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SPEAKERS

Sarah DePalma, Jimmy Carper

S

Sarah DePalma 00:01

To hold and be held. His name is Tom McDonald in that is off of the free a compact disc of out music. This is a compact disc of all gay lesbian artists. Yeah, it's just, we just keep finding new songs on here that

J

Jimmy Carper 00:18

really, really good. Yeah, I really wish that they would issue that for sale, because it's so good

S

Sarah DePalma 00:26

there. I think some of the music on here is good enough to be heard in any station in the city, you bet. And if you didn't know, they're gay and lesbian artists, in some cases, you'd never be able to tell. That's what it was about. And anyway, to hold and be held is a beautiful song. And I purposely have used it because I want to talk about I want to talk about something that occurred in Saturday Night Live a couple of weeks ago, okay. Now, there's an organization called GLAAD, gay and lesbian anti Defamation League, right. And, to their credit, they do not only look out for gays, the way gays and lesbians are portrayed on in the media, but they also look out for bisexuals and transgenders as well. And this This is This happened on the Saturday Night Live program on February 24. It was just a couple of weeks ago. Norm Macdonald does the segment of their news, their new segment. And it was the last item on their weekend update. And it was reporting on the sentencing of John Lotter. Who was the killer Brandon Tina, and I'll explain who Brandon Tina was in a minute if you don't know. But he was a transgender person, in this case a female a female to male transsexual who was murdered by this man John Lotter. And what happened was they gave a one paragraph clip about the sentencing of John Lotter from USA Today. And McDonald's joke said in Nebraska this week, a man was sentenced to death for attempting to kill a female crossdresser who accused him of raping her. Sorry if this sounds harsh, but in my opinion, everybody in this case deserved to die. Now

J Jimmy Carper 02:19
that's not funny

S Sarah DePalma 02:20
the first time I saw that on the internet, I thought I misread it. I really did. I thought no, no I because I had deleted quickly with the Oh no, I read miss read it. Surely they would not have said that. But it showed up on the internet a second time and the third time and it wasn't long before I realized the transgenders all over the country were just livid. And they have been sending letters in all over the from all over the country. Now the thing about this this murder I've we've I've mentioned the brain to brain and Tina in roundabout ways, but

J Jimmy Carper 02:50
no, actually, we we talked about this. You talked about it with several different people who said, yeah, yeah, interviews and in fact,

S Sarah DePalma 03:02
Kate Bornstein being the talked about goat Yes, going there. In this this was an incredibly vicious murder. They actually plotted and searched for teen brain and Tina for an entire week to kill him. They then drove to Lincoln, which is two hours from where they live looking for him. They're carried rope and a hatchet in their car along with a change of clothes for each of them because they feared the bloods battering when they finally found Brandon at the farmhouse he was hiding under a blanket in defenseless, and they beat they chopped him up with a hatchet. After killing Brandon, they allowed Lisa Lambert who was his girlfriend to put her baby in a crib before they shot and killed her. The third person who was involved was pleading for his life when they put a gun to his head and killed them. And now Nora McDonnell has nerve to come on Saturday Night Live and make a joke about something like this. I don't know what that says. I first of all, I think it makes me wonder what says but no Norm Macdonald makes me wonder what it says about the writers. It makes me wonder what it says about the audience who laughed at it.

J Jimmy Carper 04:14
I can't imagine where anyone could see the joke. I can't

S Sarah DePalma 04:19
either. If this had been well, no, that's not even true. I was gonna say to anybody else, the community would have been up in arms. But that's not true. Because in this case, the gay lesbian community saying hey, wait a minute, that's disgusting. But for whatever it's worth, if you would like to combat and to to contact. NBC. I'll give you the address. The name is the president of NBC. His name is Warren Littlefield. And it's spelled just like it sounds. It's one

word Littlefield 3000 West Alameda Avenue. That's a L A. Me D A West Alameda Avenue. Burbank can California, in their zip is 91523. And, you know, let them know that you didn't not only do you not think this is this now is not funny, but it's revolting. It is revolting. Now along something that's not quite this bad, but I found interesting, there was a segment of Chicago hope about two weeks ago involving a female, a male to female transsexual. Now I realize this is a hospital show, and so they're supposed to do dramatic things. What bothered me is that they didn't take the time to get their facts straight. Or what did they say this was a a male to female transsexual several years postoperative in supposedly what was going on with this case is that the person was having a hormone, a hormonal reaction, and was going back to the state that they once were as males, including growing facial hair. It's not possible. It's just me. I'm sorry, it's biologically impossible. It is factually incorrect. It is dead wrong. And I have been talking to several doctors about it who said, That's absurd. Yes, it is. But when the producers of the show were contacted about it, they said, well, but we portrayed this person positively. No, no, she committed suicide. That's no positive.

J Jimmy Carper 06:16

You're kidding. So Briars and

S Sarah DePalma 06:19

other transgendered person who committed committed suicide on televisions? You know, it's the same thing gays and lesbians had were nourish the Sharon Stone movie. Yeah. And lesbians were all upset because the only way lesbians ever gets portrayed is pick axe murderers or something. Well, it seems like on television, the only way transsexual ever gets portrayed, is is suicidal, or homicidal or

J Jimmy Carper 06:39

homicidal.

S Sarah DePalma 06:43

Now, then, you

J Jimmy Carper 06:44

know, gays and lesbians had to fight that for years and years and years. And it's just recently that there have been there have been portrayals of gays and lesbians that that were not homicidal, or suicidal. We don't have to die at the in the end of the show anymore.

S Sarah DePalma 07:01

Well, yeah, I'm what I forget the name of the show when they hit a gay couple and big

questions for a long time was with a kiss on television, you know. I really am leading up to a point about all

J Jimmy Carper 07:13

this now. Yeah, we're sexless. But we don't kill each other, or kill ourselves at the end.

S Sarah DePalma 07:18

You know, what the big kiss? Yeah, um, in the last couple of weeks, I have been contacted by NBC Dateline. In their original idea was they were going to send a camera around, they want to send a camera with a transsexual for a year, to show to show the audience what being transsexual is really, like. This is a wonderful idea for a year for a year. Yeah. In what the idea was a good one that wanted to be able to go with the person when this person told the parents that they were trained. I say, I don't know where they're gonna find that person. Well, that's true. I mean, picture if you were in the process of coming out on anything. Would you want NBC to bring the cameras with them so they can document the pain and anguish of your parents? No, I don't think. No, I don't think that's a great idea.

J Jimmy Carper 08:05

But at least they were on the right track. And they wanted to, they wanted to show as it really was Lance loud. Do that. In on channel eight, PBS special. years ago, years ago, they follow this family around and this Lance was the son who came out. Oh, I had never seen that he now writes a column for the advocate. Oh, really? That's interesting.

S Sarah DePalma 08:32

Well, the idea was good.

J Jimmy Carper 08:35

It was very, very traumatic.

S Sarah DePalma 08:37


I wouldn't want to be the person to do it and flatly said, Well, you know, look, no, you know, there are some things I just assumed not have a camera at me. That's all there is to it. So we have got we, as we gotten to talking about what made it possible, you know, we've gone from what was good, I did what's possible. And it now appears, for example, if I if I do get invited to go to Washington to testify on hate crimes, NBC is gonna send some cameras with me. Oh, cool, which is kind of nice. When we have our transgender Lobby Day in Austin next year, they want they will send cameras when it looks like they will be coming to the law conference with us this year, that would be great. And so here's this may be the first time that we may finally


get television to show us as we are. And I don't think you'll find better examples than then you would if they came to law conference. Yeah, you're right. People like Melinda White Way and Jane, Jane fi and Karen, Karen and Jesus, I mean, the list goes on that it would be fabulous. I hope they do that. But the funny part about this how this came about, was that the producer had a transgendered brother who committed suicide. Oh, so why is it that what it takes, you know, you know, I maybe maybe this won't be if if this actually happens in transgendered people. will actually finally get a chance to be portrayed as they are, that her death won't had been wasted. Yes. And I think that's kind of how he's looking at it. But I do think that's kind of interesting. Maybe in the media at long last, we are going to get a chance to show people as they are. The only show that I can recall having shown a transsexual and the light, as they really were, was on picket fences, where they showed a transsexual who was a teacher, and it was discovered accidentally, but school board immediately fired her. And they started having second thoughts when when they realized that not only the year previously, they'd voted her teacher of the year. Oh, and for once the person didn't commit suicide. She stood and fought. And she won. First, the only show I've ever seen where we have portrayed as real people. And with some backbone, which was kind of nice, yeah. Okay, nice. So, okay, we're gonna go to some more music. And then we come back, we're gonna go back to the second half of the interview with Donna and with Vivian. And what I've got up next is pussy to read. Good old procedure. And this is a song I heard a few weeks ago and said, you know, this is kind of interesting song. The song is called heels. Usually, only a drag queen would say I want my heels on if you've had to wear heels any length of time you want them anywhere, except on actually. This is KPFT 90.1, FM and Houston and you are also listening to ke O S. 89.1. in College Station. Hey, Aggies giggled. That's right. That's KPFT Houston, and ke O 's College Station. Here. Just thought we would mention that. Yeah, we're about to go to the to the second half of the interview with Vivian and with Donna. And in this this segment, we talked about what it is like to be transsexual in Britain, we have I asked about how their family received them, how their friends received them. Now one of the things that's interesting to me is that is that Vivian is in a rather masculine profession, so to speak, in that she's the I believe the chief mechanic at a garage that would be equivalent to what Metro would be here. Oh. So it's very interesting. We come back when talking about some of the things that were said in the interview. They live in Liverpool, which is a blue collar town. Wow. Sure. It's a blue collar, you know, up in Liverpool is it's a blue collar town. And yet she's fairly public. I mean, she hasn't gone out of her way to make any big secret about the fact that she's transsexual. So I invite you to listen to the second half of this. And listen to that, listen to her talk about what it is like to live as a transsexual in Great Britain, in you might want to compare it to what it's like to be transsexual in this country and see what see what the differences are. So with that, we go to the second half of the interview. We're back with the second half of their interview with VIV and Donna have VIV and Donna are British. And in the first half of the interview, we talked about some of the travails that they have had in attempting to get married here in the United States. And in the second half of this interview would like to I want to talk a little bit about what it is like to be a transsexual in a different country. Now, folks who listen to this show, have heard all sorts of stories from transsexuals from all over the United States. And we've had numerous cross dressers on the show. And we've had for example, Jane Langley on the show talking about what it was like to be on a transsexual in Australia and she has some fascinating stories. So let's talk a little bit about now you don't you live in Liverpool, which is how largest city





13:46

but two and a half million


 Sarah DePalma 13:48
hours it's a lot larger than I thought it was.


 13:50
Oh yeah, everyone thinks it's a little one i town. No, we've all heard


 Sarah DePalma 13:54
the Beatles here so we know Liverpool is bigger than that


 13:59
it's it's like clear like and all that sort of surrounding area down to Texas City. Coming up towards the beltway.

 Sarah DePalma 14:13
It's kind of an industrial blue collar areas that recall, isn't it?

 14:17
It's got a lot of green spaces in it. Yeah. It's got a lot more first a lot more things than London ever has a little half. And I'm biased against the best city in the country.

 Sarah DePalma 14:31
Ants have no room to move in London. I've bent

 14:35
the best parts of London is the highway going home. That's how much we love it. Well,

 Sarah DePalma 14:42
I've heard people say about a town that's just north of here and I know I'm going to anger my audience in College Station but I always felt that the best part of college station was seeing in my mirror. Okay, well let's talk a little bit nada. Let's let's talk about your friends. Do you Your

friends know that Vivian is transsexual. Yeah. Yeah. In how do they perceive your relationship? Do they accept it?



15:06

All right. Oh, yeah. Yeah, I have one particular friend who is like a big sister to me. And she gets worried whether I have picked the right person or not. And out of all my previous girlfriends, they've is the one that she has said, Yeah, I You look happier. Whether



Sarah DePalma 15:27

for then it must work. Yeah, it does. Now, how about family on this show? I've talked about my family. And I've explained that my father is a Pentecostal Protestant in so we get nowhere that score. How does your family accepted all of this?



15:42

Okay. Yeah, the they knew about Viv, before I actually started seeing her. I talked a lot about and they said, it's up to you. It's your life. I have two younger nephews, who now refer to it as Auntie Viv. And one particular one is only two. He is after with all the time, if I go down and see my parents, then it's vivid this with my family are very happy. They get on well.



Sarah DePalma 16:15

So there was a hit and your family. Yeah. Now we have How is your family taken all this? I mean, they've had, while not with just all this happened?



16:24

Yeah, quite a long time. My brother just does not acknowledge me at all. It's like, I don't exist. My mother and father were very, very supportive. They came down to see me in hospital when I was had surgery. They looked after me afterwards. They were there for me. For Unfortunately, my father wasn't around too much longer. It was only around for five years. And he died in 1984, late 84. So it's been my mother's been there ever since. And they're fairly supportive. My mother has been super. She loves Donna. She thinks well, Java.



Sarah DePalma 17:08

All right now right off the bat that that's, that's good to hear. Now, how about employment if you had a problem with your jobs,



17:15

employments, yes. The job that I was saying, when I told them, that's how I was found to be a girl, instead of being this wonderful manager that they had as a boy. The made life exceedingly difficult. And in the end, I had to leave through the pressures that they posed on directly and indirectly.

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Sarah DePalma 17:48

What were some examples of what you mean? Um,

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17:53

do a closely scrutinizing everything I did. I work in the transportation industry. And the closest that you have is Metro Transit, okay. And I was one of them. A team of managers in a carriage that we did all the cash handling drivers, conductors, and everything that we ran out to this place. And we had this wonderful area manager that wouldn't support me didn't support me and went out of his way to make life exceedingly difficult. And that's what you did. And in the end of January 81, it just came to a point that it made life so hard. The only way was ours.

S

Sarah DePalma 18:51

I think there are a lot of transsexuals in this country, they can identify with it, they won't fire you outright, but they make life so miserable. You almost wish they would. And of course in this at least in Texas, if you quit a job, then you're not eligible for unemployment compensation. Alright, seminar, England. Oh, okay. So when you left you had no unemployment at all, then?

U

19:12

Well, they do after a certain amount of time, right? There's a way there was a waiting period was only a matter of weeks that now it's like six months. So if you bunk out of a job now and don't have one to go to. It's a six month cooling off period without any help.

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Sarah DePalma 19:32

Yeah. Makes you sort of wonder how it is they expect you to eat now. Have you been able to obtain employment sense that you're working regularly? I

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19:39

Yeah. I went on like job creation schemes. And I went back to college. Went to secretarial college. So I'm sure I'm a typist. I'm a bookkeeper. I can run the computer and everything like that. And then I gained employment after college, where I was actually teaching 16 to 18 year olds, who were outside the education system. Both didn't have jobs, office skills. There was a

team of three of us. And we all did different parts of so I was teaching them typing and computers and numeracy and literacy and all this thing. But we just run out of funds and the manager disappeared in St. Hugh and disappear.

S

Sarah DePalma 20:36

The funds went with him. Yeah,

i

20:39

so did some of our pensions and things like that, which we never ever got. So are you you're employed now? Yeah. After that actually walked into a job with a boss are not uncommon. At that time, we were coaching company, which is like, the nearest thing would be way by you actually go on holiday in a coach on sir. charter bus shots of us? Yeah. I'll be at about 40 of them.

S

Sarah DePalma 21:08

Okay. And Donna, how about you?

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21:10

At the moment, I'm not working, I'm under metal medical supervision. Waiting to go into hospital. So I actually finished my job last January through to ill health.

S

Sarah DePalma 21:22

Okay. And your friend, your friends, have you lost friends? Have you gained friends in this country? It's a real mixed bag. I remember when I transitioned. Some of my friends, just a smile to my face and disappeared in others actually became much closer. And even for the ones that lost they were replaced by newer and better friends, sort of, I guess, has that work that work the same for you?

i

21:49

I've kept most of my closest friends. Some friends that I did lose was from my previous partner prior to fifth. And they come up with little remarks. Like how can you go with Viv, now on the fact that she is a transsexual instead, because as far as I am concerned with is a woman who said what you are a lesbian? Yes. Um, there is a woman. Yes. That sort of like shuts them up. They said, Well, I couldn't do that is not you? It is me. I love her for what she does and who she is. And when I look at it a woman I don't see her path. I do not want to know about her past. I know little bits that she tells me. But that is as far as it goes. And you get a few old friends criticizing, talking behind your back. But we accept it. They talk to me. Because they do not know this situation. What they don't know. frightens them.

S

Sarah DePalma 23:09

What they don't know could probably fill volumes.



23:13

Yeah, they say is with a real woman. Yes, she is.

S

Sarah DePalma 23:19

Right. I always tell people I get asked that occasionally and tell people my body just Yes. I'm really wondering my body just wasn't smart enough to know that. Yeah. And that sort of leaves them scratching their heads like what? Yeah. Now how are transsexuals treated in Britain generally? Are they are they sort of seen as freaks? Are they invisible? In this country? We seem to have on three different kinds of transsexuals invisible, more than invisible. And folks like me who are completely out and say, Hey, you invisible people get your butts out of here. What is it like in Britain?



24:00

Alright, to those 13 loves most of the time, I've tried to just disappear, which you will find a lot of people to just get on with what you're doing live your life and just carry on. Saying that I've never ever hidden who I am and what I am. Because of the industry that I've been in this life like 25 years, on and off. Everyone I've worked with in the first book company is working for somebody else. Right. So we all know each other. You know,

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Sarah DePalma 24:44

there really isn't any hiding. I mean, how can you hide? Yeah, where did you go? Yeah.



24:51

So I know General Managers of other bus companies. I know. You know, all kinds of people that I could Been in those places that have, you know, played along for us, because I change sacks for the book, but you know, versus saying, you know, you got slapped down, put in your place. And, you know, don't learn, you know, says stay out of our way.

S

Sarah DePalma 25:18

In this country we've we've sort of developed a political movement and we have some people, fairly well known authors in this country who are transactional. I think people like Kate Bornstein and Martine Rothblatt. And all there are two or three others that just don't come to

mind. Are books and literature readily available? If a person was transsexual one of the information? Would they be able to find it enough? No, no, no.



25:46

It's a very closed society whereby I think we've, we've done that ourselves. And we had to find hard to find out what we found out. So why are we going to make it easy on anyone else? Well, I know it's a strange philosophy, pause. If you've got to make it too easy for people, to, for the better word, jump on the bandwagon and say, Hey, I'm transsexual I wanted sex changed. And then they go and jumble the system of seeing the psychiatrists and psychologists, the surgeons and everything else like that. The two people that wants to help them need the help because of the finance. They're not going to guess it. We have gay switchboards, transsexual transvestite, switchboard lines, and things that are all over the country. So it's not that hard. If somebody wants to make the effort. Before it's not an open play to say, hey, I'll take it. You know, it's open, it's there for you now.



Sarah DePalma 27:06

Interesting, interesting that it's a very different philosophy from what I'm used to here. And there's one thing I was going to ask you, and that is now where do you go from here? If you go to Britain, and they decided, yes, you are legally married? does that solve things for you? Do you get gain full legal benefits of a married couple? Or did they impose limitations on you?



27:29

Well, we haven't tried that. Yes. Right. As far as we can see, we normally go. It's the only avenues are the tax, we get tax relief for being married couples. We own we own our own house, or in the bank goes out our house to buy a house. So you can get allowances against all these things. So you know, we're going to try, see, they won't change one documents. Let's try and get them for not changing it and make them pay for it.



Sarah DePalma 28:12

There you go. There you go. Very interesting. Audience, I know that this may be new to you the idea of a post operative transsexual, and a genetic woman, having a happy relationship and a very open relationship and living a life together. But if there's anything that we have tried to do on this show, we have tried to show you the diversity in the world. And we're trying to show you the all the many ways in which people live, it's their business. And if it works for them, where where do we get off telling people how to live? And surely since so much of our audience is gay and lesbian, surely they could understand that. I point that out because I have had friends in very similar situations to yours in the lesbian community particularly, and lesbians just absolutely Ethan for launch. A men really reject them. And not universally there are exceptions in song, glad to hear I am glad to hear you talk about this because I really want people to understand that diversity really is okay. It ought to be what we're about. It's what we try to do

on this show. Anyway. Thank you very much for being here. By the time this airs, you will have been married for several hours. Please say that I'll be at that ceremony and I'm looking forward to that. Thank you for being here. I really enjoyed this.



29:38

Thank you.