

Idaho LGBTQ Oral History Project

Emilie Jackson-Edney



BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

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This Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) Oral History Project began as a key component of a cross-listed Boise State University course, Intro to LGBTQ Studies (GEN 380, HIS 381, SOC 497). Dr. Riley Caldwell-O’Keefe taught the course and designed the project as an interactive learning tool to help students understand LGBTQ history, with special emphasis on Idaho history, and the impacts of this history on local individuals. In addition to this history and context, students learned interviewing techniques throughout the semester. We discussed ethical considerations and obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for the project. Throughout the process, we worked with Boise State Special Collections and Archives librarians, Alan Virta and Cheryl Oestreicher. The culmination and digital release of the collection would have been impossible without them. We are thrilled and honored to offer these first-person insights which help provide a more well-rounded and comprehensive story of Idaho history.

Name: Emilie “Emi” Jackson-Edney

Biography: Emi’s interview centers on her gender reassignment journey. Growing up in Nampa, Idaho, Emi was raised with conservative Christian beliefs. During her childhood, she always felt female but felt obligated to accept her male gender. She met her wife at Boise State University, and the 37 year marriage produced two children. Emi talks about going to a gender psychotherapist and beginning the process of becoming female. Emi outlines the steps required for someone who wants to undergo gender reassignment and the experience of surgery in Thailand. Now as a woman, Emi refers to herself as a woman with a transsexual history instead of a “real woman.” Also discussed are the issues of dating and the difficulty of getting insurance coverage.

Keywords: Christine Jorgensen, Renee Richards, depression, hormone therapy, suicide, denial, Thailand, psychotherapy, gender reassignment

Interview date: 11/29/211

Interviewer: Linsey Amaya

Interview duration: 2:44:53

City: Boise

Timed Notation:

00:14	Name, intro
00:33	Place of birth
00:49	Identify- race/ethnicity/gender/soc eco stat/sexuality
01:24	Growing up
04:53	Religion
06:03	Relationships in high school
08:03	No real memories of growing up
09:32	Family, sister

11:28	Family, parents
16:10	College, mom's desire for Christian school
17:33	Puberty
18:42	Earliest memory of transsexuals, in the news
22:23	How met ex-wife
25:37	College and Vietnam War draft/military duty
32:56	Marriage/children/grandkids
34:15	Coming out story
38:57	Visits Las Vegas, drove by a transgender lounge, afraid to go in
40:20	Returns to Las Vegas, went into lounge as male
42:28	First public appearance as a woman
43:15	Tells wife she is a cross dresser/marriage falling apart
45:42	Religious affiliation, role in church with wife and kids
47:14	Resigned as deacon at church
48:05	Depression, suicide tendencies, began psychotherapy
49:55	Tells general practitioner, gets help finding new psychotherapy, discuss hormone therapy
51:31	Discusses diagnosing of transsexual (DSM)
53:25	Explains that once transition is complete no longer diagnosed with a mental condition
55:1	Insurance for transgender, no coverage
1:03:11	Hormone change
1:06:21	Facial/head/hair removal
1:13:46	Continues coming out story, daughter
1:17:49	Recalls ex-wife's reaction and response
1:18:45	Coming out to daughter-in-law
1:23:45	Getting diagnosed with gender identity by doctor to be able to begin treatment
1:27:00	Requirements of first year before transition
1:29:00	Coming out to son
1:34:11	Daughter in prison, relationship with her
1:38:00	Son and daughter, estranged relationship with son
1:39:38	Daughter
1:44:07	Current relationship with ex-wife
1:44:00	Life situation making transition possible
1:45:30	Parents
1:47:40	Start of transition, surgery, two months in Thailand
2:04:45	Try to wrap it up, anything left out?
2:05:00	Psychotherapy benefits, diagnosis needed for reassignment surgery
2:08:59	After retirement.....now what.....activism! (reluctant activism)
2:09:57	Fear of dating again
2:12:47	Why the name Emilie?
2:15:12	Place feel most comfortable in Boise
2:15:48	Places feel unsafe
2:17:34	Experience the world from both genders/sexes
2:21:00	Identify self as a woman of transsexual history, not a "real" woman

2:24:24	Discrimination because of transition? Endocrinologist refusal to treat
2:28:48	Hormone replacement
2:37:30	Memories from work/delegating
2:44:48	Wrap-up