

DIANE: What-- what a cool tune? I'm so pleased I heard this. And I just couldn't believe it. This is Pink, guys. You know her, OK. If you're from Houston, if you've ever been to a bar, you know this woman. Pink has a new CD out, and also she's going to be at Memorial City Saturday, March 12 at Sam Goody Music. It's going to be a record signing party. So come on out and listen. Thank you, Pink. We loved it. It was great. Well, you know, the party doesn't end. The party doesn't end. We have a room full of people here. Two of them are from Houston Gay and Lesbian--

JIM: Parents

DIANE: --Parents. Well, Jim and Linda, thanks for coming tonight.

JIM: Thank you for having us.

DIANE: Well, great, I'm glad you're here. Tell me about your organization. Tell me about how it got started. I take it y'all are parents.

JIM: Yes, we certainly are.

LINDA: Co-parent.

DIANE: For each other or for other people?

JIM: Oh, no. No. No. No. I have three children. I had them through a heterosexual marriage which a lot of us do have kids that way. And then there are people that have chosen to become parents after coming out and are looking into adoption, and artificial insemination, and everything like that. The Houston group was formed about five years ago from a need to have some sort of support for the parents in the Houston community as well as our children. Children have a group too. They meet with us and talk out their problems they have in their own age peer group.

DIANE: Yeah, so what age group-- what age is your Kids What age are your children?

JIM: Mine are 17, 19, and 22.

DIANE: So have you hit most of the worst spots already?

JIM: No. No, it does not get easier.

DIANE: It doesn't get easier.

JIM: No.

DIANE: What about you, Linda?

LINDA: I'm a co-parent. My spouse has two children. One is 19 and one is 14. And the 14-year-old is the one that we care for at home. The 19-year-old lives with his dad. But it can be difficult but also joyous.

DIANE: Yeah. How often do you meet?

JIM: The support group meets once a month for a social activity. And then we have a support meeting once a month where just the parents get together and talk about issues that are bothering them, and with child rearing, and everything else you can think of.

DIANE: How do you think your sexuality issues affect your parenting issues? Do you think they play a big part on that? Do your-- have your kids live with you or do your kids live with you?

JIM: My kids do not live with me. I do see them see them quite often. My oldest daughter is in college and she does spend her summers with me, and spring break, and all that other break time she has. But as far as my sexuality having to do with being a parent, I don't think it's much of an issue. Because when you're being a parent, you don't have time to think those other things. Even though my kids have known I've been gay, or they've known I'm gay since they were like real young, 3 to 8 years old.

DIANE: Yeah, and how do you think that that's affected them? From your meetings with both the kids and the parents, how do you think that that's come across? Do you think that it's been beneficial? And--

JIM: Well, I certainly hope it has been. I think that they're growing up to be better adults than what they would have been otherwise. They're more accepting of different types of people and so on.

DIANE: Did you ever have the terrible name calling section? Did you ever have that part of that relationship where your sexuality was a problem, or it came to a head, or something like that happened?

JIM: Not with my kids. My ex-wife, yes, but not my kids, no.

LINDA: I think it's an added issue that the kids have to deal with in their own personal lives, definitely. It has played a part with Joseph at one point, when he was a little younger. I think the older he gets, the better he understands. And the better-- the more understanding he comes into, the less of a problem, or a crisis, that it is for him, you know.

Like they all-- all kids have issues that they deal with, their own sexuality, their own developmental skills in school, their own peer issues. And that is an added issue with kids, if they grow up in a gay household. But if you're a parent and you teach them and show them all the love that you have for them. And they reciprocate it, it becomes more of a society issue than a household issue, even for their points of view, you know. It seems more like it's society that is making it an issue, you know.

DIANE: Yeah, I'll go ahead and ask this question since your kids are a little bit older. Do they ever have questions about their own sexuality? Or did you ever-- were you ever addressed about questions about their own sexuality, I suppose? I know you mentioned that you had, I guess, a co-son.

LINDA: Right.

DIANE: And you have a daughter, so not only is there little sexuality issues but there's gender issues too being not a same sex parent-child relationship.

JIM: Definitely. And that's one way that the parents group has helped with that. The kids are not only seeing me as their father but they've seen some lesbian mothers and had realized that they're not the only children in the same situation. And that I've needed the women in my life to help me with these issues for my daughters, especially, when they go through their growing up.

DIANE: Well, you're listening to 90.1 KPFT Houston. And we're here with the Gay and Lesbian Parents Group of Houston. And we're really glad you're here. We're talking about parenting issues and sexuality issues. If you have any questions, call us up at Jam KPFT, you know the number. Give us a call.

How did you-- I want to ask you a little since you're a co-parent, when you were first getting involved in your relationship, did that-- what kind of thoughts did you have about that parenting issue? Did you-- were you addressed about being a parent or co-parent? Did you want to be-- want to take on that role, or did you want to step aside from that role, or how do you feel about that? And how long have you and your lover spouse been together?

LINDA: We've been together four years. And in the beginning, it was very difficult. Because I think that in any step-parent situation, be it gay, or lesbian, or heterosexual, you're going to have step-parent issues, you know, whether you're straight or gay. And those issues came up, you know. And we just dealt with it, you know, each day.

DIANE: Discipline issues, things like that?

LINDA: Yes.

DIANE: Who does the disciplining?

LINDA: Yes. Yes, that was an issue. But I tend to think that-- if they know you're the parent and they are the child, that's a good path to stay on. And a good path to pave even for their development, because it's important to let them know that they're the child. So that they don't feel that they have to take on all these responsibilities with these issues, that you're there strong enough to deal with the issues, to deal with the things that come up, you know. So they can rely on you and impart that to them that they can rely on you as well as discipline them, or try to instruct them, in the way that they should go, you know.

As far as what you said earlier about their sexuality, if that has ever come up. What we try to do with Joseph being in the puberty age, the hormones are acting up, I just try to take the viewpoint with him-- I don't-- and this is a misconception in the straight world that if you're a lesbian or you're a gay parent, you know, you're going to be a bad influence on your child and you're going to raise them or rear them to be the same and follow in your path of being a homosexual, you know.

And we don't do that, I mean. I wouldn't expect him to be anything that he's not. And I don't-- I wouldn't want him to choose the path until the laws of the land start making it easier for people to live a decent standard of living and without the fear that's out there. And so I wouldn't press that issue with him. He-- I think he's going to be a great dad. I mean, I already see-- we already see things in him that he's going to, I think, just naturally be heterosexual.

DIANE: He's got some good parenting skills, already.

LINDA: Yeah. Yeah.

DIANE: That's great. So what about you, are you single or a spouse?

JIM: I'm single.

DIANE: Yeah, so how do you think that affects? Do you think that your parent-- your parentness-- the fact that you're a parent, does that affect your romance, your love-life, that part of your life, or in a good or bad way? And how do you think that you're being single, if you were to meet somebody, how do you think that would affect your kids?

JIM: Well, I have had a lover before. And my kids accepted him, and grew to like him, and everything. It wasn't a problem. Being single now, it's-- we, sometimes, run into these other phobias out there, even in our own community, that tend to turn people off.

DIANE: Definitely. You think people are afraid of getting involved with somebody that's a parent?

JIM: Some people are, yes.

DIANE: Yeah, I think so too, sometimes. How do you deal with that? Do you ever hide the fact that your parents?

JIM: Never. Never. It's too much a part of my life to hide.

DIANE: Yeah.

JIM: So you deal with it like you deal with all the other rejections that are out there in the world.

DIANE: Well, somethings have their good spots, you know, some rejections have their silver lining.

JIM: Oh, definitely.

DIANE: So what else do you do besides being a parent. I mean, I know that that's a very big part of your life and you're involved with the parent network, the parents group. Is there something else that you do, let's say, within the gay and lesbian community? I mean, do you go to gay events? Do you do gay things?

JIM: Oh, yes.

DIANE: Are you now a person--

JIM: Oh, yes. I'm out. Yeah, I belong to Bering Memorial United Methodist church, and very active there. And I am just starting a term on the Bering Community Service Foundation board of trustees.

DIANE: Great.

JIM: So I do have some community activities. The Houston Gay and Lesbian Parents group is a member of the Gay and Lesbian Parents Coalition International, which has about 60 chapters throughout North America and parts of Europe. And I'm serving that body as its president right now.

DIANE: Yeah, the National Network?

JIM: International network.

DIANE: International, that's great. So what is your jobs? What is your job there entail? What does that mean to be International President?

JIM: Well, we have a lot of things that we're trying to do. Of course, we're trying to keep on top of all the different parenting issues that are coming up across the country. We've support some of them with amicus briefs. We did one for the Sharon Bonds case which went on. We're also fighting some discrimination laws like the one in Washington that they're trying to get passed. Not only discriminates against gays and lesbians but it says that gays and lesbians should not be foster parents, should not be allowed to adopt. And if they do have children, should not be able to take care of them.

DIANE: Well, there's somebody here that has a question for you. That's what I'm trying to do right now. Let's see. Let's see, if I can get to them. Press this button. OK, let's see, line seven, right here.

CALLER: Hello. [BEEPING]

DIANE: Hello. Hello.

CALLER: Hello.

DIANE: Hi, do you have a question for us?

CALLER: I don't have a question, I have a comment. I remember reading in *Newsweek* magazine, I think, it was a few years back. They had a very interesting article about gay and lesbian parents. And they had a very interesting statistic, which was-- which reported that the overwhelming majority of the children of gay and lesbian couples tend to become much more sophisticated and well-developed in their attitudes towards diversity, in particular, and the world, in general. And I really believe that the heterosexual world should take a very strong look at this. Because, you know, as screwed up as society is getting, it's going to require that we recruit as many healthy elements of our society as possible, and get rid of all of our phobias, and prejudices.

DIANE: Right.

CALLER: And I do have one question. Is the state of Hawaii the only state that legalized gay and lesbian adoption?

DIANE: No, as far as I know. Do you know anything more about gay and lesbian adoptions?

JIM: I don't know that there's any state that actually has a legal adoption law but it is something that is happening throughout the country in various parts, mainly in the major Metropolitan areas. New York is very, very active in this area. And you are seeing things, like recently in Fort Worth a co-parent has been able to get managerial custody of a child with their mother. So it is something that is happening around the country.

DIANE: A couple of us had an idea that what you could do is you could all-- you could segregate your lover's child. In other words, if a doctor would be willing, one female partner could use the egg of her female lover and actually give birth to her lover's child. That way her lover would be the biological parent but she would still be the birth mother so that the rights would be much more hotly contested, if there ever came to court. You said, you saw this article in *Newsweek*--

CALLER: Yep.

DIANE: Is that right?

CALLER: In *Newsweek* magazine about 1989, 1990.

DIANE: So it's been a while.

CALLER: And I just thought it was very interesting. And Oprah Winfrey, one time, did a show about this. And she also revealed the *Newsweek* finding.

DIANE: I think that's great that you brought that point up. I think it's important to instill the best characteristics that we possibly can into our kids, specifically, compassion, and understanding of different races, and ethnic groups, and sexual orientation. And I once said that we have a great opportunity to possibly raise and nurture the first generation of people that would fully understand our community, being our own kids.

CALLER: That's true. Another interesting thing that I've discovered also, I've read this in several different magazines whatnot, is that another so-called taboo of our society of interracial marriages, whether it's Black-White, White-Hispanic, White-Asian, whatever, the offspring of interracial marriages also have a very healthy sense of understanding and accepting diversity, more so than mono racial.

DIANE: I think that that's about creating a community. When you have to create a community between two different kinds of anything, those two different kinds of anything are going to feel a little bit more similar to each other. So I think that that's what we have to do is we have to create communities.

CALLER: And this is a very exciting age we're moving into because from other readings I've done, there seems to be a consensus among authors, sociologists, and psychologists that we're moving into an age of both high hybridization and androgyny, so to speak, where there's going to be a tremendous mix, not just between races, but between the heterosexual and gay and lesbian communities, and what not, to where we're seeing the last vestiges of hatred, in other words. I mean--

DIANE: I certainly hope so.

CALLER: You know, we're seeing a lot of Berlin walls crashing down because you can only keep a wall up for so long. And these walls are tearing down and there's a lot of crossover going on. So that's why we've seen such a spike in prejudice and hatred lately because the bigots know they're losing. Now, that's a fact. They are losing and they're on their way out.

DIANE: The biggest wall that we still have to tear down though, so to speak, in my own opinion for what it's worth, is the legalization and the right to marry and the acknowledgment of that throughout the states. I mean, that's the biggest issue, I think, that faces our own personal lives on a day to day basis.

JIM: I think it's just around the corner.

DIANE: I hope so.

LINDA: I think it'll happen sooner. I really believe it's going to happen sooner than a lot of--

DIANE: Either that or come up with some kind-- if the government, state governments, local governments, federal government, whatever, if they won't acknowledge our marriages, at least at a bare minimum come up with a legislative bill that would acknowledge a family unit to be a family unit.

LINDA: Some kind of domestic partnership.

DIANE: That's right. There's common law marriages that have been in the laws of the land for years and years. If people live together for a certain amount of years, they're considered married after a certain period of time. At least come up with a common law family unit bill, or something, you know.

CALLER: Well, it's often said that whenever a mass social movement-- in order for a mass activist movement to occur, there has to be a what they call a spark or a spike. For example the Rosa Parks situation, the Civil Rights Marches were big spikes that mobilized massive civil rights legislation. I'm beginning to feel in my bones-- because a lot of my premonitions come true most of the time. I really feel in my bones that the situation that's going on at Camp Sister Spirit.

DIANE: I heard about that.

CALLER: --in Ovett, Mississippi.

LINDA: Mississippi, yep.

CALLER: I really believe we're looking at the beginnings of a major spike.

DIANE: Well, I think that in the Houston community, we had the Paul Broussard incident and that was the birth of the Houston Coronation Movement. It was the birth of an active Act Up. We had the Republican National Convention here. I think that things are moving on a rapid pace. So I think that being able to talk tonight about being a gay parent on a radio show, I think that that's a big step forward.

LINDA: That's right.

CALLER: But I really believe, mark my words, I really believe the situation that's evolving at Camp Sister Spirit is going to-- oh, how can I say-- be a major-- it'll be a major spark that'll push the drive for federal civil rights legislation for gays and lesbians because--

DIANE: I hope so.

CALLER: All forces, I mean, look at this closely, all forces are mobilizing in Ovett, Mississippi. The Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition focus on the family people, Eagle Forum, they're all working with the Baptist churches in Ovett.

DIANE: Right.

CALLER: Just about every gay and lesbian organization is working with Camp Sister Spirit. This is a showdown like I've never seen before.

DIANE: I agree. I'm going to go and we're going to take-- we're going to take a break. We're going to go to a song. I thank you for calling and we're going to talk about this some more on the air.

CALLER: Sure.

DIANE: Thanks.

CALLER: Thank you.

DIANE: So we really appreciate that phone call. And I really appreciate you guys for being here. This has been great. Tell me a little bit more about your organization, when you meet, your phone number, that kind of thing.

JIM: OK, we do have a social activity once a month, and then we have a support meeting on the third Thursday of the month at the Montrose Library. You can reach us by calling the switchboard at 5293211.

DIANE: Gay and Lesbian Switchboard, everybody. Yay, Gay and Lesbian Switchboard. OK, great.

JIM: Thank you very much for having us on, Diane.

DIANE: Great. Great. Listen we have a song here. I know that you are a musician as well.

LINDA: Yeah.

DIANE: Tell us about the music, Linda.

LINDA: Well, I'm a singer songwriter in my spare time. I work full time job so I haven't quit my day job yet. But a real good friend of mine and I have done some recording together. We're still doing some recording. We write and perform original music. And I have a song that I brought with me that I'd like to just maybe dedicate to the whole community. It's a kind of bluesy song. And every once in a while we get them.

DIANE: That's right. And what's it called? And what's the group's name?

LINDA: It's called "I don't blame you" and the group-- well, actually, I shouldn't say group because it's just the two of us right now. But we're going by the name of Shatter Hearts right now.

DIANE: OK, great. Well, thanks a lot and we'll be hearing this.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[AUDIO OUT]

[FROGS CHIRPING]

SORCERER: I hear [? Eddy ?] approaching him.

JACK Where?

FLANDERS:

SORCERER: Over there.

JACK Well, that just looks like a thick fog moving in.

FLANDERS:

SORCERER: Right and high.

JACK Oh, you mean it's in the fog.

FLANDERS:

SORCERER: It is the fog. It sounds as though it maybe nostalgia night.

JACK What is that thing?

FLANDERS:

SORCERER: It's essentially a memory shrouded in myth out collecting specimens. Nostalgia is the law, tonight.

JACK This thing just slithers around the marshes collecting people.

FLANDERS:

SORCERER: Never mind it's a small realm but still someone has to do the work.

JACK You mean it makes slaves of the people.

FLANDERS:

SORCERER: Oh, no. Nothing so epic. They can leave whenever the thought occurs to them.

JACK Oh.

FLANDERS:

SORCERER: It's just that thought doesn't seem to occur.

ANNOUNCER: *The Incredible Adventures of Jack Flanders* is a weekly series, Saturday nights at 3:30 AM only on KPFT Houston.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Monster Island Beach Party every Friday morning, midnight to 3:00 AM. At midnight, hear the *Hour of Slack*, official sub-genius propaganda, then stay tuned for electronic music, progressive, industrial noise, improvised music, and other odd peculiar stuff. Some of it hard to label just what it is. For the oddest music and the strangest humor this side of the galaxy, listen to *Monster Island Beach Party* every Friday morning. And remember Godzilla loves you.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

JIMMY: Hi, it's Jimmy with the *QMZ*, the *Queer Music Zone*, heard every week on *After Hours*, a continuing tradition on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM world radio for the people. Damn. OK, got that out of the way. There we go. Hi, how you doing? *Queer Music Zone*, music by out gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender artists. I'm going to start out tonight with an oldie. In fact, I think we're going to do this in two separate-- two parts. I'm going to do a 15 minute version here and then 15 minutes later. So we're going to do the women, first. And I heard this recently. And it's not new but I hadn't heard it in a while. And it's really a pretty song, Lucie Blue Tremblay and "So Lucky."

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[AUDIO OUT]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Oh, yeah. Lucie Blue Tremblay with "So Lucky". What a pretty song? I like-- that's a classic. French Canadian singer, and on most of her albums half the songs are in French. It's kind of pretty. It's nice to listen to things even though you don't know what it means.

Well, if you subscribe to *Out Magazine*, there was an article in it in the latest edition that says, the Indigo Girls, and they say and there that they are out and have been out for a long time. Well, that was news to me. I didn't know that they were out. Nobody that--

DIANE: Maybe cause you know nothing.

JIMMY: --I knew that they were really out. I mean, we knew they were lesbians but they weren't out lesbians. But now, they're out. So we can play them on *QMZ*. So I've got-- well, you know, this is-- I like the Indigo Girls but it isn't exactly toe tapping music. So get ready. It's kind of a slower, slower, slower type of stuff. And this is off of their *Indigo Girls* album, yes. Number two, "Secure Yourself".

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[AUDIO OUT]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Indigo Girls, they finally come out of the closet so we can play them in the *QMZ*, the *Queer Music Zone*. And now, for-- by special requests by Diane, her favorite rocking group, its Sister Double Happiness doing that hang off the end of the truck, and drink that beer, and shit, just shake your head, and do stuff like that. It's called "Lightning Struck."

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[AUDIO OUT]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Yeah, Sister Double Happiness with "Lightning Struck". Words and music by the great Gary Floyd. Well, this has been the *QMZ* with Jimmy. I'll be back later on. But I do want to say a couple of things here. I want to raise a toast to Reign 10 of the Royal and Sovereign Imperial Court of the Single Star. They had their investiture tonight and they're having a good time now, enjoying things. What a great party? And any time you see a fundraiser by the court, run and take a look because those people are having a good time.

And that this episode of *QMZ*. The *Queer Music Zone* is brought to you by queer-- The Q-Patrol. My brain is not working tonight folks. OK, the Q-Patrol, and I want to thank those men and women out on our streets tonight patrolling. And if you want to get in touch with the Q-Patrol, we're going to get the number and find it, because I couldn't find it in my box, because they can always use the help. So we'll see you in just a little bit. But until then-

[MUSIC PLAYING]

OK, let's try that one more time. Q-Patrol 8718519, or the other number 6430029. Give them a call. Now, we're going to Jewel.