

Ben Shapiro's Interview with Riley Gaines, Olympic Swimming Champion

Riley Gaines is an outstanding athlete and one of the most prominent advocates today for fairness in women's sports. Born and raised in Tennessee, Riley rose through the world of competitive swimming and excelled on the University of Kentucky's swimming team, earning numerous titles and SEC awards. Riley's journey took an unexpected turn”

Gaines: “I remember when I testified before the Senate, Senator Cory Booker came up to me before. He sits down, he says, hey, I played football at Stanford. I'm in full agreeance, you know, this is crazy. I'm an athlete, I know what you're talking about here. And then gets on the other side of the table, reverses his stance and starts grilling me. These people are weak-kneed, morally bankrupt, spineless cowards is what they are. That's who we're being governed by. And whether that's our government or corporate America or academia, even seemingly our spiritual leaders, that's the consensus. And so I've learned a whole lot. I think we have a lot of people who like to complain. We have a lot of talking heads, people on again, social media, Twitter, on both sides of the aisle who aren't actually willing to do anything about it, which is frustrating.

Shapiro: “Training, travel and competing is an astonishing amount of work. And obviously it's not just you, it's also your teammates and all the other women who are competing in the sport in which you were competing. And then obviously you go from being an incredibly successful collegiate swimmer to a national figure because you had the temerity to challenge the idea that if a mid-ranked dude enters the water, that he probably should not be swimming against the ladies. Why don't you tell us about how you first found out what was going on with Leah Thomas, who of course is a biological male, who was swimming against the females after claiming female membership. How did you find out about that?”

Gaines: So I'll take you back my junior year of college. I ended up placing seventh in the country, which it wasn't the best time, but I was proud of this. You're top eight, you're an All-American, it's a pretty high honor. But it was right then and there that I placed seventh in the nation my junior year, that I set a goal for my senior year to win a national title, which would of course mean becoming the best in the nation”

"About midway through my senior season, I was ranked third in the nation in the 200 freestyle, trailing the girl in second by a few 100s of a second, a girl I knew very well, because like in most sports, your top tier athletes know of each other, regardless of where you compete, because we had grown up competing against each other. So I knew the girl in second place very well. But the swimmer who was leading the nation by body links, might I add, was a swimmer that none of us had ever heard of before. Not myself, not my coaches, not my teammates, not my family, not my other competitors. None of us had ever heard of this person.

And this is the first time we became aware of a swimmer named **Leah Thomas**.

Lots of red flags at the time. Lot of stuff that didn't make sense. Keep in mind, we hadn't seen a photo of this person or else things would have been a little more clear.

But for all I knew at the time, this was a senior, which no one just comes out of nowhere their senior year. From Univ. of Pennsylvania, which seldom has highly ranked female swimmers."

"And I'll set the scene, a swimming locker room is not a place of modesty. These suits that you put on, they're paper thin, they're skin tight. It takes about 20 minutes to really poke and prod yourself into these suits, 20 minutes of which you're fully exposed.

And so I had my back turned again, changing into my suit. And all of a sudden you hear a man's voice in that locker room to turn around, look up, and you see a fully naked, fully developed man. It's awkward, it's embarrassing, it's uncomfortable. I think the best words to describe the locker room atmosphere was surreal betrayal. It was an utter violation, and it was traumatic, because of what we were forced to see or how we were forcibly and non-consensually exploited. It was traumatic for me to know just how easy it was for those people who created and enforced these policies to totally dismiss our rights to privacy without even a second thought, without even bare minimum for warning that this would be the arrangement.

Terry's Comment : I listen to the Ben Shapiro podcast in my car most every week but I slow down his speaking to 75% because he talks so fast. LOL There is always a transcript too.

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