

Dominic Giovon Chilko  
Narrator

Andrea Jenkins  
Interviewer

The Transgender Oral History Project  
Tretter Collection in GLBT Studies  
University of Minnesota

June 2, 2017



The Transgender Oral History Project of the Upper Midwest will empower individuals to tell their story, while providing students, historians, and the public with a more rich foundation of primary source material about the transgender community. The project is part of the Tretter Collection at the University of Minnesota. The archive provides a record of GLBT thought, knowledge and culture for current and future generations and is available to students, researchers and members of the public.

The Transgender Oral History Project will collect up to 400 hours of oral histories involving 200 to 300 individuals over the next three years. Major efforts will be the recruitment of individuals of all ages and experiences, and documenting the work of The Program in Human Sexuality. This project will be led by

Andrea Jenkins, poet, writer, and trans-activist. Andrea brings years of experience working in government, non-profits and LGBT organizations. If you are interested in being involved in this exciting project, please contact Andrea.

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1     Andrea Jenkins             -AJ  
2     Dominic Giovon Chilko   -DGC

3  
4

5     AJ:     So, hello. My name is Andrea Jenkins and I am the oral historian for the Transgender Oral  
6             History Project at the Tretter Collection at the University of Minnesota libraries. Today is June 2,  
7             2017. I'm here in Minneapolis, south Minneapolis, and I'm caking it with my boy, Dominic  
8             Giovon Chilko.

9     DGC:   Giovon Chilko.

10    AJ:     Giovon Chilko.

11    DGC:   Yeah, a little Italian flair for you.

12    AJ:     OK, all right. So, just because I messed that up, Dominic, I want you to state your name, spell  
13             your name so we make sure we have everything spelled right, tell me your gender identity as  
14             you define it today, your gender assigned at birth and the pronouns that you use.

15    DGC:   Cool. I am Dominic Giovon Chilko. D-o-m-i-n-i-c G-i-o-v-o-n C-h-i-l-k-o. I identify as a trans man,  
16             I am straight. I was assigned female at birth and have been on testosterone three years in  
17             October.

18    AJ:     Wow, that's what's up.

19    DGC:   I'm getting it.

20    AJ:     So, to kind of get us going, kick us off a little bit, tell me what is your earliest memory in life,  
21             Dominic. What is the first thing you remember?

22    DGC:   My earliest memories, I would say, are playing outside and always feeling like I should have my  
23             shirt off or I should playing in the dirt and not with girly stuff, you know what I'm saying. All my  
24             memories, even like three years old, I remember feeling like a man – like a boy. I don't have any  
25             girly memories, I don't remember ever being dressed up or barrettes in my hair or my mom  
26             doing my hair. I remember playing with trucks and GI Joes and playing in the mud and always  
27             wanting to be around the boys. My mom thought it was because I was attracted to boys and in  
28             my mind, even from 5 years old, I knew it was like I want to be one of the boys. All my earliest  
29             memories are of a little boy.

30    AJ:     Is that right? Where did you grow up?

31    DGC:   I grew up in Boston, Massachusetts. I was adopted at the age of one by my mother and father  
32             who live in Minnesota. We lived in Boston on and off until I was about seven or eight, we would  
33             come to Minnesota for a couple of months, go back to Mass and then we finally rested in  
34             Minnesota. I went to school here, I graduated here, I work here, I live here.

35    AJ:     Wow. Where did you go to school?

36    DGC:   I went to school at Everest Institute out in Eagan to be a medical assistant. I graduated with  
37             honors, as a valedictorian.

- 1 AJ: Woo hoo.
- 2 DGC: Yup, got the yellow ribbons and everything to prove it. Branched out, did some clinicals for a  
3 little bit and was like, "Nah, that ain't me, I don't like poking people, I don't like sick people  
4 around me like that."
- 5 AJ: OK, but you went and got a medical assistant degree.
- 6 DGC: Right, I don't know what I was thinking. I was trying to do something. So, then I did driving for a  
7 little bit. I started delivering dry cleaning and I tried to do Uber for a little bit, but I was like,  
8 "You know what? Something's missing." So, then I became a PCA and now I love what I do, I  
9 absolutely love it. I wouldn't trade my profession for anything.
- 10 AJ: So, you did have a sense that you wanted to help people.
- 11 DGC: Yeah, I just didn't know how exactly.
- 12 AJ: Yeah, that's great, man. Where did you go to grade school, like when you were coming up?
- 13 DGC: Man, I went to so many schools. I went to elementary school at Lincoln Center in South St. Paul,  
14 Minnesota. I started high school at South St. Paul High School . . . let's just say the people there  
15 were not very nice to me. So, I started acting out, so then I got sent to an ALC, which is an  
16 alternative learning center and I was like, "You know what? I feel like I'm too smart for this.  
17 These kids are not trying, I was actually trying but it was just that I was getting picked on and  
18 everything else." I was like, "You all need to upgrade me a little bit or else I'm going to be  
19 dumb. You all going to put me in with the dumb kids, I'm going to be dumb."
- 20 AJ: Right.
- 21 DGC: So, then I got to pick my school and I went to the High School for Recording Arts, HSRA, in St.  
22 Paul.
- 23 AJ: Snap – I love that school.
- 24 DGC: It used to be off of . . . when I went there it was off of Cretin and Vandalia in St. Paul and when I  
25 tell you that that school changed my life with my music and my motivation and my math skills,  
26 social studies – they made everything around music so that the kids that were super involved  
27 with music would still get it . . . math, science, all that around music. There was studios and all  
28 this and I don't know - my creativity went crazy.
- 29 AJ: That school was founded by T.C. Ellis.
- 30 DGC: T.C. Ellis, who has worked with Prince and a lot of other well-known people. Yeah, he owns it.
- 31 AJ: His biggest hit was with . . . one of Prince's girl . . .
- 32 DGC: I can tell you something, I remember it when I was in school because he used to play it all the  
33 time. I don't remember it now, though – I'm sorry, T.C.
- 34 AJ: He was on JoLo's track.

- 1 DGC: Yeah, yeah – he’s produced for so many big names. This dude, he put a school in Cali now and  
2 New York too. So, now, there’s one on the one end and . . .
- 3 AJ: I think he was on *Jenny from the Block*.
- 4 DGC: I’m going to have to look this up now.
- 5 AJ: One of JoLo’s biggest hits. But, at any rate, that’s a great school that people are really super –  
6 like you said, talented and committed to young people’s learning.
- 7 DGC: Yeah, it’s crazy.
- 8 AJ: So, it changed your life, huh?
- 9 DGC: It definitely did. It opened my eyes up to what I’m capable of with music and how there’s no  
10 real gap on music – you can just keep going and keep going. And T.C. was the coolest  
11 mentor/teacher that you could ever wish for.
- 12 AJ: So, he would teach in the school too?
- 13 DGC: Yeah, he would come into our classes. He wasn’t necessarily a teacher, he was like a Dean of  
14 Students, but yeah, he’d come in and listen to lessons with us, help the teachers out, come in  
15 the studio with us, tell us if our music was good. He was so involved, that was literally . . . that  
16 was home for me, that was home. I miss that school.
- 17 AJ: That’s a beautiful thing. Were you bullied there?
- 18 DGC: I was not bullied at HSRA. Everybody was doing their own thing. It was like . . .
- 19 AJ: If you thought you were a little boy when you were five, I’m pretty sure during grade school and  
20 high school you were out, you were . . . I mean, sort of expressing yourself in non-traditional  
21 ways for a female.
- 22 DGC: It seemed like at that school there was a lot of other people in similar situations. It was a very  
23 comfortable school, there was a lot of gay people, a lot of actors, dancers, singers, musicians.  
24 And in the art culture, it’s a lot more accepting than regular society.
- 25 AJ: Sure.
- 26 DGC: So, like I said, it felt like home. I didn’t necessarily say that I was trans back then because I didn’t  
27 even know what trans meant, but I was definitely out and openly gay. I was an openly gay  
28 woman and I was dating girls and people knew that. I didn’t feel the need to hide it at that  
29 school. I was dressing like a dude, had my little stud gear on, my short haircut and designs –  
30 everything.
- 31 AJ: So, what labels have you used for yourself over time?
- 32 DGC: Let’s see . . . well, in the beginning obviously I was a straight girl, because I didn’t know no  
33 better. As I got into high school, I became a lesbian; more into high school, I became more of  
34 the stud. So, I cut my hair, thugged out – whatever.
- 35 AJ: Timbos, sagging jeans.

- 1 DGC: Right, right – sagging my pants, no belt, whatever. And then, I went through college as a lesbian  
2 and I was dating a girl that had a kid, everything like that. We was like a little family, whatever.  
3 But, I kept feeling like I wanted something more. Yeah, the little boy called me daddy but it  
4 wasn't because I was a man, it was just because that's what we told him to call me. So, I'm like,  
5 "Dude, I want to be the dad, I want to be a father, I want to be a husband. I don't want to be  
6 your wife, I don't want to be your girlfriend." It would irritate me every time we would go out  
7 and she'd be like, "Yeah, this is my girl," and I'd just be looking like, "Ahh, man." So, after  
8 college is when I really started figuring myself out – like 23 or 24 years old. I met a trans man  
9 and I had no idea that he was trans. I was like, "Hey, what's up, bro – whatever, whatever." We  
10 get to talking and he starts talking about trans and I'm like, "What the hell is that? What is  
11 that?" He explains it and he says, "Oh, I'm trans." And I'm like, "OK, what is that?" And he  
12 starts explaining it and I'm looking at him like, "Bro, you're lying," like there is no way he was  
13 ever female – look at your beard and your chiseled jaw and all that hair. And he's like, "Bro, for  
14 real." So, we went on Google for a good four hours and my mouth is just open the whole time,  
15 just reading all this stuff.
- 16 AJ: Who is this guy? Do you remember his name?
- 17 DGC: I don't remember his name. Oh, man – sorry.
- 18 AJ: But it was here in Minnesota?
- 19 DGC: Yeah, it was here in Minnesota. But, no, we did a whole bunch of research and . . .
- 20 AJ: A Black dude, a white dude?
- 21 DGC: A white dude.
- 22 AJ: OK.
- 23 DGC: Yeah, he was a white dude. We did a bunch of research and after that I was like, "Holy crap, I'm  
24 not crazy." Like, "So, you're telling me there are people that think like I do and there's ways to  
25 do this?" I had seen *Boys Don't Cry* but obviously everybody knows how that movie ends. He  
26 didn't get no hormones, he didn't have no therapist – none of that, so I'm thinking that . . .
- 27 AJ: Everyone called him she.
- 28 DGC: Right, and he got killed for it so I'm thinking it's like that and I'm like uh-uh. Uh-uh, I ain't trying  
29 to play no girls . . .
- 30 AJ: Right, exactly.
- 31 DGC: After I did that research, I was like, "You know what? I feel like this is what's been missing, this  
32 is what's going to make me happy." So, I called the University of Minnesota Center for Sexual  
33 Health and I got me a little therapist and we started talking and within my first session, she was  
34 like, "Yeah, everything you said . . . yeah, let's get you on some hormones and this and that, and  
35 this and that." I'm like, "For real?" She was like, "Yeah." Two months later I was on  
36 testosterone and I've never looked back – never.
- 37 AJ: Wow.

- 1 DGC: Yeah, this is the best thing that's ever happened to me. I feel comfortable, I feel safe which a lot  
2 of trans people can't say that they feel safe but I feel safe in my skin now. Whether I passed or  
3 not, knowing that I'm doing what I need to do is enough for me and society can kick rocks – I  
4 don't care.
- 5 AJ: But you never get clocked, right?
- 6 DGC: I did in the beginning of my transition because, if you remember, I was real little – I was like 110  
7 pounds, little curly hair or whatever when I first started transitioning. I was real, real tiny – like  
8 legs, arms, everything, so I started working out – bodybuilding right away, right away. Once I  
9 started doing that, that's when I got real comfortable. I'm like, "OK, now I feel like I can go  
10 outside, maybe not have three sweatshirts on – just my binder and a shirt."
- 11 AJ: Right, just trying to bulk up.
- 12 DGC: Right. Now, I'm bulked up so now my chest matches the rest of my body.
- 13 AJ: So, you're a bodybuilder.
- 14 DGC: Yeah.
- 15 AJ: A competitive bodybuilder.
- 16 DGC: A competitive bodybuilder – I've competed two times in 2015 and 2016. In 2015, I placed 3<sup>rd</sup>  
17 place as the first pre-op man to ever place in the bodybuilding competition and then 2016, I was  
18 only three months post-op so I just went to prove that I could still do it.
- 19 AJ: Right, to yourself.
- 20 DGC: Right, right. That I could get on stage, take my shirt off again, and show my scars. So, I did that.  
21 I didn't place or nothing, but it was cool. And then this year, I plan on doing it again and we'll  
22 see what happens now that my chest has healed up and I can really work out.
- 23 AJ: Wow. Well, now that you've mentioned that your chest has healed up, to the extent that you  
24 feel comfortable answering this question, what medical interventions have you undergone and I  
25 know you talked about hormones and top surgery, but let's put it all together.
- 26 DGC: OK, so as far as medical transitions go, I've gone through therapy, I've started hormones – that  
27 will be three years in October, so I take testosterone injections weekly. I've also had top surgery  
28 which, for people that don't know what top surgery is, it's the removal of the breast tissue to  
29 give a male appearance to your chest. So, they kind of contour your chest into pecs and then  
30 you work it out. It's not like they're going to . . . it's actually really, really flat so you start  
31 noticing other things you need to work on. But, that's to be understood. There's a couple  
32 different types of top surgery – key hole is for guys with really, really small chests to begin with,  
33 they usually go in through the nipple and just pull the fat out so then you'll really only have  
34 scarring on the nipple. What I got, because I was a little bit bigger chested, was double-incision  
35 mastectomy and so I have a scar on each side right here that goes up to about right there. They  
36 curve, like pecs, so I've got the line right here and my pecs will slowly start to come in. Another  
37 one that I saw that's new is called the T-anchor method and what they do is they start at your

- 1 nipple, cut down, and then cut in an anchor shape and then pull it out like that and then sew  
2 that up and then you just have a little anchor scar. As far as bottom surgery, no plans as of right  
3 now. For me, it's not advanced enough. I know what I want that to look like, if I had my choice.  
4 So, until they can transplant something real on to me, I'm good. I'm completely comfortable. I  
5 know you know my dad, Buck Angel, he's completely comfortable with himself and he's helped  
6 me become cool with that – whatever.
- 7 AJ: So, you call Buck your dad?
- 8 DGC: Yes, and he calls me his son. He's planning on flying me out to L.A. to hang out with him – me  
9 and my buddy, Tyler, are his "kids". He does a lot for us. He sends me gifts and things like that.  
10 He's an awesome mentor; I met him, actually, at FitCon two years ago and we've been like this  
11 ever since. He's an amazing man – amazing.
- 12 AJ: Buck is an adult performer.
- 13 DGC: Yes, he's an adult film star as well as an advocate. He is also a huge cannabis advocate for  
14 medical marijuana and waxes and things like that.
- 15 AJ: And legalizing . . .
- 16 DGC: And legalizing it because he lives in California so he wants it across the states. He fights really  
17 hard for, especially for trans men and cannabis because of the PTSD we get – the anxiety,  
18 everything like that, the trans community period. We need resources too, so that's what he's  
19 fighting for, but he's pushing the marijuana a lot – and I'm behind him 100% on that. There's so  
20 many medications they try to prescribe to us, whether it be anxiety medications, depression,  
21 and PTSD, they think you have a mental disorder. They're always trying to medicate us trans  
22 people and we don't need to be medicated – we are not crazy. I wasn't crazy then and I'm not  
23 crazy now. If anything, you're crazy trying to put me on all these meds that I'm going to get  
24 addicted to. Give me some marijuana, break it down, roll it up, smoke it – I'll be calm and cool.  
25 I'm super against prescription medications, especially really, really strong ones. There's no  
26 need. Unless you are in crippling pain . . .
- 27 AJ: I think there is some need for some people.
- 28 DGC: People with chronic pain, things like that, but for the people with minor anxiety or minor  
29 depression and stuff, they're loading them with medications and then they're getting other side  
30 effects and suddenly they got anxiety or suddenly they can't sleep.
- 31 AJ: It's just like any other drug dealer, man – they're going to try to get you hooked.
- 32 DGC: Damn it, drug core.
- 33 AJ: Exactly. Wow, so talk to me a little . . . this is fascinating, you call Buck Angel dad. There is sort  
34 of a history in the trans community about creating your own family structures. Can you speak to  
35 that? How does that impact your life and what's your relationship with your birth family now  
36 that you've come out?



- 1 DGC: OK. You're right, the trans community does tend to come together as a family – people tend to  
2 latch on to other people and their transitions and their stories, which I find fascinating. I've got  
3 so many brothers and sisters and cousins and aunties and mamas and daddies, but it's cool  
4 because it's a family that understands exactly what you're going through without question.  
5 When your family at home, they got a lot of questions; your friends out in the world, they've got  
6 a lot of questions; but the trans family, they know. They don't have no reason to ask you, you  
7 just tell them if you want to.
- 8 AJ: They know what you need.
- 9 DGC: Yeah, and they know what you're going through. So, it's very comfortable to talk to your trans  
10 family. Now, my adopted family who is the family that I grew up, we're cool.
- 11 AJ: OK.
- 12 DGC: Me and my mom, we're super close. She calls me her son all the time, she calls me handsome –  
13 all that, boosts me up. She actually had a harder time when she thought I was a lesbian.
- 14 AJ: Is that right?
- 15 DGC: So, she's cool now that I'm her son; she had a problem with the lesbian thing. I don't know, we  
16 never really went into it but, yeah, she's cool now. My dad, I guess he had mentioned  
17 something when I was 7 or 8 to my mom, "You know, Nicki's going to be a boy one day, right?"  
18 My mom was just like, "Ahh . . ." She just brushed it off, "Whatever, you're crazy." And now  
19 he's looking at her like, "I told you, I told you." So, he knew before I even had a thought in my  
20 head. He was like, "We ain't raising a little girl, we're not."
- 21 AJ: So, you all chill, you all cool? You all getting along? I mean, family is family but . . . do you go  
22 there for Christmas and dinner?
- 23 DGC: Oh, yeah, we spend all holidays together. Between my family and my girlfriend's family, we  
24 make sure that we make it all work. I definitely have a close relationship with my mom – she's  
25 been my rock. When I was about to be homeless, she helped me out; when I ain't got nothing  
26 to eat, she will be there. Me and my dad, we have a good relationship when he's sober. My dad  
27 is an admitted alcoholic and it's just been rough.
- 28 AJ: That's tough, I'm sorry.
- 29 DGC: It is tough. A lot of stuff was taken out on me that shouldn't have been, and on my mom that  
30 shouldn't have been – a lot of personal grief, things like that that he never got to handle on his  
31 own. But yeah, he's . . . I love him to death because he's my father, but I hate to see him so  
32 miserable. I hope that he figures it out before he ends up by himself. But, I mean, I'm a grown  
33 man, I can't babysit him. My mom is grown, she don't want to be babysitting . . .
- 34 AJ: We've all got our own lives too.
- 35 DGC: Right, we've got our own lives to live. So, he needs to stand up and stand out – go do what you  
36 need to do to get your head back in the game for your family.
- 37 AJ: Yeah, I'm sorry to hear about that. But there is some relationship there.

- 1 DGC: I definitely love that man. I respect him, but I just don't respect some of his choices.
- 2 AJ: Yeah, that's real. Wow, man, a lot of stuff, Dominic. How did you come to your name?
- 3 DGC: My birth middle name was Dominique.
- 4 AJ: OK, so . . .
- 5 DGC: So, I took that and put it as my first name. My adopted mother is 100% Italian, so Giovon or  
6 Giovonni is the male version of my grandmother's name, Joanna, in Italian. So Giovon is Joseph  
7 in Italian, so I took her name and made it into a male name and put it as my middle name, and  
8 then I kept my adopted father's last name.
- 9 AJ: Wow.
- 10 DGC: Because there's no more boys in the family that have boys and I kind of want to keep the last  
11 name going.
- 12 AJ: Where does that name come from – Chilko?
- 13 DGC: Very German.
- 14 AJ: Really?
- 15 DGC: Very, very German – yes. He's 100% German.
- 16 AJ: Is he chill?
- 17 DGC: Not really. He be turned up – I'm the chillin' one.
- 18 AJ: 100% German. But your ethnicity is . . .?
- 19 DGC: I am Dominican, Puerto Rican, Black and white.
- 20 AJ: Biracial.
- 21 DGC: Yes.
- 22 AJ: What is life like as a biracial trans . . . biracial is definitely appropriate, but also . . . Afro-Latinx.  
23 That's . . .
- 24 DGC: That's cool, I ain't never heard that, but that's what it is.
- 25 AJ: Right. Dominican and Puerto-Rican. That is heavily . . . both of those cultures are heavily  
26 influenced by African culture but also Latino/Latina culture. So, is that just chill for you and  
27 that's how you roll through life? Or, does that create some different, unique challenges?
- 28 DGC: It does and it doesn't. It does because I was adopted by two people of white origin. I was raised  
29 well above my means – I was taken care of, I was spoiled, I'm an only child. I had both of my  
30 parents, I lived in the suburbs, things like that. When people find stuff out like that, sometimes  
31 they want to tell me I don't know the struggle or try to kind of demean my person of color  
32 status. Like, "Bro, you ain't dark enough to try to ride with us."

- 1 AJ: Oh, wow – so, colorism within the POC community?
- 2 DGC: Yeah. I’ve been told several times that I’m not dark enough to care about the issues or I was too  
3 privileged, I’m a silver spoon baby, this and that. But, what people fail to understand is the  
4 reason I was adopted is because my birth mother was 15-years-old and strung out on cocaine  
5 and my birth father is over 35-years-old. OK. So, you can’t tell me I don’t know the struggle. I’m  
6 sorry that two very, very nice people took me in so I didn’t get killed, but that is not my fault.
- 7 AJ: Why are you sorry? You shouldn’t be sorry.
- 8 DGC: That’s what I’m saying, but it’s not my fault – I’m saying that sarcastically, like, “I’m sorry.” That  
9 ain’t my fault, I didn’t pick the family – the family picked me. And, even with that, I didn’t follow  
10 their ways, per se. I always tended to branch out into the colored people group – like at schools,  
11 functions, music-wise, everything like that. So, I have culture. I kicked it with my African-  
12 American friends, my Cuban friends, my Hispanic friends. So, I know stuff. I’ve been to the  
13 hood, I’ve been to the burbs, I’ve been to this mansions. It’s just I was fortunate enough to be  
14 adopted by two people that really, really wanted a kid.
- 15 AJ: And they really cared about you.
- 16 DGC: And they really cared about me. But, at the same time, on this same subject, I also get a lot of  
17 praise – being biracial, being so visible on social media. I’m the dude that most people tell to  
18 shut up but then they don’t want me to shut up once I start speaking the truth. I’m very  
19 opinionated – especially when it comes to trans issues, I am so opinionated I be wanting to kick  
20 myself in the face sometimes. But, I get so . . .
- 21 AJ: Well, I want to hear a few of these opinions.
- 22 DGC: I get so passionate about some things. I’m the type of person you either are going to love or  
23 you’re going to hate and there ain’t no in-between there, because I’m going to arrive at mine  
24 regardless of anybody else’s opinion. At the same time, the community kind of embraced me. I  
25 get those haters that are so, “Oh, you’re so privileged,” or whatever, but it’s mostly love. I’ve  
26 told my story, I put my coma out on Facebook, I put my top surgery out there, I put my life – my  
27 whole transition out there for other guys that are thinking about transitioning or may think that  
28 they are alone or things like that, and people respect me for that but I don’t think it’s necessarily  
29 because of the color of my skin; I think it’s because of the person that I am.
- 30 AJ: You’re right, that’s for real.
- 31 DGC: But the first part is definitely about the color of my skin and who I was raised by.
- 32 AJ: Wow. You created a documentary, or you were a part of a documentary.
- 33 DGC: Part of a documentary, correct.
- 34 AJ: Tell me about it.
- 35 DGC: The documentary is called *Man Made*, it is by a director named T. Cooper, who is also a trans  
36 male.

- 1 AJ: Local?
- 2 DGC: No, he is based out of Atlanta and New York, he travels back and forth. The documentary  
3 involves . . .
- 4 AJ: Black? White?
- 5 DGC: What?
- 6 AJ: What's T. Cooper's ethnicity?
- 7 DGC: He's either Italian or Greek. Italian or Greek, I think.
- 8 AJ: So, white.
- 9 DGC: Yeah, white.
- 10 AJ: Which is cool, I just want to lift people up and hold up everybody's identity.
- 11 DGC: For sure. No, he started this documentary to kind of showcase the trans male part of  
12 transitioning because, as he says in the beginning of the documentary, there is usually only one  
13 side told about transgender and it's usually the women, which I love my trans sisters – thank  
14 you.
- 15 AJ: Right, right – thank you, very much. We love you too.
- 16 DGC: Right, but we want to be visible too. So, with that thought in mind, he came up with this  
17 documentary called Man Made and it's all about six trans male bodybuilders and their lives not  
18 only inside of bodybuilding, but outside. Some of us have kids, jobs, we got whole lives at home  
19 beyond this bodybuilding stuff – testosterone shots, doctor's appointments, surgeries, comas  
20 for me, for example. And, he took two years out of his life to follow the six of us at different  
21 parts and different times of our journeys – different big milestones and things like that. It's  
22 supposed to drop at the end of this summer, 2017, and we will be doing film festivals first with  
23 live question and answers, so I'll be flying out a couple places. And then once it picks up, like  
24 people start picking it up, that's when he'll start shopping it to TV when he's got the money to  
25 have the backing for it. But yeah, it's going to be good, man. I'm honored that he came up to  
26 me two years ago and was like, "You look like you've got a pretty cool story, why don't you talk  
27 to me for a couple minutes." Two years later, we just finished filming and they might be at Pride  
28 too, to film my Pride performance.
- 29 AJ: So, you're performing at Pride this year?
- 30 DGC: Oh, yes.
- 31 AJ: 2017, June pride month – Happy Pride everybody.
- 32 DGC: 2017, Minneapolis. Happy Pride.
- 33 AJ: June 24<sup>th</sup>?
- 34 DGC: June 24<sup>th</sup>, 4:15pm, Loring stage – I'm going to be there.

- 1 AJ: You were saying you've got a pretty dope plan.
- 2 DGC: Pretty dope set in mind. I do live performance, so I sing and I rap. I write all my own music. I  
3 got a couple of drag king numbers that I'm throwing in there, you're going to see a lot of glitter  
4 from me – just know that. And, I got a couple special guests coming out to perform with me,  
5 also from the trans community but I don't want to say no names right now. I don't want to give  
6 nobody away.
- 7 AJ: Well, whenever anybody watches this, they probably won't . . . that event will have passed.
- 8 DGC: Way past.
- 9 AJ: A long time ago, so actually you can tell me.
- 10 DGC: OK, well, my buddy Jada Barber from Miami, he plays guitar. We did a couple videos for  
11 Facebook or whatever, and he's going to come up and we're doing to do some acoustics in the  
12 set. And then, I don't know if . . . I'm still trying to convince her to do it, but Kamaree Williams,  
13 my sister, I'm trying to get her to do one of my drag numbers with me.
- 14 AJ: Wow.
- 15 DGC: She's so hot right now.
- 16 AJ: A duet?
- 17 DGC: Yeah – a little Nicki Minaj and Jason Derulo.
- 18 AJ: Oh, OK.
- 19 DGC: Yeah.
- 20 AJ: Wow, so you went to the High School for Recording Arts, you are performing at Pride, you are a  
21 bonafide artist.
- 22 DGC: Thank you.
- 23 AJ: Tell me about your arts career, your music career. And, your . . . because you did drag  
24 performance too, and you're about to sort of re-engage that a little bit in this coming month.  
25 But, yeah, talk to me about your performance life.
- 26 DGC: OK, well, I started performing, per se, when I was about 11. I started in plays. I used to have  
27 really curly red hair, so I played Annie. I got the role of Annie once.
- 28 AJ: You played Annie before – wow.
- 29 DGC: I've been in *Little Shop of Horrors*, a couple other plays. I was a big theatre geek because I loved  
30 music, I loved the lights, the sounds – you know, "Lights, camera, action," I always wanted to be  
31 a part of that. So, I never wanted to be behind the scenes – I wanted to be right there.
- 32 AJ: In front of the audience, in front of the camera – whatever.
- 33 DGC: Yeah. So, I did a lot of plays, I was in choir – I did choir all throughout high school.

- 1 AJ: So, you are a singer.
- 2 DGC: Yeah, I love to sign, I love to . . . I just love music, everything about music. If it wasn't for music, I  
3 feel like I wouldn't be who I am – so without that form of expression. I got real serious with  
4 music when I started at the High School for Recording Arts, because that was the first time I was  
5 in a million-dollar studio. I'm hearing myself and I'm like, "Yeah, you get it." I was like, "All  
6 right, I don't sound too bad." So, after I ended at HSRA is when I really started taking my career  
7 seriously. I was in the studio every week, I was dropping music videos, everything like that. And  
8 then I came out as trans and suddenly all the hype for me being such a hot female artist . . . I  
9 had won Best Female Rapper of the Year for 2013, I believe it was.
- 10 AJ: Is that right?
- 11 DGC: Yeah, for the state of Minnesota and I was a hot commodity then. But, as soon as I told  
12 everybody I was a man, it was like, "Oh, he's just another rapper." And everybody fell off . . .
- 13 AJ: Is that right?
- 14 DGC: Yeah, all the people that wanted to collaborate with me suddenly went quiet, all the people that  
15 wanted me for shows suddenly went quiet. And, I'm like, "OK, it's either you all mad and some  
16 trans bashers, or you all know that I'm coming for your spot now. It's one of the two – either  
17 you're all jealous or you're all mad." Because my music is still exactly the same, I put on the  
18 same show with the same energy, so I'm still good, I'm still me. But, what I tell people all the  
19 time is trans is what I am, but who I am still hasn't changed.
- 20 AJ: Right, that's real.
- 21 DGC: I'm still Lil One. It's not like I changed my whole . . .
- 22 AJ: What's your rap name?
- 23 DGC: Lil One.
- 24 AJ: Lil One, OK.
- 25 DGC: But, now that I'm getting older, it's gonna just be Dom Giovon, because I'm going to try to stick  
26 more into the R&B. I got a cool little DG logo thought up and stuff. So, yeah, I'm going to make  
27 it grown and sexy now that I'm getting old.
- 28 AJ: Right. Getting old . . . how old are you, Dominic?
- 29 DGC: I'll be 27 in 19 days, June 21<sup>st</sup>.
- 30 AJ: You were telling me, though, that there was a shift – like you used to perform drag on stage.
- 31 DGC: Oh yeah, with the drag thing . . .
- 32 AJ: And then once you started on hormones . . .
- 33 DGC: Yeah, with drag it was from 16 to 21, that was my favorite thing on the planet to do – favorite  
34 thing. I was in the clubs at 16 – Innuendo, in St. Paul, when that was still open, because didn't

- 1           nobody check IDs at the door. I was in there with the Triple Threat Royalty Kings, I will never  
2           forget that.
- 3   AJ:     Triple . . .
- 4   DGC:   Triple Threat Royalty Kings. They are not around anymore because I know Spade moved to Cali  
5           and . . . yeah, but back then, I would do drag. It was so comfortable for me to get up with there  
6           with the facial hair. I mean, I was not good by any means, with my facial hair – I looked so  
7           rotten. But I didn't care, I got to be Usher and Chris Brown and all these attractive men that I  
8           desired to be at the time.
- 9   AJ:     Right.
- 10   DGC:   It was cool. We would travel to Cali and perform, it was cool.
- 11   AJ:     So, did you make good money?
- 12   DGC:   Oh, yeah, I was making good money as a little King. And then, I kept doing it for a little bit, fell  
13           off – got back into it, did a couple pageants like the Toast . . . well, not the Toast, but the King  
14           pageants at the Town House, I did a couple of those. Then, when I started hormones when I  
15           was 24, I was like, you know your whole drag career has been based of the fact that you wanted  
16           to be another person – you didn't want to be Nicki for a night, you wanted to be Chris Brown,  
17           Pitbull, whoever. But now, you're not Nicki anymore, you're Dominic. So, you're not that  
18           person, you never have to be that person again – you get to be the person that you've been  
19           trying to be and I kind of just feel off. I was like, "You know what? I don't feel the need to put  
20           facial hair on my face no more, or contour my face or anything like that." I started seeing the  
21           changes and I'm like, "Cool, man, cool." But now, I see a lot of my friends are Kings, a lot of my  
22           trans guys are Kings – like in Boston, I got a couple out here, and the impact that they're making.  
23           Kings weren't really that big when I was doing it before, now I'm noticing . . . I just did a drag  
24           show out in Boston when I was out there right before my grandpa passed away, a lot of people  
25           have never seen a trans person, a trans man for that matter. And, on top of that, a trans man  
26           that does drag. I'm telling you, when I took my shirt off, money started flying at me. I'm like,  
27           "What the . . . what is going on?" All because of my scars and there were people from England  
28           in the audience that were there on vacation and they came up to me and they said, "Your  
29           performance was so inspiring, you are so proud to be you." And I'm like, "Bro, I ain't never got  
30           this kind of love for taking my shirt off." So, I might get back into drag because now it's not that  
31           I want to be somebody else, now I can just have fun. I can do different things with my facial hair  
32           I already have. I don't have to wear the tape or the binder – none of that. I'd be more  
33           comfortable now, but there's always going to be a stereotype on trans men being drag kings –  
34           always. Well, there's a stereotype on drag – period. If you are a biological woman or a trans  
35           woman, they feel that you should not be a drag queen, and if you are a biological man or a trans  
36           man, they feel like you should not be a drag king because you are already the gender that you  
37           are portraying. I'm not the person that I'm trying to portray every day. Do I look like Pitbull?  
38           Do I look like Neo to you? Come on - it's being an entertainer.
- 39   AJ:     Right, it's entertainment.

- 1 DGC: Right. You don't necessarily have to be a drag star, you're an entertainer – that's what you get  
2 paid to do is to put on some make-up and entertain somebody. It shouldn't matter what you  
3 got going on, as long as you can make yourself look good under them lights. You feel me? I love  
4 it.
- 5 AJ: You sort of . . . do you feel like drag is a part of the trans community? I know there is a lot of  
6 people these days, like you were just saying, who want to dis drag and be like, "Oh, yeah, those  
7 are drag queens, that's not real trans identity." What's your thoughts on that?
- 8 DGC: I feel like . . . hmm, how do I feel about that? I feel like balls are more popular in the trans  
9 community, like the ball scene, because of the categories that they have – they have straight up  
10 trans categories rather than just a one-way street type of thing. I don't know, though, it's kind  
11 of hard to say whether or not drag . . . I haven't been in a lot of states to meet a lot of trans  
12 people to see how drag affects them. Personally, from here to Massachusetts, it's getting there  
13 – it's getting up there. A lot more trans people are becoming comfortable enough to do drag,  
14 especially in Boston. They are killing it out there, we need to catch up. I hope one day it will be  
15 just a normal thing in the trans community – like, "Oh, he's a drag king," "Oh, she's a drag  
16 queen, no big deal." Your gender don't define what you can do as a performer.
- 17 AJ: True. I like that. Wow, you have been really beautifully honest today, Dominic.
- 18 DGC: That's what people tell me.
- 19 AJ: Talk to me about your sexual identity. Who do you get down with? Are you in a relationship?  
20 Do you have some people . . . your partner . . . ?
- 21 DGC: OK, well, I identify as a straight trans man. Now, with that said, I consider trans women to be  
22 women also. So, when I say I'm a straight man, if I date a trans woman, I'm still a straight man  
23 because she is a woman.
- 24 AJ: Come on now, bring the noise – bring the noise.
- 25 DGC: I am currently with a cis woman, a white girl – she's beautiful, gorgeous, everything I could ever  
26 want. She was with me before my transition, we broke up for a little bit, she's with me now, so  
27 she's seen both people and she loved them both equally, but she definitely likes me better now  
28 that I'm happy.
- 29 AJ: Was the break-up around your transition at all?
- 30 DGC: It was, it was. She had a little crisis within herself trying to figure out what this would make her  
31 identify as.
- 32 AJ: Yeah, what does this mean for me? That's a real thing.
- 33 DGC: We came to the conclusion that she's pansexual.
- 34 AJ: She's a lesbian, right.
- 35 DGC: Yeah, she was a lesbian her whole life – but, yeah, we've come to the conclusion now that she's  
36 pansexual – it's hearts not parts. She loves me for me.



- 1 AJ: Hearts not parts.
- 2 DGC: Exactly – hearts not parts.
- 3 AJ: I don't think I've heard it quite phrased that way, but I love it.
- 4 DGC: Yeah, pansexual – hearts not parts. But yeah, she's been super supportive every step of the way  
5 – through hormones, through surgeries, she's helping me get my hysterectomy finally scheduled  
6 and get all the ultrasounds done I need for that to get my recommendation.
- 7 AJ: Oh, so that's coming – we didn't even mention that.
- 8 DGC: Yeah, I actually had my ultrasound appointment yesterday. Now, for any trans person that  
9 doesn't know how invasive these ultrasounds are, they are very invasive. Yeah. Well, first it was  
10 just a little regular . . . I'm like, "Girl, I'm not pregnant, why are you doing this?" And then she  
11 was like, "OK, now I'm going to do the vaginal ultrasound," and I'm looking at her like, "Who got  
12 a . . .? Oh, yeah, I do." "Oh yeah, I forgot." I'm like, "I've got to go in the bathroom and take my  
13 . . ." I got my whole thing on.
- 14 AJ: So, you pack every day?
- 15 DGC: Yup, I wear a packer, which is kind of like an artificial penis. I have an STP, which is a stand-up  
16 pee device, so I'm able to not only wear it to present, but I can also urinate with it. It works for  
17 sex, and I love it. But, yeah, packing is awesome – but it's not for everybody.
- 18 AJ: Do you pack when you go to the airport?
- 19 DGC: No, that's the one time . . . I pack it in my bag that's going on the bottom of the plane, but no  
20 I'm not trying to go through TSA . . . I did it one time and dude was grabbing all of my stuff and  
21 he's like, "What is this?" And, of course, at the time my ID still said female so I couldn't be like,  
22 "Bro, that's my dick."
- 23 AJ: I'm sorry for laughing.
- 24 DGC: No, that's cool – it's funny. I couldn't be like, "Bro, that's my dick," because he'd be looking at  
25 my ID and be like, "Oh, that's your dick, huh?"
- 26 AJ: I'm thinking about that one song, "Wait until you see my dick."
- 27 DGC: Right, they take me in the back room . . . the lady took me in the back room and she pulled my  
28 pants down, the thing fell out and I was like, "I told you." She was just like, "We just had to . . ."  
29 It was so embarrassing, I was like, "This is so embarrassing, I told y'all I was trans, I even had my  
30 pieces of paper saying what I should be called," and things like that. I was pretty manly then  
31 too. I haven't had any problems with TSA since my ID changed. I should say more or less since  
32 my ID changed and I got facial hair, because before I had the facial hair, I looked like a baby stud  
33 – a baby lesbian. Crazy.
- 34 AJ: How long have you and your partner been together?
- 35 DGC: We have been on and off for almost seven years.

- 1 AJ: Wow, that's a long time.
- 2 DGC: Mostly on, but everybody has their moments.
- 3 AJ: Right.
- 4 DGC: Yeah, we live together in St. Paul, Minnesota. We have a cat baby – she's the love of our life.
- 5 AJ: Nice, cool.
- 6 DGC: We are talking about children, obviously it's not a simple situation. So, we're looking at  
7 perspective . . .
- 8 AJ: So, you've got to put a little effort into it.
- 9 DGC: Yes. We are looking at potential donors, also we're looking at sperm banks, and then possibly  
10 getting some of my eggs, if I have any left – which I probably don't, but it's worth a shot. I'll take  
11 that invasive procedure to see if I've got any eggs left so I can have a baby that looks like me.
- 12 AJ: Right.
- 13 DGC: But, yeah, she will be the one carrying the child. I've never had a desire to carry a child. I know  
14 mentally I couldn't handle it. Physically I could; I'm healthy but my mental state would be  
15 terrible. I would be depressed, so I wouldn't be eating . . . it wouldn't be healthy for me or the  
16 baby for me to be pregnant with how much of a man I see myself as. So, she wants to carry the  
17 baby . . . now, with that said, if she is unable to reproduce, then I will consider stopping my  
18 hormones to bear a child for us, but that's the only way. So, I'm hoping to God she's fertile.
- 19 AJ: She probably is.
- 20 DGC: She probably is – her mom was and her grandma was, so she better be too.
- 21 AJ: Yeah. Wow, that's beautiful – that's a beautiful thing, man. What do you think the relationship  
22 is, as you're getting ready to perform at Pride, it's June – Pride month, what do you think the  
23 relationship is between the L, the G, the B, and the T?
- 24 DGC: Here you go, you wanted to get me going. So, the LGB got their thing and then the T, like way  
25 over there, and I don't like it at all. I've seen a lot of hatred from the LGB side to the T side, but  
26 I've also seen a lot of hatred from the T side back – that's how a war starts, that's how war  
27 starts. I feel like we are becoming closer to the LGB part because we're becoming more known  
28 and we're more visible and stories are being written about us – you're writing books. Trans  
29 culture is becoming relevant but I feel like until we do something absolutely epic, everybody is  
30 still going to focus on the LGB and the T is still going to be silent, until we make it un-silent.
- 31 AJ: Right. Well, the name of my book is *The T is Not Silent*.
- 32 DGC: I know. I was trying to use a little reference from you.
- 33 AJ: I see, I feel you.
- 34 DGC: Right now, it is silent. You advocate, I advocate, we know tons of amazing people just in  
35 Minnesota alone that advocate, but we need to get people like us in every single state to make  
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- 1 the same difference that me, you and everybody else makes. There is strength in numbers. If  
2 only a couple of us are visible, that's cool – whatever, a couple people might catch on. But, if all  
3 of us are visible, just like at Pride when we take over the park and they've got a couple bashers,  
4 but who's the squad? The LGBT community, the squad at Pride. We don't . . . no, it's strengths  
5 in numbers. If we could get like, I don't even know, a group or a panel or something in each  
6 state, that would be dope. That would be something I definitely would drive for.
- 7 AJ: Yeah. So, that kind of leads into my next question. What do you think the agenda should be? If  
8 these panels come to be, what should they be talking about?
- 9 DGC: They need to talk about real-life issues . . . trans suicides, trans murders, hormones and what  
10 they can actually do to your body if you don't take care of yourself or if you're getting them  
11 under the table. The emotional aspects of being transgender – you're not going to just take  
12 hormones and be happy. I know a hell of people that are depressed, have contemplated  
13 suicide, have PTSD or have had traumatic experiences. We need to talk about rape – a lot of my  
14 friends have been raped.
- 15 AJ: Trans men?
- 16 DGC: Trans men and women just trying to be who they are. We should be able to walk outside and  
17 feel just as comfortable as the next man or the next woman. Nobody asks for that, I don't care  
18 what anybody says – just because you're wearing a short skirt, that don't mean that you asked  
19 for somebody to come up and put their hand up your skirt. You're trying to be cute. We need  
20 to talk about hatred within the trans community. There are so many people that are either  
21 jealous or trying to step on somebody else's toes in the trans community, and I have to reiterate  
22 all the time - no two people's transition is going to be the same, by any means. Your body is  
23 your body, their body is their body, how yours changes and how theirs changes is going to be  
24 completely different. He may get facial hair after the first month, you may get facial hair after  
25 two years. Don't try to piggyback somebody else's transition and then get mad when you ain't  
26 seeing the same things as them. That's your genetics, that ain't their fault. Or, I've been  
27 hearing the words cissy trans a lot and that makes me livid. I don't see why trans men can't  
28 wear make-up. Why can't trans men wear make-up? Why can't you be a pretty boy trans man?  
29 OK, but you can let cis gay men wear make-up? That don't make no sense to me. You can't pick  
30 and choose – it's either you accept it for what it is or you don't. You can't be like, "Oh, my gay  
31 homebody looks good with eyeliner but my trans homebody, now he's gay." Listen to what you  
32 just said – you said, "Your gay homebody." OK, maybe he's gay.
- 33 AJ: I know a lot of gay trans dudes.
- 34 DGC: I know a hell of gay trans men and that also puts a lot of trans men in a category. I've been  
35 asked if I'm gay so many damn times, there is such a huge thing out there that people think that  
36 trans people are automatically gay – every single last one of them. "If you're trans, you're gay."
- 37 AJ: Wrong.
- 38 DGC: Stop – bro, stop. That's like saying if you're a cis man you automatically like woman and if  
39 you're a cis woman you automatically like men.

- 1 AJ: Yeah, that's just not the reality.
- 2 DGC: No, that's not how it works. You like who you like and that's it. It's crazy. But, yeah, no – we  
3 got some work to do, definitely, within our own community. One of the biggest things that I  
4 stress on when I'm live and I'm doing my educational videos, not just smoking, but when I'm  
5 actually educating people, I stress on if we want to be taken seriously as a community, we need  
6 to start taking ourselves seriously – wholeheartedly 100%.
- 7 AJ: Andrea snaps her fingers.
- 8 DGC: These straight people, or cis people – whatever, they're looking at us from the outside, they  
9 ain't in our community so they don't know what goes on in our community except for what we  
10 show them and how we're acting out and things like that. So, they're taking off of that – ain't  
11 none of them lived a day in our shoes.
- 12 AJ: Right.
- 13 DGC: So, if you want them to take you seriously, give them a reason to. Don't be fighting people  
14 when they ask you questions, educate them; turn around and educate. You know what pisses  
15 people off more than yelling back at them? Putting them in their place with education. You  
16 need to educate and motivate and inspire people to want to change their minds. A lot of these .  
17 . . especially the older cats, the older cis cats and straight people, whatever, they grew up  
18 thinking that we were absolutely wrong – that we ain't shit, that we are abominations, that God  
19 don't love us and this and that. It's on us as a community to inform them otherwise – that we  
20 bleed the same as they do, we breathe the same oxygen as them. It shouldn't be a, "Oh, there's  
21 this community and then there's this community." We should all be a big family. I know that's a  
22 big stretch, that's a huge stretch because I know a lot of people that do not like me but I'm  
23 saying that if we took the time as a community to take ourselves seriously, all of us took the  
24 time to educate ourselves like you do and I do and Rox does and everybody else, and then  
25 educate the masses . . . I feel like the hate wouldn't be so hot no more towards trans people.  
26 We've got to take ourselves seriously though first. We can't be fighting with each other.
- 27 AJ: Yeah, no – that's real. I believe in visibility. It's a double-edged sword but it's what it's going to  
28 take to change hearts and minds. And that's why I'm doing this project and I'm so thrilled that  
29 you are a part of it.
- 30 DGC: Well, didn't nobody get nowhere just sitting on their butts – you've got to get up, stand up,  
31 stand out.
- 32 AJ: You've got to get up and get out, give something. So, Dominic, have you ever volunteered or  
33 worked with an LGBT organization before? I know you're doing your thing on stage, but have  
34 you ever been just down with a straight up organization?
- 35 DGC: Not really, actually. I've never really . . .
- 36 AJ: You're a RARE production artist though, right?
- 37 DGC: Well, I was. I don't know about now – I haven't really talked with Rox lately. They've been  
38 super busy with everything. But, yes, anytime RARE has a show, you know I'm there.

- 1 AJ: I think once a RARE production, always a RARE . . .
- 2 DGC: Exactly. If RARE ever has a show, just know I'll be there because I love them – period.
- 3 AJ: And, just for clarity, RARE Productions is . . .
- 4 DGC: Roxanne Anderson's music/talent/artist/enterprise. It's a collective of LGBT artists.
- 5 AJ: Queer and Black.
- 6 DGC: Mostly people of color, yes.
- 7 AJ: Queer and trans people of color.
- 8 DGC: It gives us a place to be heard, we don't get that a lot. But, yeah, I ride for RARE.
- 9 AJ: Any other organizations?
- 10 DGC: Not really. I went out and helped with Boston Youth Pride when I was out there a couple weeks  
11 ago. I met a lot of the trans youth, some beautiful little trans babies . . . oh man, oh man, I'm so  
12 excited for the next generation – they're going to be so handsome and beautiful. Oh, man. But,  
13 no, I've really just . . . I reach out to people through social media when I see that they're down  
14 and out or if they have questions. I always tell people no question is a dumb question if it's for  
15 educational purposes. Now, if you're trying to ask me what's in my pants, you're going to get  
16 blocked, but if you come at me correctly, I will come back correctly.
- 17 AJ: Right, right.
- 18 DGC: No question is a dumb question when it comes to me. I say that very lightly, but I mean it. But,  
19 no – I'm more of a person to reach out to people. I've never really been part of an outreach  
20 group though. I would love to do whatever.
- 21 AJ: I'm just asking, I'm not saying you should do that but a lot of people do so I'm just trying to  
22 follow-up.
- 23 DGC: It's been talked about.
- 24 AJ: I mean, just living your life – just living our life is putting in work.
- 25 DGC: I was going to say it's like a movie.
- 26 AJ: Yeah. So, there's no pressure. But, just kind of wrapping up a little bit, man. You talked about  
27 these gaybies, what do you think the trans community will be like in 50 years?
- 28 DGC: Honestly, with how good people are getting with educating the youth and how I've watched a  
29 lot of trans men and trans women finally embrace the youth, so our gaybies, I feel like the world  
30 is going to be a lot better place in 50 years. I feel like trans isn't going to be a commodity, per  
31 se, like it is with the news and everything right now, it's just going to be something normal. At  
32 least that's my hope for the next generation – that y'all can just be you. You don't have to  
33 worry about certain doctors turning you away because they don't like what you're doing or  
34 certain therapists or being judged. I want it to just be like you could wake up in the morning and  
35 be trans and that's it – no weight on your chest, just, "Hey, my name is Alex," and that's it. "My

- 1 name is Mary,” and that’s it. Not, “Hey, I’m Mary and I’m a trans woman.” I just want it to be  
2 normal – the kids deserve that. Just like with me when I was younger, I didn’t ask for this – it’s  
3 not like I was, “Oh, one day I’m just going to be trans.” I’ve always been trans. It’s not a  
4 disease, we’re not mentally handicapped, anything like that. There’s nothing wrong with us –  
5 there’s nothing wrong with us. And, that’s what I want to bring to the kids – it gets better.  
6 When I was 13 or 14 years old, I wanted nothing more than to crawl in a hole, but look at me  
7 now. I’m so visible, I’m out, I’m happy, I’m proud of who I am, I’m living my authentic life.
- 8 AJ: Seven years in a relationship.
- 9 DGC: You know what I’m saying? It gets better.
- 10 AJ: You’ve got a job, you’ve got a musical career, you’ve got it going on son.
- 11 DGC: Right. You’re going to have somebody who is going to love you for you. You’re going to find a  
12 job where the company respects you as the man or woman that you are or meant to be, you’re  
13 going to have family members that are going to leave but you’re also going to have family  
14 members that are going to stay. On top of that, you’re going to make new family members  
15 within the community. My biggest thing is that it gets better. It may not feel like it in the  
16 moment because I’ve had moments where I’m like, “Dude, I want to give up. This is so much  
17 maybe I should . . .” But then those thoughts go out of my mind as soon as I say it. I’m like, “No,  
18 maybe you shouldn’t have because you would have been more miserable then than you are  
19 now.” Life gets easier, but you’ve got to know that it’s going to get worse before it gets better –  
20 you’ve got to go through the motions first.
- 21 AJ: That’s what’s up – that’s deep.
- 22 DGC: It is.
- 23 AJ: I know you’re biracial, but when you’re walking down the street, I’ve got to believe that you are  
24 perceived as a Black man.
- 25 DGC: Actually . . .
- 26 AJ: What is life like as a Black man? And maybe you’re not, I don’t know. You were going to say,  
27 “Actually . . .”
- 28 DGC: Actually, I get clocked more Hispanic than anything.
- 29 AJ: Is that right?
- 30 DGC: Yeah, or white – sometimes even white . . . just really tan. I think it’s because of how I grew up.  
31 I don’t talk like a lot of my friends. My mannerisms ain’t like I’m from where a lot of these  
32 people will be from, nothing like that. I don’t dress like anything but me so I wouldn’t put a  
33 specific category on the way I dress but I guess little white boy-ish, if you want to put it in  
34 perspective. I like to be clean-cut and everything like that. But, it kind of depends on where I  
35 am. Like out here, I mostly get clocked for Hispanic. A lot of other places it will be either Black  
36 or white, or mulatto – so Black and white. I’ve never been just clocked as just a Black man.
- 37 AJ: OK, so that’s not really your reality.

- 1 DGC: No.
- 2 AJ: Is it different, though, as a Latinx man versus a Latinx woman?
- 3 DGC: Yeah, we're held up to certain standards too, just like in the Black community how Black woman  
4 and Black men are held to certain standards. As a Hispanic man, you should be . . . you know, a  
5 good worker, a reliable worker, you should be able to work for a long time, you should be able  
6 to provide for your family, you need to be the breadwinner, you need to be strong – but  
7 educated at the same time. All these things . . . and with the Latino women, it's crazy for them.  
8 It's like almost any other culture – you should be good at cooking, you should be good at  
9 cleaning, you should bear my babies, you should be super educated but stay at home and take  
10 care of my kids, blah, blah, blah. Typical Hispanic culture. But then, I also have my Black roots in  
11 me so I don't necessarily live by the Hispanic ways. I kind of just do me.
- 12 AJ: Right.
- 13 DGC: I wouldn't really put a category on how I act. I'm just the man of the house.
- 14 AJ: You're a new breed.
- 15 DGC: Yeah, for real.
- 16 AJ: Remember MC Breed. I know a little bit about hip-hop.
- 17 DGC: You better.
- 18 AJ: Hey, listen. Is there anything that I have not asked you that you want to make sure is included in  
19 this conversation?
- 20 DGC: Yes. The last thing I want to leave people with, and make sure that they understand, is not  
21 every trans man is going to have or want surgeries or hormones or anything like that. And not  
22 every trans woman wants to get breasts and be on hormones and have bottom surgery, but that  
23 does not make them any less of a man or any less of a woman. And that's it.
- 24 AJ: Snap, snap, snap. Peace out.
- 25 DGC: Peace out. That's a big . . .