

T. Aaron Hans
Narrator

Andrea Jenkins
Interviewer

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

February 25, 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 T. Aaron Hans -TAH
3

4 AJ: So good morning. My name is Andrea Jenkins. I am the oral historian for the Transgender Oral
5 History Project at the Tretter Collection at the University of Minnesota libraries. And today is
6 February 25, 2017. I'm in South Minneapolis and I'm here today with T. Hans - no. I'm sorry. Oh
7 my god. T. Aaron Hans.

8 TAH: Yes.

9 AJ: How are you, Aaron?

10 TAH: I'm good, how are you, Andrea?

11 AJ: I'm sorry for -

12 TAH: It's fine.

13 AJ: - screwing up your name, but this is what I'm going to ask you to do.

14 TAH: Okay.

15 AJ: State your name.

16 TAH: All right.

17 AJ: Spell your name, so that there's no chance of it being wrong.

18 TAH: Got it.

19 AJ: And then tell me your gender identity today, your gender assigned at birth, and your pronouns.

20 TAH: Excellent. So I'm T. Aaron Hans, and it's spelled T and a period, and then Aaron, A-A-R-O-N, and
21 the last name is Hans, H-A-N-S.

22 AJ: Yeah.

23 TAH: And I use he and him or ze and hir pronouns.

24 AJ: Okay. Ze and hir?

25 TAH: Yup.

26 AJ: We have to talk about that a little bit, but -

27 TAH: We can talk about that a little bit.

28 AJ: Yeah.

29 TAH: Sorry, my brain - you asked me to say that - gender identity.

30 AJ: Your gender identity today.

31 TAH: Today. I identify as a butch transmasculine person.

- 1 AJ: Okay.
- 2 TAH: And we can talk about that too.
- 3 AJ: A butch transmasculine person. Yes. Definitely want to talk about that.
- 4 TAH: And I was assigned female at birth, and...
- 5 AJ: Yeah, I think you answered them all.
- 6 TAH: Did I get all those things?
- 7 AJ: Yeah.
- 8 TAH: All right. Excellent.
- 9 AJ: That's cool. What's a - what's a butch transmasculine person?
- 10 TAH: So I - so I came out - so when I came out, I think this goes to who I - who I was and - and how I've
- 11 come to be. So I came out first as a butch dyke.
- 12 AJ: Okay.
- 13 TAH: And I came out as a butch dyke very clearly. Like, that's how I identified myself.
- 14 AJ: Wow.
- 15 TAH: Like - I -
- 16 AJ: Like, there was no movement towards butch -
- 17 TAH: There was no - I was like - I was like, not a lesbian. Like, when I came out, I was like, "Oh, I'm a
- 18 butch dyke." Like, that worked for - language worked for me. Like -
- 19 AJ: Wow, okay.
- 20 TAH: You know, when I came out to my parents, I was like, "I'm a lesbian."
- 21 AJ: Yeah.
- 22 TAH: Right? Like, I softened it a little bit.
- 23 AJ: Right.
- 24 TAH: Right, like, so depending on who I was telling, but like, in - identity-wise, when I came out, like, I
- 25 was like - like, lesbian felt weird, 'cause it was like, I'm not a woman who loves other women.
- 26 Like -
- 27 AJ: Wow.
- 28 TAH: Like, I knew -
- 29 AJ: So you had some gender -
- 30 TAH: I knew - yeah, like -

- 1 AJ: - constructs -
- 2 TAH: - structs -
- 3 AJ: - within that label.
- 4 TAH: Yeah. And so for me, I came - so I came out - I was a undergrad at Penn State. And the queer
5 community that came out there had a pretty strong butch femme community.
- 6 AJ: Okay.
- 7 TAH: And - of elders, right? And so, like, I was able to sort of see that. So I definitely sort of came out
8 and sort of - but when I really was like, I'm going to tell people, I was like, oh, I'm definitely, like,
9 a butch dyke is like, how I saw myself. And - and then I - I met a - so I came out and I met about -
10 so in the spring of '94. So I came out in the spring of '93, spring of '94 I met Kate Bornstein.
- 11 AJ: Oh, wow.
- 12 TAH: And she came to campus, and she was on campus for, like, pride week, and she was - she
13 performed, and she did a couple classes, and she did a talk, and like all this stuff, right?
- 14 AJ: Right, yeah.
- 15 TAH: I was the person with the four-door car, so I was, like, tasked with doing some chaperoning.
- 16 AJ: Okay. So you got to hang out with Kate for a week.
- 17 TAH: I got to - I - I got to hang out with Kate off and on for a week, and the first night I met them to go
18 to dinner, and - the group of people - and, like, Kate and I had this really sort of loving, fantastic
19 relationship. And - or - interaction, not relationship, but in that moment, and at some point
20 during the week Kate and I were in the car and we were - I was driving, I don't know to what.
21 And Kate was like - Kate was like, "I'm going to say this, because I want you to hear this." And
22 she was like, "You know, it's really clear that you are not a woman. And that you're not - like
23 that you're - " How did she say it? She said, "It's really clear to me that you are not a woman.
24 And that likely you're not a man, either. But it is okay to be somewhere in the middle."
- 25 AJ: Wow.
- 26 TAH: And - and that sort of moment, of sort of being seen as myself, and in that whole way -
- 27 AJ: Wow.
- 28 TAH: - was incredibly powerful. And - and then I was able to meet - so my senior year, Leslie Feinberg
29 came to campus.
- 30 AJ: Oh my god. You - these are two of my heroes.
- 31 TAH: Right.
- 32 AJ: I know people -
- 33 TAH: No. Yeah.

- 1 AJ: - very personally - yeah.
- 2 TAH: And - and - and I picked Leslie Feinberg up at - I might actually be confusing the story. I'm really
3 old. I've been thinking about this for a long time. Actually might have been the other way
4 around. But I picked Leslie Feinberg up at the hotel, with Minnie Bruce Pratt. And -
- 5 AJ: Love her too.
- 6 TAH: To - love them both. And - to take them to dinner. And again, I'm the person with the car. And
7 so - actually, these stories are flipped. I'm - I'm confusing which one happened first. And I picked
8 Leslie Feinberg up and I was like, "Oh, shit, I'm in trouble. This is more than just sexuality stuff
9 going on." Because I was like, "What's this transgender - " like - like the LGBT folks were like,
10 "Will you pick up our transgender speaker?" And, like, I was like, "What's that?" Like - and - and
11 so this was my junior year, so this was '9 - '94. And I picked - like, Leslie came out of the - out of
12 the doors, and it was like I was looking at a mirror of myself.
- 13 AJ: Wow.
- 14 TAH: And - and I was like "Oh. This is - we're in trouble." Like, in my - the back of my head, I'm like
15 "Oh, shit. I'm in trouble." And then I, like, you know, I do all the, like, good butch stuff of, like,
16 opening doors, and like - you know. And, like, you know, Minnie Bruce Pratt is like, fawning over
17 my butchness, which was, like, kind of fabulous.
- 18 AJ: Yeah?
- 19 TAH: And - and -
- 20 AJ: 'Cause she is pretty femme.
- 21 TAH: She is totally - she is a femme. And - and she - and we had dinner, and like, great conversations,
22 and I then read Stone Butch Blues in the, like, the next three days, and I had a love-hate
23 relationship with that book as I threw it across the room, like, seven or eight times -
- 24 AJ: Wow.
- 25 TAH: - in the course of reading it, and realized, like, "Oh, this is - this is so much more about this
26 piece." It's also about being queer, but it's also about this other piece.
- 27 AJ: Which is?
- 28 TAH: Of gender, and - and -
- 29 AJ: Identity?
- 30 TAH: Identity, and how to understand who I am in the world. And how I wanted to move through the
31 world.
- 32 AJ: Wow.
- 33 TAH: And, you know, 'cause I had been - I mean, I have pictures of me as a baby that, like, I look like a
34 boy child. I was a boy - I was a tomboy from, like, the point I could, like, express myself.

- 1 AJ: Where were you born?
- 2 TAH: I was born in Massachusetts. I'm a military brat, so I was born in Massachusetts, but I was there
3 for a very short period of time. My mom actually had a - broke her back in high school.
- 4 AJ: Oh, no.
- 5 TAH: And she had to have back surgery, and so she was on bed rest for most of her pregnancy with
6 me. And so I was born, and two weeks later she had back surgery, and so my parents' best
7 friends took me, because my - they were then moving to DC, 'cause my dad was being
8 transferred right afterwards. Their best friends lived in DC, and so I went and lived - was with
9 them for, like, six weeks, while my mom recovered from back surgery.
- 10 AJ: Okay.
- 11 TAH: And - and so I lived there, and then, you know, I moved around a bunch as a kid, and - but I was
12 always - I was a tomboy. I -
- 13 AJ: You were a masculine kid.
- 14 TAH: I was a little masculine kid. Like, and everybody - I mean, I fought dresses, I hated frills, I - like,
15 the whole works. Like, was just not a sort of pleasant experience.
- 16 AJ: Are you an only child?
- 17 TAH: I'm an only child. I'm also a miracle child, in that my parents tried a lot to have children, and my
18 mom had a really hard time because of her broken back, and - to - in carrying, and so I am the - I
19 am the one that survived.
- 20 AJ: Wow.
- 21 TAH: And I am the miracle child. And - yeah. So.
- 22 AJ: Yeah. So bouncing around as this masculine kid -
- 23 TAH: Yep.
- 24 AJ: - from state to state? I don't know, country to country?
- 25 TAH: Yeah, I was - we -
- 26 AJ: You know, I mean, the military -
- 27 TAH: Yeah, we lived in Germany.
- 28 AJ: - you could be anywhere in the world.
- 29 TAH: Yeah. We were in Germany for three years when I was seven to ten.
- 30 AJ: Oh, wow.
- 31 TAH: But the rest of the time we were in the US.
- 32 AJ: Were in the US. Were - I mean, did people in your school, like - how did they respond to this

- 1 masculine kid?
- 2 TAH: So I think that's really hard to say, right? Because I really blocked out a lot of my childhood.
- 3 AJ: Okay.
- 4 TAH: I know that it was incredibly difficult, and I remember some really horrible experiences of being
5 sort of teased and taunted and bullied and beat up, and, like - and I fought back, like, you know,
6 all those things, right? Like, put my hand through a metal locker one day, like - you know, those
7 type of, like -
- 8 AJ: Oh. That you remember.
- 9 TAH: Well, I didn't put it all the way through. I dented the thing.
- 10 AJ: Okay. All right.
- 11 TAH: Quite significantly, though. Probably the worst damage I ever did.
- 12 AJ: Who - did your hand survive?
- 13 TAH: My hand survived, yes.
- 14 AJ: Okay.
- 15 TAH: Ten working phalanges. But I was - I played sports, and I was a student, and I was an athlete, and
16 I really sort of ignored the rest of -
- 17 AJ: Yeah.
- 18 TAH: - the world around me -
- 19 AJ: And you're super focused with what sport?
- 20 TAH: Super focused. But I was really clear. My mom, like, when I was older - when I came out to my
21 mom's siblings, one of my mom's siblings was like, "You know, you were, like, six when you
22 asked your mom if there was a surgery to make you a boy."
- 23 AJ: Oh, wow.
- 24 TAH: And I was like, "Uh, what? Say what?" Like - and - and so, you know - so like, you know, it wasn't
25 like people hadn't talked about it.
- 26 AJ: Wow.
- 27 TAH: Right, and and in talking with my parents -
- 28 AJ: They were not shocked or surprised, basically.
- 29 TAH: No. I mean, I think they were in that sort of way that people are, because they want to believe
30 that -
- 31 AJ: Right.

- 1 TAH: - you're just this normal, like, quote "normal" - right? Like -
- 2 AJ: But things were floating in the air.
- 3 TAH: But things were floating -
- 4 AJ: Ideas were like -
- 5 TAH: - in the air, right? Right, like, you know, my - yeah. My mom had talked to doctors when I was,
6 like, preteen, about, like, you know, and they were like, "Oh, you know, the kid will grow out of
7 it, and - "
- 8 AJ: Right.
- 9 TAH: And, you know, like - you know. So it wasn't those type of things, right? And - yeah. So like, you
10 know. But I knew really early, but didn't really have a real clear way of expressing it.
- 11 AJ: Sure.
- 12 TAH: Because really nobody was talking about it. Like, it wasn't - you know, this was not sort of
13 something people were talking about. In Europe, I was just sort of the, like - when I was in
14 Europe from seven to ten, like, what I remember there was the sort of - the difference of
15 gendered expectations and behavior was different than in the US.
- 16 AJ: Really? How so?
- 17 TAH: In ways. I just remember that I was able to be a lot freer, it felt like. In that period of time. And
18 that when I came back to the US, it felt like I went from being able to just live and sort of exist,
19 and I might have - I think a lot of people just were like - 'cause we lived off base, and so we lived
20 in Germany, and we lived off base and we lived in a local town near the base. And I played with
21 the German kids, and, like, ran around, and I think they just were like, you know, "This is some
22 freaky American kid," right?
- 23 AJ: Yeah.
- 24 TAH: Like - and like, I think that's probably what it was, and I just didn't have the wherewithal to
25 understand -
- 26 AJ: Sure.
- 27 TAH: - that, like - but I didn't - I don't remember being bullied in the same way.
- 28 AJ: Right. Right.
- 29 TAH: That when I came back to the States, I was - it felt like I was being -
- 30 AJ: Torment.
- 31 TAH: Tormented and tortured, right?
- 32 AJ: Yeah. Wow.
- 33 TAH: Most -

- 1 AJ: Sorry. I'm sorry.
- 2 TAH: No, yeah, but mostly by - mostly by the kids that were in - like, my first - our first location black
3 in the US was in upstate New York in Rome, New York, and we were just outside of an Air Force
4 base that -
- 5 AJ: Rome, New York, you said?
- 6 TAH: Rome, New York, yeah.
- 7 AJ: Okay.
- 8 TAH: Just outside of an Air Force base and - and that school was weird. It had a lot of military kids,
9 and a lot of, like, locals. And the military kids really sort of like - like all hung out together, and
10 many of them sort of didn't care, right? And there was lots of kids of color, and like - right? Like,
11 sort of like, the diverse community of students versus this very sort of white area.
- 12 AJ: Right.
- 13 TAH: And - so I had a little bit of protection in some ways there, 'cause like, I hung out with the out
14 crowd there, but when we moved to Syracuse, and we were outside of Syracuse in one of the
15 suburbs, and I moved into middle school, like, I moved into this, like, almost entirely white, very
16 monolithic - there were a couple of Jewish kids and that was pretty much it. Like - and that was
17 sort of, like - I just, like - that was just torture.
- 18 AJ: Wow.
- 19 TAH: Like - and I - and I don't really remember lots of specifics, 'cause I -
- 20 AJ: Yeah. Yeah.
- 21 TAH: I did a nice job of disassociating -
- 22 AJ: Right.
- 23 TAH: - and being like, "I'm checked out!"
- 24 AJ: The specifics don't really matter. But do you think - here's what I will ask. Do you think it was
25 about your gender? Do you think it was 'cause you're a smarty pants, or...? What sport did you
26 play?
- 27 TAH: So I ski raced, and I played - in high school I played lacrosse. And -
- 28 AJ: Okay. So those are kind of masculine -
- 29 TAH: Right.
- 30 AJ: - masculinized -
- 31 TAH: Yeah.
- 32 AJ: - activities. Yeah.
- 33 TAH: You know, and ski racing was a very sort of individualized sport.

- 1 AJ: Right.
- 2 TAH: Like, right? And - and I was really good at it, and - and so I got lots of praise for that, like, right?
- 3 Like -
- 4 AJ: Sure.
- 5 TAH: - and recognition, you know? Especially in late middle school and - and high school.
- 6 AJ: Yeah.
- 7 TAH: Because I was ranked nationally -
- 8 AJ: That's kind of a tough sport, too, right?
- 9 TAH: It's a tough sport.
- 10 AJ: Yeah.
- 11 TAH: I had missed a lot of school for it. Like, those types of things. And lacrosse I was a goaltender. I
- 12 was also - again, I was -
- 13 AJ: Wow.
- 14 TAH: Right, I was good at it. Like, right? Like - and so, like - and our team was really good.
- 15 AJ: The goaltenders get beat up in lacrosse, don't they?
- 16 TAH: Well - women's lacrosse is different than men's lacrosse.
- 17 AJ: Okay.
- 18 TAH: In that there's less con - like, you're not supposed to have contact with the goaltender.
- 19 AJ: Okay. All right.
- 20 TAH: It's much more sort of - there's a - there's an area with which in the goaltender is in, and you're
- 21 really not supposed to be in there. But ball - being thrown balls at you hurts a lot, so.
- 22 AJ: Yeah.
- 23 TAH: And I was - you know, I - maybe it was a little masochistic, I don't know. Way to deal with some
- 24 of my angst.
- 25 AJ: Could be fun.
- 26 TAH: But yeah, no, I mean I - like, so I - I did that, and I played lacrosse in college.
- 27 AJ: Oh, wow.
- 28 TAH: At Penn State, and - and - you know, it was definitely, like, that - those outlets allowed me to
- 29 really sort of like kind of forget about the rest of the stuff around me. And - yeah. So like, I think
- 30 that for me, those were the sort of ways that I sort of ignored what was happening around me.
- 31 AJ: Yeah.

- 1 TAH: My mom told me lots of stuff. When I came - once I came out, and she had gotten past the point
2 of, like, "What the hell?"
- 3 AJ: Right.
- 4 TAH: You know, and -
- 5 AJ: About incidents that had happened?
- 6 TAH: She had tell - told me about some stuff that had happened and I was like, "I have no memory."
- 7 AJ: Wow.
- 8 TAH: Like, just none. Right? And then some of my aunts told me some stuff, and I was like, "I don't
9 remember any of that." Which is just fascinating.
- 10 AJ: So it sounds like your family is relatively supportive, or -
- 11 TAH: Yeah.
- 12 AJ: - very supportive, or...I mean -
- 13 TAH: Yeah, I'm - I think -
- 14 AJ: How do you gauge that?
- 15 TAH: I think I'm really lucky, in that I have - and I think this goes back to being that miracle baby.
- 16 AJ: Yeah.
- 17 TAH: Right? Like -
- 18 AJ: Right.
- 19 TAH: That my parents were, like, incredibly supportive. My mom's the oldest of six and my dad's the
20 oldest of four, so there was a little bit of variation in sort of where and how people fell along the
21 sort of, like, we're going to be supportive.
- 22 AJ: Sure.
- 23 TAH: But I think on both sides of the family, there were people who put their foot down with the folks
24 who weren't on board, and who really struggled with it and said, "No, you really - you've got to
25 get on board with this." You know, my dad's side of the family, one of his siblings was less
26 supportive, and my great-uncle, who is the family patriarch at this - at that point, and - and at
27 this point, still to this day, who's a ex-Marine. And he just sort of - he was at a family reunion
28 before I got there, and he was like, "Aaron is Aaron, and he uses he, him, and his, and just get
29 over it." Like -
- 30 AJ: Wow.
- 31 TAH: Either get on board with this or, like -
- 32 AJ: Take leave now, right?

- 1 TAH: Take leave now. Like - and - you know, which is, like, totally not expected, right? Like - and also,
2 totally expected, right? You know, sort of the, like, we're in this, family's important, right?
- 3 AJ: Right.
- 4 TAH: Like, type of things, and - and, you know, I think - I think it always takes time, right? Like, people
5 struggle with - with things.
- 6 AJ: Yeah. Absolutely.
- 7 TAH: You know, and - and so on both sides there - there were - there were definitely clear struggles
8 with some of my parents' siblings. Whereas other people on both sides were like, "This makes
9 total sense," right? My mom's youngest sister was like, from the day one, she was like, "This
10 makes total sense."
- 11 AJ: Wow.
- 12 TAH: Right? Like, didn't even really bat an eyelash. And -
- 13 AJ: Cool. But it's funny, you say you came out to your parents sort of as a lesbian. But in your mind,
14 you actually -
- 15 TAH: Yeah, I mean -
- 16 AJ: - knew some gender stuff was going on.
- 17 TAH: Yeah, I mean - but I don't think I - I - what I will say is, is that when I came out to my parents the
18 first time, I really didn't - hadn't figured out the gender stuff -
- 19 AJ: Right.
- 20 TAH: - in my frontal lobe.
- 21 AJ: Yeah.
- 22 TAH: I think I had figured it out sort of in the back. 'Cause I had taken a class on adolescent
23 psychology my sophomore year.
- 24 AJ: Which kind of psychology?
- 25 TAH: Adolescent psychology.
- 26 AJ: Oh, adolescent.
- 27 TAH: Adolescent.
- 28 AJ: Okay, okay, I'm sorry.
- 29 TAH: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, adolescent - young - young - youth and young adult development, right?
- 30 AJ: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.
- 31 TAH: And the faculty member talked about sexual identity development, and - and, you know, this
32 was, like, '93, maybe '92 - '92-'93 timeframe. And he sort of broke it down, right? Like, sexual

1 identity development includes sex, what you - like, biological stuff. Gender, gender roles and
2 expression, and sexuality. And I was like - I - I mean, I still have the - I still to this day have the,
3 like, piece of paper that - the, like, notes from that, where I sort of, like, wrote sort of where I
4 was on it without really consciously thinking about it. And, like, at that moment - in that
5 moment of doing that, I knew - like, clearly I knew. But I didn't think about it again for almost a
6 year.

7 AJ: Wow.

8 TAH: Right. It was so short of, like - like, this is way too - like, I'm not going here.

9 AJ: Yeah. This is me.

10 TAH: 'Cause I hadn't come out, even, at that point.

11 AJ: That's the deep end of the pool.

12 TAH: Right, that's the deep end of the pool. And I hadn't come - really come out at that point, either.

13 AJ: Sure. Yeah.

14 TAH: And so, like, until when I came out, it was like, it was there but it was - like, right? It was sort of
15 in this messy mind thing, so.

16 AJ: Yeah. T. - T. Aaron - Aaron. To the extent that you are comfortable discussing this or if you want
17 to talk about some of the political reasons why you don't want to discuss it, I'm - I'm leaving that
18 option open. What sort of medical interventions have you pursued in your gender journey?

19 TAH: So I chose to go on testosterone. And I made the decision to do that because I had some really -
20 I was really sort of like, I don't know - like, I mean, I think early on, I was sort of like, "Do I really -
21 do I - do I identify as a man, or not?" Like that, like - that sort of, like, how - how does this really
22 line up, and - and how do I see myself, and - and I really struggled with that for a long time,
23 because I did definitely - didn't - I wasn't, like, "I want to be a man!" Like, ever. Like, that really
24 wasn't - you know, I think there were times when I thought I was supposed to be a man.

25 AJ: Right.

26 TAH: Like - right? Like, that the world around me was telling me that, and so -

27 AJ: Right.

28 TAH: I was artic - trying to articulate that in ways.

29 AJ: Sure.

30 TAH: But I think even from the get-go I knew that there was some - I knew that what - what I was
31 saying about earlier, about Kate Bornstein -

32 AJ: Right. Yeah.

33 TAH: - saying this thing, sort of like -

34 AJ: That you - it's okay to be -

- 1 TAH: It's -
- 2 AJ: - somewhere in the middle, right?
- 3 TAH: Right.
- 4 AJ: Yeah.
- 5 TAH: That - and I - and I didn't - it took me a long time to understand what that meant. Right? And -
- 6 and that sort of, like, being me was okay in whatever that looked like. And - and so I really
- 7 struggled with that, and I - I went to Creating Change for the first time in 1995, and I was part of
- 8 the National LGBT Task - Q Taskforce now - their youth leadership institute in 1995. And - where
- 9 they brought twenty five young people from across the country together in -
- 10 AJ: Oh, cool.
- 11 TAH: - California for a week, and about midweek, they were like, "So, there's this trans - trans-F to M
- 12 conference happening this weekend, and we're going to, like, have somebody drive you down,
- 13 and we got you - we're going to get you into the conference," and, like -
- 14 AJ: Oh, wow.
- 15 TAH: Like - like, "We want you - " like, "You need to go to this."
- 16 AJ: Had you identified yourself as a -
- 17 TAH: Yeah. At that point I -
- 18 AJ: Okay. All right.
- 19 TAH: - identified as trans, and - and I was - I was sort of one of -
- 20 AJ: So they weren't just pushing you towards this activity.
- 21 TAH: No, no, no.
- 22 AJ: Okay.
- 23 TAH: No, no, no. So - so, yeah. So I had come out as trans, like, really in the spring before that, I had
- 24 really sort of come out. Between having the conversation with Kate that spring, and - and the
- 25 work I was doing and the young people I was working with in an HIV prevention program, I had
- 26 really come out.
- 27 AJ: Sure.
- 28 TAH: And was like - I think more and more sure that, like, that there was - that I was somewhere on
- 29 that trans journey, but I wasn't sure where -
- 30 AJ: Where.
- 31 TAH: - I was going to go.
- 32 AJ: Yeah. Yeah.

- 1 TAH: And that's how I got to the conference. Like, the youth leadership institute. I got there being
2 like, "I don't really know what this means for me in the end and where my journey is going." And
3 - and the leaders of the - of the retreat were like, "Oh, yeah, you - we - we need to get you to
4 this conference." Like, 'cause there was a lot of sort of, like - even within that group of people, a
5 lot of sort of...difficulty around trans stuff. Like, they - the other young people didn't have
6 language for it. I didn't really have language for it. Like - 'cause it was new, right? Like, when
7 we're talking about 1995.
- 8 AJ: Yeah.
- 9 TAH: This was not sort of - not today.
- 10 AJ: Well, the - the - I would say the experience wasn't necessarily new but the open -
- 11 TAH: Right.
- 12 AJ: - dialogue around -
- 13 TAH: Right.
- 14 AJ: - it was -
- 15 TAH: Was relatively new.
- 16 AJ: - relatively new.
- 17 TAH: Yeah.
- 18 AJ: Like, the movement -
- 19 TAH: Yeah.
- 20 AJ: - around political thought around -
- 21 TAH: Yes.
- 22 AJ: - transgender identity was new.
- 23 TAH: Yes.
- 24 AJ: Is that fair?
- 25 TAH: Yeah, no. No, no, no. And I think that's what I meant to -
- 26 AJ: Right. Yeah.
- 27 TAH: - I meant to articulate, right?
- 28 AJ: Yeah.
- 29 TAH: Is - is - that - that - that in that sort of, like, we were just starting to have language around it.
- 30 AJ: Right.
- 31 TAH: And people were just starting to talk about it in the LGBTQ spaces.

- 1 AJ: Sure.
- 2 TAH: At a sort of - a greater level.
- 3 AJ: So the conference?
- 4 TAH: Yeah. So I went to the FTM - the first F to M international conference that they had.
- 5 AJ: Oh, really?
- 6 TAH: Yeah. And -
- 7 AJ: Wow.
- 8 TAH: And so they - they packed me up, they sent me down to New York - or San Francisco. They found
9 a place for me to stay, and - and got me into the conference on Saturday, and then they were
10 like, "So you get to go to the conference on Saturday, and then you have to be back by X time,
11 'cause the ED's going to be here, and if she finds out that we let you, like - "
- 12 AJ: Oh, my god.
- 13 TAH: It, like - it was like - this, like, whole, like, secret under -
- 14 AJ: What that Elizabeth Birch at the time? No.
- 15 TAH: No.
- 16 AJ: Elizabeth Birch was at HRC.
- 17 TAH: No, it wasn't. Oh, what is her name? I can see her face. I'm horrible with names, I told you that.
- 18 AJ: Okay, well. It's -
- 19 TAH: So -
- 20 AJ: - not a big deal, right?
- 21 TAH: It's not a big deal, right. No, no. But they really just wanted me back, 'cause they were, like, sort
22 of doing this in the dark of night type of thing. And - and I went, and - and was able just to see
23 the range of F to M identified folks, and what that looked like.
- 24 AJ: Wow.
- 25 TAH: And could see myself in people. I - I mean, I literally - I walked in the door, and Leslie Feinberg
26 and Minnie Bruce Pratt are standing in the hallway.
- 27 AJ: Right.
- 28 TAH: And - and Jamison Green.
- 29 AJ: Jamison Green, right?
- 30 TAH: Right.
- 31 AJ: He was one of the founders of the FTM International, right?

- 1 TAH: Yeah. And Shadow Morton were all sort of there. And - and Jamison had actually gotten me -
2 AJ: Shannon Mentor?
3 TAH: Shadow Morton.
4 AJ: Oh, Shadow Morton. Okay.
5 TAH: Shadow Morton. Yeah. He's a trans guy in San Francisco.
6 AJ: Oh, wow.
7 TAH: And - and he - right, so I like - I - you know, and - and Jamison had actually gotten me - James got
8 me into the conference. And so he had met me there, and - I just - my brain just blew up. And I
9 was like -
10 AJ: Yeah.
11 TAH: I was like - by the time I got back that night to the retreat, I was like, "No, this is really - this is
12 what - this is where I'm going." Right? Like, what that's going to ultimately look like, I don't
13 know.
14 AJ: Sure.
15 TAH: But I really was still really hesitant. I don't do well with drugs, typically.
16 AJ: Yeah.
17 TAH: And so I'm pretty, like - I haven't - I don't take a lot of antibiotics, I don't - right? Like, I just don't
18 take a lot of medication, and -
19 AJ: Right.
20 TAH: So I didn't think I was going to do anything. And - and at Creating Change that fall - so that was
21 in August - or July, early August, and then that fall in November was Creating Change, which is
22 the taskforce's yearly conference, and I showed up at it and I met Shadow Morton like, in
23 person. Like, we actually were able to talk, and James was there again, and I was one of maybe
24 four or five trans-identified FT-something - FTM -
25 AJ: Right. Yeah.
26 TAH: In the conference. There was probably twenty trans women, but there were this little teeny
27 handful of us. And - and Shadow one night - I - it was a horrible conference. But Shadow -
28 AJ: Oh, wow.
29 TAH: Like, it was just - it was painful. Like, you know, like, people just, like, not seeing me for who I
30 saw myself as, that, like, not - right, just that sort of not being seen in the community,
31 AJ: Wow.
32 TAH: - not being accepted into spaces, like - all kinds of stuff. And the - Shadow Morton and a bunch
33 of the Safer Sex Slut folks, who are performance and education group in -

- 1 AJ: From the Twin Cities!
- 2 TAH: No, these were the San Francisco-based Sluts.
- 3 AJ: Oh. Okay.
- 4 TAH: And they were all doing a workshop at Creating Change, and so after the work - I went to the
5 workshop and after the workshop, Shadow and Siana Stewart sort of gathered me up, and took
6 me and fed me dinner, and then took me back to their room, and -
- 7 AJ: Oh, wow.
- 8 TAH: And - and we had this powerful conversation. And - in ways that, like, they just sort of were like,
9 "We're going to figure out how to - we're going to take care of you in this moment." And - and
10 Siana asked Shadow just to talk about his experience going on testosterone. 'Cause I don't think
11 I could have asked a question if I had wanted to.
- 12 AJ: Wow.
- 13 TAH: And - and he talked about his experience, and sort of who he was before and who he was after,
14 and I was like, "Oh. I need to - I actually need to try this - this testosterone thing, 'cause maybe it
15 will make me a nicer person." 'Cause I was - I was a crabby, angry - I could use other words for
16 that.
- 17 AJ: Yeah.
- 18 TAH: Like, hormonal, angsty, pretty much all the time.
- 19 AJ: Wow.
- 20 TAH: It was like - I - I often describe it as PMSing for, like, twenty eight days out of the month. Like -
- 21 AJ: Wow.
- 22 TAH: And that's really what it felt like. Like, when I hear people describe PMS, sort of, like, in that sort
23 of, like, short-term -
- 24 AJ: Right.
- 25 TAH: - type of way -
- 26 AJ: Two or three, four five days.
- 27 TAH: Five days, like - but no, it was like - I was like that all the time.
- 28 AJ: Wow.
- 29 TAH: Just angry.
- 30 AJ: Just angry, yeah.
- 31 TAH: And mad at the world, and nothing was good, and - and so after that conversation, I was like
32 "I've got to get myself on testosterone. If - if it does what it did for Shadow, I'm like, I'm down."
33 Like, if it just -

- 1 AJ: I'm with this.
- 2 TAH: If it just changes that sort of, like, horrible hormonal angstiness. And so I went on testosterone
3 in March of '96, and - and it was - I mean, the change was instantaneous.
- 4 AJ: Wow.
- 5 TAH: Like, in some ways. And - and it was, like, really, like quick, like, I'd do a shot and, like, six or
6 seven hours later, I was like - my best friend and I were walking through a parking lot one day
7 after my shot, and - about seven hours or so after my shot - and I was, like, literally walking
8 across the parking lot.
- 9 AJ: Yeah.
- 10 TAH: And my best friend, like, stopped, and I kept walking, and all of a sudden I turn around, like,
11 "Why are you stopped?" and my best friend was like, "Your entire, sort of, like, body just
12 relaxed, and the way you walk changed."
- 13 AJ: Wow.
- 14 TAH: "And sort of, like - it was like stuff just fell off your shoulder. What the hell happened?" And I
15 was like, "What time is it?" And I was like, "Oh, I got my shot earlier today." And my best friend
16 was like, "Why the fuck didn't we put you on this years ago?"
- 17 AJ: Oh, wow.
- 18 TAH: Right? 'Cause we - we had gone to college together, right? And she was like, "We should have
19 put you on testosterone when you were in college."
- 20 AJ: Yes.
- 21 TAH: "You are - this is - like, this is good," right?
- 22 AJ: Yeah.
- 23 TAH: And so the - that sort of a positive sort of change in who I was was so visceral -
- 24 AJ: Wow.
- 25 TAH: - that I was like, "I'm going to keep that. That - that drug - this is good." Right?
- 26 AJ: Yeah.
- 27 TAH: I mean, it took finding the right one. Like, I respond pretty negatively to one of the injectables,
28 and so it sort of cycles -
- 29 AJ: You had to experiment a little bit.
- 30 TAH: Yeah, so -
- 31 AJ: Yeah.
- 32 TAH: Cycles pretty quick, but once we found the one that worked, like, it totally changed my life.

- 1 AJ: Wow.
- 2 TAH: And - so yeah. So I - so I've been on testosterone and haven't really changed dosage. Like, only
3 really bad negative effect is the shifting of hair off my head to my back. I walk in and the
4 doctor's like, "Any side effects to the medication you're taking?" And I was like, "Uh, no?" And
5 the guy - the doctor was like - the doctor was like, "But your voice is lower." And I'm like, "That's
6 a side effect? Oh, yeah! Actually the side effects that I - all the - they're all good side effects."
- 7 AJ: Right, exactly.
- 8 TAH: Like, I'm calm, my voice is lowering -
- 9 AJ: The hair is popping out of my ears now.
- 10 TAH: I'm getting hair on my face - well, at that point I was getting hair on my face. I was like, all the
11 good things! I was like, "I could do without the pimples, and I could do without the, like - "
- 12 AJ: Sure.
- 13 TAH: But, like, yeah. So - so yes -
- 14 AJ: So you didn't experience that aggressive male -
- 15 TAH: No.
- 16 AJ: - toxic masculinity -
- 17 TAH: No.
- 18 AJ: - that -
- 19 TAH: Like, I just -
- 20 AJ: - some people say -
- 21 TAH: - mellowed out.
- 22 AJ: Yeah.
- 23 TAH: Yeah. I just mellowed out. It was like - like -
- 24 AJ: You're already way toxic, so it just kind of -
- 25 TAH: I was so -
- 26 AJ: - brought you down.
- 27 TAH: Yeah. No, no. And that's - and that's what - when Shadow was sharing his story, he talked about
28 sort of how his experience was so calming, that I was like, "Oh, there's - " 'Cause I had heard a
29 lot about that toxic masculinity, and I -
- 30 AJ: Sure.
- 31 TAH: And I was like, I don't want to be some assholeish white -

- 1 AJ: Right.
- 2 TAH: You know -
- 3 AJ: Prick.
- 4 TAH: - man who's like, angry and pissed off at the world and, like - I'm like, I'm already there. Like, I
5 don't need to go - like, right?
- 6 AJ: Right.
- 7 TAH: I can't go up a notch there. 'Cause if I go up a notch there, it's going to be ugly. And so - but no, I
8 went from being there to being just sort of -
- 9 AJ: Good.
- 10 TAH: - just mellow. Like, and most of my friends are like, "Don't ever go off of it."
- 11 AJ: Oh, wow.
- 12 TAH: "'Cause it would be bad." Who knew me before, and many of them who've seen me off of it for
13 very short periods of time -
- 14 AJ: Yeah.
- 15 TAH: 'Cause of, like, being on other types of medication.
- 16 AJ: Any other...?
- 17 TAH: I had top surgery.
- 18 AJ: Okay.
- 19 TAH: In - in 1999. Right before I went to grad school. And - and - and a keyhole surgery. And -
- 20 AJ: Can you explain that?
- 21 TAH: So keyhole is where they just - they basically take tiss - they sort of reduce your - the tissue
22 around your nipple, and they go in that way.
- 23 AJ: Okay.
- 24 TAH: And they - like, they're able to leave the nipple intact from that.
- 25 AJ: So it's built like a keyhole.
- 26 TAH: Yeah.
- 27 AJ: K-E-Y-H-O-L-E.
- 28 TAH: Yeah. And - and it's basically - you have to be fairly small, and I'd been on testosterone for three
29 years. And didn't have a lot of body fat, and had, like - had significantly shrunk in size, in some
30 ways. And so - I was sort of right on the edge.
- 31 AJ: So you didn't have anything sort of lopped off, really.

- 1 TAH: Right. Exactly. And - and so because I had - because of that, and because I was right at sort of
2 the edge of it, but the doctor was willing to try - to do it, and it's good.
- 3 AJ: And no -
- 4 TAH: Works well.
- 5 AJ: - you don't have the -
- 6 TAH: No.
- 7 AJ: - big long scars, like some -
- 8 TAH: No, I don't have the big long scars, yeah.
- 9 AJ: - transmen do.
- 10 TAH: Yeah. Yeah. I have scars around both my nipples, in particular because the surgeon didn't listen
11 when I said I was allergic to anesthesia, so I woke up sneezing, and I -
- 12 AJ: Yikes.
- 13 TAH: - tore - I tore out the - one of the drains, so she had to actually, like, take me back in, and reopen
14 it, and -
- 15 AJ: Yikes.
- 16 TAH: Yeah. So that wasn't pleasant.
- 17 AJ: No.
- 18 TAH: But - but yeah. But beyond that, I really, like - I don't do well under anesthesia, so the idea of,
19 like, doing more surgeries is like, eh. Like -
- 20 AJ: Yeah.
- 21 TAH: If it ain't broke, why fix it? Like -
- 22 AJ: Life is good.
- 23 TAH: Life's good.
- 24 AJ: I mean - I mean, and that's kind of some of the throughline in this project, is that really it seems
25 like - and certainly there are people on all spectrums that have done gender confirmation
26 surgery.
- 27 TAH: Yup.
- 28 AJ: But it almost feels like people say the transition is more of a social transition in terms of
29 interacting with the outside world, and having people respect me as my chosen identity more so
30 than it is about -
- 31 TAH: Yup.

- 1 AJ: - my genitals.
- 2 TAH: Yeah. I mean, for me, it was really, like, I needed to do top surgery. Like, that was clear - like, I - I
3 knew that that had to happen.
- 4 AJ: Sure.
- 5 TAH: Like, I just could not move through the world. Like -
- 6 AJ: Right.
- 7 TAH: Testosterone was great, but like, that was just - there was so much angst there that I just was
8 like, I have to have top surgery.
- 9 AJ: Right.
- 10 TAH: But I've never felt the same level of angst...
- 11 AJ: Around the -
- 12 TAH: Around other things. And, you know, I mean, I also am not, like - I mean, I think that there are
13 lots of trans people and trans - I think there are lots of trans men in particular who have this
14 very sort of, like, "I'm a man? And I need to, like, physically be able to see that."
- 15 AJ: Sure.
- 16 TAH: And I don't - I mean, they - maybe part of it is that I don't identify as a man, per se.
- 17 AJ: Okay.
- 18 TAH: And I never really have. Like, I get that I get masc - male privilege. Like, I get that I walk through
19 the world, I look like a white man and people see me as a white man.
- 20 AJ: Yeah, you get white male privilege, which is a -
- 21 TAH: I get white male privilege, which is a whole 'nother -
- 22 AJ: Whole 'nother level -
- 23 TAH: Right.
- 24 AJ: - of male privilege.
- 25 TAH: Yeah. So i totally get that, right? Like, and - and - and there's a dichotomy in my brain that hurts
26 around that, because it is - it's A, not how I see myself, and I don't understand the world in
27 those frames. I have a hard time understanding white men in general. Like - and men in general.
28 Like, I - right, like I have a really hard time understanding men. Like, I don't - I don't get men.
29 Like, I really don't. Like -
- 30 AJ: Sure.
- 31 TAH: I just don't. I'm like ah - what? What are you thinking? Like, it doesn't - like, I just can't - I have
32 never been able to get there. And I think that's part of why I'm like, I don't identify as a man.

- 1 AJ: Sure.
- 2 TAH: Any more than I identified as a woman, right? Although I move through the world and I look like
3 - look like this.
- 4 AJ: Yeah.
- 5 TAH: Right? Like - and it is -
- 6 AJ: This being a man. 'Cause - I'm just saying that because there will be this video -
- 7 TAH: Right.
- 8 AJ: - but there will also be audio that will -
- 9 TAH: Right.
- 10 AJ: - stand alone, and be transcribed, so -
- 11 TAH: Yeah.
- 12 AJ: - like this is - yeah.
- 13 TAH: Yeah, I mean - yeah, that's true. Like, I look like a white man. Like, and I get that. Like, I'm
14 athletic, and I'm, like, able-bodied and - right? So I get all of those things, right?
- 15 AJ: Sure.
- 16 TAH: And - so as I move through the world I - I - it is always something that I think about. Because it is
17 not necessarily - that - that picture is not any more - it does not necessarily feel like I am being
18 wholly seen any more then than I was before.
- 19 AJ: Wow.
- 20 TAH: But it is more comfortable.
- 21 AJ: Yeah.
- 22 TAH: Than it was. But how much of that is the testosterone that just levels me out -
- 23 AJ: Yeah.
- 24 TAH: - and makes me a calmer being? And I - that I can't tease apart.
- 25 AJ: Sure.
- 26 TAH: Right? That hormonal transition for me probably was - is - is by far more important. And so if it
27 means that I have to move through the world in this - looking as - like I do -
- 28 AJ: This physical body, yeah.
- 29 TAH: In the physical body, that is way more comfortable than sort of moving through the world with
30 estrogen running through my system.
- 31 AJ: Sure. Wow. What has been - so, two part question. What have been some of the challenges

- 1 since you have, you know, come out, and began to live your authentic self in the middle of these
2 -
- 3 TAH: Right.
- 4 AJ: - multiple genders? And what has been some of the benefits, if you will, on...?
- 5 TAH: I think challenges are - I think one of the challenges that I - I think there are a couple of
6 challenges I've chose. One is - is sort of the - what I was just talking about, like, not being seen.
- 7 AJ: Sure.
- 8 TAH: Right? And as somebody who - I passed before I started taking testosterone, like -
- 9 AJ: Yeah. Right.
- 10 TAH: Right? Like, if I looked - you know, if I, like, butched myself up, like, people, like, right? Like -
- 11 AJ: Be like, "Sir."
- 12 TAH: Right. Like a -
- 13 AJ: "Let me help you."
- 14 TAH: Except if I was in queer spaces, right?
- 15 AJ: Right.
- 16 TAH: In queer spaces, people were like, "Oh, you're a butch dyke."
- 17 AJ: Right.
- 18 TAH: Right? Like - but, like, out in the rest of the world, like, I very clearly was seen as this sort of
19 short, young, like, teenage boy.
- 20 AJ: Right.
- 21 TAH: Right? Like - and that's often how people saw or engaged with me, like I was a teenaged boy.
- 22 AJ: Wow.
- 23 TAH: Through most of my twenties.
- 24 AJ: Yeah.
- 25 TAH: Before I started testosterone. And when I started testosterone, even the first couple years, like, I
26 still was, like, "Oh, you're just some sixteen, eighteen year old teenaged boy."
- 27 AJ: Right.
- 28 TAH: And -
- 29 AJ: With a scruffy beard, and -
- 30 TAH: With a scruffy beard, and -

- 1 AJ: Yeah.
- 2 TAH: Right? Like, I looked like a teenaged boy. I mean, I can't - I got carded until I was almost forty.
3 Right? Like - and really started losing my hair, right? Like, those - like, that thing. But if I put a hat
4 on, like - when I was at the U, and I worked at - at - at the University of Minnesota and was on a
5 really big campus, if I put a hat on and I was walking across campus, I can't tell you the number
6 of people who thought I was a student.
- 7 AJ: Wow.
- 8 TAH: Right? Like, that I was an undergrad student, right?
- 9 AJ: Yes.
- 10 TAH: Like, I got treated and engaged with, like - when I was, like, "You know I'm, like, almost forty,
11 right?" Or, I am forty. Right? Like, it was - like, it was weird.
- 12 AJ: Yeah.
- 13 TAH: It was this weird thing that would happen. So that, I think, like, that was - that was -
- 14 AJ: The invisibility -
- 15 TAH: - that invisibility. You know, I am often pegged as being queer in some form. Like, often being
16 seen as being gay. I - I think it probably has to do with the fact that I - I still inflect and use
17 speech patterns that are not traditionally male in some ways. And I tend to play with my hands,
18 and, like, I'm - you know, I don't have some of those for - some of those things.
- 19 AJ: Yeah.
- 20 TAH: And I think they - that flags me, right, often as people just assume. And - which is - I mean,
21 whatever, right? Like -
- 22 AJ: Yeah. I mean, is that a problem -
- 23 TAH: No.
- 24 AJ: - that people identify you as -
- 25 TAH: No, it's not.
- 26 AJ: - queer, or -
- 27 TAH: Like - and that's not a problem, but it's like, it - that is different than sort of being seen in my
28 gendered self.
- 29 AJ: Yes.
- 30 TAH: Is what - I think what I'm saying, right? So, like, I still get seen in a sort of queer space, in queer
31 way of how I see my - understand my identity? But not necessarily my gender.
- 32 AJ: 'Cause I would say that, you know, someone like yourself who is, I mean, I'm sure you're in a
33 queer relationship, but when you walk down the street with your partner who is a - I'm just

- 1 going to go out on a limb and assume is a cisgender woman?
- 2 TAH: Yup.
- 3 AJ: But certainly a female -
- 4 TAH: Yup.
- 5 AJ: - identified person. People see you guys as a heterosexual couple.
- 6 TAH: Yup. Yeah. Yeah, no, and it's - and so that's really weird, right?
- 7 AJ: And a lot of times people talk about losing their queer identity.
- 8 TAH: Right.
- 9 AJ: I mean, I've heard people -
- 10 TAH: Yeah.
- 11 AJ: - talk about the invisibility of being recognized as queer as a -
- 12 TAH: Yeah.
- 13 AJ: - challenge, which is sort of opposite from what you're saying. And I'm not saying one is one or if
- 14 -
- 15 TAH: Yeah -
- 16 AJ: - either is good or bad or other, it's just -
- 17 TAH: And I think it's -
- 18 AJ: - a dichotomy, that's all.
- 19 TAH: I think it's where we're - where when we're together, right? So, like, when I'm out by myself, it -
- 20 it - that often doesn't happen. But when we're together, yes, you're right, right? My partner,
- 21 who's, you know, feminine, and, you know, identifies as a woman, and looks tradition - like, you
- 22 know -
- 23 AJ: Beautiful -
- 24 TAH: Beautiful -
- 25 AJ: - Black woman.
- 26 TAH: - Black woman, right?
- 27 AJ: Yes. Exactly.
- 28 TAH: Like, you know, with natural hair, like, right, like, you know, we're seen, although our
- 29 relationship is often dichotomous in that we're in an interracial relationship, until there's a lot
- 30 of, like -
- 31 AJ: Yeah, well that's - there's that.

- 1 TAH: Right? Like -
- 2 AJ: That's a whole different set of conversations.
- 3 TAH: That's a whole 'nother conversation. So, you know, so I think that, like, so the invisibility in that
4 space is there as well, right?
- 5 AJ: Sure.
- 6 TAH: And I think you're right that - that there is that. And I think that's a sort of, like, lack of being
7 seen, in sort of that, right?
- 8 AJ: Yeah.
- 9 TAH: So there - so there's that piece. I think the - and I think within that, sometimes I think one of the
10 things that somebody who has transitioned and - and been out as long as I am - have been, that
11 finding community in sort of trans circles where lots of people my age, who've been out for
12 similar amounts of time or even shorter, often sort of disappear into the woodwork.
- 13 AJ: Sure.
- 14 TAH: And so finding those - that type of community, in the same way that I could when I first came
15 out, I think is really different. And I think that's a bit of a struggle. Like, you know. And I think -
16 I'm fortunate in that I know lots of people. And I've been doing this work for a long time.
- 17 AJ: Yeah.
- 18 TAH: And I have twenty years of national organizing experience, and I don't -
- 19 AJ: Oh, wow.
- 20 TAH: - you know, I have a Rolodex of people, right? So, like, in that sense, if I need to talk about stuff,
21 like -
- 22 AJ: You - you have a network.
- 23 TAH: I have a network, but I think that that often can be a struggle for folks, that I think I don't
24 necessarily experience, because I - because I have that. You know, I think - I think the positive
25 things are that I'm able to move through the world in a way that allows me to do my work with
26 less...strife. That I think wasn't there before. And I think that that is a really positive thing.
27 Because every step and every moment in public was filled with strife -
- 28 AJ: Wow.
- 29 TAH: - before, for me. And so I think that that's really different. You know, and I think the - I think the
30 other thing that I struggle with, is - is what is the long term impacts of hormones? Right? And,
31 like, nobody really knows.
- 32 AJ: Right?
- 33 TAH: Right? Like, in - like, medical doctors don't know. Like, nobody - right?
- 34 AJ: Yeah.

- 1 TAH: Like, none of us really know. And so, like, what is the long term impact going to be? And - which
2 I think that's always something that I think is a -
- 3 AJ: That's sort of a - existential challenge -
- 4 TAH: Existential. Right. Yeah.
- 5 AJ: - I would say, a little bit.
- 6 TAH: Yeah.
- 7 AJ: Talk to me a little bit about your political engagement in the world. So, you know, have you
8 been involved in sort of LGBT advocacy? More specifically, transgender sort of organizing? What
9 organizations? Like -
- 10 TAH: Yeah.
- 11 AJ: Get specific.
- 12 TAH: Oh.
- 13 AJ: Or in - you have, to some extent.
- 14 TAH: Yeah.
- 15 AJ: I mean, you were at Penn State, you were -
- 16 TAH: Right. So -
- 17 AJ: - the driver for the trans -
- 18 TAH: Speakers.
- 19 AJ: - speakers.
- 20 TAH: Yeah, I mean, I think - you know, I think around sort of community organizing and activism, I
21 think I was really lucky, right? In that at Penn State, I was involved in both the student group on
22 campus. I wasn't a leader in the student group, but I was definitely a member.
- 23 AJ: Sure.
- 24 TAH: I was on the - there was a taskforce of LGBT folks that were faculty, staff, and students who
25 were fighting for nondiscrimination protections at Penn State, and healthcare when I was there,
26 and I was involved in that work.
- 27 AJ: Cool.
- 28 TAH: And...and I worked in doing HIV prevention work, so I worked at the AIDS Project my senior year
29 as my - so I had a full-time internship that I had to do my - spring of my senior year.
- 30 AJ: Oh, wow.
- 31 TAH: And I spent - so I worked for them full time -

- 1 AJ: At the Mazzone Center, or...?
- 2 TAH: No, this was in -
- 3 AJ: Mazzone?
- 4 TAH: No, Mazzone's in Philadelphia. So I was in State College, Pennsylvania -
- 5 AJ: Oh, okay.
- 6 TAH: So I was at the AIDS Project State College - the State College AIDS project.
- 7 AJ: Okay. Okay.
- 8 TAH: And -
- 9 AJ: Is there a Penn State campus in Philadelphia at all?
- 10 TAH: There is.
- 11 AJ: Okay. All right.
- 12 TAH: But it's our satellite campus.
- 13 AJ: Okay, so -
- 14 TAH: I was at the -
- 15 AJ: You were at the main...
- 16 TAH: I was at the main university part of our campus.
- 17 AJ: Yeah.
- 18 TAH: So I did that. I then got involved in the Task Force through the youth leadership institute, and -
- 19 doing that work. And that work led -
- 20 AJ: NGTLF?
- 21 TAH: Yup.
- 22 AJ: National Gay and Lesbian...
- 23 TAH: Bi, queer, trans - bi trans queer taskforce. The LGBTQ Task Force.
- 24 AJ: Yeah.
- 25 TAH: They just changed their name from - and I always just call them the Task Force -
- 26 AJ: Right, and -
- 27 TAH: 'Cause it's just easier.
- 28 AJ: 'Cause it's easier. Yes.
- 29 TAH: And for a long time, I was - I was mad about it just saying gay and lesbian, so I was like "I'm just

- 1 going to call you the Task Force.”
- 2 AJ: Right.
- 3 TAH: “I’m going to ignore the gay and lesbian portion - “
- 4 AJ: Yeah.
- 5 TAH: “- ‘cause you do - “
- 6 AJ: ‘Cause you do good work.
- 7 TAH: “- do good work around LGBT stuff,” right?
- 8 AJ: Yeah.
- 9 TAH: And, you know, have trans people on your board, and trans people on your staff, and have for
10 years, right?
- 11 AJ: Right.
- 12 TAH: The name just took time to catch up. So - so I did work with them nationally for a long time as a
13 young person. I was involved in the national - I was - so I lived in Colorado for a couple years,
14 and did some local organizing in Colorado with - I was the trans - the FTM and transmasculine
15 support group facilitator at the Gender Identity Center of Colorado.
- 16 AJ: Right.
- 17 TAH: In Denver for a couple years while I lived in there. And I also worked with a LGBT youth program
18 at Oasis, Boulder, while I was there doing youth leadership stuff.
- 19 AJ: Wow.
- 20 TAH: And then I was doing HIV prevention work at my full time job for - until they fired me for being
21 trans. That was just really weird. But -
- 22 AJ: So you’ve lost your job based on your -
- 23 TAH: Yeah.
- 24 AJ: - gender identity?
- 25 TAH: Yeah. So I was basically - so I trans - so I got hired, and came out right as I got hire - well, I had
26 come out as trans. I was in the process, but I needed healthcare in order to take testosterone,
27 and -
- 28 AJ: Right.
- 29 TAH: So I got hired doing - working for a - a - a long-term care facility that trained young people to go
30 into other long term youth - care youth facilities and short term youth facilities, and - and into
31 juvenile justice centers where young people were housed to do HIV prevention work and STI
32 prevention work.
- 33 AJ: What - was this straight identified young people, or was it specifically -

- 1 TAH: Across the board.
- 2 AJ: - queer, or -
- 3 TAH: No, it was -
- 4 AJ: - were they -
- 5 TAH: - it was - it was for any young people. They were definitely willing to talk about queer identities
6 within that. And I got hired and I came out, 'cause I was like, my ID says female on it.
- 7 AJ: Right.
- 8 TAH: My Pennsylvania ID says female on it, cause I haven't gotten a, you know, Colorado ID -
- 9 AJ: Gender markers, yeah.
- 10 TAH: - yet, and - and - so I had to give them this ID when they hired me, and - and so I came out to the
11 person who was going to supervise me and my - and the - the ED of the organization, and they
12 were both fine with it. And my boss was great. He didn't care. He was, like, super supportive,
13 and I talked to them and I was like, "I'm going to start testosterone as soon as I get, you know, a
14 medical doctor and get health insurance and all those things," and they were like, "That's fine." I
15 went on testosterone and one of my coworkers, about, I don't know, six or eight weeks after I
16 had started testosterone, maybe a little bit longer than that, it was - you know, it was about
17 three months. 'Cause it was in the summer. So I started in March, and it was in, like, June or
18 July. He outed me to the young people. And - 'cause the staff knew, 'cause they - we had told
19 the staff, 'cause you - I was obviously experiencing some physical changes from testosterone.
20 And o we had told the staff, and this one guy sort of freaked out about it and he told the young
21 people. And the young people were like - didn't really care. But my - the upper administration
22 above my boss, so the shelter that I worked for was owned by another - was owned by a shelter
23 company, basically.
- 24 AJ: Sure.
- 25 TAH: And basically they were trying to strategize how to deal with the issue, and they were talking to
26 their supervisor, and their supervisor's supervisor basically freaked out, and they were like "You
27 need to - this guy - this guy's got to go."
- 28 AJ: Wow.
- 29 TAH: And - and so - they didn't - they let me resign so as not to fire me and make it look bad. And I
30 probably should have fought back, but at that point in time, I was, like, didn't really have my
31 head - wits about me, and -
- 32 AJ: Yeah.
- 33 TAH: All those things, and so I didn't. You know.
- 34 AJ: I mean, fighting a system -
- 35 TAH: A system is -

- 1 AJ: - as a trans person is -
2 TAH: - person is - yeah.
3 AJ: Challenging, right?
4 TAH: Right. Yeah.
5 AJ: Like, you fear that -
6 TAH: Yeah.
7 AJ: - is that going to -
8 TAH: And they were like, we'll give you a good -
9 AJ: - be respected, and -
10 TAH: - recommendations, and all of that. Like - and so I got hired at another shelter, and I was there
11 about three months and then they freaked out and fired me. Again, all about trans stuff. And,
12 like - until I went to work for a lesbian who ran the distribution of the Denver Post and threw
13 newspapers as an assistant district manager for -
14 AJ: Okay.
15 TAH: - a chunk of time. Like, just because it was, like - it was a stable job, and -
16 AJ: Yeah.
17 TAH: My boss didn't care, and, like, it just sort of was, like, I could do what I wanted to do, and -
18 AJ: Sure.
19 TAH: - and - but -
20 AJ: Did they offer you benefits at all?
21 TAH: It offered me benefits, yeah. 'Cause I was a district - assistant district manager, so, like, I was
22 actually -
23 AJ: So you weren't tossing the papers, literally.
24 TAH: I was a - I was a - well, yeah, for the most part I wasn't. But if we had somebody call in sick, I was
25 -
26 AJ: You had to. Yeah.
27 TAH: I would - I would go out and toss their routes for them.
28 AJ: Right. Exactly.
29 TAH: Which was always entertaining. So yeah, I was doing a lot of throwing papers. But - but I was
30 also sort of - I had a, you know, ten, twelve hour work shift.
31 AJ: Wow.

- 1 TAH: That I would work. So yeah - so, no, I - so I did that for a while, and that was good. And then I
2 moved to DC and I started working at - I was the - did some training work with the DC Fire/EMS
3 departments around -
- 4 AJ: The DC -
- 5 TAH: DC - Washington, DC, Fire/EMS and police departments.
- 6 AJ: Oh. You - were you a EMS yourself, or...?
- 7 TAH: No, I - I was hired as a contract trainer.
- 8 AJ: Okay.
- 9 TAH: For GLOV in Washington, DC, which is the Gay and Lesbian Antiviolence program.
- 10 AJ: Okay.
- 11 TAH: And they had a contract because of the death of a transwoman - Black transwoman in DC where
12 firefighters and EMS personnel -
- 13 AJ: Ignored her.
- 14 TAH: Stopped providing treatment when she was hit by a car, and then the - part of the lawsuit -
15 'cause the cops were laughing, and there was - it was just - it was horribly -
- 16 AJ: That was kind of a seminal moment in -
- 17 TAH: Yeah, it was.
- 18 AJ: - transgender history -
- 19 TAH: Yeah.
- 20 AJ: - I would say.
- 21 TAH: Yeah. And - it was horrible, and - so I moved to DC after that had happened, and they had a
22 court agreement as part of a response that they would provide training for the DC Fire, EMS,
23 and police departments, and so I was hired by GLOV, and by a national organization that was
24 doing the trainings with the police department as their LGBT trainer. And so I went in and did an
25 hour and a half training with both populations. So I did that, and then was the first youth center
26 director at SMYAL, which is the sexual youth minority league. They've changed their name since
27 then. It's still SMYAL, but stands for something else, and -
- 28 AJ: Okay.
- 29 TAH: The new title is much better. And - so I was their first youth center director that was actually
30 paid. They had had volunteers -
- 31 AJ: Sure.
- 32 TAH: - only, and they hired me part time to run the youth center. So I was doing those two things in
33 DC prior to going to grad school. And while I was there, I also worked with NYAC, the National

- 1 Youth Advocacy Coalition -
- 2 AJ: Oh, wow. Cool.
- 3 TAH: - which is no longer in existence, unfortunately. And worked with them - I had been working
4 with them actually while I was in Colorado to develop a - a definitions list around trans stuff to -
5 to publish.
- 6 AJ: I think Michael Kaplan used to -
- 7 TAH: Yup. Yeah.
- 8 AJ: - run that -
- 9 TAH: Yeah, I know Michael -
- 10 AJ: - organization for a while.
- 11 TAH: Yeah. He was - he was the ED - was he the ED right before Rea Carey? Yeah, I think he was the
12 ED right before Rea Carey. So I worked with Rea and did a lot of that work.
- 13 AJ: Okay.
- 14 TAH: And - and so was there for a while, and then I went and did grad school. I got my masters in
15 education.
- 16 AJ: Nice.
- 17 TAH: In social justice - in Social Justice Education program at the University of Massachusetts. And -
18 and while I was there I just continued to do some national organizing work with a lot of those
19 same organizations. And then we went to California, and - my partner got a tenure job-track job,
20 and so we were in California.
- 21 AJ: San Francisco?
- 22 TAH: Yeah. We were - well, we were in Monterey for the first five years, and then we were in San
23 Francisco for five years.
- 24 AJ: Okay.
- 25 TAH: And while we were in Monterey, I did some work - I had a short stint at the DeFrank center in
26 San Jose as their program director and helped them with a move, and getting money, 'cause
27 they had failed to write some grants and they couldn't pay me, so - that was a very short stint,
28 'cause -
- 29 AJ: Yikes.
- 30 TAH: - they didn't have the funding to pay me -
- 31 AJ: Right.
- 32 TAH: - when I - I got hired and, you know, when I didn't get my first paycheck, I was like -
- 33 AJ: Mmmmmm.

- 1 TAH: “Something’s going on here.”
- 2 AJ: Yeah.
- 3 TAH: So I did that for six months to, like, get them through this crunch time, and - I got paid
4 eventually, but -
- 5 AJ: Oh, wow.
- 6 TAH: It - it - it took a -
- 7 AJ: Thank goodness.
- 8 TAH: It took a bit to actually get paid. And - and then eliminated my position in the process, ‘cause I
9 was, like, you all don’t need this position. Like...and - and went back and was doing some stuff
10 on campus at Cal State Monterey Bay, ‘cause there wasn’t a LGBT person on campus. There
11 were a couple faculty, and then there was me, but there weren’t any - there was no
12 programmatic stuff.
- 13 AJ: Wow.
- 14 TAH: And so we tried to do some programmatic stuff. I was an adjunct. And - and then we moved to
15 San Francisco, and I worked at the - what was the Gay-Straight Alliance Network, which is now
16 the Gender and Sexuality Alliance network, or GSA Network.
- 17 AJ: Oh, wow.
- 18 TAH: In San Francisco, and I was their advocacy policy person for three years. And doing both
19 California policy and national policy around LGBT youth in schools. Which I had been doing a lot
20 of policy work, and legislative advocacy all throughout this time.
- 21 AJ: Sure.
- 22 TAH: In - in different ways and different places in small community organizations and, you know, on
23 campus when I was at UMass Amherst, and in the local community there, and then - you know,
24 just sort of doing stuff with local communities, but - so I worked there for three years. And then
25 we moved here, and - and, you know, was involved in supporting and doing some work around
26 Exchange with the Trans Health Coalition, and TYSN, and Rare Production. I think you -
- 27 AJ: The Exchange.
- 28 TAH: The - well, thinking about how to - when I first got here, TYSN - the Trans Youth Support
29 Network - the Minnesota Trans Health Coalition, and Rare Productions were thinking about
30 “How do we bring all of us together as the Exchange?”
- 31 AJ: Sure.
- 32 TAH: At - over near SouthSide Cafe -
- 33 AJ: Yeah. Yeah.
- 34 TAH: - in Minneapolis.

- 1 AJ: No, I - I know, this is -
- 2 TAH: I know - no. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yup.
- 3 AJ: We're documenting, though.
- 4 TAH: You're documenting.
- 5 AJ: We have to kind of -
- 6 TAH: Yeah, sorry.
- 7 AJ: - break it down a little bit. But yes.
- 8 TAH: So I - I did some work with them when I first got here -
- 9 AJ: Oh, wow.
- 10 TAH: Around sort of, like, how to, like - sort of structural stuff about how we could do that. And so
- 11 supporting them in that. And then also worked on the campaign - the Vote No campaign.
- 12 AJ: Oh, wow.
- 13 TAH: Here in Minnesota for the last eight weeks or so of the campaign, worked -
- 14 AJ: So you have a -
- 15 TAH: - pretty much full time.
- 16 AJ: - very active LGBT -
- 17 TAH: Yup.
- 18 AJ: - life.
- 19 TAH: And now I'm the -
- 20 AJ: And currently -
- 21 TAH: Currently I'm at Hamline University, and I'm the Sexualities and Gender Diversity person there,
- 22 and I do Title IX work as well as the deputy line coordinator, and I'm also the acting director of
- 23 the Office of Multicultural and Diversity Initiatives. So I wear three very large hats, and I'm not
- 24 sure which - which - what way is coming or going.
- 25 AJ: Oh, wow.
- 26 TAH: It - for the last year and a half as I do two jobs.
- 27 AJ: Hey, Mary, I hope you got that whole long fast title that - that Aaron just laid out. But if not, I'll
- 28 get his card -
- 29 TAH: Yep.
- 30 AJ: And then we can make sure we have it.

- 1 TAH: Yeah. Sorry. It's a long title, and I -
- 2 AJ: No, it's fine.
- 3 TAH: - spew it off like -
- 4 AJ: But I heard Title IX.
- 5 TAH: Yup.
- 6 AJ: And earlier this week -
- 7 TAH: Yeah.
- 8 AJ: Number 45, our so-called president, rescinded the guidelines for transgender young people
9 using the bathrooms.
- 10 TAH: Yup.
- 11 AJ: That was a holdover from the -
- 12 TAH: Obama administration.
- 13 AJ: - Obama administration. What does that mean for trans youth in your mind? And as a Title IX
14 coordinator?
- 15 TAH: Yeah. I mean, I think there are two things, right? One is he rescinded guidance. And I think
16 there's a lot of - I think what that means is very different in - in one way than what it actually
17 means in another way, right? And so what I mean by that is that I think that it says to - imp -
18 imp - most importantly, it says to young trans people in K-12 schools, and in colleges, that they
19 are not supported by the federal government. And it gives license to other young people and
20 the systems that they exist within in some ways to discriminate and to bully and to harm these
21 young people.
- 22 AJ: Sure.
- 23 TAH: And - and that's really disheartening and heartbreaking, knowing how much work went into
24 getting those guidelines approved and written and I was involved in some of those discussions,
25 and I know the people who were involved in those discussions, and - I mean, we're talking hours
26 and hours of research, and years of work.
- 27 AJ: Sure.
- 28 TAH: To just get those two guidelines. Like, that are, you know, brief mentions in one, and a little bit
29 more direction in another. So it's a rescinding of the guidelines, right? And at the same time,
30 what heartens me is that we have case law that says that Title IX includes gender identity.
- 31 AJ: Sure.
- 32 TAH: And - and that's a really powerful thing.
- 33 AJ: So if - if I'm understanding correctly, if young people are denied access, they can go through a
34 legal -

- 1 TAH: Right.
- 2 AJ: - protracted process.
- 3 TAH: Process.
- 4 AJ: At which time, they may suffer urinary tract infections -
- 5 TAH: Tract infections, and -
- 6 AJ: - and/or -
- 7 TAH: Right. And debt -
- 8 AJ: All kinds of -
- 9 TAH: All kinds of stuff.
- 10 AJ: - harassment.
- 11 TAH: Right. Right.
- 12 AJ: Potential for suicide, and...
- 13 TAH: Yup.
- 14 AJ: But, bottom line is, the law -
- 15 TAH: As it currently stands.
- 16 AJ: - would protect them.
- 17 TAH: The law currently would protect them. Now we're in this Supreme Court case with Gavin.
- 18 AJ: Grimm.
- 19 TAH: And...that case is probably the most important case that is in the Supreme Court at the moment.
- 20 And it is the most important case that I think trans people have ever seen. Because I think as
- 21 Chase, Stringia, ACLU, and Laverne Cox have very clearly said, in many ways, this is about the -
- 22 Gavin Grimm case, which is about access to locker rooms and bathrooms -
- 23 AJ: Sure.
- 24 TAH: In his school in Virginia. Is about the right for trans folks to exist in public space.
- 25 AJ: Yes.
- 26 TAH: And that is -
- 27 AJ: Yeah, 'cause if you can't go to the bathroom, you can't go -
- 28 TAH: You - you can't work -
- 29 AJ: - go to the movies, you get no -
- 30 TAH: - you can't go to school -

- 1 AJ: - work - yeah.
- 2 TAH: You can't exist in public space.
- 3 AJ: Yeah. The movies, like -
- 4 TAH: Yeah.
- 5 AJ: The mall, where all the kids go, like -
- 6 TAH: Right. Well, but - but it's not just - I mean, but it's - you know, you can't go to work, you can't -
7 like, there's a whole host of things.
- 8 AJ: Absolutely.
- 9 TAH: Right? You can't travel through states. Like, all kinds of stuff, right? 'Cause this is - while they're
10 saying it's a states' rights issue, right, like - so we're going to have piecemeal laws and go back to
11 the day of where -
- 12 AJ: I can pee in Nevada -
- 13 TAH: I can pee -
- 14 AJ: - but I can't in -
- 15 TAH: Right. Yeah.
- 16 AJ: - Oregon. Yeah.
- 17 TAH: Oregon. Well, I - you can pee in Oregon but you can't Nevada is more likely -
- 18 AJ: Okay. Well.
- 19 TAH: - to be the case. Right? And so - so it has this really negative consequence, right, to are trans
20 folks - folks seen as - and trans folks in the broadest spectrum, right? So when I use trans folks,
21 I'm talking about the whole, like, the whole kitsch and caboodle.
- 22 AJ: Yeah. Yeah.
- 23 TAH: Like, anybody whose gender expression is outside of what is deemed normative for men and
24 women, right? Like - and - and that is our, you know, LGB - queer - queer-identified siblings who
25 are cisgendered who express their identities and a range of expressive genders, and - right? The
26 whole host, right? And so - but it is about our right to live and exist in public space. And I think
27 that - that that's really what the argument's about. And that it often gets distilled about
28 bathrooms and locker rooms.
- 29 AJ: Sure.
- 30 TAH: But it's actually much - I think it's much broader, right? And Title IX is much broader. It's not just
31 about bathrooms and - and that. It's about being harassed, or being discriminated against.
32 Because I think that the way Title IX is written, right, there's this - there's harassment and
33 discrimination, and then there's sexual violence, right?

- 1 AJ: Sure.
- 2 TAH: And sexual misconduct, and - and you know, trans and queer folks experience sexual violence at
3 a much higher rate. And sexual misconduct at a much higher rate, and need those protections
4 around that just as much as they need the protections around the discrimination and
5 harassment they experience.
- 6 AJ: Sure,
- 7 TAH: And so I think that the - the both the case - this case law and other case law, I think hopefully
8 protects us in some ways. And I think we have - you know, we're fortunate that we have a
9 number of states where those protections are in place. And we have lots of governors who are
10 saying, like, "We're not going to - we're not going to abide by what 45 has said." And by what
11 the - you know, the rescinding of this by a justice in the Department of Education. And the
12 bullying and discrimination is not going to stop because we have the case law.
- 13 AJ: No.
- 14 TAH: And when the President of the United States is bullying and discriminating against people
15 through his policies, it is a dangerous, particularly divisive positionality within our government.
- 16 AJ: To say, "Hey."
- 17 TAH: Right.
- 18 AJ: "Everybody else can do this too."
- 19 TAH: Right.
- 20 AJ: I mean...
- 21 TAH: Exactly.
- 22 AJ: Bullying is cool, it - it -
- 23 TAH: Right.
- 24 AJ: - actually gets you a nice cushy job.
- 25 TAH: Cushy job.
- 26 AJ: And -
- 27 TAH: Right.
- 28 AJ: Yeah.
- 29 TAH: Yeah. And - and I think that's - that is really...that's hard to watch and see and exist in.
- 30 AJ: Yeah.
- 31 TAH: But, you know, in Minnesota, right, those protections are there.
- 32 AJ: Sure.

- 1 TAH: And I think that we have the possibility of, you know, thinking more critically about how we do
2 that. But, you know, like, for example, at Hamline, and I think at the University of Minnesota,
3 you know, most of the schools in the state are - are colleges and - and, you know, the local
4 school districts here in Minneapolis and St. Paul are really clear that, like, you know, we're going
5 to protect these students.
- 6 AJ: Sure.
- 7 TAH: But I'm worried about the students who don't live in states or municipalities where they're
8 being - they're going to be protected.
- 9 AJ: And I would - I would only add to that -
- 10 TAH: Yeah.
- 11 AJ: - is that not every place in Minnesota -
- 12 TAH: - sota.
- 13 AJ: I mean, we've had -
- 14 TAH: Right.
- 15 AJ: - some pretty significant cases -
- 16 TAH: Yup.
- 17 AJ: - where schools are trying to bar -
- 18 TAH: Right.
- 19 AJ: - young, trans-identified people from accessing public restrooms and locker rooms, etcetera, as
20 well as - we have a pretty hostile Republican legislature.
- 21 TAH: Legislature.
- 22 AJ: That is drafting laws. I mean -
- 23 TAH: Right.
- 24 AJ: - fortunately we have a governor, but I don't - I don't want to paint the picture -
- 25 TAH: No.
- 26 AJ: - that Minnesota is a oasis in the land of, you know -
- 27 TAH: Yeah.
- 28 AJ: - bigotry and hatred. Like -
- 29 TAH: Yeah. Yeah.
- 30 AJ: - those issues do exist here. We have a bit of a head start, I would say, maybe.
- 31 TAH: Maybe.

- 1 AJ: And we're fortunate at this moment to have a Republican - I mean a Democratic -
2 TAH: Democratic. Yeah.
3 AJ: - that will probably -
4 TAH: Right.
5 AJ: - not sign any bills that come to his desk -
6 TAH: Yeah.
7 AJ: - that are hateful and bigoted, and anti-trans. But...
8 TAH: Yeah, no. And I think - I think you're right, right? Like, you know - and I think that that's the hard
9 part, right? Is is that this sets up this very sort of, like, patchwork-y thing.
10 AJ: Yeah.
11 TAH: Of, like, it's okay and you're going to find safe harbor in these places, but you're not in these
12 places.
13 AJ: Sure.
14 TAH: And, like, what does it mean, right? Like, you know. And...
15 AJ: Well, T. Aaron, I literally have, like, two minutes of video tape left.
16 TAH: Got it!
17 AJ: So, you know, I just want you to think about where will the trans community be fifty years from
18 now? And what - what might you say that I have not had the foresight to ask you about?
19 TAH: Those are two big questions.
20 AJ: And you've got a minute for each of them, so.
21 TAH: Yeah, yeah. No, no, no. So I would - I think I would say that, in regards to where will we be in
22 fifty years, I hope that we will be in a place where the vast array of different ways with which
23 people can identify gender and express gender will be lifted up and will be able to do that. And I
24 have hope that that's possible. I think about the diverse array that young people express their
25 gender today, and how - how fast that has changed in the twenty-three years I've been out.
26 AJ: Sure.
27 TAH: That I hope - I would hope that in fifty years, that we are in a radically different place.
28 AJ: Yeah.
29 TAH: Not just around gender, but around a whole host of things.
30 AJ: But I think -
31 TAH: And that that ability for people to live their authentic selves in full ways around their gender,

1 around their sexual orientation, around their race, around their disability status - right? Like, all
2 of those things -

3 AJ: Sure.

4 TAH: - would be - that people would be able to be more fully seen. I think is my hope.

5 AJ: Yeah.

6 TAH: And then I would say, the thing that I would say that you haven't asked...I think i would say that
7 I...and maybe you have. I don't know. I - I think I would say that - that this is a long process.
8 Right? And we have much work to do, but we can celebrate the work that has been done.

9 AJ: Sure.

10 TAH: And that I think that finding ways to do intersectional, intergenerational work is absolutely
11 critical for us to get to that hope. Right? That that hope is not doable if we don't do this work in
12 sort of intersectional and intergenerational ways.

13 AJ: Wow.

14 TAH: In - in a whole host of places. Right? Because it is not just about - gender expression is - is not
15 something that just impacts trans folks, or just impacts white folks, right? Like - or just impacts,
16 you know, US citi - right? Like, we know that it's so much broader than that, and if we can't see
17 it in those sort of broad and inclusive ways, we miss the full picture.

18 AJ: Sure. Aaron, I just want to thank you. First of all, for spending time on us today, and - and really
19 being very open and forthright about your own life. Also, I want to thank you for your breadth of
20 work and impact that you have left on - on many people in many parts of the country, and the
21 work that you're doing right now with young minds and young students at Hamline University.
22 It's incredible to have the opportunity to - to interview you today, and so, with much gratitude -

23 TAH: Yeah.

24 AJ: I'm just saying, until we meet again, my friend.

25 TAH: True. Well, and thank you. I think this project is incredibly important, and I appreciate the work
26 that you're doing to make it happen.

27 AJ: Wonderful. Thank you so much.

28 TAH: Yeah. No, thank you.

29 AJ: Peace.

30