

Lesbian activist gave birth to Sean Hannity's celebrity, reluctantly

All you have to do is a Google search for "'Sean Hannity' and 'Turkey Baster'" and you will find all kinds of information on how Sean Hannity's career got started.

Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting, (FAIR) Senior Analyst, Seven Rendall's "*An Aggressive Conservative vs. a 'Liberal to be Determined,' The false balance of Hannity & Colmes*" was a feature published in FAIR's monthly magazine "Extra!" Nov/Dec 2003 edition, Rendall recounts Hannity's beginnings.

"Lower forms of behavior"

Before Fox News, Hannity's career included hosting a handful of confrontational talk radio shows in various states. He got his start in the late 1980s as a volunteer broadcaster at the University of California at Santa Barbara's KCSB radio station, where his tenure was revealing.

*After airing for less than a year, Hannity's weekly show was canceled in 1989, when KCSB management charged him with "discriminating against gays and lesbians" after airing two shows featuring the book *The AIDS Coverup: The Real and Alarming Facts about AIDS (The Independent, 6/22/89)*. Written by homophobic Christian-right activist Gene Antonio, the book crankily argued that AIDS could be spread by casual contact, including coughs, sneezes and mosquito bites.*

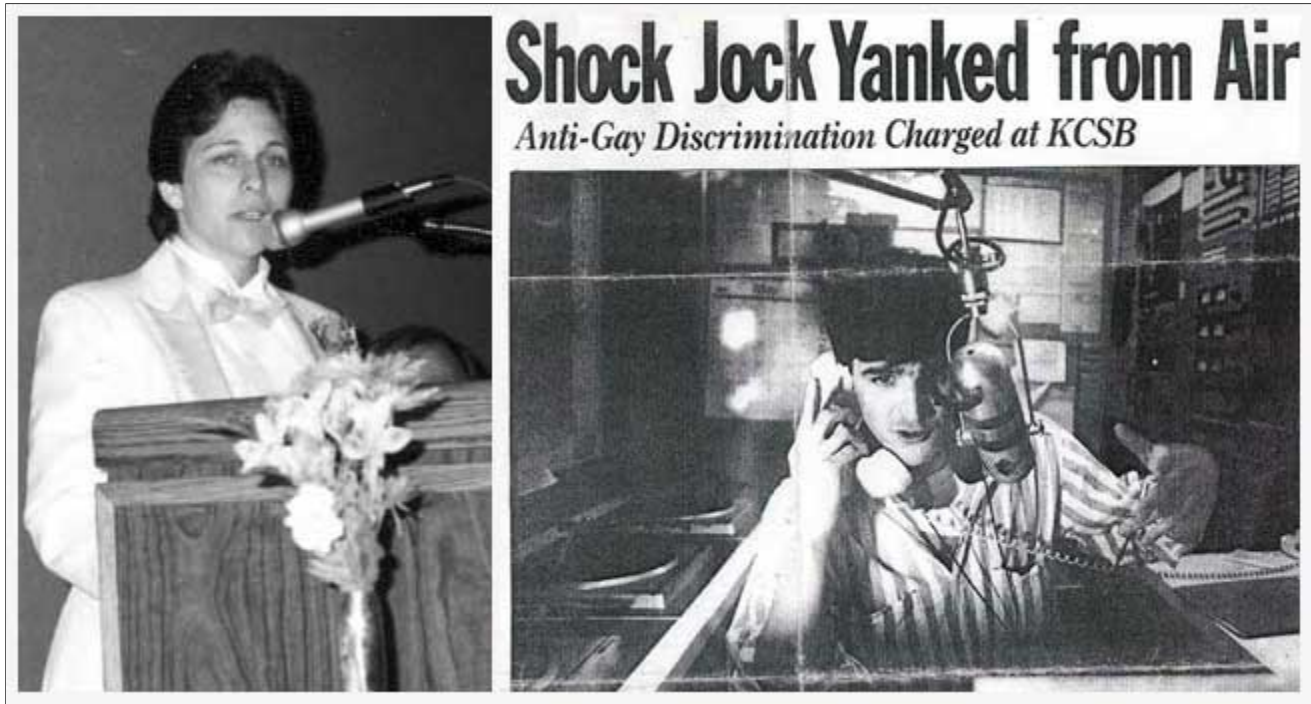
*Antonio charged that the government, medical establishment and media covered up these truths in the service of "the homosexual movement." When Antonio appeared by phone on one of the shows, Hannity and his guest repeatedly slurred gay men. At one point, according to the UCSB campus newspaper *The Daily Nexus (5/25/89)*, Hannity declared: "Anyone listening to this show that believes homosexuality is a normal lifestyle has been brainwashed. It's very dangerous if we start accepting lower and lower forms of behavior as the normal." According to the campus paper, Antonio responded by calling gay men "a subculture of people engaged in deviant, twisted acts."*

*When a fellow KCSB broadcaster called the show to challenge the host and his guest, Hannity pointed out that the caller, a lesbian, had a child through artificial insemination, and Antonio dubbed the child a "turkey-baster baby." When the caller took issue with that "disgusting" remark, Hannity followed up with "I feel sorry for your child" (*The Independent, 6/22/89; KCSB, 4/4/89*).*

THAT lesbian was Jody May-Chang who went toe-to toe with Sean Hannity on the air and in the press in 1989 that actually jumpstarted Hannity's career. Back then, and to this day, Hannity boasted that getting fired from KCSB made him the most controversial college talk radio host in America, at a time

when Morton Downy Jr. and Rush Limbaugh were rising stars in the shock jock era of talk radio. He credits this status for landing his first paid talk radio show in Atlanta.

“I know from close personal experience as well as anyone, just how these hate-monger celebrities are created, asserts May-Chang. “They vilify and dehumanize LGBT people over and over again, using us as stepping stones to bolster their careers while our media eats it up like candy.”



Echoes from the past: (left) Jody May, now Jody May-Chang, is accepting a Community Service Award in June of 1988 for her radio program “Gay & Lesbian Perspectives.” The one hour weekly news, information and music show ran for five years on KCSB-FM. At the time of this photo May-Chang was two weeks pregnant with the child that would later become the subject of controversy ten months later. (right) Sean Hannity, April 1998. In KCSB studios broadcasting the first radio program of his career, “The Pursuit of Happiness” The one hour weekly show aired less than a year when station management canceled the show after multiple complaints of over-the-air defamatory comments about gays. (Hannity Photo: Christopher Gardner, Santa Barbara Independent - June 22, 1989)