

JIM: And thank you, Terry. And right now, for all our regular listeners-- gosh, I'm going to play this next song for Big Daddy Howard McHale and Scott Lewis, who do the Husband Hunt the first Saturday of the month. Well, actually, we're changing that. It's not so much Husband Hunt anymore. It's more like a love connection because the last time they did it, they got two women together. Gosh. So this is Howard's favorite song.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

All right, "Go West." Yes, indeed, that was the remake by the Pet Shop Boys. And that was for Big Daddy Howard McHale and Scott Lewis, who you can hear right here the first Saturday of every month. Scott, who was Promotions Director for Charles Armstrong Investments, which is why we're able to give free tickets to Heaven every now and then, and Howard, who does-- I don't know what Howard does and I don't want to know. OK.

But we are still in the middle of "Marathon." That number is 526-5738, and we have had a \$100 pledge from Mike. Yes, Mike, who pledged that same amount last week, and he wants to make the same challenge to all other listeners. He wants seven more \$100 pledges for the seven years "After Hours" has been on the air.

Yes, we celebrated seven years the first week, this month. September 6, 1987 "After Hours" was born and we're still going strong. We're different, we're changing. Oh, honey, are we changing. But we're still here and we're still queer.

The number is 526-5738. And I have-- you are listening to KPFT Houston, "After Hours," a continuing tradition. And with me tonight is Sarah DePalma. And this is going to be kind of an interesting interview because, kids, you're going to learn a lot tonight. Sarah, welcome to "After Hours."

SARAH Well, thank you very much. I'm glad to be here.

DEPALMA:

JIM: Ah. Now, how did you get here? I mean, I have a feeling you have a circuitous route.

SARAH Well, actually, I was invited here tonight by Diane, but I'm not sure that's what you're asking me.

DEPALMA:

JIM: Ah.

SARAH Yeah, actually, I got here in kind of a roundabout way. I started out as a gay rights activist at Texas A&M
DEPALMA: University. And after a rather interesting experience up there and getting involved in a case that went all the way to the US Supreme Court, I moved to Houston just in time to get involved in the referendum.

JIM: Oh, yes, the famous referendum. What was that, '85?

SARAH Uh-huh. Moved up here in '85. Later, I was one of the co-founders of the original ACT UP here in Houston and one
DEPALMA: of the original members of Queer Nation here in Houston. And it was about that time that I decided it was time for me to start my transition from male to female. And there were some folks in Queer Nation who didn't exactly understand what I was doing.

JIM: OK. I'm sure there's a lot of folks out there who don't, either.

SARAH My parents included, yes. But the people in Queer Nation finally did get the hang of it and they were very supportive. And I am now the co-chair of an organization called It's Time Texas, which is part of a larger group called It's Time America. It's a political lobbying organization for transgender people.

And so that's part of why I'm here tonight. And partly, I hope to educate some people about transgendered people, who we are and who we are not.

JIM: Well, you know, that's exactly right because we say the word "transgendered" and we read articles in the gay press of Phyllis Randolph Frye, wanting to get every group to put transgender in. And a lot of us don't even know what that means and all it encompasses. And I don't think we're talking about something narrow. I think we're talking about a very broad topic here, covering a wide spectrum of different types of people.

SARAH Well, it's really true. Phyllis and I have been friends for many years. In fact, Phyllis and I went to Texas A&M together, so you can imagine how much trouble A&M was in with the two of us on campus and Ray Hill coming up to help us. A&M has never had an experience like that before or since.

But that really is true. I guess I should probably start out by defining a little bit about transgender, and I'll start with the drag community. There are a lot of people in the drag community who like to consider themselves transgendered, but there are a lot of people in drag community who will tell you flatly they are female impersonators.

JIM: Yes, I've heard all of these terms. I may not be too sure about what they really mean.

SARAH A female impersonator is exactly that. This is a person who's going to make their living, or at least makes money in any case, doing shows. But when the show is over, they go back and they are living in their gender, their actual gender. In most cases, I guess they're living as men. So they're welcome to call themselves transgendered, but they don't really care for that much.

JIM: OK, let me stop you right there because it's true on the other side of the coin, too, because there are women who make money by impersonating men, dressing as men on stage.

SARAH Correct.

DEPALMA:

JIM: OK, I've seen this.

SARAH That's correct. And most of those people, by their own definition, would tell you they are not transgendered. They are simply making a living.

DEPALMA:

Now, there are some folks who do drag who are actually people who are trying to earn money towards surgery toward being transsexual, or they may actually be people who are performing on stage but also living cross-gendered. So those people would be transgendered folks.

Then there's another category, and that's the category that Phyllis fry and I are in right now, which is to say that we are transgendered. These are for either medical or financial reasons, or for some cases family reasons, we have chosen not to have the surgery now. We may at some point in the future, depending on if we ever win the lottery, but otherwise at this point we are living cross-gendered. We have legally changed our names and our gender, so we are legally, in my case, legally female, and that's the way we live.

Then there are transsexuals, and these are people who are earnestly working toward the surgery, actually have the money to do it, and are actively working toward that. And that is a long, drawn-out, expensive, painful process. So that makes up what's theoretically called the transgender community.

Now, there's one other group that I left out, and that are transvestites. By and large, transvestites are married people. They don't tend to have a lot to do with the transgender community because the wives tend to make sure they don't.

And so they're-- again, they're sort of like the people in drag. They're welcome to become part of the transgender community, and some have chosen to do so. But many have not and never will because they don't care to threaten their marriage, and that's understandable.

JIM: Sure, sure.

SARAH
DEPALMA: So that's basically where we are in terms of what is a transgendered group. For people who are working towards surgery, it's a very tough process. For the people who are like me, who have chosen, at this point have said, well, I'm not ready for surgery or just don't care to right now, it's also a tough process, but we are certainly transgendered people.

JIM: OK. OK, so you have elected right now not to have the surgery.

SARAH
DEPALMA: Right. I don't have the \$10,000 for surgery.

JIM: Oh, gotcha. OK.

SARAH
DEPALMA: That's the minimum. That's the-- it's a very expensive process. I don't think people realize it. Electrolysis to have your facial hair removed is \$45 an hour, often takes two years to complete.

JIM: I've heard that.

SARAH
DEPALMA: Surgery is anywhere from \$7,000 to \$12,000, depending on where you go. And then there is, of course, aftercare. You're going to miss and at least a minimum of one month's work. It is not minor surgery. So yeah, I don't have \$15,000 sitting around right at the moment.

JIM: I see.

SARAH
DEPALMA: At some point would like to have it. Phyllis has chosen not to have it for personal reasons, and that's perfectly legitimate. There are a lot of people who simply will not have it, either for medical reasons or just don't want to.

JIM: OK. You do not look like a man in a dress.

SARAH
DEPALMA: I'm not. From the time from as young as I can remember, I used to lay in bed at night hoping that God would-- I used to pray and ask God for lightning come down and correct me. I knew-- oh, I guess I was eight or nine years old. I knew I should have been a girl. There was never a much question than it should have been a girl. It was somebody upstairs thought it was a cosmic joke, I guess.

And I've never really thought of myself as male. I've always thought that it was a mistake. And I consider myself female. I am female in all respects, except for what I think is a biological error. So to me, it's not a big deal. The law makes it a big deal.

JIM: The law, yes.

SARAH Other people sometimes try to make it a big deal.

DEPALMA:

JIM: It's society, yes.

SARAH It's funny, I'll go--

DEPALMA:

JIM: We have these-- we grow up with these definite boys blue, girls pink, and never the 'twain shall meet and all of this kind of BS that a lot of us in the gay community kind of throw off, but throw off for our own purposes, maybe not for anybody else's purposes. So we may be able to see it from a gay perspective, but maybe not from a transgendered perspective.

SARAH I think it's especially hard for gay and lesbian people to understand transgendered folks. Gay and lesbian people
DEPALMA: have had to work so hard to understand their own sexuality and to come to terms with it, both personally and as a community.

For someone like me, for example, two have been in Queer Nation and started my transition while in Queer Nation, there were a lot of folks who just didn't get it. And I can understand that. They work real hard to come to terms with themselves, and here's this guy saying, no, I don't want to be a guy. I should have been a woman all along and I'm going to become that. I can understand why they'd be really confused and why they wouldn't be real supportive. And I think that's where the education from the transgender people needs to take place.

I don't hold gay and lesbian community responsible for not knowing. Up until now, outside of Phyllis Frye, in the city of Houston there really hasn't been anyone who is willing to be public and say, yeah, I'll step up and talk. But if you're going to be the head of a political lobbying group, you better be willing to go public.

JIM: Yeah. Yeah. We still have a lot to learn about and by the transgender community. We're just scratching the surface here. You have a whole page of things there. You want to hit on anything in particular?

SARAH Well, I'd like to talk about It's Time America a little bit. I remember for myself what it was like to feel like I was
DEPALMA: the only transgendered person in the world. First of all, I didn't know there was a word for it.

And I remember what it was like. I used to lay in bed with the transistor radio underneath my pillow, and I'd sneak it away from my parents and listen to the talk shows. And that was how I learned what transsexuals were. So if you're out there tonight and you are confused about your gender, or if you are feeling alone, before the show ends tonight, I'm going to give some addresses and phone numbers of places here in the city where you can get help and where you can reach help.

You are not alone. You are not crazy. You are probably a member of the transgender community, even if you didn't know there was such a word. And no matter where you are tonight, don't feel alone because we're here to help.

As far as It's Time America goes, It's Time America got started partly as a result of Stonewall 25. Phyllis Frye and many others worked very hard to try and get the word "transgender" included into the Stonewall parade. And ironically, at Stonewall that couldn't happen.

JIM: The whole thing, the whole Stonewall thing just flabbergasted me from start to finish anyway. And it's like, whatever happened to the original spirit here?

SARAH
DEPALMA: Exactly. Exactly. That's what we wondered, too. And it seemed really ironic to us that transgendered people couldn't get their name into the title of Stonewall. Something was wrong with that picture.

And so there are people who came back from New York saying, something's not right here. And then we got proof that something was not right. There is a bill currently before Congress which is known as ENDA, which is the bill to end discrimination in employment. And Phyllis Frye and another woman from Vermont named Karen Kerin went to Congress, went to this committee, and asked to speak.

And they were not allowed to speak on behalf of the transgender community. And they were not allowed to speak because there were some gay and lesbian staff members on Senator Kennedy's staff, ironically, who don't want the words "transgender" included. And we were told outright that they don't want "transgender" included because they don't want to deal with our, quote, "distractions."

JIM: What?

SARAH
DEPALMA: Exactly. Those exact words. So the implication was that transgendered being included in ENDA somehow weakened the chances of passage

JIM: Oh, brother.

SARAH
DEPALMA: When the Transgender Law Conference was held here in August in Houston, it was the first time that a lot of the activists in the transgender community had actually met one another. We knew each other by reputation, but not by person.

So for the first time, we were able to meet people like Jane Fee from Minnesota, who was able to get the word "transgender" included in protection laws Minnesota, the only state that has protection. We were able to meet Karen Kerin and Lisa Middleton from California, and many, many others. And we were all pretty amazed at what we had accomplished individually and said, gee, what could we do if we worked together--

JIM: As a group, yeah.

SARAH
DEPALMA: --as a group. And so It's Time America was born. The first thing I did was get on the internet and start introducing it. We gained 25 states in three weeks.

JIM: Hey.

SARAH
DEPALMA: We now have members in 40 states and growing rapidly. I am still trying to get some chapters started. Since I'm the chairman of It's Time Texas, I'm trying to get some chapters started in places like College Station in Lubbock, and it'll happen. It'll happen. We just need to find somebody out there who's got a little courage.

But we are going to lobby Congress. We have already got some response from Senator Jeffords of Vermont, a Republican, ironically, who is working very closely with us and has actually drafted a discussion bill to get the word "transgender" included into ENDA.

JIM: Go figure.

SARAH It is kind of interesting. Of course, a Republican in Vermont is not Phil Gramm.

DEPALMA:

JIM: Yeah, I mean, yeah, exactly.

SARAH It's a little different breed up there. So we think we have some political allies. Senator Wellstone in Minnesota, for
DEPALMA: example, is working on our behalf. And there are some people here in Congress, some from Texas in fact, in the House of Representatives who are going to work for us. So we think it will happen.

And I don't want people to think that somehow I'm angry at the gay or lesbian community. I came from gay and lesbian activists. I think that, in truth, the transgender community has not done a very good job of educating. It's been my experience that gay and lesbian people know no more about transgender community and the straight community does.

I hold transgender people responsible for that, partly because there have not been many public spokespeople, and now we're working to correct that. So I have no ax to grind with the gay and lesbian community. On the contrary, people like Diane Williams and Scott Lewis, who are two of my biggest and best supporters, have-- I couldn't have survive without them. So I have only good things to say.

JIM: That's good to hear. Let's take a little break here, because I do want to come back and talk about just what problems the gay community does have with the transgendered community.

SARAH Sure.

DEPALMA:

JIM: But we are in the middle of "Marathon." Yes, that number is 526-5738, and Matt is just hovering. He's got something to say.

MATT: Hover, hover, hover. Yeah, I just want to say, it's 1:00 already and we haven't had any pledges at all. We need you to call up and show that--

JIM: Wait a minute. Mike called in.

MATT: Oh, I'm sorry.

JIM: Yeah, Mike called in \$100 pledge and a challenge for seven people to call in with \$100 pledges for the seven years that "After Hours" has been on the air.

MATT: Is that the same Mike that called up last week and did the same thing?

JIM: Yep

MATT: That's an incredible commitment from Mike.

JIM: This guy puts out for "After Hours."

MATT: Yes. And we need and we need you to put out for "After Hours."

JIM: And he's been up here before, too, answering phones. He is a cute little guy.

MATT: Holy cow.

JIM: Holy cow.

MATT: Yes. And we need you to do your part to show the community and show the station that "After Hours" is important to you, that what we do here you can't get anywhere else. You need to-- oh, he's waving things in my face.

JIM: Oh my.

MATT: This is visual radio.

JIM: I see. Yes. Here I am talking to a transgendered person and I'm sitting here in a grass skirt and a pink lei.

MATT: Go figure, Jim. You got a pink lei. Yes, you need to do it for all of those kids out there who can't do it, for the people who are struggling with the issues of who they are.

And I started listening-- I guess about six years ago, when it was you and Buddy, and I was in the closet. I mean, I wasn't even accepting myself that I was gay. And I guess I should have had a clue whenever I heard Buddy playing his music and I started breaking out in tears, that, hey, there's probably something to this.

JIM: And there are people out there right now who are not yet accepting of their gayness, not yet accepting of their bisexuality or that they're transgendered.

MATT: And not even having a clue as to what that means. There were so many myths that were dispelled for me by listening to "After Hours," that there's so much more to being gay or bisexual or transgender or lesbian, that it's not just having anonymous sex with someone. It's not a perverted thing, that we're just like everyone else in every respect except for who we love.

And that's what "After Hours" gives you. It gives you that knowledge that you're just like everyone else.

JIM: Because you are. Listen to this, kids.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

The Flirtations with "Everything Possible." You're listening to "After Hours," a continuing tradition on KPFT Houston. We are in the middle of "Marathon."

That number is 526-5738. Give us a call. Talk to Tom. Talk to Matt.

We've got premiums at different levels, but you give to After Hours because you want to see it continue, like Mike who called in his \$100 pledge and his challenge to all other listeners for at least seven more for the seven years that "After Hours" has been on the air at KPFT Houston.

We are speaking with Sarah DePalma from the transgendered community. And I wanted to ask her, I hear in the gay and lesbian community it's like, well, I don't understand these transgendered people. Are they gay or lesbian or what? What do you say to this, other than--

**SARAH
DEPALMA:** The answer is yes. Actually, it's a very interesting thing. There are a lot of people who are transgendered who are living gay and lesbian lifestyles. And they simply disappear into the gay and lesbian community because they're afraid-- they're afraid of discrimination from gays and lesbians. I have two friends right now in that exact situation, and it's an ironic situation to be closeted within the gay community.

JIM: You mean, like, trying to pass as lesbians.

**SARAH
DEPALMA:** Well, they are-- exactly. They had surgery. They are lesbians in truth. But they'll absolutely-- no one will ever know that they've ever had the surgery because they are afraid.

And they have good reason to be afraid. I've heard the comments from people.

JIM: And I'm sure they have, too.

**SARAH
DEPALMA:** And they have, too.

JIM: From people who do not realize that-- yeah.

**SARAH
DEPALMA:** They learn to hide in the gay community, which to me seems, if that's not an oxymoron, then I don't know what one is.

JIM: That seems really sad.

**SARAH
DEPALMA:** It is sad. And there's so much misinformation about what transgendered people are.

JIM: We get on the show and we talk about how if every gay and lesbian person came out of the closet tomorrow, people's ideas about gays and lesbians would be dispelled because all of a sudden everybody would know lots of gay and lesbian people. They just never realized it.

**SARAH
DEPALMA:** That's right.

JIM: And here we have the same thing in the gay community happening.

**SARAH
DEPALMA:** Well, thankfully it's not from everyone. For example, Ray Hill has been a staunch defender of transgendered people.

JIM: Oh, yes.

**SARAH
DEPALMA:** He is on the board of at least two transgender groups that I know of. But I think gay and lesbian people struggle so hard with their own sexuality, to have another curveball thrown at him it's just one curveball too many.

JIM: Well, you know, OK, maybe I would have said that said yes to that. Excuse me, my skirt's in the way.

SARAH I love it. Your skirt's prettier than mine, actually.

DEPALMA:

JIM: Maybe I would have said that 20 years ago. But these days, in Houston alone we've got Inklings. We've got Lobo, we've got Crossroads, we've got Half Price Books, we've got Bookstop. And in each of these stores are hundreds of books about gay and lesbian life.

We do not have to recreate our life anymore. It's there. We have a history.

SARAH It's true.

DEPALMA:

JIM: We learn. I mean, we can learn. So why can't we learn about other communities?

SARAH Well, there is an effort being made by some people. But it's an interesting thing in the gay and lesbian
DEPALMA: community. I think AIDS has sapped an awful lot of energy. I think the struggle of the coming out process, the individual struggle for each person--

JIM: As a matter of fact, there's another closet that's been created of HIV people.

SARAH HIV, that's right.

DEPALMA:

JIM: I've been out of the closet about being HIV positive since 1987. And at that time, it was like, people looked at me like, oh my God, you're telling the world that you're HIV positive? And it's like, somebody's got to.

SARAH Yeah. I believe-- the saying silence means death, I believe that.

DEPALMA:

JIM: Yes.

SARAH I absolutely believe it. I wouldn't be here tonight if I didn't.

DEPALMA:

JIM: See? And I don't mean to steal any thunder from you about that. But it's just kind of the same type of analogy here.

SARAH It is. I think, in part, the gay and lesbian community only has so much energy and only has so much money. And I
DEPALMA: think it's hard for them to focus on a group that just seems against everything they thought they had learned about themselves. Here come these transgendered people saying, well, there is another alternative, and it's a little much.

It's a little much for people. I'm not making excuses for them because there are a lot of-- we have a lot of supporters in the gay and lesbian community, . Far more supporters than we have detractors but all the same, I do understand why there would be confusion. So I'm not condemning anybody at all.

And to be fair, there have not been a lot of transgendered spokespeople. What happens is you get people like-- oh, I don't know, I hate to pick on Geraldo all the time. But he's there, so I'll pick on him now.

I've tried to get on a couple of talk shows, television talk shows, a couple of times. They won't take me because I'm too normal.

JIM: That's right. We're looking for the stereotype.

SARAH

Exactly.

DEPALMA:

JIM: And what is the stereotype of the transgendered person? To the gay community, I think that means the very highly painted up streetwalker.

SARAH

Exactly. And the fact of the matter is it's such a process. Let me tell you a little bit about what's involved with being a transsexual. I don't think most people really know.

DEPALMA:

First of all, you cannot go to just a psychologist and get a diagnosis. There is a group called the Harry Benjamin Society, and they have a whole series of protocols that one must go through with a psychiatrist. So right off the bat, we are not talking 60 or \$70 an hour. We are talking \$120 an hour.

JIM: Oh boy.

SARAH

All right. So initially, you have to go to a psychiatrist. There are very, very few psychiatrists who are involved in gender. It's actually called gender dysphoria. That's the exact term for it. There is a very good clinic in Galveston.

DEPALMA:

JIM: I was just going to ask about that.

SARAH

Very good clinic in Galveston. Your initial test, just the test, is \$700.

DEPALMA:

JIM: Oh my God.

SARAH

To go to an endocrinologist for more testing runs anywhere-- usually you're looking another \$600 to \$800 more.

DEPALMA:

JIM: No wonder these women are out on the streets.

SARAH

So you're looking at \$1,500, and that's just initially. And you don't know whether you're going to be accepted into a gender clinic or not. You don't know. And if you don't meet their strict criteria, which there's a lot of discussion about that in our community, but if you don't meet their strict criteria, then you're not a candidate for the surgery under any circumstance, period. It's over.

DEPALMA:

So that's initially. If you have to go for electrolysis to have your facial hair removed, that is anywhere from \$45 to \$65 an hour. You're looking at it usually about a two-year period to have it complete.

JIM: Have you had this done?

SARAH

I've had some of it done, yeah. Frankly, I've run out of money for some of it.

DEPALMA:

Hormones are another matter. Hormones are very expensive. Again, you're looking in the neighborhood of \$45 to \$65 a bottle, replaced once a month, depending on the kind of hormones you're on.

JIM: Sure.

SARAH
DEPALMA: We haven't begun to talk about wardrobe yet. We haven't begun to talk about family issues. We haven't begun to talk about job issues.

And most people do not get to retain their jobs. Most of the people I know who start a transition are no longer employed because there are no job protections. If gays and lesbians don't have job protections, I promise you, transgendered people don't.

So we're talking a very expensive process. It is not at all-- and we haven't begun to talk about surgery. Assuming you qualify for surgery, which is a long, drawn-out process, that's anywhere in the neighborhood of \$7,000 to \$15,000, depending on where you go. There is a one-month recovery. It is a very-- trust me, it's major surgery.

And so you're not talking any minor process. I mean, if you're not dedicated to this process, you better just give it up early. And I don't think a lot of gays and lesbians probably know that. I don't think they realize what's involved.

I've heard from some lesbians in particular that they take us badly. They think somehow we're mocking women. Honey, I promise you, we would not spend \$20,000 in the process to mock anybody.

JIM: And have to change jobs and lose your family and a lot of your friends.

SARAH
DEPALMA: That's right. Most people, I guarantee you, you would not spend \$20,000 to \$30,000 in a process, many times lose your family, lose most of your friends, most cases lose your children if you have any for a light process. This is no small matter. So anybody who thinks that we've gone into this process lightly or without thought really needs to think again. This is a big deal.

And it also explains to some extent, why we feel hurt that we were not included in the bill that was before Congress now. We need to be included. Transgendered people in most cases-- surgery's not covered by insurance, by the way. I guess most people don't know that.

JIM: I'd be surprised that it would be.

SARAH
DEPALMA: Yeah, it's not covered. So you're looking at a minimum \$10,000 out-of-pocket expenses.

JIM: Because it's looked at as elective.

SARAH
DEPALMA: Yeah. I know of at least one situation right now where the person is transitioning on the job. And the job has told her, if she does not have surgery within a year, her contract is canceled. She has no legal recourse whatsoever and she doesn't have the money for surgery.

JIM: Wow.

SARAH
DEPALMA: So I have no clue what's going to happen there. That's not uncommon. We have no legal protections, we have no recourse. So we have a lot in common with the gay and lesbian community.

We have a lot more in common than we have not in common. We really ought to be working together, and that's part of what reason I'm here is I want people in the gay and lesbian community to understand, we're here to support you, and we hope you'll support us, too.

JIM: Cool. OK. We're still in "Marathon" and I got to do a little pitch line on that and go into the QMZ, which we usually have around this time. And I want to ask you to stay and--

SARAH Sure, I'd be glad to.

DEPALMA:

JIM: --hang out for a while. Oh, wait a minute here. Tom?

TOM: Yeah, we have Scott on line 1. He said he's a member of the transgender community, wanted to illuminations about what's going on. You know how to do this during "Marathon" better than I do.

JIM: Oh, OK. Oh, OK, we're doing it that way.

TOM: Yeah, that's the only way to do it.

JIM: OK. Sarah, let me tell you, we'll need to put you in the other room because we have a strange phone system when we're on "Marathon." OK? And--

[VOCALIZING]

TOM: Sarah's going in the other room and we're doing all kinds of convoluted things, technical things we won't tell you about.

[VOCALIZING]

JIM: OK, let's find a mic for you.

SARAH OK, do we have a microphone?

DEPALMA:

JIM: That's a microphone.

SARAH Okey dokey.

DEPALMA:

JIM: OK.

TOM: This one goes on monitor?

JIM: No, no, no, just right here and right here.

SCOTT (ON PHONE): Hello?

JIM: Hello.

SCOTT (ON PHONE): Hello.

JIM: Hi there.

TOM: You need to turn down your radio.

SCOTT (ON PHONE): Well, I'm on the side of the road next to my car, so I'm--

JIM: Oh, OK.

SCOTT (ON PHONE): Let me-- I was listening to you while I was driving and wanted to make some comments on some things that you're saying.

JIM: Sure.

SCOTT (ON PHONE): And one of the things is I think the reason that we have a problem with the gay and lesbian community is because I don't think of myself as gay, really. I'm a man who wants to be a woman, and I like women. So that doesn't make me gay. It makes me-- I don't want to say normal because it just makes me go along with the majority, I guess.

But I hang out in the gay and lesbian community because at least those people accept me more for what I am than a normal community. Do you know what I mean?

But then again, I'm not really looking for a gay man because he wants another man. Well, I want a woman because-- I mean, I'm sorry. I want a man who wants a woman. Do you understand what I'm saying?

SARAH DEPALMA: Yeah, I do. Let me start off by asking you a question. Are you involved with any of the gender clinics in the area at all?

SCOTT (ON PHONE): No, I'm not. I haven't moved down here-- I've only lived here for about six months now. So I'm still trying to find a community here.

SARAH DEPALMA: OK. So you haven't started the process yet. Or have you begun the hormones or anything of that kind?

SCOTT (ON PHONE): Oh, no, no. No.

SARAH DEPALMA: OK. Let me give you a little bit of my background because I come out of the gay and lesbian community originally. The situation, I think, is really we need the gay and lesbian community for support.

SCOTT (ON PHONE): I definitely agree with that.

SARAH DEPALMA: And in return, we have to offer our support to them. It has to be a two-way street.

SCOTT (ON PHONE): But I think we do. I mean, I think if you go back in the history of the gay and lesbian community, some of the first people that came out and started doing any kind of protesting or any kind of activism were drag queens. I think the gay and lesbian community owes a great debt to the transgender community as far as that goes. They were the first ones who started to get any kind of national attention and brought a lot of people to light.

Well, I'm talking back in the late '60s or early '70s. I think the drag queens were some of the first ones to come out and start activism up within that community.

SARAH DEPALMA: Right. Did you hear any of the conversation that we had earlier when we were talking about some of the gender clinics and such?

SCOTT (ON PHONE): I just put you guys on the air about 30 minutes ago. I was driving, like I said, and so I missed most of it.

SARAH DEPALMA: OK. What I was talking about with some of the gender clinics in the area. And my advice to you is, if you're not involved with any of the transgender groups here in the community, you might start out that way. There's a group here called the Gulf Coast Transgender Community. It's GCTC.

SCOTT (ON PHONE): I've seen their ads in *Tapestry* magazine.

SARAH DEPALMA: Yeah, I would strongly recommend that you get involved with a group like that there. I'm no longer a member of the group, but I know many of the folks that are in this organization. They would be a great way for you to start and to get really good information, factual information about gender, about gender issues, about the transsexualism. And you'd be able to get some factual information and also meet some folks that would be able to give you some actual support.

SCOTT (ON PHONE): Right, because I mean, I have a lot of gay and lesbian friends and I get support from them, sure. But even, it's like you were saying earlier, even to them I'm a little different.

SARAH DEPALMA: Sure.

SCOTT (ON PHONE): Everybody has their own little biases and what have you.

SARAH DEPALMA: Sure. I think the truth of the matter is that when we're talking about political issues, we all have a common enemy. And you can call it Pat Robertson or Pat Buchanan.

SCOTT (ON PHONE): Or any kind of right wing liberal-- right wing conservative.

SARAH DEPALMA: Any right wing conservative. And there's the old saying, we either we're going to hang together or we're going to hang separately.

SCOTT (ON PHONE): Or the same old saying of our diversity is what we all have in common.

SARAH

DEPALMA:

Well, that's exactly right. So my suggestion, at the end of this show, I'm going to give the phone number and how to get a hold of the GCTC. And I would really suggest that you start out by getting involved with that kind of a group and get involved with the transgender community here. And it will help to give you a lot of support.

**SCOTT (ON
PHONE):**

OK.