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SPEAKERS

Jimmy Carper, Joan Devlin, Ray Hill, Glenn Holt

J Joan Devlin 00:01

Evening you're back in the studio with lesbian gay voices. And I'm here with my guest co host this evening Ray Hill. So

R Ray Hill 00:05

kind of call me a co host here, right? You get to be co host and interviewed at the same time. That's a cop. That's a rip off survivors on what it's

J Joan Devlin 00:13

like. It's like the Johnny Carson Show. You're Joan Rivers. Okay, Jack's not here.

R Ray Hill 00:18

It's my job, rivers, or is it Reagan's and Rob? No, that's me and Marta glass. But it's good to be with John and Glenn.

J Joan Devlin 00:28

Well, what we wanted to talk about tonight was the plight of gays in prison. Is there a distinction made? You know, there are some people out there that won't cyst every person in prison is gay? Well, I

R Ray Hill 00:39

mean it's a whole bunch of stuff about being gay in prisons we're different I found that

mean, it's a whole bunch of stuff about being gay in prisons, we're different. I found that absolutely fascinating. When I was down there. There are relatively few people in prison for being gay anymore. But whenever I went to prison in 1970, before the repeal of Texas sodomy law, you know, we in 1973, we got rid of what they call the old sodomy law and replaced it with 2106, which is actually homosexual conduct law. But under the old sodomy law, it was a felony law. And if you got convicted for three times under that statute, then a habitual criminal act kicked in. And in sometime in 1970, early 73, the warden on the ramsl, let me spend the evening in a tank with five old men who had been sentenced to life under the old sodomy law. And two of them were companions. They were companions in the free world. And when they got to prison, they let them live together, and they were companions in prison. They were bookkeepers and, and kind of prison Unix, did the pencil work. But they had spent most of their adult life in prison, they were from Schneider, Texas, and then we'd get out had some land there, they get out and go home and the sheriff had come kicking the door and charge them again, and then go back to prison. And then you're done. And that went on long enough for them to get to be life. But I don't know what happened to those men when they live in prison, the idea of who is gay is different from in the free world. In prison, the guy on the top is not gay. And the guy on the bottom is, and which is an interesting mythology, especially to someone who had been openly gay long before I went to prison. And, and I couldn't quite figure it out that because I thought that having sex with somebody of the same gender constitute being gay, not what you did having sex with. And so there was that kind of thing carrying as a general rule, I would venture to say, and although my good friend, Donnie Donaldson who was an organizer in the movement to stop prison rape, he died recently of AIDS, he got AIDS being raped as an openly gay man in Washington, DC jail. And so we spent the rest of his life organizing against prison rape. And Donnie just died recently, we corresponded over the over the email over the internet for a while before he died. And he disagreed with what I'm about to say. But in my experience, this is true. There is not enough trust in prison to allow for what I would consider a healthy love relationship between two individuals of the same gender. I think that prison sex is not love or affection based, but it comes out of two rather abusive notice. Heritage's a lot of prison sex is prostitution, swapping and trading something of value for something else of value. And so a lot of sex in prison is prostitution in nature. There is sex in prison. That is not directly prostitution, but status. In other words, I am so meaning so tough that I can have this little thing be my old lady, whether this little thing wants to or not. And that's supposed to be some kind of macho status. That is lessening somewhat, but being openly gay in prison, which should be differentiated from having sex in prison. I was openly gay in prison, but I didn't mess around and didn't do that stuff. Because I never found the atmosphere appropriate to do that. Number one, there's no trust, as I said, and if I'm going to have sexual communication with someone, I want to have something meaningful to me. communicate. And number two, there is no privacy. Not everybody knows everybody's business. It's a very small community, you never get out of sight of one another or, or the prison gendarmes and things of that nature. So there's not there's not enough privacy for two people to sit down and develop the kind of relationship that has something sexual to express. Now, I must admit, I'm talking about it in the show that I'm working on this ray Hill, the prison your show that Mario Garza had on all the right equipment to get my dad had very brown skin and the interesting little tight little cross between his eyes and that it had to do and other religious symbols and, and all that, but he had very smooth, brown skin and he was just a sweetheart, I was accused of having sex with Mario Garza. But unfortunately, I didn't deserve the accurate accusation because it never happened. In reflection, I think if I were going back, I would make it happen. So the accusation would be somewhat justified. So you think about Six Flags exit fantasy, a lot in prison. But real gay people probably have less sex than people who do not consider themselves Caitlyn, they get out.

J Joan Devlin 06:18

Now, what where did the guards fit into this? Because we've all heard the stories about God's kind of looking the other way. Oh,

R Ray Hill 06:24

no, I got a job one time because of the garden. Wakefield who was the bookkeeper in construction, I say I was assigned to the Rams unit as bookkeeper and maintenance. And I like fix the toilets and kept the lights on and that sort of thing. And that was a good job. But a better job was the bookkeeper and construction because you got to build things, and you hired people. And you were very popular because you could have had some power. And they caught Wakefield dragging a young officer out of his rear end. And that was the end of his term as a bookkeeper. And the end of the officers term is a guard. And so no, the guards generally, the guards kind of understand, you know, a lot of people don't really understand how prison society is built. It's not one society of guards versus another society of prison. Prisoners, you know, it's not the keepers and the camp being separate and different societies. It's one society, and that society exist for the convicts. So the convicts have a greater influence on the nature of that society than the guards. Though the guards are there only part time. I mean, they can go home at night. But sometimes you get the impression that they don't want to that they would really rather just stay there with a cut. That's where their friends are. And that's where people that understand the moment you go to, like conventions, of guards, I've been to American Correctional Association conventions and things. And I walk in, and I'm introduced as a convict. I am as welcomed there, as people who are wardens and majors and directors of prison. Because we all speak the same language. And we all understand it's outsiders that we don't trust, or they don't understand it. But there's sexual things. And if you listen to the prison show on a regular basis, the prison show is riff with women who have fallen in love with male inmates, and are now unemployed, trying to visit and have marriage by proxy. So and it's true of males too. It's just that, that that's the sort of thing that old hardened convicts and old males don't talk about. There's this wonderful, wonderful documentary they did on Alcatraz. And there's this old convict, old convict I mean, he's in his 80s. And he's talking about his friendship with a guard. And when it gets to the part where they were separated by the American Bureau of Prisons, HE SOBS you really don't sob. Whenever you get separated from your platonic friends. You get you start sobbing when you're separated from your dear friends. And that came out of this wonderful national public television documentary and I just said, Oh, there's one immune Have you had to know what's going on? Figure it out. But there's one and I've known others. I've known other good. I've been approached by Gordon said I did time with how're you doing Raymond? Can I come over and visit Scott and have a few drinks with it and don't drink but you can come over and visit?

G Glenn Holt 09:34

Ray, I've got a question. Sure. I was wondering about if, I mean, all the stories that you hear are about what goes on in the penitentiaries Yeah, do the same thing happen in the county lockup and in the municipal? No,

R Ray Hill 09:47

no, they're very distinctly different societies. And City Jail is where you go. As matter of fact, by federal law, you are required to be out of city jail within 24 hours. You either Go to county where you've got a more serious charge or you go to the P farm where you're serving out a fine or you hit the road. And that's the Saunders case. If anybody's out there listening who has spent more than 24 hours in Houston city jailed on the 61 reasoner street, you have been kept in violation from existing United States Federal Court agreement, the city has a 24 hour holdover. Now they may stretch it out so that you can go to court and the homeless people downtown have figured out clever ways how to delay plead guilty so that they can stay two or three days during the rainstorm or when it's cold, or when the mosquitoes are about to eat him under the bridge, they figured out how to manipulate that system. And if that if it's by mutual consent, you can stay two or three days to get out of the cold. But for most people, they're picked up for traffic offenses, another Class C misdemeanor, City Jail is 24. Our facility you're out of there. County Jail is where you visit, you're not supposed to be in county jail too long. Although there are people that are there for months and months and months, the turnover in the tank is very high. There not a lot of people that are there for long periods of time. And at any given time, there will be a bunch of people that came in today and a bunch of people that came in yesterday and a few people that have been there more than a week and a few are people that have been there more than a month. And so that turnover keeps it from being a stable society, and sex and unstable societies. That's one of the things kind of falls off the table. Now there's some kind of conceptual x and we get some interesting variations on that theme. I was touring the jail late at night not long ago. And there was this black dude, who was screaming at his other friend that they were busted together telling him how much he loved him and how much they wanted to be there. And this other guy was hiding. I mean, seriously, not just on the bug playing like he was sleep under the mattress playing like he wasn't there. But when he sobered up, of course, then the whole idea changed. And somebody was asking me about the conversation last night Unfortunately, nobody made a big issue of the conversation from last night. But but there's not likely to be any imposed sex is not likely to be any any prostitution, kind of sex in a jail, lockup, be it county or city prison are where people live. And that's a lot of difference. The bus comes rattling out of Huntsville diagnostic unit and it stopped it to Ramsey and you get off and you gonna be there for years. I mean, if you've got a five year sentence right now, you probably won't even get a serious consideration for parole until you've been there at least three. If you've got a 10 year sentence, you're looking at seven. And the governor wants to increase that so you're trapped. That is the world in which you live. And I need to go down there and interview I got a letter today from a young man on the Luthor unit or one of the units of a random episode. I'll talk about it on this coming Friday show who wrote me and said they're taking gay people out of protective custody where they have been for years and years and years and putting forcing them into general population? Well, I have there are good and bad reasons for segregating gay men and lesbians, for instance. I don't think there needs to be any protective custody for women on the basis of sexual behavior in women's units at all. Because we're dealing with women and what sex in prison as far as women are concerned is a whole different game. They wake women up at night in the gates of a unit and they carry them down to infirmary and inspect them to see if they have been masturbating or having contact with other women that would indicate any swollen Enos or, or any penetration at all. I mean, it's the most humiliating, demeaning, kinda, they don't do them in that way. They don't go and say, Hey, bend over and spread your cheeks. I mean, check it out and see if you've had any penetration here. No, but they do that to the women. They do that routinely to the women. And invariably, they use male guards to do it. And so sex is still abusive, very abusive, and women's and much more abusive and women's institution, but at the same time, there's probably a lot more emotional entanglement among the women. It may not all be sexual, but there's a lot of emotional support system. I have never talked to a woman

out of a Texas prison. And I know Jeanette sitting down to the store listening to this because I told her is going to be on the show. I've never talked to a woman who spent time in prison who didn't have a bunch of women. For it with him. They had emotional and personal ties that can get sexual. You of privacy affords it frequently it doesn't. The assumption of the guards or the women are in there, bouncing around like a bunch of flounders in the bottom of the boat. And that's not true. But that's just the way a male institutional hierarchy thinks of women, period. Sexism. Prison amplifies our prejudices.

J

Joan Devlin 15:23

What it's going to ask to is, you know, I find that interesting what you said about the woman being inspected because I remember when recently when women guards were added to the prison system and and several woman guards took part in a strip search that was done a couple of men that was a big deal was made out of how humiliating the men were and how embarrassed the megalitres

R

Ray Hill 15:43

like that all the time about half a mile. I do I love my bride to convict so you know, everybody's got a but male plumbing is not you're gonna be surprised to an adult female, you know? And, and, and don't you know, if you're going to have an interview who has a puritanical idea of the role of women in society, or people who are dangerously prejudiced against women? Yeah,

J

Joan Devlin 16:07

but you know, I find it amazing that when the male prisoners complain about being humiliated by having to strip in front of a woman guard, this begs the news. You say, Now women are routinely done by men and nobody seems to think there's any problem with that. What's the

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Ray Hill 16:22

female population Texas prison about 26 2700. It's not real big. It's growing, but it's less than 3000. Right now. There will be 19 births to women who have been incarcerated for more than nine months.

J

Joan Devlin 16:38

This year, so that leaves the guards pretty bad if

R

Ray Hill 16:41

they're doing it those those butch women in those sales are doing it with broomstick handles, I'm sure but you know, I deal with these things all the time. I do. I cannot tell you a quick story. Go for it. There was this guy that I was doing time with on the Ramsey. His name

was Dan they called him Dan the raper, man, and he had he was rapist, and he was doing time for being a rapist. And Dan let it be known that he was interested in Dolores and Dolores was a transgendered person. Also black, both of them from Third Ward, they grew up kind of grew up together. But Dolores kept getting better looking and Dan kept getting worse looking. And so Dan insisted that, that he wanted some of Dolores. And so Dolores worked in the garden squad, which meant that divorce dealt with vegetables and things of that nature. Dan worked in the in line which meant that he dealt with cotton and heavy crops. And so the when they come in after a day's work for Shakedown, the garden squad who went out laters in the line would come in first and then after they get cleared out then the line would come out. Well slim McGee was one of the meanest men in the world and he was the the major over the field, and slim McGee he brought the line in one time, especially at the same time the garden squad to give Raipur Dan his chance. And in my show, I tell the story of how that happened. The word went all over the unit, everybody knew that Dan was going to make his move that day. Everybody on the farm knew that. The guards the warden, the people that worked in the laundry, the people that worked in the power house that people that worked in the kitchen, were all out there to see Dan attack Dolores, I mean, he knew it was going to happen. They knew slim McGee had set it up. And so we watched him and there he was cocked and loaded, standing in line looking across at Dolores and Dolores knew about this too. And Dolores was nervous and scared. And all of a sudden he broke for he broke across four lines of convicts running all the way diagonally across the shape, it will shake down this. You take off your hat and you take off all your clothes, you come into prison just like you're coming into the world naked. You've got your socks and your hat and your cigarettes and your hat and your boots in the other hand, and you show the officer your hats and everybody's naked. There's a half quarter mile of naked people there. And you hit your boots together and the guard goes down and go into the shower in here come down tearing across that crowd and naked man and he grabbed him. I made \$5 Because I bet he'd have me dinner before they hit the ground.



Joan Devlin 19:22

Right. Well take a musical break and we'll be back with our panel discussion on being out in the media.



Glenn Holt 19:31

Yes and the phones light up



Ray Hill 19:50

all right. Apologize to the audience.



19:52

Right story.



Joan Devlin 19:53

JOAN DEVLIN 19:55

It is and if you want to hear more the stories right. I'm

R

Ray Hill 19:57

opening at the end of March. Thanks Here's me at the end of May, a little place call actors workshop, which is over in the just east of the Georgia brown Convention Center. It's a one man show called Ray hill the prisoners. Well,

J

Joan Devlin 20:13

I'll be there. And speaking of media and being out and Ellen and all that good stuff that's coming up. We have in the studio right now Jim Carper, from after hours, Kyle Young from OutSmart Hey, and of course, Ray, and we want to talk about being openly gay in the media. You know, we don't you know, people like Jim and Kyle and right, you don't get any fanfare, right gets fanfare because he causes trouble but not not for being gay shamelessly self promote.

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20:39

Well, right gets fanfare because he was actually the first. Yeah, first was out when you didn't associate without people. Yeah, yeah.

R

Ray Hill 20:49

When I first did, I did a television show with Ray Miller. on channel two, it was called the after hours and, and I went on there in 19, and 66, or 67. I had asked for the time because channel 13 was fixing to do a documentary expos called Houston, Galveston, Sodom and Gomorrah. So you can imagine what we all presumed that con to that document. And so I called Ray Miller, who knew me from journalism class of all things, and said, I want on as an identifiably gay person to ask for equal time against that documentary. And he gave me time, but I had to argue with a preacher and a psychologist and a cop. And I want all three debates in 15 minutes I was running. And then I propagandize for 45 minutes until Mr. Miller said, Mr. Hill, may I have the television station back so we can take it off? And that was the first I went the next night, and could not get served at the old plantation. No, why? Because I was the homosexual have been good. All squares in trouble. Don't make waves. And to this day, there is not any reporter who has been in this town for more than a week does not have my home number, my fax number and my pager number in case the story breaks concerning gay and lesbian people. And you know, I encourage every president of the caucus, the first thing they should do is first act of Office is send out a news release saying, I'm president of Houston gay and lesbian Political Caucus. These are the contact numbers and be absolutely available, because the problem the media has dealing with gay stories is that they got Ray Hill, and maybe pokey Anderson, and nobody else talked to. Well,

J

Joan Devlin 22:50

that goes to the next point, which is, Kyle, how long have you been in journalism?



22:55

Well, I I've been in media longer than I'd been in journalism. I was in radio for a number of years. And the last station I was at was MCs 96.5. Journalism, really, I had a journalism minor and did a lot of freelance writing when I was in college, but I started writing when I was actually with the Texas triangle. And the opportunity came up to, to kind of hit things up at OutSmart and I went forward.



J Joan Devlin 23:24

Sure. So have you always been out or open? Or? No,



23:28

actually, I came out about five years ago. So when I was in radio, I had just started peering out of the closet. In fact, I remember at that time, there was a midday guy. Because I, I wasn't in but I wasn't out. It just didn't talk about it at that time. And the guy who was doing the midday show, decided to spread this rumor around the station that I was a drag queen. This kind of got back to me, I could turn



R Ray Hill 23:56

that into promotion if you're playing well, hey, I should have



23:59

actually I went in and in the middle of his show one day, and I just went up to him and I said, Would you look at these arms which are quite hairy. Yeah. And I said I would make a horrible drag queen and, and he kind of stuttered and stammered and never mentioned it again. But yeah, and what I found in when I was in radio at that time, was that there were there were a number of gay and lesbian people there, and other radio stations. And at that time, they were still very much closeted. And this was just four or five years ago, even if they weren't on air talent. Well,



R Ray Hill 24:30

30 years ago, I know a lot of gay people in radio, I'm sure will fare well and it's wonderful job nobody sees you. You can be a person develop a following you can you actually become a character and develop that character. And that character develops once what I'm doing is prison show is I'm in character that's showbiz. It's informative, but it's showbiz and this is showbiz. And you've developed and developed following and people don't know about your

private life. And and unfortunately a lot of people I know In early radio whenever I was, because I was radio junkie, kind of guy that went to the country western station kind of hung out and looked through the glass at the guys and gals doing real radio, it was mostly guys in those days, doing real radio and spinning Country and Western records or, or news. And I'm just one of those kinds of people ready to go always been fascinated to brain and you know, kind of people. I just didn't go techie, I wanted a microphone, give me keep your Gundam transistors. And I was fascinated by that sort of thing. And that's a whole culture in and of itself. And some of the sickest drunks I've ever known were early radio.

J Joan Devlin 25:39

Well, on that note,

25:41

well, history and Ray was talking about 1967. And I believe that's the year I met him. And I was so impressed Here was a man who was talking about being openly gay, and that was totally unheard of back in those days. You just you kind of you had your gay friends and you sat around, you talked about how you all passed at work and how nobody knew you were gay. And you never know you were gonna grow out of it. Yeah, and how you never saw I'm gonna get married when I'm 35. Yeah, right. And you never associated with with anyone who was openly gay, because you didn't want to be taken for one of those. Now, 20 years later, my life changed drastically. I lost that corporate job in a layoff. And I went to get tested for for AIDS and I tested positive. So 1987 was a really terrible year. But it's also the year that I changed my life because I became an activist, I thought, why not? I'm not going to be in the corporate world anymore. Let me do what I want to do.

J Jimmy Carper 26:48

Especially facing possible death. So what I wanted to do is do something for my community. I've been been living here since 1966. And never really been a part of it. So that's when I got active in with the switchboard with radio, with protesting. But coming out of the closet was was as gay was was not really a big deal for me coming out of the closet as HIV was the bigger deal.

R Ray Hill 27:17

Mm hm. That was true. And I felt a responsibility

J Jimmy Carper 27:21

since I was on the radio to talk about that because I could, and in those days, so many people were keeping that a secret because they're afraid of losing their insurance afraid of losing their jobs.

R

Ray Hill 27:32

The first openly HIV person in media in Houston was Mike Mitch. Yes. And he was on the wildest Stein show I had found had been founding hosts of the Wildenstein show back in 1975. And long about 1978 I brought in group price when it became manager Greer became that then Mike me took over from group price when he went to greener pasture. Mike mish took off a long sabbatical when we came back, he was HIV positive. And he was willing to talk about that on the radio. Jack, I love Jack today as Jack Valinski co host of the show. I love him to death, but he hates me to this day. Because I used to hold I used to stand in that hole and hold Jack physically back from coming in the studio when Mike was struggling, trying to keep it together do the Wildenstein show, as Father of gay and lesbian radio I fought and and I you know, I brag about myself a lot. But one of the wisest thing I do is I'll let Mike mish die on these ones. Yes, yeah, that was very was there's no other way to communicate, the significant impact AIDS was going to have on all of our lives than to allow Mike mish to go through the process of the disease before these microphones. And that happened. And, you know, if you get jack in an honest mood, he'll tell you how horrible that was for me to do. And it may have been wrong. It may have been the shameless exploitation of a very soon I will stick with that decision. If I had to make it today, I'd make it again that

J

Jimmy Carper 29:05

that was this decision I made when when I came out on the air as openly HIV, and I've done several shows here KPFT other times on it. But I thought it was important that as my condition deteriorated, that I talked about it on the air, so people would know what this disease is like. And now, it was just a couple of months ago that I finally decided that I'm not can go on the air now, because of protease inhibitors. And what they're doing for me is and say I am a man who used to have AIDS.

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Ray Hill 29:40

And that message is important. That message

J

Jimmy Carper 29:42

is very important. See my teeth a year ago my T cell count was 63 and now it's 420. So that's more important. I do not I'm just HIV positive. Yeah, you

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Ray Hill 29:52

know, for years and years, I thought that the most important thing I did every day is get up and not commit suicide because the image of gay men Prior to my generation was that we're also self destructing. We're also guilt ridden. And it's also self loathing. Yeah, that, that we would we would kill ourselves. I mean, and that's true of women too. I mean, the Well of Loneliness is a wonderful book. And it has been very liberally deliberating to a great many women, but you read the book, what happens to the lesbians in the Well of Loneliness is not a positive thing. Now, the media projection of boys in the band is the sickest damn thing I've ever seen, that is

yes, and twisted. The way those people treat one another in the way they treat themselves that self loathing and peer loathing, kind of mean. And that's the image that we still do, some of us still do. But that is to be struggled against, I think, the most important thing that openly gay person does in the gay media, in wonderful raiment like KPFT, in this kind of atmosphere, and out there on the front lines, at City Hall. And wherever we are, I think the most important thing we do is we communicate to the next generation, a generation of gay men and lesbians that you don't have to be ashamed. You don't have to feel guilty, you don't have to hate yourself, you don't have to hate everybody around it, that there's hope for you lead a full and productive life. And that is what I have constantly kept in mind. I'm sure, I shamelessly self promote my radio program. I shamelessly self promote myself as as a person who wants to comment, but I would much rather comment on news items on the sixth and 10 on the major television network stations in new stations, and in the newspapers, then have some person who don't know anything about us in our community doing that. My problem is I wish more gay people would come forward. I wish that everybody at this table would in the morning, send out a news release to every news agency in the city saying this is how to get in touch with me and I'm ready, willing and able to talk about any gay and lesbian story that comes out?

J

Jimmy Carper 32:02

Well, right. On that note, when you're talking about getting people to do things, that's kind of what I did on after hours, because I knew that as a gay man, I could not talk about lesbians. I couldn't talk about the leather folks. So I got those people involved. And the proudest thing proudest thing for me, with after hours is getting bisexual people and transgender people involved as permanent hosts. And to find out that this is the first station and after ours was the first purse program in the country to have permanent hosts in the transgender and bisexual communities started amazing.

J

Joan Devlin 32:37

Now, how does this translate into print really?

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into print? Well, you know, really, it's, I find the same thing when I'm going out and doing stories in the community, that same type of looking for people whose stories aren't often told. And they're still well, you know, there's I did a story recently on gay parenting, which I really enjoyed doing talking with the parents group, but there was a lot of folks who, who were not willing to have their name in print, because they were afraid they may it put their job in jeopardy or other reasons. So I mean, that that type of fear is something that I think our community deals with. But what I found is once people, I also do public relations for PFLAG. That's, that's

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Ray Hill 33:20

good job. Thank



33:22

you. Thanks. Thanks. Thank



Ray Hill 33:23

you, because those are press releases. Those are tangible things and points of interest in the advertising campaign. And



33:29

what a great organization wonderful



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they are. They're wonderful people. And what I have seen in that is once parents once I create the opportunities for them to be in front of the cameras, and they've had time to tell their stories, as they do so many times in public through our speaker's bureau and that kind of thing that rather than bring your reporter in and saying, Well, here's our PFLAG spokesperson, this, you know, one mom out of all these folks, I have a roomful of people who are willing and capable to, to be visible on the media. But that didn't happen overnight. Because for parents, when their kids come out, they go through the same type of closing process or they have to work through that. But so I've seen that when when the opportunities are created for the media to talk to folks, that once they're there, and once they really are sure of what their message is that they can do a remarkable job. And I've been very blessed and PFLAG with having just numerous people that are able and willing in them in the Chronicle call me today. I just sent out a press release because we're having an Ellen Ellen screening. And I was able without any problem to rattle off a few phone numbers and call these people and I knew that it was they they can handle it. So I wish that we got the straight supporters of the community who are coming out now and I wish that we like you said right that we could develop more maybe that's maybe that's a place for for some organization in the community to really put together some sort of community media Got



Ray Hill 35:00

a lot. We've done media workshops for years and years and years, in many ways a lot of fun to do workshops. I mean, that's that's first thing I did movement whenever I got out of prison was trying to teach people how to do media workshops. That didn't work and I found out how to take it over manually again. But you know, the media is not a passive institution. Media responds to people, media needs customers, they need listeners and things of that nature. And in that regard, there's something going on right now. The channel 13 decision not to run the ad, right.



Joan Devlin 35:29

I wrote my letter. Okay. Well, let

 Ray Hill 35:30

me tell you, the channel 13 on their one of their local programs is doing an encouraging a survey for people to respond to. Oh, 666 1313 there's their main switchboard number that is still the main switchboard. 666 1313 I think so yeah. Give them a call. And ask them how you can express your opinion about the Ellen ad. It's very, they're where they're reopening. They're thinking about it, and they would not have reopened. They're thinking about it. Had Joe not written her letter, had the news director not been chided in public by Ray hill when we crossed. That that's the way the institutions like media are some of the most vulnerable people in

 36:12

the world. Oh, absolutely. But we have a responsibility to win. We can never forget that.

 Joan Devlin 36:16

Absolutely. And then because for too long, our stories just didn't get out. Right. Yeah.

 36:20

And there's and there's plenty of people on the opposite end of the spectrum who are willing to make those calls. Oh,

 Ray Hill 36:26

absolutely. Steven Hotez got a crowd of people and he got a phone bank. He was absolutely they calling calling calling calling that's

 36:32

why it's so important that we you know, we are active in that the medium,

 Ray Hill 36:36

or they're not stupid either. They can tell the difference between grassroots and astroturf? Yeah. That's true. Yeah. Uh, your natural personal call. This affects me that kind of voice. That kind of character is a lot different. Somebody that this is a 1200 and towards Kmart call I made tonight and I want you to keep Ellen's ad off the right doesn't make sense. There's a difference between as and, and those folks depend on that difference. They want tangible people in their audience. And you know it. There's some wisdom never picking a fight with anybody buys ink

by the barrel, or videotape by the pallet load. Does that make sense? But the fact of the matter is your input is very important. And channel 13 now has gone out of their way to hear from oh, by the way, guys, is a demonstration down here at Wednesday. Wendy's on the 30th Wendy's. Yeah,

 Glenn Holt 37:29

I've got I've got the article right here. In fact, let me let me go ahead and read it. Since you just did that nice segue into it. Wednesday, April 30, which is this coming Wednesday, members of the lesbian and gay and transgender communities of Houston, are gathering for a peaceful but vocal protest regarding the recent decision by Wendy's restaurants to pull advertising on the ABC television sitcom, Ellen. That decision which was made in response to actress Ellen DeGeneres coming out as a lesbian woman in her private life, as well as on her sitcom slated for broadcast that same evening of the protest. Wendy's International Corporate response recently were quoted as saying that they reached this discrimination policy so as not to be controversial. An all out boycott on Wendy's has been called for by Montrose Arias gays and lesbians. Matt Lachlan, the local gay advocate and AIDS activists is coordinating. Yes, he's in the media too. Okay, is coordinating the protest in response to the blatant discrimination this corporation has demonstrated. I'm reading this by Lachlan alleges that the Montrose Wendy's restaurant has historically not hired gays and lesbians as a matter of unwritten policy. And he adds when these corporate decision makers have long been financial supporters of the right wing causes, and even the anti abortion movements. Organizers plead that the lesbian and gay population of Montrose and Houston stand up to these people and stop supporting blatant homos rhetoric. She achieved by refusing to spend gay dollars at any Wendy's franchise, especially the store on Westheimer and Montrose. This is the shot that will be heard around the corporate board, Houston gays and lesbians and supporters are encouraged to gather at the Hollywood video which is 1201 Westheimer parking lot at 5:15pm for the one hour protest and again, that's going to be next Wednesday. And Elon coming out party will follow. The protest will be legal and safe to attend to please bring signs and your loudest girlfriends. Dress girlfriend girlfriend. Dress will be fun attire, and the theme will be no Ellen No Wendy's. Please call protest organisers at 713-902-2231 for more information to register a complaint with Wendy's international advertising executives, call 1-800-443-7266 and ask for denny Lynch. Denise

 39:56

gonna get the calls

 39:59

well It gives people an opportunity, instead of spending their money at Wendy's is to spend it at a gay restaurant, of which there are many in the storm. And

 40:08

if they want to go fast food I'll have to put this plug in to McDonald's is not pulling advertising from our

R

Ray Hill 40:15

drain so they're across every Windows in the world. So

♂

40:18

maybe after the protests you can go over get a coke or something and McDonald's.

♂

40:23

The other thing we have to do we have to support the people who are supporting that's

♂

40:28

right and and also in the information is available on how to reach these folks all over the community. But Chrysler has pulled their advertising as ng

J

Joan Devlin 40:38

M got my letter to drive a GM car, not for long, but

R

Ray Hill 40:44

you're just gonna have to downgrade to a BMW,

♂

40:46

I guess. The other thing I read today, I don't know if you've heard about this. I'm, apparently a local Baptist minister in Beaumont has bought up all the airtime the local airtime for the airing of Ellen in that community. And he's going to run ads about the biblical basis for anti homosexuality out there. So I

R

Ray Hill 41:09

just had a press release. And I mean, it's a press conference in San Patricio County, Texas. I flew down to fight Central Europe and senton, Texas, which is your Corpus Christi, Christi. Excuse me, I was down there. And I commented that censorship, and all of this thing that you're talking about in Beaumont raises its ugly head when somebody looks back there and realizes that many of the pews in their church is empty, and they need an issue to call attention to themselves. Or that and elections coming around and the candidate doesn't have enough

natural support, they've got to fluff up an issue in which there are few victims. And as matter of fact, we have had to communicate in the media very frequently by direct action kind of activities. It has been a media forum for us in the absence of other forums. For instance, I'm doing a little demonstration Monday against you don't bony we're gonna have a phony bony no knives in my back. Demonstration. Oh, down at 5000 Montrose at five o'clock. So you either bring your plaque or you bet more on the after our show. Shamelessly !



42:25

will tell you that the the thing that fascinates me about the whole Beaumont thing is that it's probably going to have the best ratings of any show in the year because all the right wing folks watch it. And everybody else is gonna



J Joan Devlin 42:37

tell that Minister, I go to the bathroom during the commercial, so you're not getting any. They do



R Ray Hill 42:43

wonderful media for us when Jerry Falwell and them got together and they did their media on the 1987 march on Washington. When I saw that documentary, if you turn the sound off, there were all those handsome men usually stripped to the waist, showing off all those good looking and touching one another. And there were all those wonderful lesbian couples with all of those wonderful children. I mean, they're they're gay power, gay politics documentary on the March on Washington was supposed to show up all these perverts, what it did is all of those closeted Christian boys and girls and women, young women who went to see that I don't care what they said, the visuals scream louder than the words it's in the nature of television.



43:33

Very good point.



R Ray Hill 43:34

So what was there the visual was there was very uplifting. Let me tell you, when I was kid, you never saw the word homosexual. Nobody said the word gay. I mean, I didn't even know the word gay. When I came out to Frankie. She just said, God, what a relief. I was like you were gonna be a Republican. So I used to go to the library and read the most salacious, horrible material in the closed shops. And I got positive information out of it. Because I was looking for stuff to feed my dad, I don't care what Edmund Berger thought about Queer. When Edmond burglar wrote those spicy stories of those men in those terrible sexual relationships, I got excited. That's what I needed out of those books. So you get out of media what you want in media, so let them propaganda to get let the guy have all the time. And Ellen, let him rant and

rave. All he is doing is distancing himself from members of his own family or his own congregation that need that positive reinforcement, and they will find it in his ad as well as find it in the movie. I mean, shown there.

J

Joan Devlin 44:47

So what what do you think is going to happen with the LM coming out, after all the fanfare dies down and we have our parties and life goes on?

♀

44:55

Well, you know, it's kind of back in the days of act up, people would say to me, why do you have to scream in the streets. And I always said, I have, I am going to scream in the streets until I don't have to. Until being gay is so ordinary, that we are mixed into society. And nobody gets excited when I can kiss my boyfriend on the sidewalk and nobody gets excited

J

Joan Devlin 45:22

in the sidewalk. And

♀

45:25

I have been, I've really I have been at but when, when somebody like Elon, when I went to homosexual person, a gay person, a lesbian person, as the star for primetime sitcom is no big deal.

J

Joan Devlin 45:42

The funny thing is, it's no big deal to have gay characters on shows. But because she's the main character, that's a big deal. That's

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45:50

the point. The other thing that will happen is is there are probably some writers that are sweating bullets. I mean, think of think of all the interesting things are going to have to do after these first couple of

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45:59

episodes. Well, it's gonna get down to two Hey, we have a normal life. Yeah, I mean, we buy groceries, we go to movies, we pay

 R

Ray Hill 46:08

rent. When I started doing gay and lesbian radio in 1975. They laughed at me and said I was going to run out of material and here we are on lesbian and gay voices, which is the natural heir of Wilden that has been 23 years and this material we have more material than we have time to present absolute So Elon now has more Elon is the next round of gods in the military, and millenary gaze. For six months, we were on the front page of every major newspaper in the country headlines above the fold. They searched this nation and all of its bases all over the world and they never found a banned lesbian or gay soldier. Not one. Not one member of the military was bad. Somebody say oh my god, we lost that with don't stink, don't sweat No, don't don't taste Don't Don't Don't tell don't stink. Don't. Don't tell don't lie or something. I don't remember. Don't Don't Don't Ask, Don't Tell. Look,

 ♂

47:11

there you go.

 R

Ray Hill 47:12

I get confused with these terms. But ever, ever what the problem was? The fact of the matter is we won that issue. Yes, because we came out of there with people thinking better of us and we're being more normal than ever. Well,

 J

Joan Devlin 47:24

on that note, I'd like to thank Jim Carper, Kyle young and of course my co host Jeff