

- With a couple of our council people will be out there.

- Good.

- All right, right now because we've been in the media, we're getting a lot of eyes watching us on City Hall. This is the time when we have to show a block vote--

- You bet.

- --and show that we have something behind that. That's what gets people's attention more than anything.

- Well, you're getting ready to introduce yourself.

- I am.

- And then you just started talking about politicians.

- I just get carried away with this. I am so excited. I've been talking to people. But I know I'm going to see an increase in the amount of people voting. Well, when I was talking about new people coming out, this is a friend of mine, Phillip Peters. And he's a new activist. Say, hi, Phillip.

- Hello, everybody.

[CHUCKLES]

- Phillip, you were sitting in. You were talking to me about just looking your head down and saying, Tony, I just didn't come out until discrimination touched my own life. And you know, that meant so much to me Peter-- Phillip, I'm sorry, Phillip. And I don't know. Maybe tell people about that. I think it would be very meaningful to them.

- Well, before the evening of July 3 or what you could consider the early morning of July 4th, I was arbitrarily assaulted on Pacific Street by someone who-- or a group of people rather, who expressed their anger with their fists and a brick that they threw at my friend's back. I consider myself to be a real low-responsibility homosexual. I lived within the mainstream of what I considered to be normal American society and did my own little gay thing privately.

- Kind of assimilation?

- Exactly. This really woke me up in a major way, a slug in the face in more ways than one.

- So you were just walking down the street and a group of guys came up and threw a brick in your friend's back and slugged you in the face when you turned around.

- Precisely.

- Gosh.

- Any of you who ever walked on Pacific Street at night, if this hasn't happened to you, you need to be totally aware that it really might, it could at any time.

- You said July 4th. Is this the same day that Paul Broussard was killed?

- Yes.
- It was three hours earlier, right?
- Actually, only about two hours. Right that same night, there were several incidents that night. Tony's point has been constantly, from the first time that I ever spoke with her, that when violence is not checked, it's not taken care of, is left unaddressed, it escalates. If the people that attacked me and my friend are the same people who attacked Paul Broussard and his friends, then clearly, they were there all night. And they were there to attack people-- innocent people. And the violence escalated.
- Innocent gay people.
- Exactly, innocent homosexuals who were walking in their neighborhood. I'm sure that anyone who lives in the Woodlands wants to be able to walk down any street they live in.
- Did you report this attack to the police?
- Almost immediately. Our first reaction was not to, simply because what good it do?
- Why not?
- But upon getting my nose to stop bleeding and making sure that everyone was OK and getting to my apartment to a phone, we quickly decided that we had an obligation to--
- Good.
- --not only to ourselves and to the police department and to society, but to homosexuals everywhere.
- Well, I work for the police department. And it makes me crazy when I hear gay people say, well, we were attacked. But we didn't call because nobody cares.
- The police department can't help anyone until they know what's happening.
- That's true. That's really true.
- And I want to tell everybody that the police department-- the contact that I've had with the police department, which at first was very minimal, but I've been working with them more and more, they've been more than helpful. And they're being extremely careful and thorough in working this case. And I don't think-- considering how poorly staffed the police department is, I don't think we could expect any more than what we've received.
- Why do you think it's important that other people get involved then?
- Well, I think that it's important that other people get involved because energy that changes things has to come from somewhere.
- It's true.
- And since this happened to me, I've put in several hours of volunteer work, registering people to vote at a local bar, working on the mail out that Tony spoke of earlier. That may not seem like much, a couple of Saturdays, a couple of Saturday evenings, eating Pringles and folding envelopes-- folding letters and stuffing envelopes. But everybody's effort counts.
- It may not seem like much to you. But compared to what some of the queens on Pacific Street are doing right now, it's a hell of a lot. So don't cut yourself short.

- Whatever.

- Don't say you're so short. At least you're doing something.

- Right. And before, I was inactive, totally. I was deadweight on the gay society in the city.

- Yeah, we were, too, until we got involved here.

- I took from every benefit that the gay society does offer. It doesn't offer a lot of benefits because we haven't really progressed as far as we need to. But I didn't give anything. And so that's--

- And I really like to hear this because I know when I got involved in the gay and lesbian community, and it looks like you've got about a good 15 year jump on me.

- Oh, maybe 25 years.

- Hey.

[LAUGHTER]

- Plus he's a really great worker, too. I've lucked out.

- So Tony--

- I don't want any other organizations calling or taking him away. The GLPC needs more people like this who's just start willing to work.

- So the election is on Tuesday.

- No.

- No.

- No, negative, negative. It is on Saturday-- oh, they're just testing me. I bet you all were sitting out there going, oh, no, Buddy--

- Elections are always on Tuesday.

- It is-- no, stop, stop.

- It's every Tuesday of November.

- I bet everyone else is sitting down there saying, no, this is a referendum. And it's August 10th.

- August the 10th.

- It's on Saturday so that you can't say, well, I have to work.

- No, no, no, you have--

- You have to show up.

- Actually, they might say, I have to work for the GLPC calling, getting out the vote.

- What's the number again, so people can call.
- 521-1000 and that is Yes on Proposition 35. And even if you live out of the Montrose area, yes, you can vote on this.
- Ooh, yeah.
- All over the city, this is a citywide election.
- Someone just called and said, is it too late to vote absentee?
- I don't believe so. They can call Carl Smith's office, though, on Monday morning and find out.
- Good, good.
- But listen to this, this is something else you can do. Even if you're at home, what I need you to do is call five of your friends. Everyone has their own little gay community. You can be a simple activist. Say, we have to show strength in the gay and lesbian vote right now. We have to keep the momentum voting. Vote Yes, August 10th on Propositions 35.
- That's true.
- If you have any questions about that, call the headquarters and we'll answer it.
- Sounds good. Thanks, Tony.
- Thank you so much. And thank you guys for the job that you do.
- Anything else comes up, come by and tell us.
- We will. Thanks. Thank you.
- Thank you, Phillip.
- Thanks for coming by. Hang on, we'll be back in just a second. This is 90.1 FM.
- Hi, this is Craig Washington reminding you that none of us are free until all of us are free. So keep listening to ~~to~~ *After Hours* 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.
- You're watching channel 13 KTRK-TV Houston, number one in Texas, *Eyewitness News* with Dave Ward and Shara Fryer, Marvin Zindler's *Action 13*, Bob Allen has sports, and Ed Brandon's weather. Now channel 13, *Eyewitness News*.
- Girl--
- Excuse me, what was that all about?
- I was on the news.
- Well--
- Did you see it?

- I thought Ed Brandon was going to walk in the door.

- Oh, Lord, to give us the weather forecast.

- Mm.

- Did you see it? I was on TV.

- Did I ever?

[SIGHS]

I was waiting for you to stand up.

- And do what?

- And I almost-- I saw when you stood up. And I thought, yeah, is that him? Yeah, that's him, that's him, that's him. See, I don't have--

- Everybody at work was like--

- I don't get to see you in--

- --here and there and stand up and--

- I don't get to see you in your uniform. So there you are in this white shirt with patches all over it.

- We'll tell you all about that in a minute. HPD sent me over there.

- And I thought you did a great job.

- Did you hear that?

- HPD sent you over there?

- Yeah, Channel 13 called and wanted to know if I would come and represent HPD as an openly gay person. And I did. And I asked the Chief's office. And they said yes and sent me.

- No kidding.

- I'll tell you about it in a minute. The whole time while they were setting up at Channel 13, I could hear Romanovsky and Phillips just as clear as a bell. They were going-- what were they doing?

- Hi.

- They weren't doing that.

[LAUGHS]

- Girl.

- These damn things are not worth it.

- Oh, that was a beautiful segue, but--
- No, it wasn't. It was hell. You know what, I'm a little nervous because I just canceled my Monday night show.
- I know.
- Actually, I'm glad it's over.
- Well, it was--
- I'm waiting for this one to be canceled.
- Wow.
- Well, I'm tired, girl. We come down here every week, and--
- I know.
- One of the reasons I quit the Monday night thing is because we don't get any pledges at Marathon.
- Yeah, that was a problem on that show. And I think it was that everybody likes it. But it's probably one of those things where all of your listeners listen to other programs and give to other ones. And you know.
- You think so?
- Oh, yeah.
- Well, Marathon's in less than a month.
- Is it?
- And in less than a month, we're going to start our fourth year.
- No, a little more than a month.
- September the 6th.
- Well, this is August the 3rd, Mary.
- August, then what?
- Then September the 3rd.
- And September the 6th. So I lost a month.
- A little over a month.
- Have you kept up with Stanley's money like that?
- I do. That's why I'm in such trouble.

[LAUGHS]

- Anyway, what do I want to do? I don't know what to do.

- There's been a lot going on. We need to talk about that TV thing because I liked what you did. I liked what everybody did. I wish it could have gone on for about four or five hours. There seemed to be enough people with enough questions.

- What we're talking about is the town meeting that Channel 13 sponsored on Friday night in lieu of their 6:00 newscast, which lasted for an hour and a half.

- You have to sift through, though, because there were a lot of people making political statements.

- Well, just the politicians.

[LAUGHS]

I was very disappointed. There were-- the audience is making statements about crime. And the politicians were making statements to get elected.

- Yeah, I noticed that.

- I was really disappointed. I mean, the mayor-- Bob Lanier said he asked the mayor if closing the police academy was a mistake. And I think he should have said, if not having any police training classes, any cadet classes was a mistake because the mayor said, "Well, the police academy has never been closed." But actually, it hasn't because we use the academy for training. But there weren't any police officers, brand new "slap the blue on them and send them into the streets to fight crime" police officers made for years.

- I don't think a lot of people know that.

- Well, they don't.

- It was a surprise to me. But not that I'm not that active. But we just go through thinking that there are new police officers every few months or something.

- Well, the mayor said, we were going to hire 150, I think, in the next year.

- Well--

- And we've lost 600 in the last five years. I think that's what I heard on TV. I don't know. Don't quote me on that. In fact, don't quote me on anything when it comes to the police department. I don't know. I do know that I was getting upset listening to the politicians there, stabbing at each other, trying to get elected. And I was-- all I could think about were the people back at work that were struggling, trying to get all the cars out. In dispatch, we answered to over two and a half million calls last year.

- Whoa.

- Two and a half million calls for service. People picked up the phone and dialed either 911 or 222-3131 and called the police. We took in over two and a half million calls. And out of that, over a million of those calls were cleared by the people that work in the telephone room that answer the calls when you call in Houston Police with your emergency thing. A lot of those calls were handled by those people, calls of information, and all that kind of stuff, where is, how do I get to, what happens if I-- who do I call, that kind of stuff.

- Right, sort of like the switchboard for the city.

- And have you seen the papers lately? The police department is--

- I don't understand all of that.

- Well, the mayor hired an independent consulting firm called Cresap, I think is the name, Cresap Consulting to go in and look at the police.

- Yeah, it's an anagram for scrape.

- And-- is it, really?

- Yes.

- Well, they're scraping, girl. They're scraping because in the communications division where I work, emergency communications, where we don't have enough people now, I mean, there are people working overtime now to staff the night shift because we're short.

- You've been talking about that for a long time now, how understaffed your-- one area is.

- Well, they're actually laying people off.

- And that's incredible. I can't understand that. They're already shorthanded. And they're laying people off.

- Wait a minute.

- Now does that make sense?

- The mayor said in the paper, I believe it was *The Chronicle* on Friday or one of the papers, that she hasn't even seen this report, the final draft of this report.

- Well, how did it get into the papers?

- Well, I would like to ask her, the mayor, why are people being laid off in accordance with the instructions suggested in this report if she hasn't even seen it? I mean, what the hell is going on over there.

- I don't know.

- Hello? Kathy Whitmire, are you out there?

- I know she's listening, yeah, right. She's not listening. But I'll tell you who is listening to this broadcast. A lot of people watched this Channel 13 thing on Friday. And I was really kind of-- I don't know. I was nervous. I've never been on TV before. But I got up and said something about Dave Ward was the guy. Dave Ward, I love Dave Ward. When he comes on and he says, homosexuals. He reminds me of father because he makes homosexual words this long.

[LAUGHS]

But Dave Ward was taking questions with Sheriff Friar from the audience, which a lot of people in the audience were asked to be there and didn't get to say nothing, which was disappointing. But anyway, you can only do so much, and no one cares.



- When I saw that group, I thought, not all of those people can possibly ask a question.
- No. But anyway, first of all, it was a good thing what Channel 13 did because there aren't a whole lot of broadcast medias in Houston, especially maybe KPFT, that talk a lot about what's actually going on in the city.
- I liked what you said because you're about the only person that said anything nice about the police department.
- Well, what I said basically was that I hear a lot of people complaining. And I wanted Dave Ward to ask his listeners a question, what are you going to do? And I would ask my listener the same question, what are you going to do to stop this? As a dispatcher, I send the police to calls all the time, 1-Adam-12, see the man at such and such. A police officer goes out there. When he gets there, nothing's going on, or he can't-- or he finds out what's going on.

But in order to have a case, you have to have a complainant, somebody that's complaining or reportees, someone that's reporting. So the police officer will get on the radio and say, 1-Adam-12, who's the complainant out here? Find out what they want. So you pick up the phone and call these people back and go, hello, this is Johnston from the Houston Police. Did you call the police? "I don't want to get involved."

- All of a sudden, they don't want to get involved.
- "I don't know nothing about it. I just cannot get involved."
- Then why bother calling, honey?
- So then we go, OK, thank you very much. And the police officer says-- or I usually say, sir, they don't want to talk to us. If nothing's going on, we will clear the call unfounded, which means we're going to circle it unfounded and put it in a box with a whole bunch of other stuff that don't mean nothing.
- What else can you do?
- And it's such a waste of time.
- It sure is.
- Geez, I can't believe it.
- Those police could be doing something at some other part of town where they're needed.
- Anyway, I don't want to talk all night about the police.
- Now but I remember you saying that. And you got round of applause for that.
- Well, yeah.
- About people not getting involved.
- I said that--
- And that's part of this crime thing.
- I said that the community is going to have to be responsible. People are going to have to become involved in what's going on in their city.

- Like Mr. Renterias, who-- the elderly man who was shot because he was investigating a neighbor across the street. There was a funny truck or a car or something and people he didn't know. And indeed, they were criminals ripping off the place. And he got shot.

- No, I didn't know about that.

- And he didn't die. And not only did he not die, but he remembered what they looked like. And he remembered license plates and all of that. Now we need a whole lot more people like Mr. Renteria, not to get shot, but just to watch out. You don't have to know your neighbors. You don't have to go to coffee klatches, but just be aware of what's going on in your neighborhood.

- This Tuesday night--

- Sorry about the soapbox.

- That's OK. This Tuesday night is National Night Out.

- What does that mean?

- It means at 8:00-- from 8:00 until 10:00, the Houston Police Department will join with other police and Sheriff agencies all across the United States and encourage people to turn on their porch lights, and go out in the front yard and meet your neighbors, find out who your neighbors are, say hello, I live here.

And this is my house. And this is my wife or this is my lover. And this is our dog. And we live here. And if you don't see us coming in here, that means these people who are coming in shouldn't be here. That's part of what I'm talking about when the community should become involved.

- Boy, you bet. That's a good idea.

- So National Night Out is Tuesday. You'll see all about it on the mainstream media. And when it happens, you'd go, I heard that queer talking about it.

- Listen, I have seen some hunky neighbors walking around. It wouldn't be bad to meet them.

- Well, girl, get out there Tuesday night, turn on your porch light, and go out--

- Well, I can't. Stanley's coming back.

[LAUGHS]

- Anyway, we've been doing this. We're going into our fourth year sometime in the next month or so.

[LAUGHS]

- Yeah, let's not get into that again.

- And I've been openly gay, I guess, at HPD by force because when you do a radio show every Saturday night, people know that you're queer if you say it on the radio. And we go, we're here.

- And we're queer.

- So they must know. But child, when I went on Channel 13 and said I was a member of the Houston Police Department since 1984 and a member of Houston's gay community, I felt-- holy moly, I have had more looks and more telephone calls and more computer messages. I have had more--

- Did you feel funny saying that?

- Yeah, that's part of what was nerve-wracking because ever since I started doing this program and more so since I went back in 1990, I quit my job and was gone for a year and something. I was hired back openly gay. Ever since then, it's been real important to me that the Houston Police Department acknowledged the fact that they have a gay man working for them. And that happened this week.

- Sure did.

- And we'll tell you about that in just a second. But to put you in the mood, here's something we did when Mark Timmers, who was a police officer, came to see us. And then we'll tell you my story, all right?

- I'm looking forward to that.

- Here we go.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- 2050, enter 2 and I'll connect you.

- Here at 1520.

[RADIO CHATTER]

- One time, I'll get my gears and be in to report over 6:03 PM.

- 2600 Eagle and Live Oak, no disturbance. 3900 navigation, a vehicle blocking the drive. 40,000 until Freeway I think there's a part of a vehicle, a lot of 1009 California DL. The male disturbance, all calls will be cared to [INAUDIBLE].

- PS-01, now.

[RADIO CHATTER]

- 71-5.

- 7-11, are they lost? We have a vehicle possibly outbound Southwest Freeway coming up on 610. Are you getting on it? Via white over yellow Chevrolet. They'll be outbound 59 going on to beat 610.

[SIREN]

- 3-32.

- 3-32.

- Yeah, 300 VX going about 100 miles an hour at 610 East. I'm just passing 225. They won't pull over for me. Can you close

- 225 east, still going over 100 miles an hour.

- Probably it'll be a stolen car.

- 3-32, do you have a plate?

- David Edwards Zebra--

[RADIO CHATTER]

[INAUDIBLE] he started to make some tracks. I still got him in sight. He's waving in and out of traffic.

[SIREN]

[RADIO CHATTER]

- Southbound 294--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

- Approaching Fairbanks northeast and--

- Southbound, he just cracked up. [INAUDIBLE] He just cracked up.

[RADIO CHATTER]

- 4-39, this unit's all right. Everybody's OK.

- So we've got two confirmed, two confirmed, but we'll need an ambulance and a [INAUDIBLE] supervisor.

- Go ahead and get an ambulance around out here also. [INAUDIBLE] we've got two confirmed fatalities.

- [INAUDIBLE] get some forms, please.

[RADIO CHATTER]

- You're cutting out.

- [INAUDIBLE] 4-2.

- Repeating 42.

- It'll be in report. Can you call out 4500 Beechnut.

- 32 Romeo on a Robert Sam Tom [AUDIO OUT] Street, the 8300 Greenbush. The 41 case number.

- 16 over 21--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

- --the officer. I've just been shot.

- 5-686-6832.

- 5686--

- 32, I've just been shot. 8400 [INAUDIBLE] number 32. Assist the officer has just been shot. I can check him back. Had a great rush on

- Spot, we have an officer who's been shot, 8400 Greenbush.

- It is two Black male suspects, unknown description, Blue Steel Revolver about a .38. I'm going to need an ambulance at this location. They went eastbound.

[RADIO CHATTER]

- OK, Mary, whoa. Let me explain what happened without losing my job. No, I can't explain--

- Why would you lose your job?

- Because a lot of people down there don't like faggots, Mary.

- You're still openly gay. You were hired openly gay.

- Well, they don't like it as long-- it's OK as long as you shut up. But you can't go out in public telling people.

- Well, they didn't like Blacks either. But they got over it, or they're getting over it.

- Anyway, Channel 13 called on Tuesday, a representative of Channel 13, and said, we're doing this town meeting thing on Friday instead of the news. And we would like you to come as a gay man who works for the Houston Police Department, which means that if I go I have to wear my uniform. And I can only do that with the permission of the chief of police because I can't just put on my uniform and go out and say, hi, I'm HPD. You know what I mean?

- Why not?

- Because the uniform is only to be worn when you're out and doing things for the police department. You know what I mean, official business.

- I got you.

- If you're not on official business, you can't have on the uniform. So anyway, I talked to the public information office and said, Channel 13 wants me to do this. And can I do it? And they said, well, we'll have to talk to our boss, who is Myra Jolivet, who actually works for Chief Elizabeth Watson, and see what she thinks. Then we'll get back to you. And they asked. And they called. And they said, well, everybody thinks it's a great idea. They think it would be very positive, which surprised me because I didn't think they would say yes so fast.

- Well, they didn't have a whole lot of time.

- Well, no. But they really believe in me, I guess, as an employee, or they wouldn't have put that much trust in me to let me go out like this because you can't really be a spokesman for the police department. But when you're asked to be a representative, you're there. And you got on your uniform. And everybody's watching you. So that's one of the reasons I was real nervous. So to go through what we have at HPD called the chain of command, I went to a sergeant and told him I needed to see the captain and on the way up.

- And when I went to my captain's office, I said, I would like to get time off to go do this. And it was like, well, after an hour and a half discussion, it was basically like, well, you can go. But you're going to have to go on your own time. I was going to be-- I was asked to take vacation time, which means that it's not police department time. It's my time. Do you know what I mean? If I'm on vacation, I'm not on police business, which means I can't wear the uniform, which completely defeats the whole purpose of going for the department if you're not there.

- Well, but that doesn't stop you from saying where you work.

- Well, that's true. But I mean, this isn't police department business.

- No.

- So if this were police department business, they should pay me for this. And I brought that up because that's one of the things I heard. Well, you just want the city of Houston to pay for your lifestyle, or is that an endorsement for your thing? And I said, well, if that's the case, pay for my Saturday night show that I do from midnight to 4:00 that I've done almost for four years.

- The old silence equals death.

- Pay for that because I say nice things about the police there, so pay for that, too. But they just couldn't understand it. The captain said, well, who's going to know the difference whether you're paid by the city or whether you're there on vacation when you're there? And I said, I'm going to know the difference. I'm going to know that I'm there as me on vacation, on my time, not as a city employee.

- They asked me to come as a city employee. If the department called and asked for any other minority officer, we would send them. And I said, you're not going to find another person in the department who is willing to address issues that are important to the gay and lesbian community. So if you can find one, send them. But you're not going to find one.

- They're also not going to find anyone in the gay and lesbian community that is so positive toward the police department.

- Anyway, after the hour and a half meeting, I left with the understanding that I would be on vacation on my own time, which means that I can't wear my uniform, which actually defeated the whole purpose of going. And Channel 13 wanted me there as a gay police dispatcher, who happens-- you know what I mean?

- Yeah.

- So Thursday-- This was all on Wednesday. Thursday morning, I received a call from one of the assistant chief's office who is over our division, who had received a call from the public information office who works for the chief and said, what's going on? And I said, well, Channel 13 has asked me to come as a member of the department who happens to be gay to this thing. And I would like to go.

That's great. I said, well, I was told that I have to go on vacation time rather than on city time. And he said, no, that's not the way it's going to be. People who are asked to represent this department will go on department time.

- That's the way it is anywhere.

- Anyway, what it all boils down to, which didn't make a hell of a lot of sense right now because it's 1:30 in the morning. What it all boils down to is that the Houston Police Department sent me to Channel 13 as a gay employee. And no matter what else happened that night, we made history.

- That is history.

- And when I got up and said, I'm a member of the police department since 1984 and a member of Houston's gay community, you could have-- well, you should have seen some of the looks on some of the faces. I think Dave Ward thought I was pretty safe because it was like, this guy is in uniform. And it's going to be OK, but--

[LAUGHS]

What's wrong with the telephone?

- There's some fool just calling and hanging up. Anyway, I really like what you said. I wish you had it on tape because the way you presented it, you presented yourself as I'm a dispatcher for HPD. And you're standing there in your uniform. And then you presented the fact that-- and as a member of the gay community. And then you just calmly talked about what you wanted to talk about.

- KPFT. Hello? KPFT. Hello? See, somebody's calling. But they don't have anything to say. KPFT. KPFT.

[SCOFFS]

Why is this person calling?

- Because they can't get it done.

- KPFT. KPFT. Hello, you're on the air. No, you're not on the air.

[SIGHS]

- Anyway, what does that got-- what does that have to do with anything?

- I don't know, Mary. It's just ignorant people. And you know what? I really don't give a damn if the people down there that I work for like the fact that I'm gay because I know that there are people down there who are Black. And they are disliked as much as I am by other people who are racist and sexist and homophobic. So it's nothing new. I mean, what is new is that we have a lot of support from the chief's office and from other people down there. And all this other crap has got to stop.

- Well, I think that presentation Friday night really helped because--

- Do you think anybody really cares or really saw it?

- I think a lot of people saw it. And I like the way it was presented. Hello, I'm a dispatcher for HPD and as a member of the gay community. And you did it just so very matter-of-fact. Like it's no big deal, which, of course, it isn't.

- Oh, well, let's--

- Because your problem, what you talked about and you did get round of applause, by the way--

- That's why I said--

- --if you remember, because you talked about--

- --that people should get involved.

- Which is what we scream here every week.

- Some jerk. He's playing with our phones. It must take a real pathetic little person to call up and like-- do you know what I mean? What the hell is it?

- They think they're jamming all our lines.

[LAUGHTER]

We have too many, baby. You can't do it.

- We've got 16 lines.

- You can't do it.

- Get a life. Oh, well, let's get off this phone thing because this is making me crazy. It's like all these ignorant letters that you see in the paper about-- did you see the one today in *The Chronicle*? This woman said-- what did she say? I'm starting a group for heterosexual rights because we have gay rights and lesbian rights. And where the hell is she at?

- She was born with rights. She does not know what it's like to live without them. I've seen other letters, too, about why do we have to have so much coverage over gay and lesbian rights. What about our rights? And it's the whole idea is, baby, we don't have them. And we need them.

- There's someone--

- We are taxpayer-- tax payers, thank you. And why do we have to have a second class citizenship?

- What's this? Is this for real?

- Yeah.

- Because it's like some bozo. Hello.

- Hello?

- Yeah.

- You're on the air. What can we do for you?

[INAUDIBLE]

See?

- Uh-huh.

[LAUGHTER]

Oh, no. He can't get a date either.



- So they just call in and shout obscenities. Is that all-- is that-- look, I quit doing the Monday night show because of this kind of crap. Nobody ever called to request any music. And nobody pledged at Marathon. We're getting ready to go into Marathon now. And all we get to call us are these goddamn Christians that are really good Bible-loving people and a few teenagers that can't even jerk off and go to sleep. I mean, what the hell is going on here? And I have to go down at HPD and put up with these bozos that think it's 1955, Christ.

Let's quit doing this show, Mary. You think I'm kidding. Hello?

- Hello.

- Yeah.

- This is Mike. Am I on the air?

- Yes, you are.

- I just wanted to say that-- I just wanted to call in. I'm about to go to bed. And I want to give my support to police officer dispatcher there.

- Oh, thank you.

- Thank you very much.

- That I-- I respect him for doing what he's doing. And I'm not gay myself. But I do not have any problems with that. And I'm glad that there's people like you out there that are willing to go into the community like you have and just to go out and show that you care--

- I wish a lot of the police officers--

- --every which way. You know what I mean?

- Yeah, I wish of all the police officers that were gay felt the way you do.

- Well, see, I'm thinking about going to force myself.

- Really?

- But then I had some second reservations about it.

- It's a lousy job.

- Yeah, well, lousy pay, too, I hear.

- No idea because it really is.

- Actually, I don't know. It sounds like a type of job that has to be in your blood to want to serve and protect.

- Right.

- And I really admire the men and women who have that in their blood.

- So do I. I do, and I appreciate it a lot. And I also appreciate persons like yourself that I'm sure you really care about your community and will do anything you can to help it.

- That's what I tried to tell my captain. I'm only doing this for the city of Houston.

- Well, right.

- I mean, I can come to work and go home and do my eight hours. I could really care less if anybody down at HPD ever does come out.

- Right. We don't know what's going to happen to the city itself.

- I mean, I've got my life. But I really do enjoy living in this city.

- As far as the municipality goes, it's tough to say what's going to happen today or tomorrow. But as long as we have people like you and I, like I care about the city. And I care about the whole community.

- Well, listen--

- You sound like someone that we need on the police force.

- What part of town are you calling from?

- I'm calling from Clear Lake.

- Great.

- Hey, Clear Lake, hi.

- Thanks for calling us.

- Thank you, Mike.

- Bye bye.

- Hello.

- Hi.

- Hi.

- Hello.

- This is Jamie. How y'all doing?

- Fine, how are you?

- Well, I got something to say that I appreciate you guys a lot really. And I'm having a sex change in about a couple of months from now. And I owe it all to you two guys. I really do.

- Oh, thank you.

- Because I was like in the closet for a long time.

- Uh-huh.

- But then when I first-- I never met you in person or whatever. But when I first found out about the radio station that you run every Saturday, I thought you were such great guys by being out in public. So I was kind of scared because of my parents.

- Oh, sure, yeah.

- But I'm over 21. So by now, I should be able to come out of the closet if I wanted to without their permission or whatever.

- It's like Tony Knight with the GOPC said earlier, everybody can't come out of the closet. We understand that.

- I know.

- Everybody has to make that decision on their own.

- But it's just at home, of course.

- What part of town are you calling from?

- 1960.

- Hey.

- Well, listen, thanks for taking the time to call us.

- Thank you.

- Thank you.

- Hello.

- Hello?

- Yeah.

- How are you doing?

- Terrible. How are you doing?

[LAUGHS]

- I'm making it. I can barely hear you, though. I'm calling from a payphone.

- So what's on your mind?

- I just wanted your opinion on something since you're with the Department and stuff.

- What's that?

- Everybody's complaining about how there's not enough officers out on the street and stuff. The city is complaining that they don't have the funds to put more people out there and all this neat stuff. Well, there's a lot of people like me that are in a situation to where they can't afford to go to college and aren't eligible for grants and stuff like that. But they want desperately to become a police officer. And I was wondering, do you think-- do you see anything as far as the Department maybe dropping the requirement for the 60 hours in order to get more people in there?

- Those things change all the time. Do you know what I mean?

- Yeah, yeah.

- The education thing is very important. But just because you go to school don't mean you're going to be a good cop.

- Exactly, I agree. I mean, there's a lot of people out there that are good-- that are real good people, decent people that want to-- like myself, I'm married and have three children. And I want desperately to become a police officer.

- Well, they recently lowered the-- or dropped or reduced or whatever they did, those college credit things to get Vietnam veterans. So those kind of changes-- those things happen all the time.

- I see.

- The best thing to do is talk to your city council and try to get some input from them because they're the ones that control all that sort of stuff.

- I see, I see. Well, I appreciate your time.

- Thanks for calling.

- All righty, bye bye.

- Hello.

- Hello?

- Yeah.

- I was wondering, are there many gay police officers?

- Probably. I don't know. I don't think so.

- Can you have a real number?

- No.

- I don't think there is.

- Well, because they're in the closet.

- Oh.

- We don't know.

- Get fired?

- Huh?

- Will they get fired?

- I don't think so. I mean, I'm not fired.

- Oh.

[LAUGHS]

- Well, you're not an officer either.

- No.

- Well, that's true. I'm just a lowlife civilian.

- That's why.

- Huh?

- I heard because you went in front of the council, and they couldn't do anything then.

[LAUGHTER]

- No. They could do anything they want to do.

- Thank you.

- Thank you.

- Bye.

- Why-- please. What do you mean? I'm just a civilian, a lowlife civilian.

- What do you mean a lowlife civilian? You do a very important job down there.

- Yeah, right. He's talking about the police officers out. If I do a great job, how come I get lousy pay? How come I have to work overtime, like three or four times a month--

- I don't understand.

- --to make enough money to survive?

- I don't know.

- Hello, Mayor, are you listening? Hello, Mayor? Hello? Hello?

- It surprised me to--

- It's so damn great. Why don't we have such a big turnover rate?

- Yeah, it surprised me to hear that you could be an officer in a smaller town with a lot fewer problems for more money.

- That's true.

- I was appalled at that.

- Oh, well, what's depressing is that if you go and you put somebody in jail, the criminal is serving one month for every year that they're sentenced. Did you see that?

- 26 days per year.

- 26 days for every year sentence. In fact, Judge Licas was on that panel on Channel 13 thing. She said there are cases that she has convicted prisoners. And they are out on the streets before she gets out of the courthouse through plea bargaining and other things that our wonderful state does to work its way out of the thing. I don't know. Hello.

- Hello?

- Yes.

- All right, how are you guys doing out there?

- Fine. How are you?

- Pretty good, pretty good. I'm just calling to express my opinions why is Houston so bad, all the killings and because of all of us hanging out.

- What do you mean Houston? Crime is up all over the country.

- Oh, I know because you see, yesterday, I was watching that on Channel 13. And I went, uh-huh, uh-huh. And it's just every day, every day, every day.

- Well, they've been focused-- ever since the Paul Broussard thing, there's been a focus on crime. And I think that's why you're seeing more of it. It's always been there.

- I know but--

- But people haven't been talking about it and should.

- But why can't the Houston Police Department be on Montrose more, especially at night? So all this-- it won't happen.

- You could put a cop on every corner, and it would happen.

- Sure.

- But us guys, we need protection and so does everybody else.

- Everybody needs-- yes, everybody needs--

- You do, too.

- Yeah.

- I don't know what the answer is.

- I don't think there is any answer.

- Well, a lot of people are getting together, neighborhood watch groups.

- That's part of--

- It's about time.

- It's part of the answer.

- And if there's one in your area, you should think about joining it.

- I'm thinking about it.

- Thanks for calling.

- Thanks for calling.

- Hello.

- Hello?

- Yeah.

- [NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

- Bite mark.

- What was that?

- I think that was an Aryan Nation guy. That sounded like Hitler? It sounded like-- I couldn't really understand what he was saying. But it sounded kind of German and kind of shouting.

- It sounded like-- I don't know what the hell that for.

[LAUGHS]

What do you want to do, Mary?

- Let's play this one thing about police. And then we'll play my little thing that I said at Channel 13.

- Oh, you do have a copy of it.

- Because these calls aren't getting us anywhere.

- And there are a couple of other subjects we need to cover.

- Let's listen to this. This is for all my friends in the blue uniform. And you know who you are.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- What are policemen made of? A policeman is a composite of what all men are, a mingling of saint and sinner, dust and deity. Culled statistics wave the fan over the stinkers, underscore instances of dishonesty and brutality because they are "new." What that really means is that they are exceptional, unusual, not commonplace. Buried under the froth is the fact that less than one half of one percent of policemen misfit that uniform. And that's a better average than you'd find among clergymen.

What is a policeman made of? He, of all men, is once the most needed and the most unwanted. He's a strangely nameless creature who is "sir" to his face and "fuzz." Behind his back, he must be such a diplomat that he can settle differences between individuals so that each will think he won. But if the policeman is neat, he's conceited. If he's careless, he's a bum. If he's pleasant, he's a flirt. If he's not, he's a grouch.

He must make an instant decisions, which would require months for a lawyer. But if he hurries, he's careless. If he's deliberate, he's lazy. He must be first to an accident, infallible with a diagnosis. He must be able to start breathing, stop bleeding, tie splints, and above all, be sure the victim goes home without a limp or expect to be sued. The police officer must know every gun, draw on the run, and hit where it doesn't hurt.

He must be able to whip two men twice his size and half his age without damaging his uniform and without being brutal. If you hit him, he's a coward. If he hits you, he's a bully. A policeman must know everything and not tell. He must know where all the sin is and not partake. The policeman must, from a single human hair, be able to describe the crime, the weapon, and the criminal and tell you where the criminal is hiding.

But if he catches the criminal, he's lucky. If he doesn't, he's a dunce. If he gets promoted, he has political pull. If he doesn't, he's a dullard. The policeman must chase bum leads to a dead end, stakeout ten nights to tag one witness who saw it happen, but refuses to remember. He runs files and writes reports until his eyes ache to build a case against some felon who will get bailed out by a shameless Sheamus or an honorable who isn't honorable.

The policeman must be a minister, social worker, a diplomat, a tough guy, and a gentleman. And, of course, he'll have to be a genius for he'll have to feed a family on a policeman's salary.

- Or he'll have to feed a lover on a policeman's salary.

- Yeah, right. Don't worry. There aren't any gay cops at HPD. I'm the only queer down there.

- Yeah, right.

- I work with this guy that-- I really respect him a lot. He's been there for a long, long time. And he's a police officer who's been in the communications division where I work for many, many years. And today we were in the hallway on a break. And he looked around and make sure nobody was looking. And he said, Buddy. And I said, yes. And he said, why did you have to mention this gay thing on Channel 13? They just don't get it.

- No, just don't get it. I'm surprised by a lot of Black people who just don't get it.

- Because when we're in the closet, we don't exist. Silence does equal death, baby.

[SIGHS]

- Anyway, here's the thing I said. Do you want to hear this?

- Yeah.



- It's not a very good recording. But this is what I said at Channel 13.

- Oh, OK.

- I've got a question back here. Let me get your name and your question, sir.

- Hey, I'm Buddy Johnston. I'm a dispatcher for the Houston Police Department. I would like to ask a question to your viewers tonight. I work for the police department since 1984. And I know that our police officers down there and we're working very hard. And we're facing something that a lot of us think we can't beat. I'm also a member of the Houston gay community. And the communities are working hard. We're fighting something we think that we can't win.

And the question is, what are you going to do because we have to work as a community together? I don't know how many times I receive a call from a citizen and dispatch a police officer to the scene. And when the officer gets there and tries to do something, we hear, "We don't want to get involved." "I didn't call." "I don't want to get involved."

[APPLAUSE]

This community is going to have to get involved. I just recently heard the gay community screaming and yelling that nothing's being done. And we're working, we're down there eight hours a day, five days a week working. This community is going to have to work together with these people and quit trying to blame someone. We have to.

- Very good. That's a good point that he just made.

- Well--

- I like that.

- Well, I don't know if I liked it or not. I was scared to death because I've never been on TV. This is real easy for me. You know what I mean, radio--

- Radio?

- --because I come down here for all four years. And I've been doing radio almost 20 years. And nobody's here but us. And we've got our buttons and our records. And we're in control.

- I can understand that. I was scared of the microphone for the first few months I was here.

- Really?

- Yeah, for some reason.

- Well, you warmed up to it.

- I certainly have.

- But I was nervous. Plus I knew that I was there as a gay member of the Houston Police Department.

- That's another coming out as a matter of fact.

- That was something really big for me, you know what I mean.

- I keep saying, coming out is a process. It's not an event. And you come out here. You come out there. And after a while, that part's easy. But this was a new experience saying, hey, I'm gay on TV. Well--

- It was very scary. And I know that a lot of police officers, straight and gay, were watching that broadcast. And they were thinking, oh, God, there she goes again.

[LAUGHS]

- But that was the point.

- Yep. I spoke to Mark Timmers Thursday morning.

- Hello, Mark.

- Actually, Friday morning, about 3:00 in the morning, I woke him up--

- I'll bet.

- --because I was so nervous. I mean, I had fought all day Wednesday with myself and my conscience and my supervisors about trying to get them to understand that Channel 13 asked me there as a gay employee of the police department.

- Wait a minute. You really called Mark at 3:00 in the morning?

- Yeah, I was really upset. He was the only one I knew that would understand because Mark used to be a cop. And he said--

- And he should be one again.

- He said it's real funny, Buddy. It's funny that it's going to be you that somehow is going to open a lot of doors for a lot of police officers in the city of Houston. I hope he's right. I don't know. I still am waiting for one cop somewhere to show up and go, I'm here. And I'm queer. And you're right.

- Well, Mark did it.

- Yeah, but that's another story. Anyway--

- One we should play because we have that on tape.

- We're going to be-- I should have brought that. And we could have played that tonight. But I wasn't-- I had all these things to do. And then this bozo kept calling. And I'm over him because our phones are all-- I'm not even paying attention. While we were at Channel 13 getting ready for this thing, I was thinking about Romanovsky and Phillips. And they sing this song. And as the whole thing was going on, this is all I could think of. What's that?

- We had a request--

- And?

- --for a Romanovsky and Phillips, a song for Donna and La Vida.

- La Vida.

- And it's La Vida's happy birthday.

- Well, happy, happy, happy birthday.

- And Alfredo says happy birthday. And I'm sorry about being a jerk.

- Wow. Hey, no personal messages on these things.

[LAUGHS]

- I know. I thought I'd try to slip that in.

- Oh, happy birthday, child. And this is all I could think about while all this stuff was going on, all these people, and all these politicians because the politicians really didn't say diddly-squat about crime. They were like, look how great I am. I have all the answers and vote for me.

- I know. You really had to search through and sift through what people were saying.

- And I'm really disappointed, honestly, about the way that the Chief has been treated by the Council. I mean, they appoint this woman to be the chief of police. And up until recently, she didn't have a whole lot of support. So I mean, they expect her to run this department with a shoestring. And it's real easy to hire all these real expensive groups to come in and look at us and tell us how bad we're doing. I wish just once that the City Councilmen would come over and sit with us for an hour or two hours and actually see what's going on.

I would invite any of them. But they're not going to do that. They're too busy politicking to get involved in real life. But anyway, maybe they will. I don't know. Maybe I'll invite them.

I do want to go to City Council in the near future and ask the mayor why-- if she doesn't know anything about this big Crasep report that we keep reading about in *The Houston Post*, why people are actually being laid off in dispatch. Anyway, that's another story on another day. And I'll play this Romanovsky and Phillips because as I was sitting at Channel 13, this song kept going through my mind. And it's the only answer, kids. It is the only answer. Don't you think?

- Yeah.

- It is. When heterosexism strikes, strike back. This poor woman.