few weeks, we'll be looking back at 1991. Reviewing the events and the people making news which affected the lesbian and gay community during the past 12 months. There almost always seem to have been those oddities and absurdities called kickers in the broadcast biz. To top off our weekly summary of some of the news in or affecting our community. News wrap co anchors Cindy Friedman and Mark Sakamoto help us stroll down a somewhat twisted memory lane. With LinkedIn 90 ones truth is stranger than fiction cavalcade of kickers.



Cindy Friedman 21:14

The US national lesbian conference held in late April in Atlanta, Georgia, drew more than 2400 participants, about half as many as conference organizers had hoped. plenary sessions of sensitivity trainings intended to combat racism and other oppressions within the lesbian community made up half the program, but reportedly drew only about 1/5 of the participants who generally appeared to be more interested in concerts, crafts, booths, and a variety of workshops. One of those workshops was presented by staff of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, who were surprised to discover that what they meant as a joke became its official title, one which may represent the apex of New Age activism, lobbying with crystals.



22:06

Panic struck the Palo Alto California post office when an inconspicuous package in a plain brown wrapper suddenly began shaking, making strange noises and moving around by itself. Postal

officials called in the police bomb squad who made a thorough inspection only to find a vibrating sexual aid. repackaged with the batteries removed. The vibrator is said to have arrived safely at its destination on Valentine's Day.

 Cindy Friedman 22:41

In Orange County, California, ACT UP visited professional homophobe Lou Shelton's traditional values coalition to protest his assault on the state's proposed anti discrimination legislation to show just what they think he's worth his weight in. They left at the door about 170 pounds of shall we say organic fertilizer.

 23:11

Roman Catholic Monsignor Norman belts, Azhar was an active opponent of anti discrimination legislation recently passed in the city of Tampa and the county of Hillsborough in Florida. Apparently, it was a case of his protesting too much about Azhar was one of six arrested in a sting operation this month for soliciting sex with a male undercover police officer. Now released on bail removed from his pastoral duties and undergoing psychiatric evaluation. Bout his are like so many before him, says I had too much to drink and was not in control of my census.

 Cindy Friedman 23:55

From an item that appeared in Toronto's extra our direct action organization quieres R Us met recently for the first time. One member asked that the facilitator recognize gender parity. Another member asked that the group also recognize color parity, ageist parity ableist, parity and species parity. Even though animals even gay ones do not generally attend queers R Us meetings, phrases such as blind as a bat and lazy cow were cited as examples of how our language marginalizes the evilness of non human species. Debate surfaced over the name of the organization. Some felt that the word queer because it begins with a que may put undue emphasis on that one particular letter. It was suggested that the name of the organization be amended to A B C, D, E, F, G, H J, K L M N O P queers R S T U V W X Y Z so as not to discriminate against the other letters of the alphabet.

 25:08

Ireland openly gay Senator David Norris apparently does not suffer fools gladly, even when they're ranking churchmen in response to remarks about homosexuality by Desmond Connell, the Archbishop of Dublin. Norris told the legislature I accept that the archbishop is an expert on angels, but he knows nothing at all about fairies.

 Cindy Friedman 25:35

Earlier this year, the northern German city of Kiel was the site of the first international drag races, but anyone who came expecting to see fast cars would have been disappointed. This occasion was a sort of Olympics for drag queens, featuring competitions such as the teabags

row. The most popular event was the race in which the voguing participants pushed vacuum cleaners for a distance of 987.35 meters. All entrants were required to wear sensible shoes.



26:14

Sometimes it just doesn't pay to advertise. In California, the San Luis Obispo Gay and Lesbian Alliance tried to place an ad in their local newspapers that listed 50 Local and 50 famous lesbians and gays in celebration of National Coming Out Day, October 11. Although one weekly printed the ad without a problem, the San Luis Obispo County telegram Tribune was so nervous about it that they asked for signed consent forms for each of the people named. It was a little difficult to get the signatures from people like Alexander the Great Plato and Socrates. Although one Alliance member felt his Italian background qualified him to sign for Michelangelo. At last report that papers attorney was still at work developing the consent forms.



Cindy Friedman 27:07

And finally, the US Direct Action Group queer nation build their October 12 press conference as a queer October surprise. They promised to out some highly influential closet queers, who did not take the next step on National Coming Out Day October 11. As it turned out, they dished only one major film store. A queer national told the media we have photographic evidence of him in bed with numerous men marrying men kissing men



27:45

in hair ribbon, he was singing the following song. Would it be wrong to kiss scene I feel like this and then he said hello Big Boy and gave a great big kiss on the lips to another male character. As far as I know the only person who's ever married was Elmer Fudd. I present to you are queer OF THE YEAR Bugs Bunny



Cindy Friedman 28:21

will continue to bring you news of a wicked and the weird in the weeks to come. For this way out. I'm Mark Sokka mono and



28:29

I'm Cindy Friedman



Lucy Chappelle 28:36

you're listening to this way out the international lesbian and gay radio magazine with Greg Gordon I'm Lucia Chapelle. Do you understand? Me I offend me for Lyon is a Los Angeles based black lesbian activist, journalist and performance artist. Joy flier produced this selection from her recent performance piece about a much underused word in the English language.



29:21

I've got something to say to you. I want to talk about the L word. I know this is going to be difficult for many of you. It's my experience that nobody really wants to talk about the L word. And not just straight people either. With straight people I'm not surprised. I expect them not to want to talk about it. That just makes me want to talk about it more. You know, I'm just a perverse kind of person. But it always surprises me when gay men and lesbians tend to run screaming into the night or the closet or whatever is handy just because someone mentions this word. I need to talk about this L word. It's sort of a badge of courage for me to be able to claim the L word and be one of them. So does everyone here know what word I'm talking about? Not a person from Beirut, not fewer garbanzos. I'm talking lesbians, lesbians, I need to talk about being a lesbian. I want to stand up here and proudly tell you that that's who I am a lesbian. It wasn't always so you know, I was one for many years, and I didn't even know what to call myself. You have to understand, I first started practicing as a lesbian in 1965. It wasn't easy back then. You know, it's not like they were Gay Pride marches or newspapers like the lesbian news of the Vanguard. I didn't have any clue that I was one of them back then. In fact, I always say, I wonder how women in Iowa even figure out that they're lesbians. I mean, I'm pretty sophisticated. I grew up in a big city, and I didn't have any clue that I was a lesbian. Why should I? It's not like they have images of lesbians on television or in People magazine. I mean, I can see a few black characters in their own series. But there are no series on TV that feature a lesbian couple. There's been a few movies very few, like Leanna, or desert hearts. But mostly, I don't see myself reflected in the millions of images that bombard my senses daily. How does a young person figure out that she is lesbian? Most lesbians don't have lesbian mothers or older sisters to ask for advice. Adolescents in general are confused about how to interpret the sea of hormones that flows inside them. But lesbians in particular, are starved for role models. Where does a young lesbian go for validation of who she is, I didn't have a clue back in 1965, when these feelings first surfaced, even today, I'm not sure high school students know where the bookstores or the concerts are happening, or other places where one can see a lesbian. You know, it's really funny about being a lesbian. Nobody's really sure exactly what makes someone a lesbian. I mean, most people agree that it's more than a sexual definition of who I am. If I'm celibate for five years, I don't have to declare myself a lapsed lesbian or semi heterosexual or something. So it must be more than what I do in bed. But can I say I'm a lesbian, if I'm living with a man, or does that automatically make me a bisexual, I have a lot of confusion about these things. Sometimes I wish there was a lesbian selective service, you know, when guys get to be 18, they go down, they register for the draft, and the government knows who they are, and that they're eligible to be in the army. Well, I think if there was a lesbian Selective Service, thanks, could go fill out their paperwork and get a card that told them for sure they were part of the lesbian nation. See, I need to talk about being a lesbian. Remember that song, it's my party, and I'll cry if I want to, well, this is my show. And I'm gonna keep saying lesbian if I want to. So if you get offended by that, you better leave. Now, before I get really carried away. See, I need practice. I don't get a lot of places to talk about being a lesbian in my life, because nobody wants to hear it. At my job. Even the most liberal person usually gets this very pained expression on their face, when I start talking about my lover, or that I write for a gay and lesbian publication, and heaven forbid, I should call myself a lesbian. It seems to be such a burden to people to hear that word.



33:26

I grew up in a cultural vacuum. I mean, going up a lesbian in a specific culture I come from, it's like growing up in Eskimo in the middle of the Sahara Desert. It's pretty hard to get knowledge about who you are and where you come from. When everyone around you is completely ignorant of who you are. I grew up in the Pentecostal assemblies of the world. That's a church organization that most of my family participated in, practically seven days a week, my grandmother, my grandfather, my uncle's, my cousins, all of them were ordained ministers in the church. And they truly believed that the world was divided into those who had been saved, and those who were consigned forever to the damnation of hell. And I was being groomed to succeed. My grandmother someday is the pastor of Zion temple, the storefront ministry she had begun. So for many years, I didn't know what I was. Back in seventh grade, when girls were getting crushes on boys. I knew I didn't feel that way about boys. But there was one girl who definitely had my attention. I was so smitten that I carved her name on my hand one night, which is definitely a statement. You know, what's funny about this is my parents assumed that she was the bad influence on me that I would never have gotten those ideas on my own. You know, have you ever noticed that parents never assume that their child is the bad influence? Anyway, I'm having a great time right now talking about being a lesbian. I'm like a two year old kid that just discovered the power of the word. No, I'm gonna use it till I wear it out. Because I didn't know what a lesbian was. Or even that I might be one. I didn't even try it out. Hi, the fact that I had this crush on a girl in my eighth grade class. My parents were so upset. They yanked me out of that school and sent me to another school. I didn't learn. Two years later, I was caught, as they say, in flagrante delicto, with the CO editor of the school newspaper, my best friend. I had been going to a lot of newspaper meetings. I mean, by now I knew enough not to brag about my attraction to another young woman. What I didn't know was what I was supposed to do. There was no joy of lesbian sex manual to look in for instructions. At least heterosexual teenagers can go to the movies and watch love scenes for inspiration. I remember the day we got caught as if it were yesterday. It was a Saturday in March, I told my mother we had a newspaper meeting at Beth's house, she had just gotten her driver's license and borrowed her brother's car. We drove up to cranes beach about 20 miles from Boston. Neither one of us had planned for anything in particular, we just needed to get out and away from watchful eyes. We sat there on this big hunk of rock, trying to get up the courage to kiss. I don't even remember which one of us was brave enough to actually kiss first. We ended up wrestling a lot. We got all covered up with mud and ended up in the shower together. And then we ended up in bed together, which is where her dad found us. So I came out practically in the Dark Ages. I'm talking 25 years ago before Stonewall, about the only lesbian book around was the Well of Loneliness. Now, if that's supposed to be a commercial for lesbians, they need to go back to the drawing board and start over. That book is so depressing. It's enough to make somebody straight if they weren't really sure. You know, I figured out that part of why people hate to talk about the L word is that most people are afraid to talk about sex. And they definitely don't want to talk about two women being together. And then there's this confusion about it being a sexual preference. And that's another thing I want to talk about. Because I looked up preference in the dictionary, and it said the exercise of choice. To me, that's sort of like saying, I prefer vanilla ice cream. If it's easy to get, that's what I'll choose. But if the local 31 flavors only has strawberry, I'm not gonna lay down on the floor and throw a temper tantrum or anything. If being lesbian was that easy to give up? Do you think I would have continued to be one with the obstacle course of negative deterrence out there that I had to maneuver, being locked up in a psychiatric hospital losing my job being molested by my physician. I think if it was so easy to give up, I would have done so by now. Give me a break. Because I'm pretty sure I'm not the only dyke running around who's wondering if she's really a lesbian. I remember back when I had that first affair with my girlfriend in high school. It got pretty rough for a while, and I wasn't sure if it was worth it. First, they took me to church, and all the people in the church made a circle around me and they prayed over me. And they said, lose this demon lord, take this

hateful, vile spirit from your servant Lord, we know the temptations of the flesh have overcome this young bride of Christ. And we want to save her, cleanse her, prepare her for the path of righteousness, lose her feet from the bonds of servitude to your fallen angel Lucifer that fills her mind with these wicked thoughts. Oh, Jesus, cleanse her violated body and fill it with your Holy Spirit in the name of Jesus who can wash away the sins of the world. Amen. Amen. Amen. And when that didn't work, they had me committed in a psychiatric hospital for making love to a woman. Now my dad raised me regularly for more than eight years. And nobody locked him up in a psychiatric hospital or filled him up with drugs or tried to convince him to change his behavior. But they locked me up and isolated me from all my friends and support, you know, the bad influences in my life, and tried to convince me to be normal. My mother spent every day for as long as I can remember drinking to avoid her feelings, especially the sexual ones. But since the feeling she was running from were heterosexual, she was normal. All I wanted to do was share loving feelings in an intimate way with another person who felt the same way about me. But the fact that she was also female meant that I was treated as some aberration of nature. So I made up my mind and figure out how to get out of that hospital any way I could. I started paying attention to the kinds of questions the psychiatrist asked me, it was real clear, I just needed to have a change of heart. Now, I'm a funny kind of person. I don't like bars or cages or jails. No matter how nice you make the inside look. So if you ever see what you don't want anybody to tell, don't tell me because if they threaten me to lock me up, I will tell your secret in a minute. I will sing like a canary. So I figured out that I just needed to say I was willing to be with men, and they would release me and they did that. The first man that even blinked in my direction I married him. And that was truly jumping out of the frying pan and into the fire. After 18 months, I was beginning to question whether I had made a good choice. I mean, the hospital started looking really good to me, which tells you how horrible my life with this man was. So it really was not a preference. I couldn't choose this man or any man, not even to ensure my freedom. I left that relationship and got involved with a really gentle artistic man. We work together at National Black Theatre in New York, we shared a brownstone apartment building with his best friend and his best friend's wife, who also worked at the theater. It was very convenient. He and his buddy went off together, and the wife and I developed a wonderful loving relationship. Everyone thought it was so great that we got along so well, since our husbands were such good friends and all. To this day, I don't know whether our husbands realized what was going on between us. But at that time, I still had not heard the L word. I didn't see it on any newspapers or in any books. The women that I saw in bars that I thought might be available to me, were bold daggers. I knew I wasn't like them. I didn't want to try to be like a man. I wanted to love women. The entire time that I had this affair while I was married, I didn't have a label for who I was or what we were doing. I just thought we were incredibly lucky to have found each other. I was actually pretty positive that we weren't lesbians because all the descriptions of lesbians that I had heard or read, or clearly about white women, just like the word French means white, or Swedish. I came to California in 1973. I was celibate for five years. I was busy though. It was here in California that I got to just hang out with lesbians. I sang in the Los Angeles women's community chorus for nearly 10 years. And many of those women were openly identified as lesbians. I went to concerts and parties and readings and picnics and all kinds of events, and hung around lesbians in the hope that I would figure out how to be one when I grew up. By 1978, I had figured out I was probably a lesbian too, but I still hadn't publicly come out. Two events in that year catalyzed my final leap from the closet. One was the Briggs Initiative, a ballot referendum that threatened homosexuals who are teachers and those who supported their right to teach. I was so outraged by the unfairness of this potential law that I got involved in the campaign to defeat the initiative working on the fundraising committee. Ironically, I was working for the State Department of Fair Employment and Housing at the time, my boss started asking me questions about the amount of time I was spending on personal phone calls, and I admitted that I was spending work time on political

activities. At this point in the conversation, she was very sympathetic and basically willing to overlook my transgressions as long as I made up any work time involved. However, when she pressed me further, I explained which political campaign I was involved in. Once she learned that I was working to stop proposition six, she initiated procedures to terminate me, I still would not call myself a lesbian. Although I had certainly publicly admitted that my sympathies were with gay men and lesbians in the struggle for civil rights. The last rung on the ladder to my full acceptance of myself as a lesbian came when I saw the film, the word is out. It was playing at the old fox, Venus theater, I went to see it on a weeknight, there was hardly any audience. I sat near the back of the theater and watched as these individuals spoke about their lives. A magical transformation happened for me that night, I saw a black woman on the screen, who called herself a lesbian. I saw a woman who'd been hospitalized against her will, in a psychiatric hospital, I saw a whole spectrum of men and women who were gay men and lesbians, and recognized myself and then I stayed and watched the movie a second time, I sat in the back of the theater, with tears brimming in my eyes. As I finally found the piece of understanding and recognition. I knew I could never settle for the safety of anonymity again. So I stand up here, and I talk about The L Word and publicly call myself a lesbian, because it is who I am, no matter who I sleep with, or don't sleep with, if I am never sexual again, or if I am totally promiscuous. I am a woman who loves other women, and I proudly call myself a lesbian. I stand here and call myself a lesbian on this stage, just in case there's someone sitting out there. Like I was wondering, what do these feelings mean? Could I be a lesbian? What is a lesbian? And there can never be too many ways to proclaim, I am a lesbian. There can never be too many lesbian plays, or lesbian books, or lesbian songs or lesbian visions. You'll never ever have to wonder about me again. I'm going to write it on the page and shouted from the stage lesbian, lesbian, lesbian.

G

Greg Gordon 45:18

Thanks for spending some time in 1991 tuning into this way out the international lesbian and gay radio magazine. Thanks to this week's program contributors Cindy Friedman, Mark Sacco mono Peter Clem Joey flyer and Christopher David trends on and of course to your family for Lyon. Thanks also to all who contributed programming to this radio project in 1991. As we hope the scope and diversity of programming on this way out has demonstrated during the past 12 months, they're too numerous to mention.

L

Lucy Chappelle 45:47

Sweet Honey in the Rock performed some of the music you heard and Kim Wilson composed and performed our theme music.

G

Greg Gordon 45:54

This way out is brought to you by a staff of community volunteers and is sustained by financial support from the community. satellite distribution is made possible by a generous grant from the Paul Rapoport Foundation.

L

Lucy Chappelle 46:05

audio cassettes of this way our programs are available by mail individually or by subscription write to us for more information.

G

Greg Gordon 46:12

We'd also like to hear from you with any comments, suggestions or questions you might have. Or just to let us know you're listening right to this way out post office box 38327 Los Angeles, California 90038. This way out is produced by Greg Gordon and Lucia Chappelle. And we thank you for listening on W E are you Blue Hill falls K u and v Las Vegas and one YC Auckland among others and for supporting this local community radio station

L

Lucy Chappelle 46:40

now you all stay tuned.

⦿

46:45

And this is after hours. We're back. KPFT Houston and we've had a guest pop in welcome Jewel gray.

J

Jewel Gray 46:53

Hi. Hi. Excuse me,

B

Bruce Reeves 46:55

my co host i co host at

J

Jewel Gray 46:57

I was just in the neighborhood and thought I'd dropped by that's a good one. I thought that was pretty good this hour.

⦿

47:03

This hour. You sure you weren't leaving? The bar is at this hour?

J

Jewel Gray 47:07

Well, actually, I had gone over and visited a couple of friends.



47:12

Friends, yeah.



Jewel Gray 47:13

over it. Juliet's actually had to pay my tap. Where's that? It's over here on Richmond. That's the old Yeah. Oh, Romeo. She has done a lot of great things with it.



47:25

Yeah, yeah. Good things.



Jewel Gray 47:29

Oh, yeah. Yeah, she's gonna choose her attitude. I mean, I don't want to give you know, like commercial and that's what I'd be like, because I really like commercial. Yeah, pretty much. Because, you know, I just, I, you know, got in there when she bought the place and help change I helped change some of the things around and kind of was a glorified air in person. And I loved it. That's all I wanted. And got to see some of the insides and the attitude change over there was a real pleasure.



47:59

And there really aren't a lot of places for women to go Are there any when I say that



Jewel Gray 48:06

borrower socially in the evening I'm I'm not a bar person and that and that's not to say that anything bad of those who are but I know people who see the bars every week that's that's just not me. I tend to try to