

**Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project  
Oral History Initiative**

**Interview with Trish Valentine  
February 25, 2016**

Interviewer: Kerri Dalton (and Teddy Melnik)

Interviewee: Trish Valentine

Date: February 25, 2016

Location: Fintel Library, 220 High St, Salem, VA 24153

Transcription prepared by: Becca Brown

47:57 total

0:00 = Gender pronouns & transgender awareness

2:26 = Transphobia, including among cisgender gays and lesbians

5:30 = childhood in the suburbs of Washington, D.C. (1940s – early 1960s)

10:57 = first experiences with cross-dressing (at six years old)

13:17 = more about her suburban neighborhood, and her parents

16:40 = struggles in her marriage (early 1970s?) after her wife discovered her cross-dressing;  
finding a transgender support group in Charlotte, North Carolina (1980s?)

21:24 = attending a major transgender conference in Atlanta

23:25 = shopping for women's clothing, and a story about going through airport security  
dressed as a woman

28:20 = about her wife and how they met

32:16 = involvement in Ladies and Gents of the Blue Ridge transgender support group

34:50 = views on sexual orientation, and the prevalence of homophobia among Christians

37:35 = homosexuality within the Bible

39:28 = is gender identity influenced by nature or nurture?

40:51 = Transgender acceptance and the public bathrooms issue

45:05 = on transitioning

47:55 = discussing headshots

0:04

KD: Alright, it is 1pm on Thursday, February 25<sup>th</sup> 2016. My name is Kerri Dalton, I'm a Roanoke college student here with Trish Valentine at the Fintel Library located in Salem, Virginia. I am conducting this oral history as a public record for the community. One of the first questions we were asked in our class was "what pronoun do you identify yourself with?"

0:27

TV: The pronoun is the way I'm dressed. If I'm dressed and presenting 'fem' then I definitely want to be a 'she' and 'her,' okay? I don't want to be a 'he' or 'it' [*laughs*] or anything else. If I'm dressed as male than I identify as male. So the pronouns I would like to match the presentation.

0:50

KD: Okay

0:52

TV: Hey, even transgender people among other transgender people slip up all the time. Don't get too offended, don't offend yourself, don't be too... if you use the wrong pronoun I'm not going to be offended.

1:05

KD: That's my biggest fear.

1:07

TV: No, out in public if you were sitting around the table and the waitress was there it's really nice to have the right pronoun. It's heaven when a waiter comes up and says "ladies, what can I get you?" you know? Then you are really okay.

1:23

KD: Yeah. Why did you agree to participate in the project?

1:28

TV: Mainly because anything that gives people that are not transgender a better understanding of what transgender is, anything like that, I have to. I just have to. You know, I kind of am of the opinion I'm going to attack everyone one at a time. I'm not going to convince a whole crowd of people, but if I can be nice to people and they can see me as transgender and they like me and they get along, that's just one more step. That's one more person on this side of—the right side of history. So, I just want to share with the objective of bringing people to be more accepting of people who are different than they are. You know, even gays and lesbians don't... some just don't want anything to do with us, some don't mind but they don't understand. So anybody I can meet is fine.

2:26

KD: Do you think... you were talking about gays and lesbians not accepting your group, transgender groups?

2:35

TV: Yeah, I think they struggle a lot. And they have done a lot in their struggles and sometimes they feel that transgender, the T in the LGBT, is kind of riding on their coattails. Just like the blacks do not like the LGBT community to say "we want our civil rights, too." "No, no. Civil rights are black and white," [they say]. Sometimes they are being discriminatory against the LGBT community because they have been through the struggle, they have gained acceptance, and I guess they resent us because they have had the hard battles. It's strange but everybody is looking for somebody to look down on. I'm looking for somebody to look up to. I'm always... I'll put it this way: I was president of my own company for many years, but my business card never had the word president on it, it had the word associate. I'm not into titles; I'm just into accepting people.

3:45

KD: That's good. So you would say that was what you would like to gain out of this? You would say that everybody is pretty much the same? Everyone has the same battles?

4:01

TV: Well, you know, if you drop a bunch of marbles on this table and you figure out how far they are from where you dropped them, it's going to form a bell curve. [*gesturing on the table*] So there are very manly men, very feminine females and they kind of sit here. As you move away a little bit, then you find a certain man is a little bit more feminine, you find a woman who is a little more masculine. Until finally you find a woman who has a lot of masculinity and identifies as masculine and you find a man who is feminine and identifies as feminine. So you get this bell curve. Think about this, think how lucky we are to be born in America. And then think about how lucky we are to be born in this time in America. So, a lot of things are just about luck. I'm blessed by being transgender. I love being transgender because I know a lot about the feminine side of things. I don't pretend I will ever know what a woman knows. But I'm going to be woman-like. But I know I will never be a woman. So I just think everybody has something about them that is a little bit different than everybody else, and why you should look down on somebody because of that is beyond me. So, that's my feelings.

5:30

KD: That's a good feeling. Can we move back in time when you mentioned how blessed we are to live here in America, and we are, times are changing. Have you lived in Virginia your entire life?

5:41

TV: No, I was I was born in Washington DC about a block from the capital building and then lived about a mile or two outside the District of Columbia into Maryland so I went to school in Maryland schools. Went to college at NC State and then moved to Virginia to take a job when I came out of college, so I've been here probably longer than—I'm twice your age—about forty-seven years so *[laughing]*. I got here as fast as I could. I love being down here. I would never go back up to DC or Maryland again. North Carolina and Virginia are both wonderful states. So, I've been here forty-seven, forty-eight years.

6:32

KD: Can you tell me a little bit about what it was like growing up in these locations?

6:40

TV: Growing up in the DC area was a ball because when I was young there wasn't a lot of criminality, I guess. At ten years old I could take a bus downtown, I did this in the winter a lot because there was a hotel that had a public swimming pool inside. I'd ride the bus downtown, pay ten cents to go swimming and come back by myself. Now you can't let a ten-year-old kid in a big city now get on the bus, go ten or fifteen miles, and expect him to come home alive or all in one piece. That was a lot of fun. DC is a very small town compared to New York or Chicago or LA. So it was fun. It's a hick town. It really was. It was a long time before the Kennedy Center was built... and the joke in DC was if you want to have a good time in DC, go to New York. *[laughs]* That was the standard because there wasn't a lot of plays or outlets at that time. I enjoyed it. I was probably one of the last generations to live in DC and be able to move about. You go there now and all the barriers, because they are terraced, you can't drive near buildings. You know, I could get anywhere in DC, I knew where everything was. I drove right into the riot area of the riots back in the sixties and knew how far to get into the riot area and back out. But now everything is just terraced and running, I guess, because they have changed our lifestyle. But back then it was fun. Like I said, my generation was probably one of the last generations to really enjoy growing up in [the] DC area.

8:37

KD: That sounds like a good time. Can you tell me about the hangout areas? Where did you hang out the most?

8:47

TV: DC's liquor laws were such that at eighteen you could drink beer or wine. My uncle owned one of the most liberal restaurants in town so we could get in there at sixteen and have a drink or two so we hung out there. And then we would go down to M Street where some of the bars were where you could listen to music and things like that. Growing up it was mostly playing sports: playing football, swimming competitively, and things like that. We hung out in Southeast

Washington DC, which is a very dangerous place now but back then it was not. Is that what you were asking?

9:35

KD: You are doing fine. Can you tell me about your friends? What did you guys do? Where did you guys go? Who did you hang out with?

9:44

TV: On our street there was one girl our age and there were nine of us boys. So if you wanted to play ball, if you wanted to go out and have a rock fight or do whatever it is you wanted to do, then you would just walk out onto the street and you had things to do. Most of my friends were into sports. We didn't smoke, we drank a little bit in high school. Everybody was into one sport or the other and I swam in the summer and some of my other friends played baseball, football, but when we were home we were playing football in the street, baseball in the street, whatever. Streetball, that's what we did a lot of. Growing up, just about everybody on this long street was male.

10:32

KD: Do you still keep in touch with these friends?

10:35

TV: Mm-hm. My next door neighbor who is retired to Florida, I keep in touch with him and his wife. And then the guy that lived on the other side of him we touch base every once and a while. So not often but the one next door, he and his wife came by last year and spent a few days with us. So I keep in touch with a few.

10:57

KD: Did they know... did you transition around that time?

11:01

TV: Now remember, I'm not transgender I'm a cross-dresser. (KD: right, sorry) So I'm fully male.

11:06

KD: So did you cross-dress at that time?

11:09

TV: I started cross-dressing at six years old. (KD: ah, okay) My mom and dad worked and I was a latchkey kid so when I came home from school I could get into mom's makeup, mom's clothes, and then have to remember "okay, this bra was put here and this lipstick was put over here." So I had to be careful to put everything back. I never knew if my mom and dad knew. Mom did dress me as a woman one time on Halloween. I had a big Spanish skirt on and I remember the white pull-over-your-shoulders blouse. I don't know if it was her idea for me to go out trick-or-treating as a girl or if it was my idea, but that is a very vivid memory. That was probably in fifth or sixth grade. I remember from the time I was six or seven when my parents weren't home going through mom's stuff. I was an only child so I didn't have any sisters at all so I had to go through her stuff.

12:14

KD: That's bizarre to think.

12:16

TV: But if you talk to a hundred transgender [people] there are some that never put on a dress until they were in their fifties and sixties. I don't know what they [unintelligible] then but most of them have the same history. It's young, it's keeping it to themselves, it's dressing in their sister's or their mom's clothes and then putting it away real quick because you might hear footsteps at the door or something. It was all guilt, it was a guilt trip, of course it was taboo. You thought you were a real sinner or you thought you were really doing something wrong back then.

12:51

KD: Did your parents ever find out that you...

TV: Don't know. I don't know. I really don't. I got to believe that mom had suspicions. I think she would see some of her clothes maybe disorganized from the way she left them or some of her makeup being used, I don't know. We never talked about that so I don't know.

13:17

KD: Can you tell me a little more about what your parents did?

13:20

TV: We were probably either upper lower-class or lower middle-class. My dad was a meat cutter, my mom was a nurse. So mom had attended three years of college, at that time it took three years to get your nursing degree instead of four, so she was pretty much early on ahead of her times as being an independent woman making her own money, living her own life until she met dad and got married. Even then she continued to work until she died, until she retired rather. It was interesting. Our community was kind of funny. It was a hilly community. The

doctors and lawyers lived up here, we lived in the middle, and down at the bottom near the creek that separated us from Washington DC was some of the smaller houses so it was almost stratified. (KD: tiers) Yeah.

14:19

KD: Wow, I need to visit this place.

14:22

TV: I almost got caught one time. The first time I ever went outside of the house, with makeup and clothes on. It was about 11 o'clock one night and I rode around and when I was coming back to my driveway, my next door neighbor and I, my best buddy, his dad and my dad built a common driveway between the two houses, and I was just coming up the hill to the driveway, here he comes home from a date, so I pull my car to the side of the road, dive out of the car, go in the back door [of the house], get undone, and then go back and retrieve the car. He told me years later he knew. He asked me one time. We were probably about 30 years old and he said "still wearing your mom's clothes?" I should have been a little bit braver. I should have told him "no, I've got my own now." [laughs] So that was the only time I got caught until I was married.

15:20

KD: Were you afraid at that moment? I'm guessing you were since you dove out of the car.

15:24

TV: No I was terrified! [KD: (laughing) what was going through your mind?] Terrified. One of the first things you think about yourself when you are... back then it was a transvestite, we didn't know crossdressers, we didn't know transgendered. And look at my initials. Transvestite: TV. Trish Valentine. And I picked that name long before I really understood crossdressing and what a crossdresser was and that I was different. But what you do think of at a young age and in high school, you think you are the only one. You think that nobody else is doing this stuff, you never see anybody. I was on a business trip out to LA one time and I knew they did a lot of gender exploration and I called them and said "you know if you help me out, I'll let you interview me. I'm a transvestite." They kind of laughed and hung up. I called them like I was the only one, like this was going to be a big thrill for them, they are finally going to meet a transvestite, in L.A., right? [laughter] So you think you are the only one. You really hide, you have to hide everything.

16:40

KD: You introduced your fear. I was wondering what the most difficult period of your life was.

16:48

TV: It was... when you have a lot of projects when you are in school, college, you know what it's like. You have the pressures and you are always busy so your mind doesn't wander too much towards dressing. But after I was married, I kept my stuff in a black bag. My wife bought a wig when we were married about a year or two. I had never had a wig. I had always put maybe a scarf or something on my head. And so I had waited until about 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning. I had to try that wig on! So I put the wig on and got into her makeup and got dressed in the bathroom then I heard [*knocking sound on the table*] then I heard a knock on the door. We had a child, 1 year old. So, I was discovered. I wouldn't say caught, caught sounds like you have done something illegal. I was discovered. She discovered that I was a crossdresser after one year of marriage, so she's known for 46 years.

So the difficult time was when I did want to dress more, maybe in my forties, I just wanted some freedom, needed some time, I needed some Trish time. It was hard to get. It was hard on her and hard to get the kids somewhere. I thought about suicide then. I said "this is just not right." I would imagine most transgender people at some time in their life they have given a thought to that. Until they figure out they really are blessed and that it's a wonderful life. So my wife and I found a psychiatrist up in Charlottesville. We were scared to even talk to somebody in Lynchburg. Lynchburg is where we were living. We went to a psychiatrist pretty much as our choosing. It was kind of nice because it took an hour or more to get up to the Charlottesville area where he was. That gave us an hour to talk about what we were going to talk about. Then we would be with him for 50 minutes and that would give us an hour and a half to ride home, maybe stop and get lunch and talk about what we did talk about. So, my motive for going to him was to make sure he was able to really make my wife understand that this isn't going away. You don't just stop being transgender no more than you stop being heterosexual or you stop being homosexual or... Whatever it is at 5 or 6 years old that is what you are going to be. I think she really understood but having somebody else say it besides me helped a lot. And then he told me "you need to join a transgender group. You need to do that. I have a patient, he is an airline pilot, and it is really easy for him because once a month he jumps on a plane free, goes out to San Francisco, and spends a weekend dressed with his girlfriends out there." And girlfriends meaning TG girls. Do you know the term "GG"? [KD: No, what is it?] ... girl. [KD: what is it?] Generic girl, born girl, biological girl, generic girl. So you have GGs and you have TGs, transgender girls, and GGs. So he would go out with his TG friends, transgender girls and spend the weekend and all. He says "you need to find a place." So at the time we were living in Lynchburg, just think about how conservative Lynchburg is largely due to the church there, there is no way that you are going to find a psychiatrist or join a group of other transgender [people]. I don't even know how I would have found them. So we got on the internet and we found a group in Raleigh, found a group in Greensboro, found a group in Charlotte. I talked to the group in Charlotte, so we would go down there, monthly to their meetings, and spend the weekend in Charlotte. Kappa Beta was the name of the group [*spells it*].<sup>1</sup> It was the girls group

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<sup>1</sup> Kappa Beta was founded in 1988 in Charlotte, North Carolina. The organization is now known as the Carolina Transgender Society, <http://carolinatransgendersociety.com>

down there. They had been there for a number of years. It was a pretty good sized group: 20 or 30 people in the group. That helped a lot.

21:24

KD: So as equally as difficult as this period was, you feel like it helped you too?

21:28

TV: Yeah, to me the difficulty was before meeting the psychiatrist, and then the easy part was coming out of that. We would go up and probably about 4 or 5 times we weren't scheduled and we would just call and say "hey, we want to come up again," so we would go up. It wasn't like we were meeting every 2 weeks or 2 times a week or anything like that. We maybe met with him once a month. The first thing he suggested we do was go to... the largest transgender conference in the United States, it's held in Atlanta. It's for TG girls and TG guys. My wife and I went down and spent a week, and it was the first time I had ever spent a week dressed. It was heaven. Everybody there was transgender and we took over the whole Sheraton [hotel] I mean there were like 800 people there every year it is held. So he suggested we go down there first and then find a group. Then life became better. My wife was reluctantly tolerant about my dressing but it became easier for her as she understood that I wanted to dress more than I was dressing at that time. So I was allowed to dress more and then finally getting out of the house and joining a group and going to a meeting, driving all the way to Charlotte dressed and back dressed, spending the whole weekend dressed. That was nice. The whole world turned upside-down once we got some good input from the doctor. Southern Comfort is the name of the yearly convention down in Atlanta and it's huge.<sup>2</sup>

23:14

KD: I was going to ask about that but I wasn't sure, because I have heard about it but...

23:25

TV: I don't go to group meetings anymore and rarely get on the internet to find other girls. I think people like Virginia and I, we call each other, we still do things together.<sup>3</sup> It's much more fun doing something normal: going out to dinner, not going to a meeting and sitting in a hotel room with 20 other transgender girls. That got to be old pretty quick. I go every once and a while. I went down to Nashville recently to meet some girls I talked to online for years and years. We did that a couple of months ago, but not as a constant. It's much more enjoyable doing things a normal woman would do. I go shopping. I love Dress Barn. Dress Barn I guess trains their salespeople to be very accepting. It's something that women like in a dressed man...

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<sup>2</sup> Southern Comfort is an annual conference held in Atlanta, Georgia, since 1991.

<sup>3</sup> Virginia Irene Lindsey also recorded an oral history for the project. See the LGBTQ History Collection, Virginia Room, Roanoke Public Library.

I don't shop for women's clothes when I am dressed as a man but when I am dressed as a woman I go into Dress Barn, "oh, let me get you this. This would look good on you!" They are bringing stuff to the dressing room. It's a lot of fun. So doing things with my wife as a woman is not a great deal for her, not fun for her, but it's a lot of fun for me. I go spend a week with her and her girlfriend. The three of us went down to Key West for the week and I never put on a bit of man's clothing the whole week so for me it was my first travel in a plane dressed. You want to hear a funny story about that? [KD: yes!] So my girlfriend who I grew up with, who is down the street at rehab, I say "hey, I'm going to come over and I'm going to find out if there is any trouble getting on the plane. So we are going to go over and interview some of the TSA [Transportation Security Agency agents] and we are going to go up to the camera and we are going go..." So, we went over there and they said "we don't care how you dress as long as you have your identification. Don't come with any fake identification. Bring your male identification, and you're not going to get any static from us." So now it's time to go to Key West. So we drop the car off in the parking lot at the Roanoke Airport, get our stuff, go in and check in and [she] goes through and I'm behind her and the guy says "let me see your ID" so I have to give him my male ID. "You're not so and so." I said "oh yes I am." And he says "Well I have heard of you but I've never met one." So now I'm "one." So that's my new name: "one." [laughter] So I think he winked at the girl, a beautiful woman on the other side of the metal detector. He must have winked at her because she said "would you sit over there for a minute?" She had pulled me out of the group. So she had me sit right by the thing while everybody paraded by and then she said "take off your shoes and come on through." And then she sent me over to a guy that examined my shoes. They wanted to put me through the full deal. But I had been out on my own enough by then that it didn't phase me. And if you give somebody a chocolate it's okay. So the gentleman looking at my male driver's license and then saying "I've heard of you guys but I've never met one." And I said "well, you've met one now."

26:50

KD: I guess the main thing is just exposure. Getting exposure.

26:55

TV: Yeah, and it's like anything, just a little bit easier every time. I've been lucky enough so far that I have not been confronted. Everybody is always treating me nice. I haven't had any confrontation. One time, a transgender girlfriend, my wife and I went out to Las Vegas and we had a free room for a week. I flew that time, too, as transgender. And I was going from slot machine to slot machine and I saw a place I wanted to go and I had to go through two rows of slot machines into a little opening. I think this guy had probably been trying to wait for this, he tried to cut through at the same time I did, and he said "oh excuse me, SIR." He made sure the "sir" was very loud. But sitting at the blackjack table with other people they were kind of giving me this [makes face], but once they found out I had a personality I just kind of blended into the woodwork. But at first it's... if people haven't been around somebody transgender before then they are usually put off by it.

28:09

KD: Yeah, that is the most difficult part. Just getting people to meet you.

28:18

TV: yes, getting past that first thing...

28:20

KD: Getting past the judgment... Can you tell me about your wife?

28:28

TV: yeah, she is a wonderful mother for our two children. [KD: what are their names?] I don't want to do that. [KD: oh no, right right] We haven't shared this with anybody in the family except cousins. And it took me a long time before I ever told my best male friend. [KD: I complete forgot about our (agreement)!]. That's okay. They are in their 40s now. And my grandson doesn't know, neither one of my grandsons, of course. But our close knit friends, all the women know. One of the close knit couples, the wife has died, the man doesn't know but his daughter is homosexual, and I want to tell her so bad but they are friends of my daughters and I don't want to burden them with a secret. We went down this past weekend, her 40<sup>th</sup> birthday party and she is married and has two children, she was artificially inseminated and when you do that you get to reserve some sperm so that the two children have the same father. Not only do they have the same mother but they have the same father. So after the law was passed [the legalization of marriage equality], her and her long term partner got married and they have two children. I want to tell her so much and she knows I support them but she hasn't figured out all the reasons why. But my wife, she is college educated. She is accepting. She has so much fear about somebody finding out. It would tear her up. I think we raised our children so that they would be very accepting, but they have kind of redneck husbands, so, and I have wonderful son-in-laws so I don't want to ruin the relationship there. I don't know how they would accept that. So she's an enabler which is fun. She is reluctantly accepting except sometimes she will come home and say "look at this beautiful skirt I found for you," so she will bring stuff home. She always lets me wear her clothes. We have the same size fingers so we trade rings. We trade jewelry back and forth. So even though she is reluctantly accepting sometimes it's just heaven because she is very accepting but then she goes back to where she was, just kind of in fear that somebody will find out.

31:22

KD: Where did you guys meet?

31:25

TV: When I was at NC State, I had a pal and she and I palled around together. If neither one of us had a date, we would get together and go to a ball game or go out together. I asked her, I said "I'm really looking for somebody really nice to date." So she brought my wife up. She came in from another town to Raleigh and when she walked in the door, I knew she was going to be my wife, no doubt. So she was. I only asked one person in the world to marry me, that was her, and she told me "no" so I didn't do anymore asking. I just told her "this is the way it is going to be. We will be married," so we did.

32:16

KD: That's so sweet. Sorry, moment. Moving to a completely different ballpark, can you tell me about Ladies and Gents and working with them? I believe you worked with them at some point? [TV: What?] Ladies and Gents of Blue Ridge?

32:36

TV: Oh. I joined that group. And Tazi [*spells it*] formed the group. I'm still not sure how I came across Tazi, but Tazi came to town and had a job here and was transgender and she said she wanted to form a group. So she formed Ladies of the Blue Ridge and we would meet over at the MCC [Metropolitan Community Church] church over there on Elm Avenue, or Bullitt Avenue, 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue [8<sup>th</sup> Street].<sup>4</sup> We'd meet over there once a month. It was just about four or five of us. So I stayed with them a little while but it's interesting that sometimes there is a power struggle. I've seen a power struggle. People who have maybe never been president of a little group, all of a sudden they think "oh man, if I could be president of a transgender group that would be a lot of power." I could just see that there were some people willing to take over the group when Tazi was moving out of town so I kind of backed off. I was on the board and I said I just got to get off the board. I didn't tell them why. And sure enough a big cat fight broke out. I've stayed friends with a few of the girls in the Ladies of the Blue Ridge but I don't attend any of the meetings anymore. I see them at Pride in The Park. There is no animosity between me and them. I just didn't need all the drama.

34:15

KD: I am going to ask two more questions and then it will just be whatever you want to throw at me.

34:24

TV: okay. I don't know that there is anything you could ask that I wouldn't want to respond to.

34:30

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<sup>4</sup> Since 2003, Metropolitan Community Church has been located at 806 Jamison Avenue SE, which is the location the speaker is referring to.

KD: What change do you want to see regarding sexual orientation?

34:35-34:50

[Clarification of question]

34:50

TV: My sexual orientation is heterosexual, okay? Which a lot of people find strange... [*struggles for the words*]... I just finished a document called "60 million reasons why Ted Cruz won't become president, ever." And the 60 million reasons are, and I will name all 60 million, let's assume that 5-10%, 3-10% of America's population or maybe the world's population is LGBT. So let's take 5% as an easy number. 300 million Americans. If you take 10% that's 30 million. Half of that is 5%, so there is probably about 15 million LGBT folk in the United States. Surprisingly each one of them have two parents so that's another 30 million people. So you have 15 million transgender or homosexual [people], we have parents of transgender and homo, and on average everyone has a brother or sister, so that's another 15 million. So there is 60 million people in the United States that are either homosexual, bisexual, transgender, or parents of homosexual, transgender, and so on, or brothers and sisters, and that isn't even counting the children because many transgender and homosexual people have children. So not even counting those, we've got 60 million people that have a reason not to vote for somebody that says "the first thing I'm wanna do is turn over the same sex marriage law." It's a three-page document. So, things that I would like to see: I would like to see Christians become Christian. If you read the New Testament... [*rustling paper*] I'll write everything that Jesus said against homosexuals on this piece of paper... That's the total New Testament that Jesus wrote against homosexuals: zero. Zero. So I look at these people who are so homophobic, I look at them as being Old Testament Gentiles not Christians, you know? I would like to see the Christian faith really become inclusive. I would like to see America become inclusive and not try to divide us up into little boxes and groups, and just accept people for what they are. Is that...? I don't know if I answered a different question or not.

37:35

KD: Yes, that's perfect. People sometimes read too deeply into the Bible [TV: and make up their own stuff too] Exactly. Make up fillers, tons of fillers.

37:49

TV: If you think about it, and I got this from a pastor, if you think about it, before printing presses, they had a room full of monks and they would start copying the Bible. So they could hand it out, there was no printing press. And you know some editorial comments got in there. There are only two people that talk about homosexuality in the bible, and that's Moses and Paul. Paul talks about it in the New Testament, Jesus doesn't. Are these two homophobes? Did they really say that? Did the monk who had some problems write this in? It's hard to look at the

Bible literally but if you look at the bible and try to gather what it is trying to say in a broad sense, that makes a lot more sense to me rather than trying to use it for whatever agenda you have. That's just my opinion.

38:45

KD: You could pick anything from the bible and come up with your own interpretation. That's all I have but this is your time to talk freely about anything else you want to add or contribute. I know it's very broad but anything you want to say.

39:06

TV: I'm trying to think of something that would be important. You haven't asked the one question I thought you would ask.

39:17

KD: What question is that?

39:20

TV: Why.

39:21

KD: Why?

39:21

TV: yeah, is it nurture or nature?

39:24

KD: That is a good question. See? This is why I ask you this!

39:28

TV: Nobody knows. Nobody has a clue. I don't know if my mom dressed me as a little girl because she wanted a little girl and therefore I thought I was supposed to dress as a little girl to please my parents, or my genes such that there's something in my brain or something... you know, when somebody closes their eyes they know what gender they are. You don't have to look in the mirror, you don't have to look in the mirror, you know you are male you know you are female. I would go to bed at night and pray that I would wake up as a girl and then I knew when I was older there must be ovaries or something in here. I thought maybe I was intersexed

because I didn't know about transgender so much at that time. So as far as I know, nobody knows why. I thin the same thing with homosexuals. I don't know if it's nature or nurture that makes a person homosexual. Just like what makes a person right-handed or left-handed. Let me see is there anything else I want to say...? I guess from a transgender perspective, the funny part about transgender acceptance... do you know what the big issue is?

40:50

KD: No.

40:51

TV: It's bathrooms. It's always bathrooms. I have a friend that works at NC State and she is graduated from NC State and they finally said "you have to go up to the second floor to a family-type bathroom," not a men's or women's, and she finally accepted that. You would never know that she was born male. She is fully transitioned and so the bathroom issue is always an issue. I'm putting you on the spot here, have you ever been in a women's bathroom? [other interviewer Teddy: when I was a kid, yeah] If you walk into a women's bathroom, there is no way that you can be a voyeur. People think it's a voyeuristic thing, that they want to see something. In a man's bathroom you got a bunch of stalls you all stand there, you stand upside each other and take a leak, that's no big deal. But in a women's bathroom is a very private place. It's funny, I don't know how many women know that there is a man sitting on the commode next to them. I don't go in there for any reason but if I see a woman taking a young child in I would never go behind them. I try to go in, do my business, and get the heck out. So the bathroom issue is really funny, it's a joke. It's being legislated mostly by males and males don't know anything about what's in a woman's bathroom. You go in, you do your thing, and you get the heck out. So the bathroom issue is kind of funny. I think maybe someday it will be a male/female family and then a trans or just a separate bathroom. I would rather go into a separate bathroom, I don't want to put anybody ill at ease, I don't get any thrill out of going into a women's bathroom. I'm not going to go into a man's bathroom like this. That wouldn't be too bright.

42:48

KD: That's the thing, I always noticed that too. I have never been able to tell somebody who crossdresses. Sometimes men, they dress as a female, they look just as beautiful as a woman. You can't tell.

43:04

TV: Right. And I like to think I have, sort of like gaydar, I have "transdar," but sometimes I can't tell. One of the women in LBR [Ladies of the Blue Ridge], the first meeting I went to I was trying to figure why she was there, maybe she's the wife of the one of the other people. So, if you have met her before, she is very attractive. It would be very hard to tell unless you are really

looking for it. Are you aware of a group called The Red Hats group?<sup>5</sup> It's a group of older women who get together for no other reason than to party. They wear red hats and purple dresses and they are all in their 60s, so I've been invited a couple of times to have dinner with them. Some know, some don't... I sat and talked to an 80-year-old woman for an hour and a half this far away [*showing closeness*]. She showed me all her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We talked for an hour and a half. I found out from my friend who was head of the group, she said "she never knew." But I don't think I pass. I try to blend, I don't try to stand out with pink hair and skinny skirts to here and all. I try to blend, I try not to draw attention. There is a lady today that showed me the way to the bathroom when I got here, you know after an hour and a half drive I had to get to the bathroom, and I asked the lady behind the desk and an older woman had heard me, probably a teacher had heard me asking, so she came over and walked alongside and said "go through here and go back there" so I don't know if she knew or not. I don't really know what else to tell you. If you have another question to ask, that is fine.

44:50

KD: I do have one more actually. And I apologize for my blindness I didn't realize that you were a crossdresser, I didn't realize the difference. I was thinking more transgender, corrective surgery, so when you said that you were getting surgery I thought that was for another reason.

45:05

TV: No, years ago I had prostate cancer and they put radioactive seeds in your prostate. That kills the prostate. Radioactivity is kinda funny: it also causes cancer. So it caused some cancer in my bladder and they were working on that and it's very minor, everything is going to be okay. I have had some surgery. I've had my eyes done, I've had my face lifted, when I lost weight I wrinkled up again... and I've had electrolysis for over five years. So I have very little hair. I shave maybe once a month or something like that and I go back, you know hairs start popping out every once and a while, so I went last Wednesday for the first time in five months to have them pull some more hairs out. So when you say transition, have you had your surgery, have you had your transition, well, I got tired of having a beard show. If I was going to go out in public I don't want a beard so I went to electrolysis for five years and then I've had some facial operations.

46:19

KD: I guess the point is to feel comfortable, fit in, do whatever you can to do that.

46:23

TV: Yeah, and the closer, I think, I can become... the further away I can be from male I guess is better. Back to the bathroom issue, when I go to the bathroom in a public place the first thing I

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<sup>5</sup> The Red Hat Society is a social organization for older women, founded in 1998. The Roanoke chapter was established in 2001.

do is look down and make sure of what I am wearing. Because you know I'm maybe 10% female and 90% male most of the time. So, I have to make sure I don't walk in the wrong room.

46:58

KD: I get confused just dressed as myself, too. *[laughter]* I walk into the wrong bathroom. It's crazy.

47:06

TV: I'm trying to think... I don't know if there is anything... *[rustling papers]* I thought I had some things about North Carolina. Some of the North Carolina organizations and their ... I want to stress *[papers rustling throughout]* that a lot of history in Southwest Virginia happens elsewhere because we had to go somewhere else. *[more rustling]* I've got some headshots in here if you want... [KD: yes!]

47:53

KD: Thank you for your time!

47:55

*[Discussing headshots]*

END.