

- --make it.

- OK, Mary.

- Yeah.

- Actually, we're not ready.

- Of course.

- Hello, Barbara.

- Hi, there. Well, we want to thank, first thing, people who brought the total for Houston Saturday--

- How'd we do? How'd we do? The goal was 700. How'd we do?

- --night to 5-- the goal was 700 and we made 520, and that's wonderful.

- That's--

- Good.

- That's not bad.

- That's great. That's great.

- Thank you, all very much.

- Thank you, all. We want to thank Bahadur.

- Yay.

[APPLAUSE]

- Yay. Victoria No.

- Yay.

[APPLAUSE]

- Jerry Stanley.

Yay.

[APPLAUSE]

- Yay. David Webster.

- Great.

[APPLAUSE]

- And Doug MacLeod. Thank you all for calling in.

- Members of the World Savers Club--

- Yay.

- --and people are saving the world.

- That's right.

- And Victoria, right? Thank you, Victoria. Thank you for your wonderful name. That's the name that it's going to be--

- All right.

- --when the money's in, right?

- But Victoria pays her twice.

- Oh, she always does. Yeah.

- She'll get her tape.

- 5 2 6--

- Love you all. See you next week.

- 526-5738 is the number to call now and support KPFT and After Hours. We've already got a number of pledges for After Hours. I want to thank-- we want to thank Mike, and we want to thank Laurence Jackson, and we want to thank--

- Are they still talking or?

- Yes.

- Hi, I'm thanking your-- I'm thanking your pledges now.

- Sorry.

- We did our-- we did our--

- Oh, yeah. Patricia and David called for After Hours. And Patricia called again. So we've already got four pledges for After Hours, guys.

- Yes, we did a marathon foreplay last week. Hello?

- Yeah.

- That's why we--

[LAUGHTER]

- But, yeah, but these are people who've called in.

- Oh, tonight already?

- Yeah.

- No kidding.

- No kidding.

- No, Barbara, you're kidding.

- I'm not kidding.

- What about that people from the marathon foreplay from last week?

- That, I don't know about-- I mean, I know about it, but I don't have those names.

- Oh, OK. I think--

- These are new people.

- Ah. Well, Jim's taking care of that. So we'll get that together and thank those people again.

- OK. Well, I just-- good luck, guys. I'm going. But call now. 526-5738.

- But, Barbara, we didn't mean to run you off. Just--

[LAUGHTER]

- I'm so offended.

[LAUGHTER]

- You-- you people.

[LAUGHTER]

- Goodbye, Barbara.

- Goodbye.

- Thanks, Barb.

- Have a good night. That's Barbara out there. 526-5738 or 526-KPFT.

- That's right. In fact, Barbara is one of the paid staff here at KPFT working overtime for, I'm sure, no money. It just because it's marathon.

- That's true.

- Because we all believe in it so much.

- And because the boss said if she didn't come down and help--

[LAUGHTER]

- --she wouldn't have a job on Monday.

- Well. Anyway, we'll be back. Hang on. This is After Hours. It's marathon, and please call in a pledge, because if you don't, you don't even want to start like bitching from hell.

- Oh, I know. You know how she gets.

- You don't want to hear that. So call us and I'll be nice, I promise. We'll be back in a minute. Hang on.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- The following program contains language or images of a frank or sensitive nature that may be considered objectionable by some. Listener discretion is advised.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- I'm not feeling too terribly proud of myself today. Let me explain. Recently I wrote about Linda Morales, the Democratic activist who was a lesbian and it who was a Grand Marshal of the Gay Pride Parade. The next day, I got a call from an admirer who urged me not to write anymore about the fags because my readers were upset. I remained silent and let him go on talking until he realized I was not pleased with this call.

Over the next several days, I got several letters, some unsigned, from religious zealots quoting the Bible to the effect that both Morales and I will end up in hell. They used words such as queers, perverts, and despicable creatures. One person gave me 40 days to repent and vowed to pray for my destruction if I don't. Again, I remained silent.

The next week, a coworker suggested we go down to Montrose to beat up some queers. Because I knew he was joking, and because I thought that it would be less of a hassle, I remained silent. A few hours later, he repeated the same remark, and again, I remained silent. But Sunday morning as I read about Nancy Rodriguez, the Georgia woman who had come back here to pick up the body of her 27-year-old son, Paul Broussard, I decided that I had remained silent way too long.

If you have not heard about Paul Broussard, don't feel embarrassed. This newspaper, which has been conducting a search for justice crusade for several weeks, relegated the story to the local news section, as did the other paper. Broussard and two friends were attacked around 3:00 AM Thursday as they walked from a gay bar in Montrose.

He and one of his friends were beaten with nail-covered 2 by 4s by 10 or so young men. Broussard died several hours later. It has been labeled a gay-bashing incident, another in a series of hate-filled attacks on gay people. But it was the killing of a human being, cold and cowardly. It was an act of pure hatred committed by the 10 young men, but also by their parents, their schools, their churches, and their communities.

Gay activists say that if it hadn't been for their efforts to alert reporters, Broussard's death might have gone unnoticed, because the police were acting as if it were just another murder. It might as well have been, for most of official and religious Houston reacted to this latest act of brutal oppression with a thundering, deafening silence. Had it been some white kids attacking a member of a racial minority group, for the sole reason that he or she was a member of that group or vice versa, this city would have been up in arms and the story would have stayed on the front page for weeks.

Every elected official and would-be elected official would be out roaming the streets in search of a TV camera instead of reluctantly talking about it when cornered in some hallway. But in the eyes of many, Broussard was a queer, he is a fag, he was a despicable creature, and he probably deserved to die for the fact that God made him prefer men. The Right to Lifers apparently feel that Broussard had no right to life because they too were silent.

That he was a loving son and an earnest employee and that he loved to read books meant nothing to this group of maniacs who attacked him, and it apparently means nothing to most of us. His mother told the post that she couldn't understand how such things can happen. Well, I can. I can understand because I know that such things are a result of the silence of people like me.

Paul Broussard died because we were cowards. We prefer to sit in our cubbyholes and spend all our efforts keeping our sinking boat steady. The gay rights activists are right, silence does equal death. When we fail to speak up, we are sanctioning the hatred or ignorance of people like my coworker and my correspondents. And it is such hatred and ignorance that tells stupid kids that it's OK to go around beating up the Paul Broussard's of the world.

I did not know Paul Broussard, but I am not going to let Houston forget him or how he died or why.

- That's right, Ma, you had it easy. You lost your husband in a nice, clean hospital. You know where I lost mine? I lost mine on the street. That's right, they killed him on the street. 27 years old, laying dead on the street, killed by a bunch of kids with baseball bats. That's right, Ma, killed by children. Killed and taught by people like you because everybody knows that queers don't matter, queers don't love, and those that don't deserve what they get!

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[CROWD CHEERING]

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- Say it so they can hear you in the Capital. For love and for life, we're not going back! For love and for life, we're not going back!  
For love and life, we're not going back! For love and for life, we're not going back!

[CROWD CHEERING]

- I think that's Robin Tyler on the stage leading the chant, for love and for life, we're not going back.

- Good afternoon and welcome to the National March on Washington DC for Gay and Lesbian Rights, and Carl [INAUDIBLE]!

[CROWD CHEERING]

- Let's hear it out there!

[CROWD CHEERING]

[APPLAUSE]

- I'm Lea Delaria.

- I'm Bruce Hopkins.

- I'm a dyke!

- I'm a faggot!

- And we're best friends!

[CROWD CHEERING]

- I want you to savor this next moment. I have the proud task of telling you that the official count of the Lesbian and Gay Rights March, the official count is over 500,000 strong!

- It's all right, you may all come out.

- 500,000 strong!

[APPLAUSE]

- Look at you!

[CROWD CHEERING]

- 500,000 strong!

[CROWD CHEERING]

- 500,000 strong! One of the largest marches in United States history!

- It's all right, you may all come out.

[APPLAUSE]

- One of the largest marches in United States history. 500,000 strong.

- We parents want to persuade society that our gay children are not acting out of defiance and self-indulgence, they're being true to their own nature. Our children are fine men and women. And we say to society that the parents and friends of lesbians and gay men will support their children.

- They've got to understand something. They can't understand something, we are not talking about white politics. This is not a movement from the waist down. We are talking about our right to love and to choose and to live. And I don't care about straight comments, and I don't care about great understanding, you better hear me in Washington, we are demanding-- we are demanding our civil right!

- Harry, do you have a few words for KPFA?

- Yeah, come on out.

[LAUGHTER]

Join us. Bring a friend.

- What do you think about the turnout so far?

- Well, it's never enough, never enough, never enough.

- It's all right, you may all come out.

- We must destroy the myths once and for all, shatter them. We must continue to speak out. And most importantly, most importantly, every gay person must come out.

[CROWD CHEERING]

- And even though there's an end, you must tell your immediate family. You must tell your relatives. You must tell your friends if indeed they are your friends. You must tell your neighbors. You must tell the people you work with. You must tell the people in the stores you shop in. You--

[APPLAUSE]

And once they realize that we are indeed their children, that we are indeed everywhere, every myth, every lie, every innuendo will be destroyed once and for all.

[APPLAUSE]

And once you do, you will feel so much better.

[CROWD CHEERING]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do want?

- Gay rights!

- When do want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?
- Now!
- What do we want?
- Gay rights!
- When do we want it?
- Now!
- When do want it?
- Now!
- What do we want?
- Gay rights.
- When do we want it?
- Now!
- What do we want?
- Gay rights!
- When do we want it?
- Now!
- What do we want?
- Gay rights!
- When do we want it?
- Now!
- What do we want?
- Gay rights!
- When do we want it?
- Now!
- What do we want?
- Gay rights!
- When do we want it?
- Now!

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- And I ask, I ask people all over this country to do one thing. Come out. Come out, America. Come out!

[CROWD CHEERING]

[LAUGHTER]

- What?

- Happy anniversary.

- How do you follow that?

- I know.

- That's got to be the greatest thrill of my week, to come in here and play that for about 9 minutes every Saturday night. Because it gives me such strength to hear--

- I guess so, your hands are flying all over the place.

- Well, it's a lot of fun because there's a lot of energy there. I played that one time for Lucia Chappelle from Pacifica, and she said, that's the opening? What do you do after that?

[LAUGHTER]

Well, we do a show called After Hours and we've been doing it for four years. Good, god, I talked to--

- Tonight?

- Yeah, I talked to Sergeant--

- [INAUDIBLE], or whatever.

- I talked to Sergeant Anne Cochran today.

- Yes.

- She was a supervisor in the dispatch division back in 1987, and I went to her, and I said, in a very quivery voice, I want to do a gay program at KPFT, and I'm gay, and I'm-- by the time it was all over, I was in tears, and they were like, well, whatever you do in your own busi-- in your own personal life is your own business and nobody really cares either way.

- Buddy?

- They're going to come in here and get me. And I remember, four years ago, I was like shaking like this. I couldn't cue records because I just knew the police were going to come down here and drag me out. And it's been a lot of hateful queens that have tried to drag me out of here in the last four years.

[LAUGHTER]

- Buddy, anyone who listens to this program is going to have a hard time believing that.

[LAUGHTER]

- Believing what?

- That you were ever quivery or in the closet or anything.

- I've got the tape to prove it.

- Aha.

- And here's Alan to say, we're queer.

- We've also got--

- What an anniversary show we have got for you tonight.

- It's going to be great. It's going to be great. I have got the original tape that Alan did back when the Pope was on his way to San Antonio in 1987 and discovered that heaven was on Pacific Street.

- I see.

- And the pontiff made an unexpected stop in the Crystal City--

[LAUGHTER]

- --to see the wizard. No, no, no, it's another story. Anyway, we do have a great story for you this morning. Happy ending.

- You betcha.

- It's good to have a fairy tale with a happy ending.

[LAUGHTER]

And we're going to tell it just a minute.

- Well, that woke him up.

- Well, he's here.

[LAUGHTER]

- And he's queer, but he didn't tell us the last time, dammit.

[LAUGHTER]

- Maybe we'll get him to tell us this time. Hang on a minute. This is After Hours on KPFT. By the way, we're marathoning. That's what keeps us going.

- Oh, yeah.

- 526-5738 or 526-KPFT. Here's Romanovsky and Phillips, I think.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- You're applying for a job. So you're filling out a form.

- Strike back.

- Oh, god, they had one too many burritos in Mexico. 526-5738, 526-KPFT, After Hours on Pacifica.

- So what, is there something going on with the Pope? We understand the Pope is on his way to San Antonio, correct?

- Well, the Pope was on his way to San Antonio. But the Pope made an unscheduled stop in Houston on his way to San Antonio last night after hearing that heaven was located on Pacific Street. He wore his white Lycra spandex papal vestments with holier-than-thou spike pumps. The Pope was shocked to discover that only gays and lesbians were going to heaven.

As he departed, the pontiff was heard to remark, heaven is a lot like Texas. I think I'll stay. Former Mayor. Louie Welch, intended to confront the Pope on the issue of gays in the church, but was put off by an aide to the Pope, who said, Louie, Louie, whoa, whoa, we got to go.

[LOONEY TUNES PLAYING]

- All the way from 1987.

- That was Alan, right?

- Girl, we started we started throwing rocks at the Pope right off the bat. Girl!

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- And now, four years later, we're still throwing rocks.

- Oh, well.

- Then I got a few to throw this morning.

- That's the kind of guys we are.

- Yeah. This is radio celebrating live from the heart of Montrose, 90.1 FM. We're here--

- And we're queer.

- And you can call us and give us your money, please, because I don't want to like beg.

- Oh, that's right. That's right. 526-5738, 526-KPFT. You know the spiel, MasterCard, American Express, Visa. We got great deals for you and a very special guest coming up right after this. So stay tuned.

- Shall we tell them who?

- No. We're here, and we're queer.

- Yeah.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- Say it so they can hear you in the Capital. For love and for life, we're not going back! For love and for life, we're not going back!  
For love and for life, we're not going back! For love and for life, we're not going back!

[MUSIC - JASON DONOVAN, "TOO MANY BROKEN HEARTS"]

- Harry, do you have a few words for KPFA?

- Come on out. Join us. Bring your friends.

- What do you think about the turnout so far?

- Well, it's never enough, never enough, never enough.

- We must destroy the myths once and for all, shatter them. We must continue to speak out. And most importantly, most importantly, every gay person must come out.

[CROWD CHEERING]

Difficult as it is, you must tell your immediate family. You must tell your relatives. You must tell your friends if indeed they are your friends. You must tell your neighbors. You must tell the people you work with. You must tell the people in the stores you shop in.

[APPLAUSE]

Once they realize that we are indeed their children, that we are indeed everywhere, every myth, every lie, every innuendo will be destroyed once and for all.

[APPLAUSE]

And once-- once you do, you will feel so much better.

[CROWD CHEERING]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- I want to do something that we don't usually do.

- Yeah?

- And that's dedicate a program to somebody.

- OK.

- Because, maybe now, for the first time in my life, he can actually see me doing something.

- Oh, got you.

- His name is Stan Steele. And when I was a kid, I was on the high school paper, and I wrote articles like everybody else did. But I never could get in the paper enough, because the teacher who was the editor kept taking me out. And I thought, well, how the hell can I get more stuff in? And they said, well, if you do a feature, something special, they'll put you in every week, every month.

So I came up with this idea to interview important people in this city, and it was called Buddy something. And one of the guys I interviewed was, his name was Stan Steele. And Stan was the hip DJ that all the kids listen to. And when I went to that radio station over 20 years ago, I saw him playing 45s and eating Kentucky Fried Chicken and slinging stuff around, and I said, that's what I want to do.

[LAUGHTER]

Nobody told me that it didn't pay any money.

[LAUGHTER]

- Did it matter?

- And then in that last, four years ago, in April in 1987, I was turning through the dials, making a cassette to listen to, going-- I was going home to see my mother, and I figured if I could hear the word Houston every 30 seconds, I might not be as miserable as I usually am at my mom's.

- Mm-hmm.

- And I came across something called KPFT, and I heard Ray Hill and Jack Walensky talking about how awful it was that the police were raiding the bookstores and how it just had to stop, and these Queens just weren't going to take it anymore.

- Oh, what was this now?

- April of 1987.

- Oh, OK.

- And the next week I had my little cassette recorder ready, and when I heard Jack say, we're gay and lesbian people, I started to cry. Because I thought, this is great radio, and these people are gay and they're just talking about themselves. And little did we know that we would wind up here.

But anyway, we never started with a script. We haven't had a script yet and we just kind of come in here and wing it. And I think Stan would be proud of me if he could see us do this, and, anyway, I hope that he would. The reason I'm saying that he might be able to see us is because he died last week.

- Oh, I didn't know that.

- Yeah. And he had some kind of cancer that-- anyway, it's a long story. He's gone, but I'm sure he's here with us because he just helped me push all these crazy buttons. So Stanley, this is for you and I hope you enjoy it. And we have a very special guest for you coming up next.

Please call and make a pledge if you haven't. 526-5738, 526-KPFT. You know the scoop. If you don't call, we're not going to be here. Well, call and make a pledge, would you? 526-5738 or 526-KPFT.

Do it for somebody that you love or somebody that can't make a pledge on their own. Or do it for someone that's not around anymore because that's why we're here. Anyway, thanks for listening and stay tuned. We've got a great guest coming up in just a second.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- You know, we used to do this at 2:00 in the morning.

- Yeah, I know.

- From 2:00 to 4:00.

- We kind of change things around.

- The only person we were able to ever get in now. We got a lot of people in here those hours. We had Craig Washington here one morning.

- From 2:00 to 4:00.

- Two or three years ago.

- Matter of fact--

- We couldn't get him--

- --he wouldn't leave.

- We couldn't get him out of here.

[LAUGHTER]

- But he was great.

- Oh, we've had a lot of great people. And two or three weeks ago, how long has it been? Has it been that long?

- I don't want to think.

- We had you here.

- Probably about a month or more.

- And everybody kept telling me, the first time you were here, he's gay. And I thought that, and I was like, well, he didn't say that and I didn't ask him, because it really wasn't important.

- Yeah, it's funny how we are, we scream about coming out of the closet, but we're certainly against outing in any form.

- We're talking about this gentleman that's sitting in the control room with us, because he had written an article, a column for the Houston Post that really touched me and a lot of people a lot. And I wanted to ask you to come on and read that, and I called, and I was really kind of shocked when you said you would.

Because I respect your writing a lot and I was very proud to have you here. And we were really shocked at the events that took place. And since you don't want to tell us about that. Just tell us that whole story now, Juan.

[LAUGHTER]

- Cue this town doesn't know.

- Oh, we don't want to hear that. I've seen it on Good Morning America and everything else.

- That's right.

- But Juan and-- is this right, Palomo?

- Palomo, that's correct.

- I've been saying it all week to try to get it right. Juan Palomo from the Houston Post is back with us this morning. Right?

- Yes, I am here.

- And we just wanted to ask you to stop by and talk about how come it's important, why-- how come, that's a good word, isn't it? How come. Got a great writer here and I'm like, how come, ain't that good? No, OK.

- Well, there--

- No, we ask you to come in and share with us your ideas on coming out and why it's important. And is it really worth it? Is it, looking back, really worth it to be out?

- That, the answer has to be a very definite yes. You've gone through this, both of you, and I'm sure a lot of people who are listening have gone through this. But there are those who don't, and they will never believe it until they do it. It is the most liberating thing any person can do.

I mean, just the fact that you don't have to hide anything about yourself ever again. It just, it's a great feeling. And the best part has been, I guess, my family. I mean, they did not know before all this started. I wrote him a letter, I told them, and their reaction was as I expected. It was very supportive.

And then, this past week, when my name was all over the news, all over the country, and they-- my sisters and brother kept getting calls from all across the country. People who had read the paper and I was identified everywhere as a gay columnist. And they, most of them live in a town of 8,000 people down in South Texas, and this is the type of thing that is not talked about there.

- Especially in Hispanic communities, right?

- Especially in Hispanic communities. And it would mostly would be considered a scandal. But they were great. I talked to one of my sisters two days ago, and I said, well, how are you guys handling this, I mean, all the gossip and stuff? And she said, we don't care what people say, said, we love you, we're proud of you. She says, I don't wait for people to ask me, I go around asking people, have you read the story about Juan?

- Ooh, that's wonderful.

- Yeah.

- That, I mean, that is a great reward. If nothing else, that is a great reward there.

- Do you ever look back and say, I wish I hadn't have done it?

- No, no. I wish things had worked out differently. I wish I hadn't gone through this last week. But I was just sitting here listening to myself again reading that column, and it sort of made me realize, for the first time in about a week, for what-- how this all started. And it started with Paul Broussard's death.

And you know what happened to me was horrible. I don't want to go through that again, as I said, but I'm here. I lost my job. I could have gotten another job. It would have been difficult, but I would have gotten another job. But I got my job back.

And Paul Broussard lost his life. He can't come back. He can't get his life back, no matter how many people protest, how many people walk up and down the streets of Montrose, he can't get his life back like I got my job back. And that's what's important here.

It's that I need to have my column to speak out about things like that. And that was one of the main reasons why I decided to come back, even though it wasn't under the most favorable conditions.

- But don't you realize that because of what the HDLPC did, and other people, and your column, people's eyes were opened to the Paul Broussard thing.

- Not just to Paul Broussard, but to the thousands--

- All of it.

- --of gay and lesbian people that have been killed over the years.

- And not only that. It was the beginning of all the focus on the crime in Houston.

- That is true. And so, if, to the extent that I had anything to do with that, I am-- I'm very proud of it. I wish I had said something or done something before that would have prevented Paul Broussard's death, would have prevented the beatings up of other people.

- But even these steps aren't going to stop it. That's what's important.

- Oh, no, I--

- Because I am working at the police department. I got a call tonight from a young man in the Heights.

- Yeah.

- He called the police. He didn't know I was there. He didn't know I was queer. And he didn't know I was the one that would call him back. And I said, what's the problem? He said, I come home every day from work, and I work hard. I try to walk my dog. The guy across the street is yelling, faggot, queer, hello, queer, grabbing his crotch and making-- he said, I just don't want to put up with this anymore, and I want to know what I can do.

And I said, you're doing it, you're complaining. And we sent the police out and they made a report. But even now, tonight, it still goes on. Just because civil rights legislation was signed by President Johnson, that didn't stop the hate against Blacks.

There will always be ignorance and racism and homophobia, but speaking out really slows it down a lot, I think. And I agree with you, being out, being as open as we are, especially as you are now, there's nothing they can throw at you anymore.

- Nothing.

- Nothing at all. And the feelings are-- gay people see me out and they go, why you so happy? And what am I worried about? Let me ask you something, Juan. How in the closet were you? You said on the last show that you worked with Dignity, and--

- Did he say that? Because I missed it.

- At the last show at KPFT.

- Oh, OK.

- [INAUDIBLE]

[LAUGHTER]

That you worked with Dignity and that you had a wide your circle of friends you were out to. And--

- That's true.

- --most, many people at the Post knew.

- That's very true.

- So you weren't exactly in the closet.

- I was not, but for most of my adult life, I was. It wasn't until about seven years ago, I guess, when I first got the courage to tell my best friend at that time, who's still my best friend. And, I mean, I'll never forget that he had-- I was based in Barbados.

I was working out of Barbados so he had visited me for about a couple of weeks. And I wanted to tell him then, but I never had the courage. So I did what I usually do, I wrote him a letter as soon as he left. But instead of mailing it right away, I carried that letter for about two more weeks in my pocket.

- Mm-hmm.

- And finally, I went to the post office, and had enough courage to drop that letter in the slot.

- Whoa.

- And that was one of the most wonderful feelings that I've ever had. Because I knew there was no turning back. And since then, I've come out to most of my friends. Well, now I have to everybody, I guess. But I never said, hey, listen, I'm gay. It was usually in the context of a conversation, if it came up, if it was appropriate, I would do it. Otherwise I wouldn't. But publicly, as far as a columnist or a reporter, I had never done that.

- What do you say to people, and I hear this a lot at work, why do you have-- when I did the channel 13 thing, and they said, why did you have to bring up the gay thing? Why do you have to make such a big deal out of it?

- Well, it's-- I do get that question, and it's never easy to answer because they'll never understand.

- That's right. They're never going to understand.

- I mean, it is because it is who I am. And although one of the big criticisms about my column from my editors was that I injected myself too much in my column, which is not exactly true. I went back and counted all the columns that I did, for the posts that I've done so far, and only about four were really personal columns. The Paul Broussard was one, but that was-- I thought that was different.

But the main thing about the Paul Broussard column-- why I wanted to say then that I was gay, and that's really what started this whole thing-- was that here, I just heard you guys talking about how powerful you thought that column was, and wondering how a straight person could write something like that.

- That's what I was going to ask you. If it had said you were gay, would that have taken away some of the zip?

- Well, it may have, but the point that I keep repeating to people is that, people keep saying, oh, it was wonderful the way it was because it made it seem as if a straight person had said that. Well, it may have, but that was a lie. And I don't like to lie to my readers.

And it just didn't seem right. I felt like a hypocrite. I was tired of-- I had written several columns about gay issues before, and I was always writing they instead of a we, I was writing them instead of us. And I just got tired of it. That was hypocritical, and it was a lie, and I didn't want to do that anymore.

- That's one of the big reasons in dealing with people. That's the first one of the first things I tell them, because if somebody's going to tell you, it's going to be me. You're not going to hear whispers from people in the back of the room, going, did you know.

- And that's another thing. I mean, I had been very critical of a lot of people, a lot of politicians who like to play dirty. I could just imagine, one of these days, one of them getting up in front of the public, and say, hey, this one, Palomo, have you heard? He goes to all these gay bars and that kind of stuff.

I wanted to come out on my terms, not on their terms. I mean, if something like that would have happened, I would have very proudly admitted it. But I don't want to admit that I'm gay, I want to proclaim that I am gay.

- On the other hand, it's sometimes is used in a slur-ish way against us. Even in The Voice, did you see the big headline, gay post columnist? At first, I thought there was a new paper called the Gay Post, but then, I realized that they were addressing-- it was important to them that it was a gay columnist.

- Well--

- And there was an article in the other paper talking about you, and refer to you as, Juan Palomo, comma, an avowed homosexual, comma, although they were talking about Mr Cooper, and they never said he was an avowed heterosexual.

- That really kills me too.

- And too, makes it sound like avowed child molester or something.

- Yeah.

- And just--

- I don't like the way they do that in the media. But the media is not obviously listening to us, not the gay commu-- not the gay media, anyway. We invited them here for our big anniversary show and you can see the cameras everywhere.

- Yes, yes, yes.

- Photographers from all the papers are here.

[LAUGHTER]

- But I think they obviously need educating. And you'd be surprised. I mean, just from my experience at The Houston Post, that has been one of the most rewarding things, in addition to my family, was the support that I got from my coworkers. I read where Mr Cooper said that he had a lot of support for my firing.

I can produce a list of 80 people who signed a petition in my favor, and maybe more by now. I don't think he has such a list. I don't think he can produce such a list. The people, they were very supportive from the very beginning. And I think those are the kind of people who would be very open to criticism and suggestions from this community as to how news about the community should be handled.

- I want to say something too about The Post and Mr Cooper, and we said this-- we didn't say this last week, I kind of said this on Monday. The Houston Post has the right to hire and fire anybody they want to, we'll all agree to that. But as a consumer, I have the right to pick up and buy that paper, whether or not I want to. And that's where we were putting the little leverage to them, and I think they got the message very quickly

- Oh, what--

- He was so afraid of losing readership. And I think he found out very quickly that they were going to lose a lot more than they had anticipated losing.

- I think, I mean, I wouldn't be here as a-- still a columnist for The Houston Post if it hadn't been for the council subscriptions, if it hadn't been for the calls, it hadn't been for the protests by Queer Nation. And, boy, what a wonderful organization that is.

- Could you say something--

- And the Hispanics.

- --about Queer Nation? Because I heard Don broke through the other day a little statement that you made at the Queer Nation reading. It was very, very touching.

- I think what I told him was that I had-- when Robert Kennedy died back in 1968, that I never thought that I would ever again have any heroes. But as I sat there, watching them talk and debate what they were going to do, and had watched them before-- another incident, so their activities that they have been participating in-- it occurred to me that, if I do have any heroes now, those are my heroes. I mean, those are the people who are totally honest with themselves, totally honest with the world, and don't care what the rest of the world thinks of them, as long as they accomplish what they want to accomplish.

- And so now you're back at The Post?

- I am back at The Post. I start Monday, start writing, in addition to two columns a week in the opinion pages, which is one of the good things about this whole thing. One of the main contentions that, between me and my editors, was the fact that I tended to be a little bit too opinionated, which I thought columnists were supposed to be. But, anyway, they never liked that.

And now I'll be in the opinion section, so there'll be no question about whether or not I have too much opinion in my columns. And secondly, I'll also be on the editorial board, which means that I will help write editorials. So I'll have an-- a voice in what The Post says editorially. Would, I think, probably-- I'm not sure about this, but it may make me the only openly gay person on an editorial board of a major Metropolitan newspaper. So I feel very good about that.

- OK. Now this job is different from your last one. The last job was three columns a week.

- You're right.

- This is two columns?

- Two columns a week, plus editorials.

- Are you happy with this, or happier, or?

- I am not happier. I am happy, otherwise, I wouldn't have taken it. I said, when it was first offered to me and I rejected it, that I considered it a demotion. Not because I think column writing, there's anything wrong with column writing, or I see it as beneath me, because I never have. In fact, for a long time, I aspired to be a column writer. But because it was not the same job that I had, and I would have-- it requires that I do other duties, in addition to writing columns.

So I guess what I've had to do and I admitted today at the press conference, that it was a question, it was a choice between swallowing my pride, but keeping my column. Or keeping my pride and not having a column, and not having both the gay community and the Hispanic community have voices-- their voices heard in The Houston Post.

- OK. So that means Queer Nation can call off the dogs?

- Yes, and they have. They had a-- they were going to have a demonstration at noon at The Post today, and they had a celebration. So they officially thanked The Post, I guess.

- Back in 1987 when we started, the powers that be here at KPFT said, what do you want to do? Fight for a gay program? And I said, well, I remember, as a gay man, going home from the bars after the bars had closed, and that was probably the loneliest time, being alone, for me. And I would like to talk to those people like myself, and say that it's OK, and that there's power out there. And invite different groups from around the community to come on. Because then, in the-- back of this week in Texas, in the Montrose Voice, there were hundreds, back-- four years ago.

And we found out rather quickly that, most of the people that were out in those clubs are too busy drinking, and dancing, and whatever it is we do after those place closes, that we don't turn the radios on. But we did find a huge audience in a lot of young people and a lot of straight people. We have a tremendous straight audience that listens. And a lot of people who are outside of Montrose, who have never found the courage to say, I am gay, to anyone yet. What advice would you give someone if they just called and said, I want to do it, well, now, what do I do next? What do you suggest I do?

- Well, it's obviously very easy for me to say, go ahead and do it, but this is a man who waited many, many years to do it. So, I mean, it'd be hypocritical of me to say don't be afraid to do it, because I was afraid most of my life. But the only thing I can tell them is encourage them to keep on listening to this radio shows like this, to read. I mean, that's what I did, I mean, when I finally realized-- well, no, I'd finally-- it was very early, what I was all about.

I mean, I set out to the libraries and I figured it out, which was very helpful to me. Even though I, publicly, I was not gay, I had no problem with it very early. I accepted it. And I decided I was going to live with it. I was going to make the most of it.

And, I think, the worst thing that can happen to a young person is continued-- continuously feeling that there's something wrong with him. And the best thing they can do is read and talk to other people, and listen to other people, so that they'll know that there is nothing wrong with them, that that's the way they were made.

- Did you have to make these steps alone? Were you completely alone when you came out?

- Oh, yeah. I mean, growing up in a small town of 8,000 people in South Texas, I'm sure there were other gay people there, but I didn't know who they were.

- But I'm talking about after the column and after the problems that you faced. Did you face those alone?

- Well, pretty much. I mean, I have some friends, but if you're asking if I have a lover, the answer is no.

- No, no, no, I'm talking about the community itself, rallying behind you.

- The community did, and my friends did. I mean, I have some very close friends who did. In a way, it was difficult, because I haven't been here that long. I mean, most of my friends were still in Washington, and so it's not the same thing, having a longtime friends as having a new friends. But they were wonderful.

- It's amazing, the support system gays and lesbians have.

- Oh, yeah. Yeah, it's--