

Joy Michael Starkey
Narrator

Andrea Jenkins
Interviewer

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

July 5, 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.

Andrea Jenkins

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1 Andrea Jenkins -AJ
2 Joy Michael Starkey -JS
3
4 AJ: So hello.
5
6 JS: Hi.
7
8 AJ: My name is Andrea Jenkins, and I am the oral historian for The Transgender Oral History Project
9 at the Tretter Collection at the University of Minnesota Libraries. Today is July 5th, post-
10 Independence Day 2017.
11
12 JS: [Laughs].
13
14 AJ: And I am on the campus of the University of Minnesota today in Andersen Library, and I am here
15 with Joy Starkey. How is it going Joy?
16
17 JS: Good.
18
19 AJ: Yeah?
20
21 JS: Yeah.
22
23 AJ: Good, good, good. Uhm, before we go too deep into our conversation, how about if you state
24 your name. Spell it so we make sure we have the correct, uhm, spelling. Uhm, tell me what's
25 your gender identity as you define it today...
26
27 JS: Mhm.
28
29 AJ: ... the pronouns that you use, and your gender assigned at birth.
30
31 JS: Sure. Uhm, so I'm Joy Michael Starkey. Uhm, and that's S.T.A.R.K.E.Y. Uhm, I identify as
32 genderqueer non-binary trans person. Just like to make that as long as possible.
33
34 AJ: [Laughs].
35
36 JS: Uhm, and I use—
37
38 AJ: Say it one more time.
39
40 JS: [Laughs]. As genderqueer non-binary trans person.
41
42 AJ: Wow. [Laughs].
43
44 JS: I know, right? [Laughs].
45
46 AJ: It's awesome. It's awesome.
47

1 JS: Uhm, yeah. And I, uhm, I use the pronouns they, their, and them.
2
3 AJ: Okay.
4
5 JS: Uhm, I'm queer. Uhm, yeah.
6
7 AJ: Assigned... assigned female at birth?
8
9 JS: Oh, uhm, female assigned at birth.
10
11 AJ: Okay, alrighty. Cool. So, you know, we're just gonna talk openly and freely. Uh, but just to kind
12 of get the memory bank working a little bit like what is the first thing that you remember in life?
13
14 JS: I'm not sure, uhm. Wow. I'm really not sure. Uhm, I... uhm, I remember, uhm... uhm, I remember
15 when, uhm, shortly after my little sister, uhm, was born, uhm, my sister is also trans...
16
17 AJ: Wow.
18
19 JS: Yeah. Yeah, my parents went two for two.
20
21 AJ: Okay. [Laughs].
22
23 JS: They're very lucky. Uhm. [Laughs]. But I remember going over and going to a garage sale and
24 getting the, uhm, stuffed raccoon that would be my, my like favorite stuffed animal.
25
26 AJ: Uhuh.
27
28 JS: Yeah, his name is Zipper.
29
30 AJ: Zipper?
31
32 JS: Yep. And he is still with me.
33
34 AJ: Uhuh.
35
36 JS: And that's definitely one of my first, my first memories.
37
38 AJ: Okay, wow.
39
40 JS: Yep.
41
42 AJ: That's cool.
43
44 JS: [Laughs].
45
46 AJ: Uhm, so your sister is younger.
47

1 JS: Yeah. Yeah. Uh, yeah, she's three years younger than me.
2
3 AJ: And that's your only sibling?
4
5 JS: Yep. Yep.
6
7 AJ: Wow and they identify as trans.
8
9 JS: Yep. Yeah.
10
11 AJ: That's pretty unusual.
12
13 JS: Mhm.
14
15 AJ: I would say.
16
17 JS: Statistically unlikely. [Laughs].
18
19 AJ: Statistically unlikely given that trans people constitute, what? About... .3 percent of the
20 population?
21
22 JS: Something like that. Yeah. Yeah.
23
24 AJ: Uhm, you're that PhD student? Uh [laughs]...
25
26 JS: Right, right.
27
28 AJ: ... but I know it's a pretty low number.
29
30 JS: Yeah. I mean, do we really know though? We just have...
31
32 AJ: Yeah.
33
34 JS: ... I feel like we have no idea.
35
36 AJ: That's just the very little documentation that happens.
37
38 JS: Right.
39
40 AJ: And there are so many people who, who deal with gender identity concerns or issues...
41
42 JS: Yeah.
43
44 AJ: ... but don't ever act on them or are very verbal about them.
45
46 JS: Right. Right. And I think histor— like, I think at certain in our history we really had, uhm, a lot of
47 language around medical transition and like people who, who identify as trans men and women.

1
2 AJ: Mhm.
3
4 JS: Uhm, not a lot of language and not a lot of visibility around people who, who identify as... not,
5 not that, not the gender they were assigned at birth but just outside of the gender binary. Or, or
6 somehow gender non-conforming.
7
8 AJ: Mhm.
9
10 JS: And I think we are seeing more and more folks like us like find language and, and community.
11 Uhm, and it will be interesting to see what happens.
12
13 AJ: Yeah.
14
15 JS: It's a very, it's a very strange time period.
16
17 AJ: It's a very strange time period. It's, it's moving...
18
19 JS: Yeah.
20
21 AJ: ... rapidly.
22
23 JS: Yeah.
24
25 AJ: Things are changing.
26
27 JS: Yeah.
28
29 AJ: Just kinda want to stay in the early days for a little bit.
30
31 JS: Sure.
32
33 AJ: Where did you grow up?
34
35 JS: So I grew up, uhm, I grew up in the suburbs.
36
37 AJ: Mhm.
38
39 JS: Uhm, so I grew up in a town called Vancouver, Washington...
40
41 AJ: Okay.
42
43 JS: ... which is right across the river from Portland, Oregon.
44
45 AJ: Hmm.
46

- 1 JS: Uhm, so Pacific Northwest. And when I was a kid Vancouver, Washington was the place that
2 people went, uhm, if Portland was too liberal and/or too expensive for them.
3
- 4 AJ: Oh, okay.
5
- 6 JS: Right. So in some ways it was just a bedroom community, uhm, for people who—
7
- 8 AJ: Conservative, poor people. No, I'm just kidding. [Laughs].
9
- 10 JS: [Laughs]. Yeah! Yeah! Uhm, well, it, some of it was just like, some of it was like liberal like folks
11 who didn't have a lot of money.
12
- 13 AJ: Sure.
14
- 15 JS: And then some of it was really conservative people.
16
- 17 AJ: Mhm.
18
- 19 JS: So and like Vancouver, Washington has like a lot of history with white supremacists
20 organizations.
21
- 22 AJ: Oh really?
23
- 24 JS: Yeah, yeah, I was told that the KKK used to recruit at my high school. And there was like some
25 evidence of that. It's really frightening.
26
- 27 AJ: Oh my god.
28
- 29 JS: Yeah and, and like, but it's white liberal land so no one talks about it.
30
- 31 AJ: Mhm.
32
- 33 JS: So I, where I found growing up in Vancouver to be terrifying, uhm, at least once I was in, uhm,
34 high school, uhm, and really had a sense of who I am...
35
- 36 AJ: Mhm.
37
- 38 JS: ... uhm, like I, uhm, I tried to start our high school's first, well we were calling it at the time Gay-
39 Straight Alliance.
40
- 41 AJ: GSA, uhuh.
42
- 43 JS: Yeah, that was the language but in the day.
44
- 45 AJ: Sure.
46
- 47 JS: Uhm, and that went poorly.

1
2 AJ: [Laughs].
3
4 JS: [Laughs]. Uhm, as, as you can imagine.
5
6 AJ: You, you make it sound like that's an understatement. I'm getting the impression that, uh...
7
8 JS: Yeah, yeah, it was, well, like, the white liberal rhetoric is so confusing and strange because
9 what... I had a lot of administrators who were trying to help me.
10
11 AJ: Mhm.
12
13 JS: Uhm, in undergoing this process in ways that did not seem like help to me.
14
15 AJ: Right.
16
17 JS: Uhm, and some of them were, some of them were genuinely benign. Like we had a, we had to
18 file to, to be a part, to start this organization. Uhm, and, uhm, the principal stepped in and said,
19 "You don't have to take it just to be government," which, uhm, I said— I thought was
20 discrimination...
21
22 AJ: Mhm.
23
24 JS: ... because everybody else had to go through student government.
25
26 AJ: Sure, exactly.
27
28 JS: And he eventually had to explain to me, he was like, "No, I know that this will fail if you go
29 through student government so I'm stepping in..."
30
31 AJ: Oh, okay. To help...
32
33 JS: "... to help you."
34
35 AJ: To quote, "help."
36
37 JS: Right. Right. Uhm, but as you can, like so that was the good side of it. Uhm, but also, uhm, the,
38 the not so good side of it is that we put, we put up filers and posters everywhere.
39
40 AJ: Mhm.
41
42 JS: Uhm, I was like, I didn't know at that point to be cautious. Like I was just this...
43
44 AJ: Right, you were just like, "Yay! Let's do this."
45
46 JS: Right. Right! Right. I was, I was a very, I was, I grew up in a family that's very politically active
47 and very like progressive.

1
2 AJ: Okay.
3
4 JS: I, I have become much more radical than my, my parents.
5
6 AJ: Mhm.
7
8 JS: Uhm, but this was normal. Like, like activism was normal. Uhm, but so eventually we, uhm, put
9 up all these fliers and they got, they got yanked down.
10
11 AJ: Mmm.
12
13 JS: As you can imagine. I wasn't surprised by that. This was, this is like 2000.
14
15 AJ: Yeah.
16
17 JS: Yeah, uhm, and, uhm, I, uhm, and eventually the football coach came up to me and introduced
18 me to the two football players who apparently had been pulling down these signs.
19
20 AJ: Ah.
21
22 JS: And I was just like, why are you introducing me to two people who want to kick my ass?
23
24 AJ: Right.
25
26 JS: This is unbelievably stupid.
27
28 AJ: Uhuh.
29
30 JS: I shouldn't say that word.
31
32 AJ: Oh, okay.
33
34 JS: But it was just, I like, it was just un— like they could not think through my safety in any way.
35 Uhm, and it came to, two things like came to a head. Uhm, one was, uhm, that, uhm, I
36 happened to be walking through the library and someone that I knew in passing told me that,
37 uhm, he had written a paper, uhm, in which he described, uhm, sexually assaulting members of
38 the GSA.
39
40 AJ: Mhm.
41
42 JS: It was like there's a GSA so this is my fantasy about how I'm going to respond.
43
44 AJ: Wow.
45
46 JS: And I immediately found a teacher.
47

1 AJ: Yeah.
2
3 JS: And was like, "This is terrifying. I'm scared." But the school refused to do anything to make me
4 feel better or to respond in any way because, uhm, when, when this kid showed me his paper
5 very proud of himself...
6
7 AJ: Mhm.
8
9 JS: ... uhm, he was like, "Oh, what do you think?" I was like, "That's interesting." And because I
10 hadn't been like, "That's horrifying. I'm terrified of you," like that was using his excuse that I was
11 really okay with it. And that nothing needed— there was no response that needed to happen.
12
13 AJ: Did the instructor that he turned into say anything?
14
15 JS: I mean, she, she took it to the principal...
16
17 AJ: Uhuh.
18
19 JS: ... and then it just was like, "Meh, we don't care."
20
21 AJ: Fell apart, huh?
22
23 JS: Yeah, at least that's my, my recollection of—
24
25 AJ: Sure.
26
27 JS: ... that's how I understood it. Uhm, and then I told my dad that this happened and this was mu—
28 this was before I was out.
29
30 AJ: Mhm.
31
32 JS: Uhm, he was just like, "Well, why, like, what's the big deal?"
33
34 AJ: Yeah.
35
36 JS: Yeah, so, uhm, so that was, that was terrifying.
37
38 AJ: So you, you weren't quite out to your parents but were you out at school? I mean, if you found
39 the GSA people are gonna assume that—
40
41 JS: I, okay so I [laughs], yeah, yeah and my take of like, I was just gonna kind of let them assume...
42
43 AJ: Yeah.
44
45 JS: ... that like, I was, I never been someone that was very good at being like here are my like my
46 declared statements. Everybody just caught on.
47

1 AJ: Uhuh.
2
3 JS: Like, I've, that, I've always come out through the backdoors.
4
5 AJ: Come on guys keep up.
6
7 JS: Yeah, like, yeah, in, in part because I just can't, especially as someone who like uses the pronoun
8 they, I just can't take on like trans people, like cis people's learning process.
9
10 AJ: Sure.
11
12 JS: Like, I'm not gonna, I'm not gonna make it easy for them.
13
14 AJ: Mhm.
15
16 JS: Like they can, they can just tell me about themselves, and I will sit in silent judgement because I
17 can't, I can't do it for them.
18
19 AJ: Sure.
20
21 JS: I, I just can't, uhm, yeah and that kept me from like coming out for a long time because I didn't
22 want to spend my life telling people what my pronouns were.
23
24 AJ: Sure.
25
26 JS: Like yeah.
27
28 AJ: So you talked, you talked a little bit about your home environment and your trans sibling and...
29
30 JS: Yes. Yes.
31
32 AJ: ... your parent, were your parents, uhm, I mean, both in the home?
33
34 JS: Yeah, yes, so, uhm, my parents, uhm, yeah, uhm, still are married. They still live together.
35 They're happy, as happy as straight people are.
36
37 AJ: [Laughs].
38
39 JS: Uhm, no, I think, I think they're happy. They're, uhm, I mean, families are always stranger on the
40 inside than...
41
42 AJ: Yeah.
43
44 JS: ... than, like, I mean, they're as strange as every other group, right?
45
46 AJ: Sure. Absolutely.
47

1 JS: Yeah, but they're, uhm, so it's the four of us, uhm, and, uhm, they still live in the same house—
2
3 AJ: What was in water? I mean.
4
5 JS: Oh, man.
6
7 AJ: Your, your sibling is...
8
9 JS: I don't, I don't know, man.
10
11 AJ: ... gender non-conforming...
12
13 JS: [Laughs].
14
15 AJ: ... or transgender, I don't— did they...
16
17 JS: Yeah, uhm, yeah she's, you know, I'm not going to speak for her.
18
19 AJ: Yeah.
20
21 JS: Yeah, I'm not going to speak for her.
22
23 AJ: Sure.
24
25 JS: Uhm, but, uhm, yeah so we were on...
26
27 AJ: She is more identified on the...
28
29 JS: Uhm, yeah, trans femme spectrum.
30
31 AJ: ... binary spectrum?
32
33 JS: Well, I don't, I don't think particularly binary, uhm, necessarily.
34
35 AJ: But certainly presenting feminine.
36
37 JS: Yeah.
38
39 AJ: Yeah, cool.
40
41 JS: Yeah, yeah, she's, she's great, uhm, but we were, we were raised, uhm, in this little, this weird
42 suburb just slightly differently than everybody else...
43
44 AJ: Okay.
45

1 JS: ... where my, uhm, my parents were both very, uhm, like working-class white folks who got
2 more radicalized and went from being more conser— from conservative family and were much,
3 much more liberal.
4
5 AJ: Uhuh.
6
7 JS: Uhm...
8
9 AJ: Than your upbringing.
10
11 JS: Yeah, in part because they both went to, uh, Quaker college.
12
13 AJ: Oh, okay.
14
15 JS: Yeah, so they became, they became Quakers. Uhm, and we were, we were raised, we were
16 raised Quaker. Uhm, but in the Pacific Northwest Quakers are often fairly Evangelical rather
17 than kind of what you find in a lot of the east coast.
18
19 AJ: Yeah, usually they're kind of just to themselves and...
20
21 JS: Yeah.
22
23 AJ: ... not really polytheizing.
24
25 JS: Well and these, like, these are Evangelical Quakers in the sense that they actually can be quite
26 conservative.
27
28 AJ: Mm.
29
30 JS: So we've found our way when I was in middle school out of these kind of more Evangelical,
31 conservative meetings to a very, very progressive one that just got kicked out of the rest of...
32
33 AJ: Oh, okay.
34
35 JS: ... the yearly meeting because of their, their, uhm, LGBT...
36
37 AJ: Radicalness.
38
39 JS: Yeah, yeah! It was really about, it was really about LGBT policies.
40
41 AJ: Oh, really? Wow.
42
43 JS: Yeah. Yeah, so I grew up with these, these very well intentioned white people who were all
44 pacifists...
45
46 AJ: Mhm.
47

1 JS: ... and had their real limitations. Uhm, particularly around racism. Like, there's a lot, a lot of folks
2 that really believe we are the exceptional white people, and that we were... we're not like those
3 racists over there...
4
5 AJ: Mhm.
6
7 JS: ... without any like self-reflection...
8
9 AJ: Wow.
10
11 JS: ... about privilege or why like, well why are there no folks of color at this like Quaker meeting.
12
13 AJ: Mhm.
14
15 JS: Like we can't think through that.
16
17 AJ: [Laughs]. Yeah.
18
19 JS: That's too much. And that's been a, that's a frustration.
20
21 AJ: Very little introspection, huh?
22
23 JS: Yeah. Yeah. Uhm, but...
24
25 AJ: How do you identify culturally?
26
27 JS: Uhm, I, I am white and I was raised middle class, uhm, and I, uhm, that's definitely where I come
28 from. And I've just spent a lot of time in communities where I was not the majority.
29
30 AJ: Mhm.
31
32 JS: And, uhm, and, uhm...
33
34 AJ: That's helping you become woke if you will.
35
36 JS: [Laughs]. I, I don't use. Yeah.
37
38 AJ: I mean your upbringing, sounds like you were pretty progressive and...
39
40 JS: Yeah. We've just been always a little bit more, uhm, I mean, I, I view it as generational change,
41 like my parents were not like they're parents.
42
43 AJ: Mhm.
44
45 JS: And I took it a lot further, uhm, trying to like be serious about social justice and social
46 movements...
47

1 AJ: Sure.
2
3 JS: ... than my, my parents did. Uhm, and I don't see myself having children but I teach, and like
4 sometimes that's, that's the thing that gives me hope is that like over time very, very slowly
5 people might like get out from beneath some of these ideas and systems that are really not
6 serving us.
7
8 AJ: Joy, tell me when did you first realize that the gender you were assigned at birth was not quite
9 the fit for you?
10
11 JS: You know that's a really good question because, uhm, I had a sense, I don't remember ever not
12 having a sense that I was gender non-conforming.
13
14 AJ: Wow.
15
16 JS: Yeah, like I always, but when I was a little kid like I really liked wearing dresses.
17
18 AJ: Mhm.
19
20 JS: They're awesome.
21
22 AJ: Yeah.
23
24 JS: They're fun.
25
26 AJ: Dresses are fun.
27
28 JS: Yeah, for sure. So I was like, I always was getting in trouble because I would be climbing the
29 money bars in a dress.
30
31 AJ: [Laughs].
32
33 JS: Yeah and we can't do that.
34
35 AJ: Right.
36
37 JS: Everyone will see your underwear and that's just apparently a very bad thing.
38
39 AJ: [Laughs]. Right.
40
41 JS: Yeah. Can't cope with that one.
42
43 AJ: No one has ever seen your underwear and probably owns a pair.
44
45 JS: [Laughs]. I know right? Right? And I was like six.
46
47 AJ: Yeah.

1
2 JS: Like surly we're all okay here.
3
4 AJ: Exactly.
5
6 JS: Uhm, but, but so I... uhm, yeah, I had this sense and I, I was a kid, I was like I'm a tomboy. I just
7 never had a lot of good words for this and also really had this sense that you couldn't talk about
8 it. That I— and just that I wouldn't be believed.
9
10 AJ: Mhm.
11
12 JS: Uhm, and by the time I was in high school I really had a very strong sense that this was, that,
13 uhm, I just didn't fit into either of these categories.
14
15 AJ: Hm.
16
17 JS: Uhm, and thought about transitioning but got freaked out but these articles that were like you
18 have to be, like you have to wear a tie and dress like a, like you're a business man because that's
19 the only way that people won't think you're a dyke. Like this is what I remember reading, I
20 mean, at...
21
22 AJ: Wow.
23
24 JS: I was like, "But I like dykes."
25
26 AJ: [Laughs]. Right.
27
28 JS: And I don't want to wear a tie. [Laughs].
29
30 AJ: [Laughs].
31
32 JS: I'm like eighteen. That sounds strange...
33
34 AJ: Yes.
35
36 JS: Uhm, so it really, it really took me like, uhm, finding like concepts like genderqueer and really
37 when I had a friend who used the pronoun they I finally was like, "Oh that's something that
38 makes sense to me."
39
40 AJ: Mhm.
41
42 JS: I had been really like... I just didn't feel like I, I knew, I knew people who used the pronoun ze...
43
44 AJ: Yeah.
45
46 JS: ... back in the day [Laughs].
47

1 AJ: Mhm. Yeah.
2
3 JS: Uhm, and I just was struggling with it myself.
4
5 AJ: Ze never really caught on.
6
7 JS: No. It just...
8
9 AJ: Even though it was promoted by Leslie Feinberg...
10
11 JS: I know.
12
13 AJ: ... who was probably one of the most influential transbutch masculine people...
14
15 JS: Leslie is my favorite.
16
17 AJ: But ze...
18
19 JS: Yeah. Yeah.
20
21 AJ: ... never like... ze, zir...
22
23 JS: Yeah, it just, it seemed so othering.
24
25 AJ: Mhm.
26
27 JS: Uhm, and I was like, if I struggle with this, I know no one will ever respect it.
28
29 AJ: [Laughs]. Right.
30
31 JS: Right? Uhm, so it was really, uhm, when I was starting my master's degree in Women's and
32 Gender Studies that I was like, "Oh, okay. Well here's a new group of people, uhm, that I can try
33 this out, out on...
34
35 AJ: Sure.
36
37 JS: ... uhm, who maybe won't, who maybe will believe me. Uhm, and, and then, you know, kind of
38 things really shifted, uhm, in the years after that. Partially for me. Uhm, and then also, uhm, like
39 culturally we, there's just a lot more, uhm, trans visibility.
40
41 AJ: Mhm.
42
43 JS: Uhm, uhm, than there once was, and it felt like there, there was language that made more
44 sense, uhm, and... And, you know, there was also like a process for me where I just became felt
45 more able to find clothes and ways of being and people that supported me. Uhm, so...
46
47 AJ: So it's been an evolutionary process.

1
2 JS: Yeah, yeah. And it's not been in one that really, uhm... you know I think there's a lot of pressure
3 to say like either that like there was a point of transition...
4
5 AJ: Mhm.
6
7 JS: ... or that I was always like this.
8
9 AJ: Right.
10
11 JS: And I've always been like a lot of different ways.
12
13 AJ: Sure. [Laughs].
14
15 JS: And like coming out has never really been something that made sense to me.
16
17 AJ: Uhuh.
18
19 JS: Uhm, like even, even around sexuality. Uhm, like I did come out to my parents, uhm, in a very
20 dramatic fashion.
21
22 AJ: [Laughs].
23
24 JS: Uhm, but that went so badly—
25
26 AJ: How?
27
28 JS: Oh god. It's a really funny story.
29
30 AJ: [Laughs].
31
32 JS: Uhm, yeah. It was, it was National Coming Out Day.
33
34 AJ: Okay.
35
36 JS: I was in college.
37
38 AJ: NCOD.
39
40 JS: Yeah. I know.
41
42 AJ: Mhm.
43
44 JS: Uhm, I just, just started college and for some reason I decided that I want—I was queer. So I had
45 to leave home. And I decided to go to Indiana...
46
47 AJ: Mhm.

1
2 JS: ... [laughs] of all places.
3
4 AJ: Wow.
5
6 JS: Yeah, so I went to a Quaker's school in Indiana...
7
8 AJ: Uhuh.
9
10 JS: ... for college, and found like...
11
12 AJ: What's it called? Do you mind saying?
13
14 JS: Uhm, Earlham College. Yeah.
15
16 AJ: Earlham?
17
18 JS: Earlham.
19
20 AJ: How do you spell that?
21
22 JS: Uhm, E.R., uhm, E.A.R., uhm, L.H.A.M.
23
24 AJ: Okay. Earlham College.
25
26 JS: Earlham College. Yeah, so I found like this one like square mile where you could be queer...
27
28 AJ: [Laughs].
29
30 JS: ... in Indiana [Laughs].
31
32 AJ: Uhuh. [Laughs].
33
34 JS: Uhm, and, and survive that experience, and I just didn't leave.
35
36 AJ: Didn't leave. Okay.
37
38 JS: I didn't leave. Uhm, but everybody was coming out to their parents.
39
40 AJ: Uhuh.
41
42 JS: And it was Parent's Day weekend too and all my friends...
43
44 AJ: So your parents were there?
45

1 JS: Yeah! All my friends were, were being cute with their like their family. Half of them had like
2 queer family too. I was like, "Well, clearly it's time." Cause I felt a lot of— like at that time that
3 was how you were.
4
5 AJ: Right.
6
7 JS: Like that was the— like come— you had to come out.
8
9 AJ: Mhm.
10
11 JS: Uhm, and like it had to be a big moment.
12
13 AJ: [Laughs].
14
15 JS: I know, so I, I called. I got all of my friends together.
16
17 AJ: Mhm.
18
19 JS: And, uhm, made them stand in the room. We didn't have cellphones then so we picked up the
20 telephone, and I called my parents.
21
22 AJ: Uhuh.
23
24 JS: I was like, "Mom, Dad." And at the time the words that I was using was, "I'm bi."
25
26 AJ: Okay.
27
28 JS: Uhm, this is a very different time period.
29
30 AJ: Yeah, no, I get it.
31
32 JS: Yeah. Uhm, and, yeah they, they were like. "Okay... alright..." Uhm, and they weren't hostile but
33 my mother is a very verbal processor.
34
35 AJ: Uhuh.
36
37 JS: Uhm, and she [laughs], what she said to me was like, "Okay, Joy, but I'm just worried that you're
38 going to marry two people, and then your kids are gonna lose their library books." My mom's a
39 librarian. A school librarian.
40
41 AJ: [Laughs].
42
43 JS: "I just see all of these kids and their parents are divorced and their library books. I worry about
44 your children."
45
46 AJ: [Laughs].
47

1 JS: So you had to explain like that's called polyamory.
2
3 AJ: Right.
4
5 JS: Right, and it's not particularly a direction I see myself going in. [Laughs].
6
7 AJ: Uhuh. Oh wow.
8
9 JS: But yeah, and then, and then actually it, it got, it got worse. Uhm, it got worse after that. Uhm,
10 because I went home. Uhm, and had kind of a, not realizing—
11
12 AJ: A month later for Thanksgiving?
13
14 JS: Right.
15
16 AJ: Six weeks.
17
18 JS: Yeah. For Christmas.
19
20 AJ: Okay.
21
22 JS: Uhm, and I hadn't really realized that I had set myself up for a really bad situation because my
23 friends weren't there anymore.
24
25 AJ: Right.
26
27 JS: Uhm, and my, my mother had six weeks to prepare invasive questions.
28
29 AJ: [Laughs]. Oh. Wow.
30
31 JS: And it broke down trust...
32
33 AJ: Mm.
34
35 JS: ... with them completely. Uhm, and I ended up, I ended up basically running away from home
36 that summer. Like I left and didn't really intend to come back.
37
38 AJ: Wow.
39
40 JS: And you can imagine like it was very marginally housed...
41
42 AJ: Mhm.
43
44 JS: ... for a couple of months. Like right on that boarder between homeless and not.
45
46 AJ: Sure.
47

1 JS: Uhm, and that was, that was not good. And there was a partner involved in that. He was also
2 not good. Uhm, so, yeah, and that's, that's why I kind of am not interested in having a lot of
3 interaction with my family around gender and sexuality, even the...
4
5 AJ: Also still raw. Pretty raw right now.
6
7 JS: I'm just not over it, especially because when my sister came out, I, my parents thought that
8 they, that surely they could come to me, and I would help them understand.
9
10 AJ: Right.
11
12 JS: And not, not knowing that I was exactly the wrong person to bring all of their new questions...
13
14 AJ: Mhm.
15
16 JS: and concerns to because I, I just found them incredibly triggering.
17
18 AJ: Right.
19
20 JS: So...
21
22 AJ: Wow.
23
24 JS: ... yeah, so eventually they're gonna find out and I'm just letting them, they'll find out at some
25 point.
26
27 AJ: Okay.
28
29 JS: Maybe I should—
30
31 AJ: So you don't go home very often?
32
33 JS: I don't go. I go home about once a year. Uhm, and I talk to them a lot. We're on fairly good
34 terms.
35
36 AJ: Cool.
37
38 JS: But it's, it's a very complicated...
39
40 AJ: Wow.
41
42 JS: ... dynamic.
43
44 AJ: Yeah.
45
46 JS: Yeah.
47

1 AJ: What's your relationship like with your sister?
2
3 JS: Pretty good. Uhm, pretty good. Uhm, she's, uhm, she's a wonderful person.
4
5 AJ: Mhm.
6
7 JS: And we always have a lot of fun together.
8
9 AJ: Is she in college now?
10
11 JS: No, she is, uhm, she's working on... she actually has some, uhm, she's had, it is really hard to be
12 a trans feminine person. And it's had some really... I know, I know, you're shocked.
13
14 AJ: [Laughs]. Shocked.
15
16 JS: Totally. Uhm, and, so she is, I won't, I won't talk for her, but she's had some really crappy things
17 happen to her.
18
19 AJ: Mhm. I'm sorry.
20
21 JS: Yeah, and it's had some major medical, uhm, like mental health stuff that's gone down.
22
23 AJ: Mhm. I'm so sorry.
24
25 JS: Yeah. So she, she lives with my parents which I think would just be awful but she's kind of okay
26 with...
27
28 AJ: Mhm.
29
30 JS: ... uhm, and is trying to make some sort of...
31
32 AJ: And they're still in Port-- I mean, uhm, Vancouver, Washington.
33
34 JS: They're still in Vancouver. Yup.
35
36 AJ: Okay.
37
38 JS: I know. I know.
39
40 AJ: Nice. Be careful sis.
41
42 JS: I know. I just, I, I keep telling her, you know like, the world is awesome when you're in it and not
43 at home with mom and dad...
44
45 AJ: Mhm.
46
47 JS: ... who are boring in, in the suburbs where everything just seems stifling...

1
2 AJ: Yeah.
3
4 JS: ... even though it's gotten much, much more livable in Vancouver.
5
6 AJ: Okay.
7
8 JS: It's gotten... Yeah.
9
10 AJ: Portland, I'm sure the Portland creep has been steadily coming cause...
11
12 JS: Yeah.
13
14 AJ: ... it's super expensive in Portland right now.
15
16 JS: Right, right. So there's a lot more [laughs] yeah.
17
18 AJ: [Laughs].
19
20 JS: Yeah, the liberalism has expanded a little bit.
21
22 AJ: Mhm. What challenges have you faced since you began to express your true gender identity?
23
24 JS: That's a good question. Uhm, so I, uhm, a lot of, I like being trans. Uh [laughs] but there's also
25 been a lot of things that have been really hard. I, uhm, ended up being, uhm, forced to quite a
26 job.
27
28 AJ: Wow.
29
30 JS: Yeah, yeah. I was working for a university in their service learning, uhm, I don't know, you can
31 see how I feel about service learning, I mean.
32
33 AJ: [Laughs].
34
35 JS: Their service learning department, uhm, running a scholarship. Uhm, and desperately my
36 students and was actually adjuncting for, uhm, for the Peace Studies department, uhm,
37 Women's and Gender Studies department.
38
39 AJ: Wow.
40
41 JS: Yeah, I was like making real people money.
42
43 AJ: You were all in, yeah.
44
45 JS: I was, I was all in, and I loved my work. And I had a boss, uhm, who appeared, uhm, like a year
46 into, about a year into this process about having this job. Uhm, and, uhm, she, we thought she
47 was gonna be cool. Uhm, she was, she was from a Women's and Gender Studies program...

1
2 AJ: Right.
3
4 JS: ... and she was not cool. Uhm, and I ended up filing... Well I ended up filing a massive like
5 discrimination claim against her that was pages and pages and pages and pages of every
6 awkward thing she had ever said to me. And she liked to tell people not to use my pronouns.
7
8 AJ: Wow.
9
10 JS: Yeah! That was cool. Not cool. Uhm, yeah, yeah and she, but she managed, for some reason
11 when I, when I filed this claim they couldn't find the discrimination. It was like it was hidden
12 behind the couch. And what was especially frustrating about the situation, there were actually
13 three trans people under her...
14
15 AJ: Oh wow.
16
17 JS: ... and all of us had had awful experiences...
18
19 AJ: Uhuh.
20
21 JS: ... and ended up leaving.
22
23 AJ: Wow.
24
25 JS: Yeah. But we, I mean—
26
27 AJ: And the university did nothing?
28
29 JS: No, the university did absolutely nothing. Uhm, I don't remember if they filed with the university
30 but we did have some meetings with like trans lawyers we knew.
31
32 AJ: Mhm.
33
34 JS: Uhm, and, you know, I, I was thinking about suing, uhm, mostly because I like I had to quit my
35 job.
36
37 AJ: Yeah.
38
39 JS: Like I needed some money. Uhm, I'm a prison abolitionist...
40
41 AJ: Right.
42
43 JS: ... but I was not above like getting some, some cash out of this university...
44
45 AJ: Exactly, yeah.
46
47 JS: ... that's treated so many people so poorly.

1
2 AJ: Mhm.
3
4 JS: Uhm, but I ended up having a lawyer tell me, "Well are you sure you're trans?"
5
6 AJ: Mmm.
7
8 JS: Like because there's just like no...
9
10 AJ: There's no language, no understanding, no...
11
12 JS: ... protection. Yeah.
13
14 AJ: Yeah.
15
16 JS: Yeah. And it's—
17
18 AJ: If you're non-binary...
19
20 JS: Right.
21
22 AJ: ... genderqueer or...
23
24 JS: Right. Right. Uhm, and also the other dynamic of it is that you have to, for all of us, we actually
25 have to get fired...
26
27 AJ: Right.
28
29 JS: ... in order to have legal recourse.
30
31 AJ: And you guys left.
32
33 JS: Yeah.
34
35 AJ: Like you felt you were forced to leave.
36
37 JS: Right. Well and I have, part of what was happening too is that I have a seizure condition...
38
39 AJ: Mhm.
40
41 JS: ... and I was having seizures every time I saw my boss.
42
43 AJ: Oh my goodness.
44
45 JS: Right. So my health was just not worth...
46
47 AJ: Mhm.

1
2 JS: ... risking.
3
4 AJ: Yeah, absolutely.
5
6 JS: Yeah, so that was awful.
7
8 AJ: Yeah.
9
10 JS: Uhm, and, and then the other thing that's been hard, uhm, has been, beyond kind of the
11 everyday where it's, it's hard to be very visible.
12
13 AJ: Mhm.
14
15 JS: And a lot of people I think have this attitude, "Well someday you'll pass, and then you won't be
16 our problem anymore."
17
18 AJ: Right.
19
20 JS: And that's not gonna be my—
21
22 AJ: Your reality.
23
24 JS: Right.
25
26 AJ: Yeah.
27
28 JS: I, I'm not interested in that. Uhm, that wouldn't be affirming. Uhm, but also, I, I mean, I'm in
29 academia and Women's and Gender Studies...
30
31 AJ: Mhm.
32
33 JS: ... and that has put me in contact with, uhm, some old school like feminist ideology that's just
34 not always very, uhm...
35
36 AJ: Affirming?
37
38 JS: Affirming. Yeah. Yeah. Uhm, so I've, I've always been the only, uhm, like non-binary person in
39 the program...
40
41 AJ: Mm.
42
43 JS: ... and, and it feels, like maybe one of the only non-binary person these people are acting like
44 they've ever known.
45
46 AJ: Wow.
47

1 JS: Right. So that's, that's like, on the one hand I think it's really exciting to be a part of, like trans
2 people creating our own scholarship about ourselves.
3
4 AJ: Mhm.
5
6 JS: Let there's a desperate need for that. And I have— I always have trans students...
7
8 AJ: Mhm.
9
10 JS: ... that are really wonderful and did a bunch of trans student activism that was fun. Uhm, and,
11 and value, well we did a lot of trans coalitional work around Palestine actually.
12
13 AJ: Hm.
14
15 JS: When I was getting my master's degree, that was really cool.
16
17 AJ: There are trans people in Palestine?
18
19 JS: [Laughs]. Yeah! Just like everywhere!
20
21 AJ: [Laughs].
22
23 JS: Yeah, uhm, but on the other hand it's really hard to just be on these, these academic spaces...
24
25 AJ: Mhm.
26
27 JS: ... that have no... no room for non-binary folks and for trans feminine folks. Uhm, usually a few
28 more trans guys get through the door...
29
30 AJ: Mm. Yeah.
31
32 JS: But it's not easy for them either.
33
34 AJ: No, it's not, it's not easy but it's something that I've been trying to get at in these
35 conversations...
36
37 JS: Yeah.
38
39 AJ: ... that I've been having, particularly, uhm, with sort of trans masculine identified folks.
40
41 JS: Yeah.
42
43 AJ: Uhm, and that is, this is just my own sort of... perception but, rooted in some reality...
44
45 JS: Mhm.
46

1 AJ: ... that historically trans men sort of come out of a more politized, lesbian or women, feminist
2 environment...
3
4 JS: Mhm.
5
6 AJ: ... so they sort of have that language...
7
8 JS: Mhm, mhm.
9
10 AJ: ... uhm, and, and sort of have the capacity to, uhm, articulate that in a way that, that resonates...
11
12 JS: Right.
13
14 AJ: ... and so consequently they— it seems like there's more acceptance, particularly in academia
15 or...
16
17 JS: Yeah.
18
19 AJ: ... uhm, or sort of other intellectual kind of pursuits.
20
21 JS: Mhm.
22
23 AJ: Whereas trans women... you know, and, and it, and it shifts and varies too cause black women,
24 black trans women sort of come out of drag culture. [Laughs].
25
26 JS: Mhm, mhm.
27
28 AJ: And, and white trans women tend to come out of middle class...
29
30 JS: Middle class respectability.
31
32 AJ: Middle class respectability, white male privilege.
33
34 JS: Yeah.
35
36 AJ: Uhm, is that something that you've experienced or that you think about or anything?
37
38 JS: Yeah! This is stuff that I think about all the time.
39
40 AJ: Mhm.
41
42 JS: Uhm, yeah, I think that, I think there are a few things and part of the this is like what I'm
43 interested in in research.
44
45 AJ: Mhm.
46

- 1 JS: There are a few things that stand out to me like one is, uhm, one is that we just have hidden
2 away all the stories about trans, uhm, trans women who were lesbians and who were feminists.
3
- 4 AJ: Right.
5
- 6 JS: Like those, like even though all those people were involved in all of these movements. I mean
7 they have to be involved to get kicked out.
8
- 9 AJ: Right. Exactly. Yes.
10
- 11 JS: [Laughs]. But somehow like people either couldn't keep records or no one's reading them.
12
- 13 AJ: Mhm.
14
- 15 JS: Uhm, so you kind of have this, uhm, this like dearth of those voices and people were so heavily
16 policed and like the— I think the rhetoric you see is that, uhm, that like trans, trans men could
17 be saved, like trans men could just realize that they bought too much into patriarchy...
18
- 19 AJ: Mhm.
20
- 21 JS: ... and that they need to like...
22
- 23 AJ: They can be pulled back, yeah.
24
- 25 JS: They can be pulled back, yeah. And they can— we're losing all of our butches...
26
- 27 AJ: Uhuh.
28
- 29 JS: Like that ridiculous rhetoric...
30
- 31 AJ: Right.
32
- 33 JS: ... even though we are losing butch culture.
34
- 35 AJ: Uhuh.
36
- 37 JS: And there is something sad about butch culture...
38
- 39 AJ: Yeah.
40
- 41 JS: ... but also there's a big positive about losing some of that.
42
- 43 AJ: Something positive because so many more femmes are now...
44
- 45 JS: Yeah.
46
- 47 AJ: ... asserting themselves, partnering with other femmes, and, yeah.

1
2 JS: Yup, yup.
3
4 AJ: Whereas that, you know, in the '70s and '80s...
5
6 JS: Yeah.
7
8 AJ: ... you know, it wasn't as, you know, you identified lesbians as boot wearing...
9
10 JS: Right.
11
12 AJ: ... motorcycle riding...
13
14 JS: But some of it is that I think that it's a loss of working class queer identity.
15
16 AJ: Hm.
17
18 JS: Like that's, that's kind of my theory...
19
20 AJ: That's interesting.
21
22 JS: ... that some of it is that you see, like, like Leslie Fienberg's book like thinking about all these
23 bars that shut down...
24
25 AJ: Yeah. Right.
26
27 JS: ... all the jobs shut down and people end up going to New York City and really not having any,
28 any kind of sense of community any longer.
29
30 AJ: Right. Yeah.
31
32 JS: I think some—
33
34 AJ: You're talking about Stone Butch Blues.
35
36 JS: Yeah, yeah. I think some of that was, I think some of that happened nationally.
37
38 AJ: Oh, yeah. I'm sure. Absolutely.
39
40 JS: Yeah. But it's hard, it's hard to know, I mean, and I think working class queer identities have just
41 become a lot less visible. Like we went from hypervisibility...
42
43 AJ: Right.
44
45 JS: ... to, to really like all these middle-class folks in academia like me.
46
47 AJ: Mhm. Yeah.

1
2 JS: You apparently are the face of whatever even though—
3
4 AJ: And corporate, I mean.
5
6 JS: Yeah, like all these HRC's.
7
8 AJ: Corporate queer identity is huge, right?
9
10 JS: Right.
11
12 AJ: You know you think of, uh, a lesbian now, she's a vice president at, you know...
13
14 JS: Yup.
15
16 AJ: ... some Fortune 500 company.
17
18 JS: Yeah. And I'm supposed to be excited that my bank is going to give me credit card with, like, two
19 men, white men holding hands.
20
21 AJ: [Laughs]. Right.
22
23 JS: I'm supposed to be thrilled. Yeah, and all these pride parades, trans people only go when we're
24 going to shut them down.
25
26 AJ: Right. Exactly.
27
28 JS: Like they're just not for us.
29
30 AJ: Yeah, no. They, they are not. Absolutely.
31
32 JS: But I do think, going back to what you were saying, I think that the big piece for me is like the
33 trans misogyny. It's like we could save butch people...
34
35 AJ: Mhm.
36
37 JS: ... uhm, but like, I think, the, the rhetoric out of radical feminists and out of police was all of
38 those trans femmes are lying, and they're inherently deceptive and they're criminal and they're
39 sexual predators.
40
41 AJ: Wow.
42
43 JS: That's, that's what we see historically.
44
45 AJ: Mhm.
46
47 JS: Uhm, and that—

1
2 AJ: It's the whole thing behind the whole bathroom...
3
4 JS: Exactly.
5
6 AJ: Right.
7
8 JS: Exactly. And yet we can't...
9
10 AJ: Although there's never been really any documented cases of trans femme violence in
11 bathrooms.
12
13 JS: No.
14
15 AJ: It's mostly hetero or... I don't know what they're sexuality is but cisgender white men who...
16
17 JS: Well it's mostly us getting attacked in bathrooms.
18
19 AJ: Well, yes.
20
21 JS: And, and like I think part of the problem is that people, women are, like white women are
22 talking about rape only in terms of, or the, the rape culture I should say cause white women
23 have pushed back on this but the rape culture like view of rape is that you're gonna get raped in
24 the bathroom or walking down the street.
25
26 AJ: Mhm.
27
28 JS: Not, like it's, it's more likely to be someone you know.
29
30 AJ: In your home. Yeah.
31
32 JS: Yeah. So...
33
34 AJ: Or in someone else's home, yeah.
35
36 JS: Yeah. Yes. I think those things combine to this absolutely absurd conversation about the
37 bathroom.
38
39 AJ: Mhm.
40
41 JS: Uhm, which often non-binary people don't get represented in at all.
42
43 AJ: I know. How do we get to a resolution around that?
44
45 JS: I don't know because I really think we need trans femmes who are the most impacted by this...
46
47 AJ: Mhm.

1
2 JS: ... to be at the forefront but there's a lot of this no— non-binary people have to start talking
3 with each other about— and organizing together to try to get a sense of what we do have in
4 common, what we don't, and how we want to engage with this.
5
6 AJ: Yeah, cause a lot of trans femmes I think feel like, I don't want to necessarily take up the non-
7 binary issue...
8
9 JS: Mhm.
10
11 AJ: ... because then somehow that may negate my own existence...
12
13 JS: Mhm. Yeah, and you know there are—
14
15 AJ: ... which is very complicated and nuanced.
16
17 JS: Right, and there are a lot of, there have been a lot of queer spaces where people who are
18 assigned female at birth have a lot of privilege over trans femmes in particular.
19
20 AJ: Mhm.
21
22 JS: Uhm, and, yeah, but there's also not a lot of like those are spaces where I have like masculinity
23 projected onto me...
24
25 AJ: Mhm.
26
27 JS: ... that I don't identify with and try to find ways to push back against. And also where it's not like
28 people find like someone who like I am not attractive in those spaces.
29
30 AJ: [Laughs].
31
32 JS: Like honestly. Like, like those are really sexualized like skinny andro like androgynous girls are
33 desirable. And, and certain like sort of trans masculinity is desirable.
34
35 AJ: Mhm.
36
37 JS: and there need— we don't have a lot of conversation that has a lot of depth to talking about the
38 rest of us and how we relate to each other, what privileges we do have, and, and the ways in
39 which we are like— complex ways in which non-binary people experience... [Sighs].
40
41 AJ: Well, I wanna hear a little bit of your ideas around, uhm, medical intervention.
42
43 JS: Yeah.
44
45 AJ: And if you, you know, so I'm gonna ask the question...
46
47 JS: Sure.

1
2 AJ: ... but, to the extent that you feel comfortable...
3
4 JS: Mhm.
5
6 AJ: ... please only...
7
8 JS: Yeah.
9
10 AJ: ... answer or not answer to that extent. So have you undergone any medical interventions...
11
12 JS: No, and—
13
14 AJ: ... and do you have any intention?
15
16 JS: Yeah, no. And I never had any desire to do so.
17
18 AJ: Mhm. Okay.
19
20 JS: I certainly thought about it...
21
22 AJ: Mhm.
23
24 JS: ... because that's, that was the script that was handed to me...
25
26 AJ: Sure.
27
28 JS: ... is like, oh, okay...
29
30 AJ: Go get your hormones. Go get some testosterone.
31
32 JS: Yeah.
33
34 AJ: You'll be fine.
35
36 JS: Right. And, uhm, and especially when I was considering it, uhm, the only, the only model I saw
37 was, "You need... go become a man."
38
39 AJ: Mhm.
40
41 JS: Not like... you could, not the kind of informed consent model that exists where some people just
42 like, "Yeah, well I'm just gonna like..."
43
44 AJ: Mhm.
45
46 JS: "... get a little bit of T for a while."
47

1 AJ: Right. Exactly.
2
3 JS: Right? That was not a part of my world. Uhm, and, uhm, I, now I'm really more rooted in how
4 much I'm not interested in that. In part because of, uhm, feeling, uhm, like I want to have, like
5 there's a way to be non-binary that doesn't rely on, on masculinity.
6
7 AJ: Mhm.
8
9 JS: And I certainly did not always feel that way. I, I really felt like I had to be really butch.
10
11 AJ: Mhm, mhm.
12
13 JS: And, and that didn't sit well with me.
14
15 AJ: Right.
16
17 JS: Uhm, yeah, and so now I'm more interested in, in how, how can I figure out how to be a more
18 integrated person that gets to be my whole self.
19
20 AJ: Sure.
21
22 JS: And that's not, that's not easy for any of us. And it doesn't— it's taken me being really
23 comfortable with the fact that people won't read me the way I want them to.
24
25 AJ: Mhm.
26
27 JS: And I can't make them do— I, I can't, I can't let those people like determine whether or not I
28 feel successful as a person.
29
30 AJ: Sure. I mean, no, you, you just can't, right?
31
32 JS: Yeah. Yeah.
33
34 AJ: How do you deal with the restroom issue?
35
36 JS: You know, it is, it is a drama. So I don't know how I've managed to not be like confronted in the
37 bathroom but it's, it's yet, I've yet to—
38
39 AJ: But you haven't been?
40
41 JS: It hasn't happened.
42
43 AJ: Yay!
44
45 JS: Thank god, right?
46
47 AJ: Right.

1
2 JS: Uhm, yeah, uhm, mostly, uhm, I try to find gender neutral bathrooms and try to pee at home. Or
3 find like single stall...
4
5 AJ: Single stall...
6
7 JS: ... uhm, yeah, and I was, part of the drama with, uhm, where I'm, I'm going to school in Ohio
8 State now, and there's like eight bathrooms, eight gender neutral bathrooms on this campus...
9
10 AJ: Wow.
11
12 JS: ... for like sixty thousand people so I never get to pee.
13
14 AJ: [Laughs]. I'm sorry.
15
16 JS: It's so bad. It's so bad. There's one that I sometimes use...
17
18 AJ: Uhuh.
19
20 JS: ... but usually I like go to the Women's and Gender Studies bathroom...
21
22 AJ: Mhm.
23
24 JS: ... where I'm like, "Okay, so it's a women's bathroom but none of these people are likely to, to
25 beat me up in here."
26
27 AJ: Right.
28
29 JS: I just feel, I feel awkward...
30
31 AJ: Yeah.
32
33 JS: ... but I would feel more awkward in the men's room. The, the only ugly experiences I've had
34 have been with family bathrooms and family locker rooms.
35
36 AJ: Really?
37
38 JS: Yeah, because sometimes people get very into the family aspect of it.
39
40 AJ: What's a family bathroom?
41
42 JS: Okay, so you know some—
43
44 AJ: I think of them as single stall.
45
46 JS: Yea— yeah but if you notice some of them will say like family on them...
47

1 AJ: Mhm.
2
3 JS: ... which is, is just them saying that it's like there's, there's a changing table in there.
4
5 AJ: Right. Exactly.
6
7 JS: But some people and, and sometimes they have family lockers...
8
9 AJ: Okay.
10
11 JS: ... uhm, where, which makes more sense, like okay...
12
13 AJ: Yeah.
14
15 JS: ... it's you and your kids.
16
17 AJ: Your kids going into the locker room.
18
19 JS: Right. Right. Well I was, I was trying to, I was trying to use, use the locker room, uhm, and I, I
20 heard there was a family locker room, and I was like awesome. I can go...
21
22 AJ: Okay.
23
24 JS: ... and not like...
25
26 AJ: Disrupt things.
27
28 JS: Right! Uhm, and I, I walked in and, and there was like somebody was like, "Come on in!" And I
29 was like it's you and your kids. And I got the weirdest looks cause I don't have any kids with me.
30
31 AJ: Okay.
32
33 JS: So they were like, "What are you doing here?"
34
35 AJ: Right.
36
37 JS: And sometimes people just don't know how to read me at all.
38
39 AJ: Mhm.
40
41 JS: And they're like, "Well, okay, you're a woman but you're telling me you're trans. So are you a
42 trans woman or are you just a freak? Are you lying? Are you weird?"
43
44 AJ: Mhm.
45
46 JS: Uhm, and I just saw all of those things on these people's faces, and I'm like I will never go into a
47 family locker room ever again.

1
2 AJ: Awe. Wow.
3
4 JS: Yeah. Uhm, yeah. So...
5
6 AJ: What's dating like?
7
8 JS: It's [laughs]. It's not good. It's not good. Uhm, partially because dating is a cesspool for
9 everybody right?
10
11 AJ: Yes.
12
13 JS: [Laughs].
14
15 AJ: Yes. [Laughs].
16
17 JS: Yeah, uhm, I, I find it really, really hard because either people, either you tell people up front
18 that you're trans, and I have to like because, because otherwise they won't, they won't respect
19 me...
20
21 AJ: Sure.
22
23 JS: ... like know what my pronouns are. Uhm, uhm so you, you do that and people either like, "I
24 don't know what that is so I'm going to have nothing to do with it. Or you get, uhm, like queer
25 folks, uhm, who are cool with it, uhm, and, uhm, I've certainly been like, been out with people
26 that were fine. Uhm, or like really supportive but often I feel like people really project some sort
27 of masculinity onto me...
28
29 AJ: Mhm.
30
31 JS: ... that I don't identify with.
32
33 AJ: Okay.
34
35 JS: I like really identify like in the middle...
36
37 AJ: Sure.
38
39 JS: ... or outside of this.
40
41 AJ: Mhm.
42
43 JS: And I really don't think that I'm... certainly in dating relationships running around acting
44 particularly masculine.
45
46 AJ: Yeah.
47

1 JS: But people are like, "Oh, so you're gonna initiate all this." And I'm like, "Have you met me?"
2
3 AJ: Right. [Laughs]. No.
4
5 JS: And I have not figured out a way out of that dynamic, and also it's just like, uh, it just depresses
6 me.
7
8 AJ: Oh.
9
10 JS: I know.
11
12 AJ: Yeah. So no relationship currently then?
13
14 JS: Nope, no.
15
16 AJ: Mhm.
17
18 JS: No.
19
20 AJ: Wow.
21
22 JS: [Laughs].
23
24 AJ: Uhm, what do you think the relationship is, and you've kind of hit on this a little bit, and, but
25 maybe before I ask you that, I should at least let you talk about what are some of the positive
26 aspects of, uh...
27
28 JS: [Laughs].
29
30 AJ: ... being gender non-conforming.
31
32 JS: Sure. Uhm, I mean, there's so much about it that I really love. Uhm, like one thing that's, I still
33 think about, uhm, even though it's been, like, this have been me for like six or seven years. Uhm,
34 it's just, it feels, it feels like magic. It's like people actually like, I realized this thing about myself
35 and like and it wasn't a big effort to, to suddenly be like, "Oh yeah, you look pretty, you look
36 really gender non-conforming." I, I remember as a kid just thinking just like, "I got boobs. No—
37 everyone will always see that I'm a girl."
38
39 AJ: Right.
40
41 JS: And I have people who have no idea what my gender is...
42
43 AJ: Sure.
44
45 JS: ... all the time.
46
47 AJ: Yeah.

1
2 JS: All the time. Uhm, and then also I have a lot of cis people who don't believe me when I tell them
3 that. I know, it's very, very strange.
4
5 AJ: Wow.
6
7 JS: I definitely— people tell me a lot more about themselves than they, they are telling me about
8 me. That's what I've come to the conclusion. So that's still pretty like amazing. Uhm, and I, I
9 think that a lot of trans people I both struggle with the community, uhm, because it can be a
10 really small community.
11
12 AJ: Mhm.
13
14 JS: And it can be a very... a community that like I, I've run into very politized trans circles.
15
16 AJ: Sure.
17
18 JS: And it can kind of be like—
19
20 AJ: Aren't most of them?
21
22 JS: I know right? That's like, yeah. They are.
23
24 AJ: Yeah.
25
26 JS: And it can kind of feel like, it's like, "Okay, well you better make sure, you better not mess up."
27
28 AJ: Mhm.
29
30 JS: And that can be, that can be just tiring.
31
32 AJ: For sure. Tiring. Exhausting.
33
34 JS: Yeah, and it's just like, "Wow, this isn't fun. I'm here to not mess up..."
35
36 AJ: Right.
37
38 JS: "... instead of here to like connect with other people."
39
40 AJ: Mhm.
41
42 JS: Uhm, yeah. Uhm, but I, I have a lot of trans friends that I love, uhm, very deeply. Uhm, I have
43 really enjoyed, uhm, uhm, doing a lot of activism that's been, uhm, related, uhm, to trans
44 struggles in various ways.
45
46 AJ: So what kind of... have you been a part of organizations?
47

1 JS: Yeah! Yeah, I'm a part of Black and Pink. Are you?
2
3 AJ: Oh really?
4
5 JS: Yeah. Oh yeah. Black and Pink. [Laughs].
6
7 AJ: Prison abolition.
8
9 JS: Yup! Yup. Uhm, I've kind of been on...
10
11 AJ: So you maybe know CeCe McDonald?
12
13 JS: I met CeCe. She gave me a hug. That was really nice. [Laughs].
14
15 AJ: [Laughs]. Yeah.
16
17 JS: She's a like—
18
19 AJ: She extols the virtues of Black and Pink. Yeah.
20
21 JS: Yeah. Yeah. She's, she's amazing. Uhm, we're lucky, we just don't have her with us.
22
23 AJ: Yeah, absolutely.
24
25 JS: Uhm, yeah. Yeah, I've been a part—
26
27 AJ: And thank you Leslie Feinberg for your work in making it an international call celeb.
28
29 JS: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Uhm, yeah, and like I...
30
31 AJ: So you've been involved in Black and Pink.
32
33 JS: Mhm. Yeah and I think...
34
35 AJ: Started the GSA at your high school.
36
37 JS: [Laughs]. Uh, yeah. Yeah, the, the, what actually killed the GSA in the very end was that the
38 resource cop is what they used to call cops and police...
39
40 AJ: Sure.
41
42 JS: ... in, in schools, showed up at our first meeting.
43
44 AJ: Mhm.
45
46 JS: And I was like, "I'm done." I was, I was where like, I was just like, "Why the hell are you here?"
47

1 AJ: Right.
2
3 JS: "You're terrifying."
4
5 AJ: Wow.
6
7 JS: And that was when I realized that these people are just gonna drop in on us on our spaces.
8
9 AJ: Mhm.
10
11 JS: And, and I was just like, this like, little teenager who was scared of this whole thing. I was like,
12 "I'm done."
13
14 AJ: Wow.
15
16 JS: I couldn't do it anymore. So [laughs].
17
18 AJ: So that's disbanded.
19
20 JS: Yeah, yeah, yeah. It just kind of flopped.
21
22 AJ: Wow.
23
24 JS: But I learned a lot from that.
25
26 AJ: Yeah. [Laughs].
27
28 JS: Uhm, I also, so I've been doing, most of my activism, uhm, for many years has been around
29 Palestine.
30
31 AJ: Mm.
32
33 JS: Uhm, yeah. And I've been involved in like anti-pink washing activism...
34
35 AJ: Mhm. Sure.
36
37 JS: ... uhm, and research for a really long time.
38
39 AJ: Okay.
40
41 JS: Yeah, and then I've also just been like lucky in Chicago to know a lot of folks who have done
42 some really amazing stuff around police violence and around, uhm, like Blackout Pride.
43
44 AJ: Right.
45
46 JS: Yeah. Yeah.
47

1 AJ: Die ins and shutdowns and...
2
3 JS: Mhm, mhm.
4
5 AJ: Wow, you know one other thing, you mentioned this phrase, trans misogyny.
6
7 JS: Mhm.
8
9 AJ: You know, I personally know but this video may be viewed by...
10
11 JS: Sure.
12
13 AJ: ... more than just me hopefully.
14
15 JS: [Laughs].
16
17 AJ: Uhm, they may not be aware of what trans misogyny is. Can you talk a little bit about that topic?
18
19 JS: Yeah, and it's good to have like a snapshot of how we're understanding it or at least how I'm
20 understanding it.
21
22 AJ: Right, at the moment, yeah. Mhm.
23
24 JS: Yeah, so I think, uhm, I do a lot of teaching, uhm, about, uhm, yeah, I've taught, uhm, college
25 kids for a few years now.
26
27 AJ: Okay.
28
29 JS: Uhm, and, uhm, this for me is like the one thing that I really want them all to understand. Uhm,
30 it's kind of like okay. Uhm, Julia Serano, uhm, was one of the first people to articulate the idea of
31 trans misogyny, uhm, and it's the—
32
33 AJ: Whipping Girl.
34
35 JS: Right! Right. I remember when we were all talking about Whipping Girl and LiveJournal.
36
37 AJ: [Laughs]. Yeah.
38
39 JS: [Laughs]. That's what I remember.
40
41 AJ: Oh, okay.
42
43 JS: Yeah.
44
45 AJ: I don't even know what LiveJournal is but...
46
47 JS: This was the, this was my generation's...

1
2 AJ: I think we're a little generationally, uh...
3
4 JS: Yeah. That was our like social movement— social media platform...
5
6 AJ: Okay, alright.
7
8 JS: ... was these longform journals.
9
10 AJ: Oh, wow.
11
12 JS: Yeah, and they were a hotbed of trans thinking.
13
14 AJ: Okay.
15
16 JS: Like that's where we all talked about ourselves endlessly.
17
18 AJ: Uhuh. Wow.
19
20 JS: Yeah, it was, it was great. I miss LiveJournal. Uhm, someone should do research on trans
21 communities on LiveJournal. Uhm. [Laughs].
22
23 AJ: Yeah, that would be fascinating.
24
25 JS: Yeah.
26
27 AJ: Maybe you should do it.
28
29 JS: Maybe. [Laughs]. Uhm, anyway, uhm, so, yeah Julia Serano came up with this, this term that
30 people have been talking about for a long time...
31
32 AJ: Mhm.
33
34 JS: ... uhm, where it's, uhm, the intersection between transphobia and misogyny. So, uhm, trying to
35 like to give a voice to the kind of specificities of like state violence and cultural hate, uhm, uhm,
36 against trans femme, feminine people. Uhm, and try to like talk about, uhm, how, how kind of
37 these things we've been, these dynamics...
38
39 AJ: Mhm.
40
41 JS: ... around, uhm, around transphobia are different, uhm, when, uhm, you're— we're also talking
42 about the way that femininity is just devalued so trans femininity, of course, is just radically
43 pathologized...
44
45 AJ: Right. Mhm.
46

1 JS: ... uhm, yeah, I think, and I think it's a really, really important concept, uhm, for, for people, for
2 kind of the, the political work to be engaged...
3
4 AJ: Right.
5
6 JS: ... and kind of understanding that this is what's going on and taking it further to talk about like
7 when like people are using the phrase, uhm, trans misogynoir, so like... yeah.
8
9 AJ: Yeah, so trans misogyny against black women, right?
10
11 JS: Right, right, which is really specific.
12
13 AJ: Very specific and very real.
14
15 JS: Very, very real. Very real. And there's a lot of like, people, for someone like me to talk about
16 transphobia, like I think there's a way in which sometimes we, uhm, are trying to convince
17 people that it's real and that it's bad...
18
19 AJ: Mhm.
20
21 JS: ... and that it's devastating, uhm, and sometimes people do, it's like well think about all the
22 people who are murdered? Well the people who are being murdered aren't me. They aren't
23 looking like me.
24
25 AJ: Mhm.
26
27 JS: They're overwhelmingly black women.
28
29 AJ: Mhm.
30
31 JS: And we need to find ways to talk about that. And also to, to still do like more thinking about—
32
33 AJ: Fifteen trans women of color have been murdered...
34
35 JS: Yeah.
36
37 AJ: ... this year alone.
38
39 JS: Yeah. I think there was just another one that— another name that came out today.
40
41 AJ: The fifteenth person.
42
43 JS: Was it? Oh, shit.
44
45 AJ: Yeah.
46
47 JS: Wow.

1
2 AJ: Very sad.
3
4 JS: That's really bad.
5
6 AJ: How do you— do, can, so, I was gonna ask this question, what is the relationship between LGB
7 and the T?
8
9 JS: [Laughs].
10
11 AJ: I'm gonna nuance it up a bit more, uhm, can LGB folks be trans misogynistic?
12
13 JS: Yeah. Yeah. They're—
14
15 AJ: Are they?
16
17 JS: Often. Almost all the time. Uhm, yeah, and, like some of that is historically, like we've seen like,
18 like, uhm, Jean O'Leary...
19
20 AJ: Mhm. Who?
21
22 JS: ... yelling at... Jean O'Leary? Uhm, in 1973 Jean O'Leary, uhm, was a radical feminist—
23
24 AJ: Jean O'Leary?
25
26 JS: Yeah. Yeah.
27
28 AJ: Okay.
29
30 JS: She was a radical feminist in New York, and, uhm, after Sylvia Rivera gave that amazing speech...
31
32 AJ: Mhm.
33
34 JS: ... she...
35
36 AJ: At Pride?
37
38 JS: Yeah. Yeah. At Pride. At Christopher St. She got up and, uhm, misgendered Sylvia.
39
40 AJ: Mhm.
41
42 JS: Uhm, and said that like terrible things about her.
43
44 AJ: Sure. Yeah.
45
46 JS: And what a lot of people don't realize—
47

1 AJ: I tried to block out her name I guess.
2
3 JS: Yeah, yeah, yeah, it's, it's really, and, and then Marsha saved Sylvia's life.
4
5 AJ: Mhm.
6
7 JS: Uhm, after Sylvia like tried to kill herself...
8
9 AJ: Right.
10
11 JS: ... uhm, because of what— and nobody is acknowledging that Jean did that to Sylvia.
12
13 AJ: Mhm.
14
15 JS: No like it's not in the history books.
16
17 AJ: Wow.
18
19 JS: It, it, like, I wrote it on Wikipedia because I was mad...
20
21 AJ: Okay.
22
23 JS: ... that nobody [laughs]...
24
25 AJ: [Laughs].
26
27 JS: ... knew about it.
28
29 AJ: Well, it's in your video now. [Laughs].
30
31 JS: [Laughs]. Yes. Jean O'Leary, everybody.
32
33 AJ: Jean O'Leary.
34
35 JS: Uhm, yeah, Jean O'Leary. Uhm, so we— there's this whole history of LGBT people, uhm, like,
36 like, on, on personal level, I've seen trans, uhm, women, and femmes I know just have awful
37 experiences, uhm, and, uhm, from, from queer folks.
38
39 AJ: Mhm.
40
41 JS: Uhm, like, I certainly have seen that go down in classrooms, uhm, where people just had really
42 struggled to finish their degree.
43
44 AJ: Mhm.
45
46 JS: Uhm, because, because they were always being treated like they were too emotional, too
47 excessive, asking too much...

1
2 AJ: Too angry.
3
4 JS: ... too angry. Yeah. Uhm, yeah, and then. And then we have like all of these, like a long history
5 of, uhm, trans women, especially trans women of color, getting up and saying something, uhm,
6 and then...
7
8 AJ: Mhm.
9
10 JS: ... being booed by cro— by crowds of gay folks. Like Jennicet Gutierrez...
11
12 AJ: That's a very good friend of mine, yes.
13
14 JS: Yeah, yeah, uhm, yeah, like there's that whole, I mean, and some of it is a, it's like—
15
16 AJ: Sylvia, I mean, well, you named it, but yeah. It's a long history.
17
18 JS: Sylvia, yeah. It's a long, long history. Uhm, and some of it is that people like, we have to think
19 about it's like trans women were resisting, and that's the response to resistance.
20
21 AJ: Right.
22
23 JS: But also it just takes, it's, it happens when trans women are just like, being, being people.
24
25 AJ: Right.
26
27 JS: Like, it, it's nasty. It's really, really nasty.
28
29 AJ: Wow. Uhm, what do you think the agenda for the trans community should be going forward?
30
31 JS: Oh, man.
32
33 AJ: And, when you, when I say trans community, I am including GNC...
34
35 JS: Mhm, mhm.
36
37 AJ: ... folks into that.
38
39 JS: Yeah. Well, I'll say two things. Uhm, I think that like for like non-binary GNC folks, we need to
40 like have an agenda just to talk with each other...
41
42 AJ: Mm.
43
44 JS: ... about, what, how are we the same, how are we different, uhm, cause there are a lot of
45 people who are using the pronoun "they" now who don't even identify as, as trans. Maybe
46 they're GNC but they're not trans. And if you, like, I don't know what that means.
47

1 AJ: Yeah, no, I know a person who doesn't identify under any of the queer labels but...
2
3 JS: Yeah.
4
5 AJ: ... they use they/them pronouns.
6
7 JS: Right, and I know some people who are very thoughtful in that.
8
9 AJ: Almost in like an ally kind of way. Yeah.
10
11 JS: Yeah, uhm, I do know some people like I have some people I'm very close with, uhm, I have no
12 friend I'm very close with who's very thoughtful. Uhm, prefers the pronoun they but identifies
13 as cis and for them it's about racism. It's like, okay, well, well, like, uhm, it's about being a black
14 woman but that means you're not really a woman. So they're trying to figure out a way to
15 navigate that reality. Uhm, but I won't speak for them.
16
17 AJ: Yeah.
18
19 JS: Right? Uhm, and I think that there's some thoughtful work that's emerging. Uhm, but we're at,
20 at— it's also like we're in this, this moment where the media is like screaming about trans stuff...
21
22 AJ: Right.
23
24 JS: ... all the time...
25
26 AJ: Mhm.
27
28 JS: ... in ways that just can be very distracting for all of us because it feels like it might be good, it
29 might be bad.
30
31 AJ: Sure.
32
33 JS: So I think we have to talk with each other. Uhm, but also, I think, our larger agenda has to be
34 around like prison abolition...
35
36 AJ: Mhm.
37
38 JS: ... state violence like...
39
40 AJ: Wow.
41
42 JS: Like, uhm, and health care. Period.
43
44 AJ: Mhm.
45
46 JS: Surviving this Trump administration is gonna be... immigration, uhm, finding ways for it not to be
47 about visibility.

1
2 AJ: Yeah.
3
4 JS: Because some of us— like I'm very visible.
5
6 AJ: Mhm.
7
8 JS: And it's not, it's not something that... my visibility hasn't gotten me more food or a job.
9
10 AJ: [Laughs]. Yeah.
11
12 JS: Like and I don't know why we all think that visibility is a political good.
13
14 AJ: Mhm.
15
16 JS: And I'm certainly a part of a lot of communities that don't believe that.
17
18 AJ: Right.
19
20 JS: But we're not really being listened to necessarily. [Laughs].
21
22 AJ: [Signs]. Well, well, you know, uhm, it's interesting. This is not an endorsement at all.
23
24 JS: Mhm.
25
26 AJ: But, uhm, I think Caitlin Jenner is probably done more to put the word transgender on people's
27 mouths than...
28
29 JS: Yeah, yeah.
30
31 AJ: ... than anybody.
32
33 JS: Right. Well, and you know, I have a complicated relationship with Caitlin Jenner like I think most
34 of us do where, uhm, she always... she's come to suck all the air out of the room.
35
36 AJ: Mhm.
37
38 JS: Like whenever my students talk about trans people the only one they know to talk about is
39 Caitlin Jenner.
40
41 AJ: Right. Sure.
42
43 JS: And, just a year, like a couple years ago, it was Janet Mock and Laverne Cox...
44
45 AJ: Uhuh. Right.
46
47 JS: ... and CeCe were the only people they knew. And those were like, that's a very different...

1
2 AJ: Andrea Jenkins wasn't one of those?
3
4 JS: [Laughs]. Sorry.
5
6 AJ: I'm kidding.
7
8 JS: [Laughs].
9
10 AJ: [Laughs].
11
12 JS: Not yet. We'll work on that.
13
14 AJ: Okay.
15
16 JS: Uhm, but, but I mean I think a lot of us want to have some compassion for her because people
17 forget that she was outed.
18
19 AJ: Right.
20
21 JS: Like I don't think she, she tried to do this, but her politics are awful.
22
23 AJ: They're awful.
24
25 JS: And she doesn't want to be—
26
27 AJ: I have some sympathy for her just because I know how challenging it was for me to live a sort of
28 divided life for twenty-nine years.
29
30 JS: Yeah.
31
32 AJ: I can't imagine doing it for sixty-five.
33
34 JS: In the public eye.
35
36 AJ: Yeah.
37
38 JS: Yeah. But like I find it, I find it interesting to think—
39
40 AJ: But her politics are completely...
41
42 JS: Crap.
43
44 AJ: ... out of this world.
45
46 JS: Yeah.
47

1 AJ: Insane.
2
3 JS: Yeah, she doesn't have a reasonable assessment of how this world works.
4
5 AJ: Or her politics are about upholding like white supremacy.
6
7 JS: Yes.
8
9 AJ: And corporate dominance.
10
11 JS: Exactly. Exactly. I mean, her surprise over Donald Trump kind of reflects a lack of judgement but
12 everything else about her is like no, you, she's exactly who, who she...
13
14 AJ: Yeah.
15
16 JS: ... would be...
17
18 AJ: Exactly.
19
20 JS: ... if like she were a cis white woman with all that money.
21
22 AJ: Right. Yeah.
23
24 JS: Like she's not a surprise.
25
26 AJ: No.
27
28 JS: Uhm, but, but it is interesting to me to think about like people like Renee Richards.
29
30 AJ: Mhm.
31
32 JS: Uhm, who, like, I'm, I'm trying to remember the last names, but she was that...
33
34 AJ: Yeah.
35
36 JS: ... tennis player, right?
37
38 AJ: The tennis player, yeah. Doctor Renee Richards.
39
40 JS: Yeah!
41
42 AJ: Yeah.
43
44 JS: Uhm, who certainly had like, as far as I know, better politics than Caitlin Jenner.
45
46 AJ: Mm...
47

1 JS: But... oh, but—
2
3 AJ: [Laughs].
4
5 JS: Yeah. It's, it, maybe not, at the same time, but we've had—
6
7 AJ: Well, she's very deeply binary.
8
9 JS: Yeah, yeah.
10
11 AJ: Uhm, which to each his own, I mean, life is...
12
13 JS: Yeah.
14
15 AJ: ... but she kind of states it as that's the only way...
16
17 JS: Right.
18
19 AJ: ... to be...
20
21 JS: Right.
22
23 AJ: ... which is problematic.
24
25 JS: Right. Right. But she, I think she's interesting because she points to how the media has been
26 obsessed with like trans women who are athletes for a while because I think...
27
28 AJ: Mhm. Yeah.
29
30 JS: ... it's like famous people, and I think that for some like— it reminds me of Chris— uhm, uhm,
31 Christine Jorgensen too...
32
33 AJ: Mhm.
34
35 JS: ... where it's like, oh, well, one is in the military...
36
37 AJ: Right.
38
39 JS: ... doing this hyper masculine thing.
40
41 AJ: Mhm.
42
43 JS: So now it's like so fascinating.
44
45 AJ: Right.
46
47 JS: Like it's the same rhetoric. Like Caitlin Jenner, there's a whole history. Like she's not new.

1
2 AJ: And, I mean, you know, I can speak from experience that, you know, in an effort to try to
3 conform I pursued sort of hyper masculine activities...
4
5 JS: Yeah.
6
7 AJ: ... to throw off the sin if you will or [laughs]...
8
9 JS: Yeah.
10
11 AJ: But really more so to try to conform, and it just...
12
13 JS: Mhm, mhm.
14
15 AJ: ... was not to be.
16
17 JS: Yeah.
18
19 AJ: This is not about me. This is not about you, Joy.
20
21 JS: [Laughs].
22
23 AJ: So, uhm, I'm getting down to sort of the last question, and I guess that is like where do you see
24 the trans, non-binary, GNC community fifty years from now.
25
26 JS: Oh wow.
27
28 AJ: Just pick up your crystal ball and make some predictions.
29
30 JS: [Laughs]. Well I hope our planet is like a habitable...
31
32 AJ: Still here?
33
34 JS: ... place. Yeah!
35
36 AJ: [Laughs].
37
38 JS: Oh my goodness.
39
40 AJ: Well actually the planet will still be here.
41
42 JS: Right. We might not be.
43
44 AJ: We might not.
45
46 JS: [Laughs]. Or there might not be as many of us as there are.
47

1 AJ: Yeah.
2
3 JS: Uhm, hm, you know, I really feel like, I don't even, I don't know because I could certain— there
4 have been really big changes in my lifetime that I never imagined.
5
6 AJ: Mhm. Yeah.
7
8 JS: Uhm, and my students, uhm, are, have this very different experience, uhm, of being trans, uhm,
9 than I have. And they're just like ten years younger than me.
10
11 AJ: Mhm.
12
13 JS: Uhm, I really hope that, uhm, we figured out a way to, uhm, have a more complicated
14 understanding of gender that has more space for like non-binary and agender and gender fluid
15 and gender queer.
16
17 AJ: And even cisgender. Right?
18
19 JS: Yeah. Yeah.
20
21 AJ: Like that's a gender.
22
23 JS: Right! Right and they clearly have some shit to work on.
24
25 AJ: Right.
26
27 JS: [Laughs]. Like, they clearly have questions...
28
29 AJ: Yes.
30
31 JS: ... uhm, and a lot of their relationship with us is they're hoping that we have the answers. Uhm,
32 like it's a, gender isn't working for anybody.
33
34 AJ: Mhm.
35
36 JS: That's, that's my point of view.
37
38 AJ: Right.
39
40 JS: Uhm, and a lot of cis people are trying to find some sort of answers through fetishizing us...
41
42 AJ: Mmm.
43
44 JS: ... or, like, like weird theory like from the academic world about us. Like, like I'm not, I'm not a
45 Judith Butler hater, but a lot of Judith Butler is like okay gender isn't working.
46
47 AJ: Mhm.

1
2 JS: Let's look at these more extreme...
3
4 AJ: Right.
5
6 JS: ... examples...
7
8 AJ: And you're saying Judith...
9
10 JS: Judith Butler, yeah, yeah.
11
12 AJ: Okay.
13
14 JS: Uhm, and I think that there's a way in which it's like let's mine this community for information.
15
16 AJ: Hm.
17
18 JS: So I hope that cis people figure themselves out. That would be nice.
19
20 AJ: [Laughs].
21
22 JS: But I like, for me, it's also the question like my hopes are around like an end to capitalism like an
23 end to prisons and policing...
24
25 AJ: Mhm.
26
27 JS: ... like my hopes are that we can figure out a way to end structural racism and, uhm, I hope that
28 we can figure out a way to really talk about, uhm, these systems instead of, instead of, moving,
29 moving away from kind of just a very individual view of being trans.
30
31 AJ: Wow. That is fascinating. Joy.
32
33 JS: [Laughs].
34
35 AJ: It has been, I mean this is going to sound...
36
37 JS: [Laughs].
38
39 AJ: corny.
40
41 JS: I know what you're going to say. [Laughs]. It's been a joy.
42
43 AJ: Yes! Because I've learned so much and, uhm, you know, having been out myself for over twenty-
44 five years and talked to a hundred and seventy-eight people on camera...
45
46 JS: Wow.
47

1 AJ: ... about gender identity, I learn each and every time, and I certainly have today. So thank you...
2
3 JS: Thank you as well.
4
5 AJ: ... so much.
6
7 JS: It's been fun for me too.
8
9 AJ: Yeah, and, uhm, peace!
10
11 JS: You too, and good luck with your campaign.
12
13 AJ: [Laughs]. Thank you.
14
15 JS: [Laughs].
16
17 AJ: Thank you, thank you. Alright.