**Interview with: Frederick Feeley**

**Interviewer: Cassandre Broussard**

CB: So, what part of the Southeast Texas region do you live in?

FF: I live in Beaumont, Texas.

CB: Do you feel like there is an LGBT presence in the community in Beaumont?

FF: I think there is. I think it is very subdued. I know some people that are part of the community, but it’s very – sort of – under the surface. I’m not really one to be out and in it. It’s funny because I am part of that subdued culture. It’s really funny.

CB: Do you feel like that’s generational?

FF: You know as a yankee, I really can’t speak to that. It’s a curiosity, from a yankee point of view to witness the dichotomy of the deep, deep, well, I guess this really isn’t the South. This is more the southwest. Texas is it’s own brand of thing, you know. There are some that I know that are very conservative politically, some that I know are very religious, and it seems like faith has a big hold on people in this region. Whether they are Evangelical, Catholic – I think even the Catholics have a touch of the Evangelical – there is this, I think finding a liberal homosexual is almost hard to do. And there is always that judgement of that initial, you know, political judgement based off of, I don’t think that’s fair either. I think people come by who they are just like everybody else does. Whether they’re raised that way, determined to be that way. So yeah, it's interesting to see how it plays out, and then some are just as liberal as can be. Yeah, it definitely lives under the surface of everything else.

CB: It kind of reminds me, I started reading The Deviant’s War, Eric Cervini’s queer history, not so much of the United States, his focus is on a lot of the work of Frank Kameny. And one of the things that he talks about in there is that for the longest time, you had people who were – during that time before Stonewall – when everything was still illegal, and all of these laws were still in place, people who – this sociologist did all of this research – and there were gay men who in their day to day lives, presented as very conservative, very, sort of, felt like they had to try harder to fit that mold of the time to cast any doubt on the possibility that they could be anything other than this WASP-type of thing.

FF: And for listeners, that is White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant. (laughs)

CB: Right. That sort of very, straight-laced, and I feel like the possibility that around, especially Texas being somewhat South, I feel like that might be very latent around here. There are a lot of people who are still very much wanting to, they were raised to be this one thing and then through self-discovery they realize they are outside of it.

FF: And I was going to let you say that. That’s the accusation, right? You’re banking up, you’re compensating, and I think for a long time, even I did it, even being a northerner. You know, I’m from Detroit, I could throw a rock and hit Canada, but I grew up very conservative, very conservative household, and I think that was the driving force behind my adult life. It was, let me, I know this is my fault here, so let me do x, y, and z to make up for it. I was the first male in my family to graduate high school, first to go off to the military, first to hold a college degree, and I was just burning it at both ends. And then, I sort of, came to myself, and was like, a) you’re not going to survive like this, you’re going to burn out, and you’re burning out fast, and b) God’s just not an asshole. And so, to shift your political ideology, to shift your religious ideology, individually they are both difficult and mine shifted at the same time and for a while there I drifted – like hardcore. And I think that’s what college was for me really, was trying to find more to cling to, like something. And it was really funny because I was talking to Dr. Terry Davis the other day, and I told her, “You were that moring for me because you come into your classroom the very first day, and you began to speak on your subject matter. It could have been underwater basket weaving, but you did it with such a passion that it snagged me immediately, and that’s why I shifted majors because I found a thing. You know, I wasn’t interested in law. I didn’t give a damn about it, but it was the poetry of it all that just grabbed me and held me.

CB: She’s great. I mean, that’s what Carol was for me. She was the thing that pulled me to history. I mean, Gwin sealed it, but Carol is the one that pulled me in.

So, when did you first realize that you were part of this community, or that you were not heterosexual?

FF: Oh God. I was always different. I was a very feminine little boy. I had two older sisters, and I was always teased, like mercilessly but like, I didn’t know. I had no name for it, I was just a kid. I liked Saturday morning cartoons, I liked breakfast cereal, I liked it before my parents woke up and made us turn it off, video games, playing outside, roller skates. I just remember not having the burden of human sexuality on me and the awareness of it. And then puberty hit, and the plagues of Egypt erupt all over the place, and you are like the Exxon Valdez with the amount of oil and everything, and your voice is cracking, and there’s hair growing in funny places, and you’re like “hello God, it’s me Margaret, what the hell is happening?” Like what did I do to deserve this, and why am I now 600 pounds.

Then I realized I didn’t like girls. I thought, eh, it wasn’t even like that really. It was, it was high school when I had my first major crush, Wayne, some guy named Wayne, and he looked like Superman, and I just wanted him to always be around. I didn’t know what that meant, but like, when he left, I felt like vomiting. Yeah, special feelings happening inside. It was awful.

CB: And too, growing up in a conservative household as well…

FF: Yeah, because I couldn’t hide that either. My dad, my father was like, “Well he’s just your buddy, and you miss your buddy.” And I’m like, “Yeah, yeah that’s it. Yeah, that’s got to be it.” Yeah, bad poetry and Buffy the Vampire Slayer (laughs). But, I mean, it wasn’t until the Army actually, ironically enough, and this is under Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell, where I come out of that closet like, “Hello nurse,” and then I really started to begin to deal with it.

CB: And how did you wrestle with that? Because I know for everybody it’s a little bit different.

FF: So, I grew up, I’m just going to use the word, I grew up in a cult. I grew up in a very fundamentalist, evangelical cult. It wasn’t a religion because, and I think, I grew up in the Independent Fundamental Baptist Church, and I use the term cult, and I use the term, they were certainty addicts, they were absolutists. And I think the important distinction is that fundamentalism is often used by religion, but fundamentalism isn’t itself religious, it’s political because it’s the lens in which you view the world. And when I went into the Army, most people – I would assume – entering an institution like that, where they’re giving up freedom for this structured hierarchical machine, and it’s very straight-laced. But I’d come out of such a high visibility, high controlled environment that going into the military, things eased off, and so it just spelled freedom for me, and I mean, the pomp and circumstance, I respected the institution obviously, but yeah I was young and dumb and yeah, I’ll leave it there. (laughs)

CB: So, when did you finally get to a point where you started telling people or being more open about who you were?

FF: Well, the first person I ever came out to, her name was Jessica B-, she was my squad leader, and to answer that, it was actually during the deployment to the Middle East that I was sort of like, “Fuck it, like send me home, like I don’t give a shit.” It was such a, it was such an eye-opening event on a lot of levels. Because as soon as we got out of basic and AIT, we’d gone, I got my duty station was at Fort Riley, Kansas, and I swear to God Cassandre, we were stuck in a motor pool, which for those, it’s a parking lot to do work. And I was constantly in this fucking parking lot and I’m like, this is the Army. Not the marching, not the singing, not the shooting of the gun, it is drip pans and chop blocks, and who gives a shit, you know. And I was like this was not in the brochure, what the hell. Meanwhile, I’m living like a college student, living it up. I had a drinking schedule, and so I sort of got lackadaisical in a lot of ways, but that deployment snapped me back into reality. And it’s like, “Holy shit, we could go North, we could go into Iraq at any moment.” So that’s when I started, I told Jessica and so yeah. What was the question?

CB: It was just when did you start telling people?

FF: Yeah, it was like do what you have, do what, I didn’t join the military as a career. It wasn’t a career option for me, it was post 9/11, it was because of September 11th and I gave Uncle Sam one shot. You get one shot with me, and so I was really liberated into that, you know, I wasn’t trying to hide anything anymore, so yeah, that was when.

CB: Okay. Since you’ve been living here in Southeast Texas, when exactly did you move come down here?

FF: 2008, it was right before Hurricane Ike.

CB: Oh, heck of time. (laughs) Heck of a time to show up.

FF: Well, because it was my friend Luke. I asked him, because I had come down the April before, my friend Joe I had served in the military with, and I graduated from college up north, and was having some familial problems, and he was like why don’t you come to Texas, and I was like, alright. So I packed up four bags of, garbage bags, of my stuff, put it in the back of a Dodge Neon His brother Luke flew up to Michigan to drive back with me and I drove from Taylor, Michigan to Texarkana in one swoop, passed out, woke up the next day-ish, and drove the rest of the way and got here a couple weeks, because before Ike it was Gustav, and I was totally panicking, because all I knew of hurricanes was Hurricane Katrina, and I was like I don’t want to get raped for a bag of ice. So yeah, welcome to Texas. I got drunk, I was so anxious that I got drunk and slept through most of the hurricane. Yeah, that’s when I ended up here and afterwards went to Austin, discovered the brilliance of 6th Street. I was drunk there too.

CB: Oh, I think everybody is.

FF: I think everybody, I think you pull up on 6th Street and your alcohol content level just skyrockets.

CB: As soon as you get out, it just like hits you and its airborne.

FF: Welcome to the party.

CB: Oh yeah.

FF: But yeah, that’s when I came.

CB: For you, I know you mentioned that you’re not really out and about much, but as far as your identity as a queer person, are you in the, obviously with work because of what you do being a queer author, you write fiction that specifically has to do with the community, so obviously as work you are, but

FF: I am proudly queer. I am not flying rainbow flags, mostly because it would clash with everything. (laughs) No, I am who I am and I’ve come to this peace with that. I was really big into identity pol;itics for a long time and then I had a period of self-acceptance in a lot of ways. And just you know, marriage is dealing with hard things, and mortgages, and illnesses and house payments, I said that already, but its life. It’s dealing with life and like to me, my pride is the life that I’ve built, and that’s where I am with that. I always talk about my husband. I’ll say, “my husband, blah, blah, blah,” A lot of times around women and I will get caught alone together, I will ‘hey girl, hey” just for her comfort level (laughs) because I am 6 foot 3, and 200 pounds. “That’s a beautiful, blah, blah, blah,” and let her know, telegraph this to you, you’re fine with me, sis.

CB: It’s okay, I know I look imposing, but not.

FF: Yeah. I had a friend of mine, I had worn a suit for something for school and he says, “You look like a Bulgarian hitman.” And I was like, that’s oddly specific…thank you. (laughs)

I remember when I bought my first home, John was trying to sort of keep it in the closet that we were a gay couple, and the neighbor across the street had come over, and she was just, him and her were talking and I didn’t see her, and so like we had all the boxes but it was time for dinner, and I was hungry, so I stepped out of the door and I come around and saw him standing in the driveway and I was like, “Hey babe, where’s my Italian spices?” and I see this blonde head tick over, right, and it was like oh, welcome to the neighborhood, and I was like, “Shit.” Yeah, after that I was just over it.

CB: So, having lived other places, and then here, do you feel like the experience for queer people in this area is different? Or how so?

FF: I, uh, not really. I think that Texas, the legend precedes, but even then, its I think people here are different. I think people here are friendlier. I think people here want to talk, and I am all about that. But then you run into that religious clash again, you know, it has a very particular hold. But I think that’s also the age we find ourselves in. It’s definitely not San Francisco, its not New York City. I’ve known people who’ve had to remove themselves from their environment, to go somewhere else to flourish. I think this could be a place like that for some people, but I think that’s also just hometown blues type of thing where you just need to leave, and that can be Detroit too. And I think that, I think I flourished here. Whereas somebody born here, I knew a gentleman, I don’t think he was, I think he was queer-adjacent, if that makes sense. He was very cosmopolitan. He was an opera singer from Vidor, and I don’t think, he would have been tormented, and I don’t think he was queer at all, but because of that profession, because of his demeanor, he needed an Austin, he needed a Chicago to flourish and that’s fine. So, sometimes you have to leave the constraints of home to discover yourself. And that’s fair. I think Texas, I think the South, gets a bad rap.

CB: Over the years, how do you feel that the acceptance of the queer community has changed, post-Stonewall? How do you think that has changed?

FF: Oh God, that’s evident. I mean you’re talking about big movements, you’re talking about mountains. But now we’re in an age where it seems like we’re regressing, Trumpism, nationalism, jingoism, Marjorie Taylor-Greenism. I think its two steps forward, one step back. In a lot of ways, I think for everybody who is not a WASP, for everybody who is not a male WASP, yeah male, I think, my sexuality aside, white male, Anglo-Saxon Protestant, I am prime real estate for this country. And wokeness, sort of, allows me to see the disparities all over the place, and they do exist all over the place, and we are, you know like Star Trek: Discovery said we’re infinite people in infinite combinations, you know and I think we’re freer than ever before, but I think that freedom is contingent on our watchfulness and our willingness not to return. There are people who want us to return, people say to the 1950s, honey, but they mean the 1850s, and it is our duty not to allow that to happen. But isn’t that just like with everything else though, and everybody else has to be aware. Democracy is not, I don’t believe that people, the arc of civilization is toward freedom. I believe its toward control, and democracy, liberal democracy, you have to have somebody guarding the watchtower. And the struggle of the 20th century Europe is no longer in Europe, it’s here, and we have to do our due diligence to be awesome.

CB: The idea of the two steps forward, one step back, I feel like that’s something we see in a lot of movements for a lot of marginalized people, and so for this movement in particular we’re seeing that push back, and all of our generations have seen it. From Stonewall forward, hell, even before that, as people started to rock that boat, you get that fall back, that pendulum shift, that history likes to do.

FF: Well, it seems like there is a cost that comes with freedom, and like the African American community, they wanted a seat at the table in the 1950s and 1960s, we finally allowed them in the door, and they got in the door, and then white people slammed the door shut, locked it, and set the house on fire. And that’s, there’s this punishment for freedom in this country. And you, I think a lot of, I don’t think Trump is an action in and of himself. Donald Trump is a reaction, Trumpism is a reaction. Marjorie Taylor Green, Lauren Boebert, all of those people are a reaction to the, they’re the punishment, you know, people are trying to grab power back, and they’re just going to their lowest. So yeah, this is our 64-65 era, not just queer people though, people of color, women, like there is this, with the abortion, there’s this anti-liberal movement, and so yeah, that’s where we find ourselves. And it’s a very precarious situation, because as a queer man, there is no way in hell I’m giving up my, no. Give me liberty, or give me death, kind of, cake or death.

CB: And, you look back at the, because you were mentioning 64-65, where we’re at almost remind me of that era, the rise of Goldwater…

FF: Sure, the Vietnam era…

CB: Yeah, and that push, that Conservative movement that happens during that time. And so, we know from history, that it is very much a pendulum shift, but I think the concern for a lot of people is how far is that pendulum going to go before it starts to shift back, and with all of the anti-trans legislation that’s on the block right now, it’s just this feeling that things, what’s the tired old saying, ‘things are going to get worse before they get better,’ kind of thing.

FF: Yeah, you know I think a lot of the hatred, Cassandre, around the queer people has nothing to do with the “ick” factor, I think it has to do with the hatred of women. I think all that homophobia is, is hyped up misogyny.

CB: Like how dare you choose a woman over me?

FF: Or how dare you be feminine? How dare you take a passive role in the bedroom? How dare you want to be a woman? And its like, wow. Do you like women?

CB: At all? (laughs)

FF: At all. Like queer men tend to revere women. Like I love the female aesthetic, I’m just not trying to make babies with it. I will march, I will ‘you go girl,’ my friend Alan, before he passed away would put out this list every morning of all the songs he’d listened to, and one of the things he said that made me laugh was, “I am white man, proud gay, white man until I listen to “Free Your Mind” by Envogue, and then for 3 mintues and 58 seconds, I am a strong, Black woman.” (laughs) I cracked up, but its like, all of this legislation, all of this push back is anti-feminism. And it’s just this idea of where women are. And because women have been such a force in the gay rights movement too, that a lot of people, I don’t think, realize that women were the biggest allies. That, I think our detractors see that, that alignment, and that’s where I think the trans issue came up. Because if you turn on the internet on any given day, the news blurbs are not about a trans person sexually molesting a child, it’s a pastor, it’s a deacon, it is a heterosexual, quote-unquote, male, and its just telling on themselves. Every accusation is a confession.

CB: It’s wag the dog, right? Oh no, don’t look at me, hate this person over here.

FF: It’s not, its wag the pound.

CB: Well, yeah, its not one (laughs)

FF: Do not believe your lying eyes.

CB: Yeah

FF: I mean at the drag queen story hour. What did you want to happen? Marriage equality happened, all the gay bars shut down, these girls have to work. You know? (laughs)

You know, but at the same time, RuPaul’s Drag Race has won 857,000 Emmy’s. And it’s just, you see this competition, this and its holding itself in tension right now, and you have the geographical dichotomy of North and South is dead as a door nail. It is now, urban versus rural, and, which is a good thing because there is all this civil war talk, and it’s like, Texas will be in a civil war, like we’re not talking, you know what I mean, it’s definitely centers of culture, and learning and art, versus tradition and its just odd.

CB: Definitely, yeah. And just the fact that, I mean last weekend, last Saturday, was the Beaumont Pride Festival…

FF: Really?

CB: Yeah. And so I just, I feel like, no Beaumont can’t manage to keep a gay bar open, but the fact that this happens, it happens every year, and its something that continues publicly. It’s right out in the open, and you don’t see instances of violence, I think shows growth for this area. Now, there used to be, back in the 90s, there was a lot of violence around the gay bar that was open at the time, but mainly toward drag queens. (whispers) I don’t know why people hate drag queens. But yeah, I think that’s showing growth for this area, and I th-, I don’t know what your perspective is on this area, but as far as nationally, yes, you still have these pockets of hatred, but it seems like, across the board, you have kind of, acceptance or indifference.

FF: Sure. Maybe the indifference is the better part of it, and I think that’s sort of where I want society to be. Like why should there be gay marriage, why can’t it just be marriage? Right? I mean, I’m an Aries. To most people that means bubkes, to some people who have their charts and their, you know, alignments and know all that shit by heart, you know, but I want that to be just as banal as “I’m an Aries.”

CB: Yeah, like what kind of car do you drive? What color are your eyes? For it to be just as normal. And I think that’s, I wonder if part of the concern that these very sort-of far right people have is this idea that it could just become normal, and then its possibly just something they are going to lose to argue.

FF: Honey, they lost that argument. Who was it, uh, Indiana, oh gosh, he was an Indiana politician, his son came out of the closet, I can’t remember, Porter?

CB: Oh, the one that suddenly had empathy?

FF: Yeah, but he told the GOP years ago, “You’re playing social politics. It’s a losing game,” and it, I think ultimately it is. I think we’re seeing the last hoorah of a bygone era. We’re watching Jim Crow on life support. It’s still here. It’s still alive. And you’re watching a though process, you’re watching a mindset, they don’t lack political opinion, they don’t lack religious ideology, they lack relevance, and they’re doing everything in their power to maintain that relevance, and it’s slipping, and they know it’s slipping. And it’s almost like they’re in panic mode. And I think that’s a lot of what you’re seeing. I don’t think, I mean I’m no psychic, but I think you’re watching the death of something.

CB: It’s just kind of in its death throes, and it’s trying to cause as much ruckus before it dies.

FF: Perhaps, or I could be completely wrong. But it seems desperate.

CB: It does, yeah. There is a lot of desperation to it. There’s a lot of, sort of, rallying, and…

FF: Well, it’s a loss of control.

CB: Yeah, and this idea, this freedom, you know like we were talking about before, you don’t have to fit a box. You just have to be yourself. And for the longest time, it was you know, you have to be, there has to be some sort of order.

FF: In a lot of ways, Cassandre, I think that’s a part of the problem too. You have to have some sort of empathy for them because our national inclination as human beings is to quantify and qualify, and make boxes. We are built that way. It makes the world make sense. So when you’re talking about things like gender fluidity, and sexual fluidity, and all that other stuff, you’re taking away those boxes and you’re taking away that comfort, you know, and whether there’s, whether it’s a conversation happening within communities and the world at large, honestly, I think we’re moving through a reformation. I think we haven’t seen one in 500 years, but I think the scholarship exists to show us we’ve been here before. And reformations, take it, the institutions that we’ve created in all manner, and all aspects of life and throws it up in the air, and says, “what do we keep and what do we get rid of?” And I think that if you step back from the world at large and allow yourself this big view, you will see that the churches – from the highest offices in the churches, to political, everything is up in the air right now and there is this sort of yard sale happening where we’re trying to determine what do we keep and what do we dismiss. And I think Martin Luther would have been like, “Yeah, that was kind of the way it was.” And so yeah, I think that’s what is happening.

CB: Because that was the root of it, right? He wasn’t trying to…

FF: create a new religion

CB: He wasn’t trying to do any of that. He was like, we need to fix these things, and that’s what ended up happening.

FF: Well, look at what the Reformation effected.

CB: Oh yeah.

FF: It wasn’t just, okay now you have Protestantism, now you have capitalism, you have individualism, you have um, the spread of education and the spread of wealth, the royal ‘we’ turned into the individual ‘I’, humanism erupts, you know, constitutions erupt, and “we hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created” may have been written by a Deist, but if you look, those words are reformative.

CB: Yeah, absolutely.

FF: So yeah, congratulations, reformation 2.0 or 3.0, like I don’t even know which one we’re on now.

CB: (laughs) Somewhere around there.

FF: Somewhere.

CB: So, I feel like I agree with you in the aspect of things are perceived, because of the area, to be, “Oh it must be so much harder to be there, and to be someone who is part of this whole community.” But, I don’t know, I think there are pockets of hatred here, sure yeah, whatever, but like you said, I don’t think its all that much different. I think, for some people, their family, or the community they grew up in, they’ll have to escape it in order to fully be themselves, but I think this area kind of matches the national narrative in the way that, well you can kind of be who you are.

I have a kid that just graduated from high school, and there are more gender fluid, trans kids…

FF: Oh my God, they’re so queer, it drives me crazy. I was gay before it was cool. (laughs)

CB: Right? But I feel like they are, even the ones that come from very traditional households, they’re like, no I can be this thing now. And so, the stuff that we dealt with, you know, with, I can tell you high school, because I was in high school here, and there were two out people, and it was like…

FF: Which is funny because like up north in Detroit, like we’re the same age, in Detroit there were zero out people, and that’s hilarious that you had people in the quote unquote South, who dared to step out where…

CB: Oh, they were shunned. They were pariah.

FF: That still takes brass balls.

CB: Yeah, and I think that, you know, they were both bi, which I mean that’s a whole can of worms in and of itself because even within the community, right, we have…

FF: Well, yeah because bisexuals, that was like the entrance ramp to gayland. That was how you tested the waters. It’s how I did it, and looking back it was kind of shitty, but you know, that’s where you put your toe in and see, and give them a little bit of hope.

CB: What was it you said, “It’s like riding a bike.” (laughs)

FF: Yeah. (laughs) Oh, Jesus Christ. I got this, come on. That’s funny.

CB: But its, that goes back to that, you know, breaking away from the boxes thing. Because even within the queer community itself, there are boxes, right? We have all these different letters, that’s kind of where I finally got to the point where I’m like, “I’m just queer.” I don’t want a box.

FF: Yeah, I think, honestly, what’s funny with labels is that you want to defend labels then.

CB: Mmhm, yeah.

FF: And you become very conservative about your defense of those labels.

CB: Right, yeah.

FF: And that’s a mindfuck.

CB: Right.

FF: But yeah, I’m pretty queer. I am just queer, and I get it. I think there’s competition. When you introduce boxes, you introduce competition. It just becomes this thing that you were trying so desperately to get away from. It’s just taken on a different form because congratulations, you’re a human being, and it just is what it is. Like, in places like San Francisco or New York City, or the bigger cities where even the gays and lesbians, we’re very separated. You know, I grew up in the Midwest, where there wasn’t enough of us, so we all hung out and partied together, and thank God, because I think I’m more a lesbian, like culturally. You know, because I’m a big music fan, and it seemed like all the lesbians in the 90s were talking, having conversations about things, whereas the gay men were like “and glow stick, and glow stick, and glow stick,” except Elton John, saint Elton John, but there were better conversations happening.

CB: It’s always very interesting to see that sort of, well no, yes a label can give you some sort of, “Oh this is where I fit, these are my people.” Like it can give you that sort of comfort, but then it can also become very…

FF: Constraining

CB: Confining, yeah. And you don’t, okay well, but, what about this or that, or..

FF: Well like, during the AIDS epidemic, everybody abandoned gay men, it was the lesbians who came and you know, they didn’t have to. They didn’t have to. They were getting it marginally less, for biological reasons we will not get into, but they showed up, and were the driving force behind any kind of care. And yeah, those labels become constricting. And its just, whatever.

CB: Which I think also could play into what you were saying about the misogyny. It’s like how dare you go and help this group of people that we have ostracized because of this disease?

FF: Yeah, sure. Yeah, and I think now we’re doing it now to trans people.

CB: Oh yeah.

FF: I think the L, I think like, there’s fights internally, and it’s so stupid. It’s like, trans people were there in the beginning, you know, and its Marsha.

CB: I was fixing to say Marsha.

FF: You know, “Eat my brick, bitch.” It’s just really weird. Because I think they’re the target and everybody wants to step back and step away from ground zero and that’s shitty.

CB: One of things I’ve seen, having a kid that’s trans, is that, you know, about the time that you get people to accept that okay sometimes your brain is wired differently than your biology, but you also have people who just want to kind of somedays they want to, they identify as this specific thing, but some days they dress differently, so then its like, “well, what are you, this or the other,” and its like, why does the garments, why do garments decide because you look back at Teddy Roosevelt as a kid with his long curly hair and his dress.

FF: Oh God, Cass, you don’t have to go that far back. Go back to the 80s and the rock stars, the glam rock, Skidrow, Bon Jovi, Kiss, Cinderella. Come on, you have a problem with a dude dressing like a lady, Aerosmith made the song, you know. And it’s like these were your men. Like you couldn’t get anything in those pants they were so skin tight, and glam, like you, your men were so androgenous, and we reveled in that androgyny, you rebel bastards, you weren’t clean cut with the, like the uber male, or the alpha bullshit, hell no. The more masculine the guy was, the higher note he could hit. You know, and it’s such a joke. It’s so hilarious. It’s like, hello Prince. You know, it’s like, who are you talking to? Where did all of this come from? And its kind of funny, because before AIDS, it was, their parents were the exact same way. I mean, the 60s and 70s, they had sex with and smoked anything that would stand still long enough. And then AIDS comes around, scares the shit out of them, and they married, move to the suburbs, and have their 2.5, but before that, it didn’t exist. You guys were free love and everything else. And again, you’re talking about that backlash, that kind of, and it’s like, to paraphrase hiphop, “bitch, please,” come on. So, I apologize, I cuss a lot.

CB: Oh, it’s fine. It’s fine.

FF: Colorful metaphors

CB: Absolutely. One of the things that really, because anytime you look up anything that has to do with Texas and the gay community, Lawrence always comes up.

FF: Lawrence v Texas yeah, I was in the Middle East when that decision came down.

CB: I don’t think that, I think a lot of people don’t realize how recent that was. You know, that was 2003. That was this century. And I think for a lot of people, they don’t, and at that point, the law wasn’t just, they called it the sodomy law, but honestly by that point, they had Texas had changed it, it was the homosexual conduct law. It was literally applied to, they changed the law to make sure that it only applied to the queer community, and for a lot of people who are like, “why are you so loud? Why are you so vocal?”

FF: So, for the listeners, it meant that oral sex could be had for straight people and not gay people, and other types of, you know, and not only that, but they followed them into their house. They went into their house.

CB: Yeah, no, whenever I read about the whole way everything went down with Lawrence, it was like, wait a second, and then all the conflicting accounts of like, this is what happened, no this is what happened, we don’t remember that happening. It wasn’t even like, this is something that took place in a public place, this was inside someone’s…

FF: private home

CB: In their bedroom, inside their apartment kind of thing, and yeah so…

FF: You’d figure, like Texas, the independence, the independent streak in every Texan would have been like, “I don’t know them homosexuals, but goddammit, (laughs) you get out of them boys house.”

CB: And it is Texas, so like how was someone not shot.

FF: How, exactly.

CB: Yeah, so I think for some people, they’re like, why is there still such a fuss, why are people still so vocal, and its like, do you realize how recent these changes were, and how, like you said, there’s the pushback. And so we’re just trying to make sure that pushback doesn’t go too far. And you kind of have to put your foot down and say, “Okay, no more.”

FF: And all you can do is go to the ballot box, you know. Fucking vote. Yeah, but its definitely a reaction. I think Trump was a reaction to Obama, it was the reaction of being unable to unseat a black man, who was this politically centrist, but it was just the idea, just the idea of him sent people into a…

CB: a frenzy

FF: A frenzy. Yeah, strange days.