

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- *After Hours* every Saturday night at midnight right here on KPFT Houston, 90.1 FM.
- The following program contains language or images of a frank or sensitive nature that may be considered objectionable by some. Listener discretion is advised.
- Hi, this is Craig Washington reminding you that none of us are free until all of us are free. So keep listening to *After Hours*, KPFT Houston, 90.1 FM.
- I'd like to talk very briefly about myself-- no, not about myself, about why I'm running.
- Annise Parker, openly gay candidate for Houston City Council District C.
- It's probably expected that I'll stand up here and talk about my qualifications. Well, I hope that you know my qualifications. I've worked with many of you. I know most of you. We've worked together. We've laughed. We've cried. We've [INAUDIBLE] We've argued. And occasionally, we've triumphed together.

And my campaign material does list some of my past activities, my qualifications for office. I'm not going to talk about or rail about potholes. I'm not going to pontificate about rail, for that matter.

[LAUGHTER]

I want to speak from my heart and, I hope, touch yours. And I paid my dues in the feminist movement. I paid my dues in the Democratic Party. But where I put most of my time and my energy and my effort has been in the gay and lesbian community.

No one asks Hispanics why they want to be represented in government by their own. No one asks Blacks any longer. No one asks Asians any longer. No one asks women why they want to see women in office. And yet when openly gay or lesbian candidates run, somehow, that's different. Well, I don't think it's different.

Are you content to be always represented by men and women who do not understand what you've had to go through in your lives, who do not understand what we deal with every day? I am no longer content to do that, and I hope you're not either.

[APPLAUSE]

On the other hand, I don't want any of you here to vote for me because I am an openly gay candidate running for office. I am a qualified, experienced, proven leader who would make a hell of a council member, and I am openly gay. And that's why I want you to elect me to this position.

[APPLAUSE]

I have been called in some circles a single-issue candidate. Those of you who know me know that is not true. If you don't know me, I will say that, yes, I have a gay and lesbian agenda for City Council. I also have an AIDS agenda. I have an environmental agenda. I have a housing agenda. I have a redevelopment agenda. I have a crime agenda. And I want to take all of those things with me to City Council.

I also have a personal agenda. I want to be the first openly gay elected official in this city, and I want to be the best council member that District C has ever had.

[APPLAUSE]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[WHITE NOISE]

- What do we want?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Gay rights!

- When do we want them?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Now!

- What do we want?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Gay rights!

- When do we want them?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Now!

- What do we want?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Gay rights!

- When do we want them?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Now!

- What do we want?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Gay rights!

- When do we want them?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Now!

- What do we want?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Gay rights!

- Kindly say it so they can hear you at the Capitol!

- (ALL TOGETHER) 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!

[CHEERING]

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

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

[CHEERING]

- Let's hear it out there!

[CHEERING]

I'm [INAUDIBLE].

- I'm Bruce Hopkins.

- I'm a dyke.

- I'm a faggot.

- (TOGETHER) And we're best friends!

- 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.

[CHEERING]

- 500,000 strong! Look at you! 500,000 strong! 500,000 strong, one of the largest marches in United States' history!

- It's all right. You may all come out.

[CHEERING]

- One of the largest marchers 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 the friends of lesbians and gay men will support their children.

- They've got to understand something! They've got to understand something! We are not talking about white politics! This is not a movement from the waist down! We are talking about our rights to love and to choose and to live! And I don't care about straight politics And I don't care about--

[WHITE NOISE]

--standing! You better hear me in Washington! We are demand--

[WHITE NOISE]

- OK, Mary. KPFT Houston. Sorry, we're back. Let's try it one more time. If it goes off again, girl, I'm going to the tub.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

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

- Yeah. Come on out!

- [LAUGHS]

- Join us. Bring your friends.

- What do you think about the turnout so far?

- Well, it never does-- 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--

[WHITE NOISE]

--come out.

[CHEERING]

As 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 store you shop in.

[CHEERING]

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

- When do we want them?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Now!

- What do we want?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Gay rights!

- When do we want them?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Now!

- What do we want?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Gay rights!

- When do we want them?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Now!

- What do we want?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Gay rights!

- When do we want them?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Now!

- What do we want?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Gay rights!

- When do we want them?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Now!

- What do we want?

- See, Mary, I had a feeling that we would go off the air just at midnight--

- Mm-hmm.

- --because we got one of the greatest guests that will be one of the most important guests we're going to have of the year here tonight. And we've got to get this show out.

- I won't dare to say a guest.

- And there are 168 hours in a week, and we only got four--

- I know.

- --to say it's OK to be here.

- And queer.

- Yes, and we are, so hang on just a second.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- When do we want them?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Now!

- What do we want?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Gay rights!

- When do we want them?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Now!

- What do we want?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Gay rights!

- When do we want them?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Now!

- What do we want?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Gay rights!

- When do we want them?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Now!

- What do we want?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Gay rights!

- When do we want them?

- (ALL TOGETHER) Now!

- What do we want?

- And I ask--

[CHEERING]

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

- And send money to KPFT so we can fix this hateful transmitter.

- [LAUGHS]

- We've only got 168 hours in a week and only four--

- Only four.

- --to tell you that we're here, and we're queer, and it's OK, and all that good stuff. You know we do that every week.

- Yes.

- Anyway, it's going to be a great show.

- Yes, it is.

- A great, great show.

- Ooh.

- I'm that faggot that works for the Houston Police Department.

- And I'm that faggot who doesn't work at all.

- [LAUGHS]

- Now, I got to say I'm the faggot dispatcher.

- Yes, yes, yes.

- Not a police officer.

- Exactly, you're not an officer.

- So please don't write a letter to the chief and say that "police officer" because I'm not a cop.

- What are you?

- Or so I was because I'd like to frisk you.

- I see.

- So anyway--

- Well.

- --we got a great show this morning. A candidate for Houston City Council is here.

- Mm-hmm.

- And she just happens to be a friend of the stations and a friend of the community because she's been active in the community for-- I won't tell you how many years.

- No.

- She might slap us.

- Yes, I know, but we'll find out all these little--

- Yeah, we will.

- --personal things sometime during the next few hours.

- Anyway, this is *After Hours* radio celebrating live from the heart of Montrose, 90.1 FM KPFT Houston. We're here.

- And we're queer.

- And it's only 16 minutes after midnight, and here's Alan to say.

- (CREEPY VOICE) We're queer.

- Ah.

- And it's the radio--

- Thank you.

- --gremlins. Leave us alone. We'll do a good show for you. It's going to be a good show.

- Now, some people may just be tuning in right about now.

- Going, why the hell are they-- I don't know how. It's the radio gremlins, kids.

- Yes. Well, you see there's been a change here, and we're not running the BBC--

- Ooh, that's right.

- --anymore at midnight--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

We're on right at midnight.

- Yes, so we're right on that midnight. You can just-- when that old clock bongs, you can turn us on.

- Anyway, I got a couple of tunes to play before we talk to our superstar who's-- well, it's Annise Parker.

- Yes. I'll give her some toothpicks for her eyelids.

- Mary, we've got some herbal tea that I brought from the house. So--

- Oh.

- --cook her up some.

- I see.

- That blackberry or strawberry stuff is really, really good.

- [CHUCKLES]

- Anyway, hang on. We got a good show for you. And I also have a special song that I want to play for this guy, and I hope he's still awake to hear it.

- Well, we all do.

[LAUGHTER]

- Well, I wanted to play "Give A Little Respect" by Erasure for Vince, but I know he's not listening. Anyway--

- Oh, well.

- --if you're listening, no, this is just for you, and I'm glad you're listening. And hang on. We'll be back in a second.

[MUSIC - STARSHIP, "NOTHING'S GONNA STOP US NOW"]

*After Hours* radio celebrating live from the heart of Montrose, 90.1 FM KPFT. And if you take Harvey Milk's advice and elect openly gay people to City Hall, nothing's going to stop us now, right?

- You betcha.

- We're here.

- And we're queer.  
- And stay tuned, kids, and we got a show for you.

Mary, when the light comes on--

- I know.  
- --you stop talking.  
- I-- yes.

- [LAUGHS]  
- When that red light comes on, mm.

- "Nothing's Going To Stop Us Now."  
- It never has.  
- Yeah, well, we're just not going to make anybody mad this morning. Ah.

[LAUGHTER]

- Oh, that's the funniest thing you've said all night.  
- Except maybe, oh, I got to be careful in case Whitmire gets re-elected.  
- Oh, that's right.  
- I still want to get my little 2%.

- I see.  
- And her salary's gone up 55% in the last 10 years, and she's got to give me 2. [KISSING] Thanks, Kathy.

- [LAUGHS]  
- Anyway, how many times have you heard me say I met this man?  
- Oh.  
- [GIGGLES]  
- No.  
- I met--  
- Really?

- --this guy. Yeah, he's really nice. I went out on a date. I've never done that. I usually just like jump on people or--  
- Yes.

- --go to the tubs or something.

- Yeah

- --what I [INAUDIBLE]

- I mean, like a date, where you go somewhere and--

- An honest-to-God date.

- --say, hi, my name is, my name is?

- I don't think I've ever done that, except maybe when I was in high school, and I dated this girl to keep up the image. You know what I mean? And then after we returned home, I would run over to the gay bar-- [CHUCKLES]

- [LAUGHS]

- --and pick up a man.

- I see.

- --get the date out of the way. But I went out with this guy, and he's very, very nice. And I want to play a song for him, but I don't know what to play. So I've narrowed it down to about 20, but since we only got one choice--

- [COUGHS]

- --I'm going to play this thing by Chris McKay.

- Oh, good choice. You know that's my favorite.

- So Sophie, tell Walter that this song is just for him, and I hope he'd enjoy it.

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

- Oh, yes.

- "Too Many Broken Hearts" in the world.

- And what are we going to do about it?

- We're going to register and vote and elect openly gay people to public office. That's what we've been saying for-- well, since 1987.

- Yeah, I'm reading something--

- [CHUCKLES]

- --here, and it keeps going through my mind.

- We've been doing this for almost five years.

- There is--

- Oh, Christ.

- --no substitute for a seat at the table.

- No, there's not.

- Yeah.

- And let me tell you what happens when you elect openly gay people. Things like this. This is from-- god-- in the late '70s when somebody by the name of Harvey Milk stood on the steps of San Francisco and was sworn in as the first openly gay person in public office in this country. Now, they said it was going to-- Anita Bryant said, because you like to queer, it's going to be like a drought. And it had been dry. It'd been dry for months, Lewis. But when Harvey took his oath and as they were swearing him in, it started to rain.

- You're kidding.

- No. Listen to this.

- Harvey, please raise your right hand.

- Do you, Harvey Milk, solemnly swear or affirm that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of California against all enemies, foreign and domestic, that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of California, that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion, and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties upon which you are about to enter and during such time as you hold the Office of Supervisor District number five?

[LAUGHTER]

[CHEERING]

- [HOWLING]

I'm so glad. [GIGGLES] I do. [LAUGHS]

- [WHISTLING]

[APPLAUSE]

- A moment of levity, Anita Bryant said gay people brought the drought to San Francisco, and look what's happening here.

I'm Harvey Milk. I'm a supervisor in San Francisco.

- And I'm Greg Gordon for *IMRU*.

- And I'm gay. [LAUGHS]

- And so am I. And we're up in San Francisco in Harvey's office at Castro Camera. And Harvey is graciously taking a few minutes out of his very busy schedule--

- [GIGGLES]

- --to talk to us about politics in San Francisco and how he got elected, the first openly gay person to be elected to public office in California history.

- The legislators and the executive officers, be they the local supervisor, be the statewide, run your life. They run your life, and they spend your money. When they collect tax money from gay people and don't give us anything back in return, take it for their golf courses, take our tax money for their pet projects, and give us-- and then, top of it, insult us by not giving us our rights, that's not motivation.

If you like being harassed by the police, if you like being a third-class citizen, if you like being beat up by pugs, if you like the church yelling at you, don't register and don't vote, but don't complain. If you want a shove, you'd be shoved back in your closet. If you want to be the traditional gay person who gets beat up and whipped in his home and say, well, I'm gay, and I deserve to get beat up, fine. Otherwise, the only thing you can do is register to vote.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Somewhere, as in Des Moines or San Antonio, there's a young gay person who, all of a sudden, realizes that she or he is gay, knows that if the parents find out, they'll be tossed out of the house. The classmates would taunt the child, and the Anita Bryants and John Briggs are doing their bit on TV. And that child had several options-- staying in the closet, suicide. And then one day, that child might open a paper that says, "homosexual elected in San Francisco," and there are two new options. Option is to go to California--

[LAUGHTER]

[APPLAUSE]

--or stay in San Antonio and fight. Two days after I was elected, I got a phone call, and the voice was quite young. It was from Altoona, Pennsylvania. And the person said thanks.

And you've got to elect gay people so that that young child and the thousands upon thousands like that child know that there's hope for a better world. There's hope for a better tomorrow. Without hope, not only gays but those Blacks and the Asians and disabled, seniors, the us's Without hope, the us's give up. I know that you cannot live on hope alone, but without it, life is not worth living. And you and you and you got to give them hope. Thank you very much.

- I wish we had the tape cued up where Harvey says, you've got to elect gay people because there are just too many young kids, and he's right. We have a lot of fun in here, and we laugh and joke and make all these crazy things that happen every week. But until we start putting openly gay people in office who support us, who understand what we have gone through and continue to go through, nothing's going to change-- nothing.

So call your friends right now and say Annise Parker, who is a openly gay person, is running for City Council Houston District C. And she's getting ready to be on the radio, and you need to listen to her. Call right now because this is probably one of the most important things that we could do for ourselves, right?

- And for you out there.

- In 1985, I sat at the Houston Police Department, when it came across the screen and said 75% against the queers, then I was in the closet hiding, that's never going to happen again. But it may not be against the queers if we have openly gay people who are supporting us and standing up for us there.

- Wow.
- Now, I saw her on TV today, and she said, I don't want you to vote for me because I'm gay. I want you to vote for me because I'm qualified, because I've been a leader, because I've always been around. And we're going to talk to her about that in just a second.
- OK.
- But I want you to understand, kids, if you don't elect openly gay people, nothing's going to change. And it has to change. It can't always be like this. I'm tired of being the company queer. There are hundreds and hundreds of gay people at HPD who are afraid to come out because there is not a leader in this city with enough guts to stand up and support them. And I can tell you one thing. If we put this woman in office, maybe I can get a date from HPD, girl.
- [LAUGHS]
- Anyway, hang on. This is *After Hours* on KPFT. You know what I'm talking about.
- Yes, I do. Yes, I do.
- Call your friends. We'll be back in just a second. This is-- oh, I don't know. Probably the-- it is very important. I've seen a lot of people come and go out of Montrose that said, vote for me, vote for me, and they were like, well, like Harvey Milk said, just because you're gay and you're a turkey, I'm not voting for you. Well, we have the cream of the crop.
- We certainly do.
- And she's going to be talking to you in just a second, so hang on to your hats, kids.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[MUSIC - SWING OUT SISTER, "AFTER HOURS"]

- So all those radio gremlins have kept us. [LAUGHS]
- Yes.
- What the hell has that been?
- [CHUCKLES]
- Anyway, this is *After Hours* radio celebrating live from the heart of Montrose, 90.1 FM. We're here, and we're queer.
- (SHAKY VOICE) Yes.
- [LAUGHS] And we have a very special guest.
- Yes, we do, a young woman who is running for Houston City Council. I know they don't pay a lot. Do they pay a lot?
- Yes, actually, they pay-- they do pay a living wage.
- Are you serious?
- It's not like the state representatives that make \$7,200 a year.

- Because I heard someone say that you're going to be a full-- you wanted to be a full-time council person. What does that mean?
- I want to only be a council member while I'm in office. I don't want to be council member for life, as some of our council members are.
- Hmm.
- But that is-- that would be what I would be doing full time all the time every day, getting up like going to any other job, but it doesn't stop at 5 o'clock or 6 o'clock.
- Well, welcome to *After Hours* in KPFT. Actually, I've been trying to get you here for a long time--
- I know.
- --in other capacities.
- I want to--
- I have actually been on *After Hours* before.
- Yeah.
- You have?
- Yeah.
- It must have been a long time. No.
- No.
- It hasn't been that long time, yes.
- Frank White talked--
- Frank White.
- --to me a few months ago.
- Listen, Lewis, where have you been?
- You know how dizzy I can be.
- I know. Annise, why run for office? Why set yourself-- or open yourself up, rather, for all of the things that happen to politicians?
- I want the job.
- Why?
- Well, no one should run for office unless they really want the job.
- Mm-hmm.

- There's a lot of reasons, other reasons, to run, but that has to be part of it. I want to make some points, raise some issues in the city, and I want to make another contribution to the gay and lesbian community.

But I also want to do something for myself because I think just by running, I can make differences in the lives of people and that, winning, I can do some things that I really like the opportunity to do on City Council.

- If the election on Tuesday comes out like I hope that it will, you'll be the first openly gay person ever elected to public office in Houston.

- Yes.

- Now, we've got Glen Maxey up in Austin, so what-- are you set up for that? I mean, mentally and physically-- or emotionally, are you ready for that, that title--

- [LAUGHS]

- --that would wag you round?

- No, I'm probably not. I don't know if you can be ready for it. Those of us who run for office, we're still pioneers. Those who are holding office around the country right now are still pioneers, and you're under a microscope all the time. You have to be better and smarter, and somehow, there seems to be a higher standard--

- Mm-hmm.

- --often for openly gay and lesbian--

- Oh, you bet.

- --office holders.

- You bet. It's like being gay at a corporation. You just feel like you have to work harder.

- Especially when you're out, just like HPD.

- Yeah, yeah.

- I mean, Vice made 100-and-somewhat arrests down on Allen Parkway this past week of guys doing things. And they keep coming to me, going, buddy, who are these guys down there?

- I know, and, like, you're the expert.

- Because they don't listen to *After Hours*.

[LAUGHTER]

They don't know--

- That's right.

- --there's a better way.

- So why do you want to be under the microscope?

- I don't want to be under the microscope, but I want to give something back to the community. I want to make people's lives better. I don't want the next generation to have to go through a lot of the-- let's say, some four-letter words here, a lot of the stuff-

-

- Right, exactly.

- --that I had to go through.

- That's why we come down here, really.

- Yeah, same thing.

- Well, not only that being not-- you're taking it one step forward. You've always been openly gay, but didn't you--

- Well, I haven't always been openly gay.

- Well.

- But I've been-- I'm 35 years old. I've been out-- been coming out since I was 15.

- Oh, it is a process.

- It is a process.

- Oh, yeah, but--

- I have a few tiny closets left.

- --to have you in the seat, it shows the whole city, hey, we're not green-eyed monsters with forearms.

- It's one of the things that I've said. Just the fact that I'm running and the people get an opportunity to see me and talk to me, I think, makes a difference--

[WHITE NOISE]

--earlier about my statement that I didn't want anyone to vote for me just because I was gay, but I wanted people to vote for me because I'm gay, and I can also do a good job, and I have good ideas, and I have all sorts of platforms that I want to take with me. But it is important that I'm a candidate just because I'm gay.

- That's true. That's very true.

- That having--

- Because there have been gay people elected to public office, I'm sure, in Houston.

- Lots of gay people.

- [LAUGHS]

- Closeted gay people are elected to public office all over the country.

- We'll read those names after 2 o'clock.

[LAUGHTER]

Just kidding, just kidding. They're all gone.

- And win or lose on Tuesday, it's the fact of my candidacy. There was a very conscious decision on my part and on the part of other activists in the community to say it's time to declare our turf, to say--

- Mm-hmm.

- --that we deserve representation and that we will be running and that we want to represent Montrose and that we will be fielding candidates over and over again until we get it.

- Did the election of Glen Maxey have anything to do to push you into the direction-- into where you're at now? Did that help make you--

- It didn't--

- Did it help you decide?

- --help me make up my mind or anything, but I was just ecstatic when Glen was elected.

- Isn't that wonderful?

- He deserved it. He has put more into the gay and lesbian community statewide than any other person I can think of through his years on the Lesbian Gay Rights Lobby.

- Mm-hmm.

- As our lobbyist, he's just-- he's sweated for us. He really has done wonderful things. And he didn't-- he wasn't handed a seat. He really had to work for--

- That's true.

- --it and earn it, but he deserved it.

- Well, no one's handed anything in politics. You said, tonight--

- Well. [CHUCKLES]

- [LAUGHS]

- --you had to decide between eating and going to another function, and you decided to eat.

- Well, every so often, yes.

[LAUGHTER]

Yes.

- What-- as you're out on the campaign trail, what's been the response from people that you've come in contact with outside of the Montrose and on the other end of the district, let's say?

- Well, my district, District C, goes from roughly Buffalo Bayou, South to the County line, and it's got South Main and South Post Oak on the east side and 59 on the west side with Bellaire and West U. And fortunately, River Oaks taken out of the district.

- [CHUCKLES]

- So it's got Westbury and Meyerland and the Braes Heights, Hertz. It's pretty conservative down on the other end, and I've been campaigning for four months. If it is an issue, people don't bring it up, and I think that is the biggest change. And looking back over 10 and, well, 20 years of coming out, people don't talk about it. It's beginning to be-- unless you're an HPD maybe, something that is--

- No, no, no, even at HPD. I thought, in 1987, that the police would come in here and drag me out, and I get nothing but support. I mean, I went to the City Council one time and made a little speech and was elected president of the Houston Police Support Personnel Union after coming out. And I go to the chief's office monthly, and we talk about union issues, but then we talk about what's going on in Montrose.

- But see, most--

- Especially after the Broussard killing, and it has really opened up a lot of doors there.

- Most bigots are cowards.

- That's very true, and when you stand up to them, they run the other way. They hide in their closet.

- Yeah. I mean--

- [LAUGHS]

--there may be lots of people at these civic associations who are thinking terrible things, but they don't have the nerve to stand up and say so. And in general, the campaign has been very, very positive. People want to know about my positions on city issues. They don't want to know what my sexual orientation is, although I have been candid about that. I do talk about the fact that I'm a past president of the Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus. It's my push card. It's in the stuff I'm mailing out and in most every-- almost everything I put out that's--

[WHITE NOISE]

--part of some kind has the fact that I'm gay on it and every media story. I ought to change my name. It should be Annise Parker Lesbian. And "Lesbian" my official last name--

[LAUGHTER]

--so that-- [LAUGHS] the media stories would be accurate.

- That would take all the fun out of it for doing that. Then they would have to come up with something else.

- But the people in the district don't--

- Don't really care.

- It is funny. I had a little altercation with my opponent. We've been getting along very well.

- Oh, yes, your opponent.

- And he's not really a bad guy. But he got upset with me one day, and he was saying, how dare you say that you're running as an openly gay candidate? He said, you never talk about it. And I nearly fell over. I mean, the fact that he felt that I wasn't running as an openly gay candidate when all the media stories and it's in my literature.

And he said, you're not openly gay because you don't talk about it. And I said, the point we're trying to reach is that everybody out there knows that I'm gay, and I don't have to talk about it.

- Mm-hmm. Exactly.

- I can talk about other things, and they can see me as an individual. And that is what I want to achieve for myself, and ultimately, I'd like all of us to achieve where it's just one other aspect of each of us.

- Yeah. Does he talk about being openly heterosexual?

- Yeah, he does now.

- [LAUGHS]

- He says I'm discriminated against minority. I'm a heterosexual white male. [CHUCKLES]

- Oh, brother.

- He can move to Louisiana and vote for David Duke.

- I see.

- [LAUGHS]

- I'll tell you--

- I have to say something about David Duke. We're having a terrible time doing polling in my race and getting information about my race, and it's the David Duke factor, is that a lot of people in our community are so closeted that they don't want to say that they're voting for me because it would imply that they're gay, even though I do have a lot of straight support.

- Mm-hmm.

- My heterosexual supporters have no problem saying that they're supporting me. But there's a lot of gay people who come and whisper to me that they're voting for me but, oh, I can't-- I can't put a yard sign up, and I can't put a bumper sticker on at the--

- Come on. Don't get him started in this.

- When Maxey was here the day-- or the week after he was elected--

- Yes.

--he said that he had been in Austin for the big rally for gay rights and that someone had came up to him outside of the bars or somewhere and said, did-- were you out there Saturday? I was-- I'm all suntanned. I see you have a little tan. But he said the kid could just not say the word "gay," and Glen was like, out where? What are you talking about?

[LAUGHTER]

I'm like, girl, get over it. Nobody cares. Anyway, politics. I caught a video today that's running on Access Houston, and I understand it's going to be on quite a bit longer. You said there were four things that politicians should do that aren't really being done, and that was something about protection-- police protection and solid waste and street and bridge--

- Streets and--

- I can't remember--

- --sewer.

- Yeah, exactly.

- Sewer and water that-- well, municipal government is pretty basic.

- What is the job of the government as far as you're concerned?

- Well, there's different government entities, and they should be doing different things. And the things that the state legislature does is very different than what the city council should do. The absolute first thing that city council needs to be responsible for is making us safe. And that's police. That's fire. That's emergency services.

And then the other things, the city's responsible for picking up our garbage. They're responsible for maintaining our streets, making sure that the sewer and water lines are maintained-- the infrastructure of the city. And that's it. The city has to do those things well first and then worry about all the other things that are out there.

- Are we doing a job as a city that-- the best job that we could be doing now?

- Do you think so?

- No.

- Are you happy with the way the city is?

- No.

- Come on.

- I'm in HPD every day. I know it's not.

- Obviously, we're not doing a good job, not doing what we really need to be doing.

- So if we elect you to city councilor, you're going to be realistic about things, or are you going to do like every other politician and just powder everything up to make it look pretty?

- All right, I got to be realistic about it.

- For example, right now, we've got 10,000 police officers on overtime. Everybody screamed out overtime. We got 10,000 police officers on overtime. Moving them around to different [INAUDIBLE] city--

- We don't have 10,000 police officers.

- Yeah, I know.

- We had-- do you know how many police officers we have? We have somewhere between 1,500 and 1,700.
- Yeah, we have-- I think it's actually about 150 that we've had for the past few months on a special assignment, and their job is to drive around and wave at the folks and look pretty. They don't actually run calls for service. That means, when you call in, I send the police. And as a dispatcher, it's very frustrating to have all these cops and not be able to use them. And it's very frustrating.
- The things that we do now-- we have a great department, a lot of hardworking people. But they're not paid properly, and they're not supported from City Hall like they should be. And a lot of times, the current council member that's in there for District C is fighting with the administration so much, bickering back and forth about little things that all the big things fall by the wayside. You see what I'm saying? Are you going--
- Actually, that's my major criticism of him is that he's not a team player, and he would rather take shots at the mayor and other council members than actually do something.
- Now, we have the strongest mayor form of government of any major city in the country. The mayor holds all the cards and-- or almost all the cards, and it's up to her, really, to share that power with the council members. The council members don't have a lot. But I think there are ways around that, and the council members need to be in there scrapping for everything they can.
- Mm-hmm.
- We could spend hours talking about the police department and crime. That is the number one issue in the campaign in the city right now.
- Well, don't spend hours. But you've worked with the Police Advisory Committee. Is that what they call it? Or what do they call it?
- Yeah, Houston Police Advisory Committee, past chair.
- What is that exactly? Because I work at HPD and still don't know what that is.
- It was formed right after Jose Campos Torres, who was thrown or jumped into Buffalo Bayous.
- Hmm.
- And the idea was that various minority groups would meet with the chief on a monthly basis and try to talk about touchy issues or hot spots and deal with them before they developed. And I think, for a while, it served a really important function.
- Then Lee Brown came in, and it gradually became-- and I've been involved for many years, and I enjoy my association with the organization. But I think it became a PR organ that we would go, and we would meet, but we didn't have any big problems to deal with.
- That's the way Lee Brown operated everything at HPD.
- What? So--
- And every time--
- --you sit around and have coffee and--
- Well--
- --shoot the birdies?

--we get lectures. I mean, different representatives from different departments in HPD come. And it's probably the most diverse group in the city. All different ethnicities [WHITE NOISE] are represented. We have Jamaican-Americans and Philippine-Americans in the gay community. There are a number of Black groups, a number of Jewish groups, Hispanic groups. They're all there. And it's became mostly an opportunity to learn about the department. Well, then we're going to have traffic in today, or we're going to have homicide in.

- Well, that's no fun.

- No.

- What about the problems?

- Yeah.

- Over the years, the Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, which is represented, probably brought up more issues than any other group there. And when bar raids were a common occurrence. That was one of the subjects that was dealt with on a very frequent basis.

And frankly, I think one of the reasons that we have fewer, much fewer, bar raids now-- it's very uncommon-- is that during the budget crises of the late 1980s, we did a study that showed how much it cost every time HPD would do a bar raid, and they'd send 20 officers and half a dozen cars and a police wagon and tie them up for hours when they could actually be out doing something fighting crime.

And we also did a survey where we called all the other big cities around the country and asked about their program of raiding bars in the gay community, and they didn't do it anymore.

- Oh.

- Well, see, that's what it takes. See, it's not just going there and saying, hello, I'm gay, and police don't raid my bar anymore.

- [LAUGHS]

- It takes just a group, just like what you said.

- Well, dollars has since make--

- Money talks, baby. Yeah.

- Money makes the world go round, yeah.

- Money talks, and--

- [LAUGHS]

- you know what? What? So is the police department doing-- are you happy with the police department now?

- No, I'm-- actually, I've been very disappointed. You're not ever going to have a perfect police department.

- Mm-hmm.

- And a lot of the problems that the police department is having are beyond the control of the police department. They didn't say, oh, we don't want to do any more cadet classes for a while. That was the city council saying, we don't have the money to do it. We're going to have to cut the budget somewhere. Let's cut out cadet classes. It didn't come from HPD.

- Right.

- They didn't create the situation where they have an-- I don't want to say aging police force, but, in a sense, that's true. A number of officers getting up there, getting to where they can take their pensions.

- And that's going to happen very quickly. And we're going to--

- It's already happening.

--lose a lot of people, and we're going to hurt. And we're already hurting, and we're going to hurt a lot more. Anyway.

- Hmm.

- But I think there's also-- we've-- the police department allocates too many resources to public relations and image-building and not enough out on the street.

- And that's very true. OK, we'll talk about other things in just a minute. We got to take a break--

- Oh.

--be talking to Annise Parker, who is a candidate for District C. That's where we live in the Montrose and includes a lot of areas. And we're going to talk about things other than the police in just a second. And I want to tell you my famous Vince Ryan story and why he's not here.

- Oh.

- OK, hang on.

- Yes, I'd like to hear that.

- Here's Harvey Milk.

- The legislators and the executive officers, be they the local supervisor, be the statewide, run your life. They run your life, and they spend your money. When they collect tax money from gay people and don't give us anything back in return, take it for their golf courses, take our tax money for their pet projects, and give us-- and on top of it, insult us by not giving us our rights, that's not motivation.

If you like being harassed by the police, if you like being a third-class citizen, if you like being beat up by pugs, if you like the church yelling at you, don't register. Don't vote. But don't complain. If you want to shove, you'd be shoved back in your closet. If you want to be the traditional gay person who gets beat up and whipped in his home and say, well, I'm gay, and I deserve to get beat up, fine. Otherwise, the only thing you can do is register to vote.

[CHANTING]

- In Chile, 8 million people who want to vote can't. In South Africa, 25 million people who want to vote can't. In the United States, 81 million people who can vote don't.

[PENSIVE INSTRUMENTATION]

Democracy, it can't be of the people and for the people if it's not by the people. Vote.

- Every Saturday night at midnight on *After Hours*, we play music.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

*After Hours* every Saturday night at midnight right here on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM.

[MUSIC - SWING OUT SISTER, "AFTER HOURS"]