

SARAH: That's right. That's exactly right.

JIMMY: And I think it's the same thing with gender.

SARAH: And right now, it's a really hot topic in the transgender community because there are more and more of us who are becoming extremely skeptical of the medical community. And we're beginning to wonder whether surgery isn't something that's being sold to us just like perfume. I personally know at least one person who died on the operating table. I know other women who have had problems after surgery.

And there are people, like Phyllis Frye and myself, who are looking and saying what would surgery give us we don't already have. Why is surgery necessary? And we're beginning to look around and say, you know, maybe it's being sold to us. The clinic-- the gender-- the clinic is often associated with the hospital. So it sounds silly but you say to yourself, well, gee, do the therapists get commission for everyone they send into surgery.

JIMMY: Well.

SARAH: You know, are there kickbacks? What's going on? Now, I'm not making an accusation. I'm just saying that there's an appearance of it being improper. That's all.

JIMMY: Yeah.

SARAH: And there's--

JIMMY: And it is a factory. I mean, what--

SARAH: It is a factory.

JIMMY: Yeah, what do you make here? I mean, what do you do here you? If you're gender clinic, you're changing genders, or doing something with gender.

SARAH: One of the-- one of the guests in her future shows is going to be Gordene MacKenzie, who has written a book called *Transgender Nation*. And that is a very hard look at the medicalization of transsexualism. And she asks the question, in this book, is transsexualism being sold like a product?

JIMMY: Oh.

SARAH: Are transsexuals a profit motive for the medical community? Now, that sounds-- that sounds crazy. But then again, you know, breast implants were sold that way.

JIMMY: Yep.

SARAH: Let me let me tell you something. I guess, I can say this on the air. I'll try and-- I'll try and put this in medical terms. I was at the law conference in August. And there was a doctor there who does the gender reassignment surgery. And he had a slide in which he had two vaginas on the slide. And he looked at the audience and said, can you tell which one is the transsexual and which one is the real woman.

Then went on to say, actually, they're both real women, you have no idea how long it took me to get the nurse to pose for this picture. And I wanted to rip his heart out and hand it back to him on a platter. I was sitting next to Gordene MacKenzie and we had to forcibly make her sit still.

JIMMY: That's really tasteless.

SARAH: It's not only tasteless, it's sexist. And the problem with this is he will later went on to do to-- he showed a before and after picture of a person who was coming in their leather jacket looking really butch. And afterwards, here's this really femi female person and actually, said, you see what I can do? And I thought this guy thinks he's God.

Well, now, you take the sexist attitude, you take this attitude of see what I can do, and it leads to the question are these heterosexual doctors saying, you see what I can do, I can create women in the image I believe they should be. Now, you start getting pretty skeptical.

JIMMY: Well.

SARAH: And now you see why I'm questioning surgery. You know, what am I getting led into here, my fodder for the medical community. That's a good, it's a legitimate question. It's a question that's going to come up more and more because more and more people are saying, wait a minute, this is my body, I have the right to make this decision.

JIMMY: Rather than you fit the mold that they have already prepared.

SARAH: That's exactly right. And I think the time-- I think the time is long past where we can-- where the medical community can just take us for granted. I suspect it's one of the reasons Dr. Cole granted me the interview, very honestly, is that we're beyond the time where he can simply say, well, we're going to ignore the community and I don't have to talk to these people. We've got enough political clout now that he does have to talk to us. Well, I think we've covered that topic a little bit. What do you think we go to some music?

JIMMY: We're getting real close to that *QMZ* time.

SARAH: Well, we are, as a matter of fact.

JIMMY: As a matter of fact.

SARAH: Tell you what--

JIMMY: It's time. We're like right on it.

SARAH: I've got some-- I've got some Christmas music cued up. Why don't we do some Christmas music? And we'll come back and go to the *QMZ*.

JIMMY: OK, let's do that.

SARAH: OK, and a way we go.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[AUDIO OUT]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

JIMMY:

Hello, Houston. It's Jimmy with the *QMZ, The Queer Music Zone*, where we feature music by gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered artists just for you. And we're going to start out with a request. Someone called in earlier this evening and wanted to know if we were going to play something that I featured a couple of weeks ago.

And actually, the tape messed up so we had to give it some major surgery. It's a piece I picked up in San Francisco a few weeks ago. It's by a group called Fag Bash. And it's called "Lust Letters." And if I can get this going. Yes, Fag Bash "Lust Letters".

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[AUDIO OUT]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Oh, yeah. "Lust Letters" by Fag Bash, and that was by request on the *QMZ, The Queer Music Zone*, which is heard almost every week *After Hours*, continuing tradition right here on KPFT.

Now, I want to switch to something that we get requests for every year. It's a group called Venus Envy. You'll be hearing more of it in the next couple of weeks. Four women from the Seattle Washington group, and they put out a Christmas album. And I'm going to play the title cut, "I'll be a Homo for Christmas". By Venus Envy.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[AUDIO OUT]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Oh, yes. "I'll be a Homo for Christmas", by Venus Envy. We'll be bringing you a lot more of Venus Envy and other queer Christmas carols in the next couple of weeks. And now because we played "Lust Letters", by Fag Bash, I think, we ought to play something for the women along those same lines. This is a group called CWA, and that's all I can tell you over air. And the name of the tune is "Only Straight Girls Wear Dresses."

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[AUDIO OUT]

Oh, yeah. Venus Envy with "Rhonda the Lesbo Reindeer." That was right after CWA. That's that group that that's all I can tell you over the air, CWA, "Only Straight Girls Wear Dresses". We know that's wrong. And to wind up the *QMZ, The Queer Music Zone*, which you hear almost every week right here on KPFT Houston, I want to do something you have never heard. It's music of the Golden Gate Men's Chorus. We'll be featuring a few more of these in the next weeks too. Something I picked up in San Francisco. And something really kind of nice. Something you might have heard tonight, if you had been at the Wortham. OK.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[AUDIO OUT]

Yes, we're back. You were listening to the *QMZ*. And now you're listening to *After Hours* with Jimmy and--

SARAH: And Sarah. And you know, I like that lesbo reindeer song. I thought that was hilarious.

JIMMY: Isn't that funny? Venus envy. They put that out a couple of years ago and it's requested every year.

SARAH: It sounds like Cheech and Chong from the gay community. I like that.

JIMMY: "Rhonda the Lesbo Reindeer" and "I'll be a Homo for Christmas".

SARAH: You know, and it improves the Beach Boys immensely.

JIMMY: Absolutely.

SARAH: I'm not a big Beach Boys fan. I don't know if-- they were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall Of Fame a few years ago.

JIMMY: Yeah.

SARAH: And their speech was so right wing, the audience actually booed them.

JIMMY: Wow.

SARAH: Well, you know, they are Nancy Reagan's favorite groups. So that-- maybe that says something about them. And the next presenter had--

JIMMY: Wow, I didn't know they were that old.

SARAH: Thank you. I'm as old as them.

JIMMY: So am I.

SARAH: And when the next presenter was Bruce Springsteen who asked, do we actually know who any of those guys are.

JIMMY: Really, no kidding.

SARAH: They're what you would call right wing. Well, you want to talk about some community news.

JIMMY: Sure.

SARAH: OK, I got a whole--

JIMMY: What do we got?

SARAH: --bunch of stuff. I don't even know where you want to start here.

JIMMY: OK.

SARAH: Well, OK, let's start at the beginning. On Saturday the 7th, at St. Stephen's Episcopal church--

JIMMY: Wait a minute, Saturday the 7th.

SARAH: I'm sorry, that's January the 7th.

JIMMY: Oh, OK.

SARAH: Yeah, that helps, doesn't it? Yeah, Saturday, January the 7th, from 09:30 to 4 o'clock, there is going to be the first transgender community meeting.

JIMMY: Oh, OK.

SARAH: And we are going to be addressing topics such as creating a food pantry, screening elective candidates, food stamps for the unemployed, which is that unemployment is still a major problem in our community, creating a legal defense fund.

JIMMY: Well, the unemployment thing has got to be an epidemic in the transgendered community because how can you keep a job when you're going from one gender to another.

SARAH: Well, actually, the group that I had-- it's time Texas has started something. It's called the National Job Discrimination Documentation Program. And one of the reasons we're doing it is because, sooner or later, we're going to have to bring this up as an issue in legislative arenas. Right now, we are sponsoring a name slash gender change law.

And here's the reason why that law is necessary. Currently, if a person goes for a name change and a gender change, it is up to judicial discretion as to whether the gender change happens.

JIMMY: Oh.

SARAH: So often a person will go, and they will apply, and the judge says, sure, you can change your name to, you know, to Kermit the Frog, if you want to. But no, I'm not going to grant you a gender change. Your genitals are still whatever they are so I won't grant it. Now, so you get a license. And the license says, Sarah but the gender still says, male.

You go to apply for a job. And you are required to fill out something called an I-9 form, that's an immigration form. It's a federal document. So you have to present a license. And the interviewer says, I notice your license says, Suzy, that you're still male, is this a mistake. Oops, and you said, well, no, it's not a mistake. You no longer have that job.

So yeah, that is a major problem. And that's one of the reasons we have to address that kind of discrimination. And this is a national project. We have begun to receive letters-- I may bring some in the next show. We're beginning to receive letters from all over the country of people who have been fired, or not been able to receive jobs, strictly on the basis that they're transgender.

JIMMY: Sure.

SARAH: So yeah, the unemployment is a problem. I know some people who have been unemployed for two years now. And--

JIMMY: Is it a matter of not being able to pass, or-- and that's not even-- that shouldn't even be part of it, you know, whether you can pass or not. That shouldn't have anything to do with it as to whether you can do a job or not.

SARAH: No, actually, sometimes it gets tied into a lot of other things. And I'm thinking of one person, in particular. There was a person who was working on the design program of the space shuttle, when she decided to transition.

JIMMY: OK.

SARAH: So she worked for NASA. That meant according to NASA rules, she lost her security clearance. So she couldn't work. Because somehow, if you're transgendering, just as gays are often considered to be a security--

JIMMY: Oh, that, the old security risk crap.

SARAH: Yeah, so all of a sudden she was a security risk.

JIMMY: Oh, brother.

SARAH: So here is a person who went from being on the design program of the space shuttle to a year and a half of unemployment, and is now working at a legal secretary at about \$8 an hour. And she's glad to have that \$8 an hour. Is this person underemployed? You bet.

JIMMY: Sure.

SARAH: But after a year and a half, you take what you can get when you can get it.

JIMMY: Absolutely.

SARAH: That's-- those are the exact kind of issues that we're trying to address with the legislature right now. Senfronia Thompson has agreed to take this name change law into her committee. She's the head of the judicial committee in the state legislature. And we have a good reason-- a good chance to get it passed because I think we can we can prove to the state that if the state would get out of our way, we'll pay twice the taxes to them that we're paying now.

JIMMY: See that's the whole point. Yeah.

SARAH: You know--

JIMMY: You'll-- you'll become taxpayers.

SARAH: That's right. Another area--

JIMMY: OK, so this is happening January.

SARAH: That's January the 7th.

JIMMY: OK, where?

SARAH: This is at St. Stephen's Episcopal which is at 1805 West Alabama.

JIMMY: Oh, OK.

SARAH: The cost is zip, zero, nada, nothing.

JIMMY: That's the church that's right across the street from Two-piece.

SARAH: Exactly right. Bring your own bag lunch.

JIMMY: OK.

SARAH: And I want to stress that this is open to anybody in the transgender community. OK, so I mean, if you're a drag queen, if you're a heterosexual cross-dresser, and if you fall anywhere in between, show up. Show up, the laws, the things that we're going to be talking about affect you. We're going to be talking about police education. We're going to show you how to file complaints against the police in case you are roughed up.

JIMMY: OK.

SARAH: We'll talk to you about what your rights are.

JIMMY: That's very important, knowing what your rights are because I'll bet--

SARAH: I must get ten phone calls a month.

JIMMY: I'll bet most cross-dressers-- I'm going to use that term-- do not know, or think that it's illegal to cross dress.

SARAH: I'd be willing to bet you 98% of gays and lesbian people don't know what their rights are, if they're arrested.

JIMMY: Oh, that's-- I'm sure that's it, yeah.

SARAH: In one of the future shows, we're going to have Annise Parker on. And Annise will be talking about that exact issue. Because in conversation, we have come to the conclusion that probably 98% of the population, no matter who they are, don't know what happens when you-- if you get arrested and they're sent to a jail. And don't know what to expect, and many people don't survive it, regardless. So we're going to be talking about those kinds of things. There will be no long speeches, OK. That means Phyllis and I will not stand up here and talk for an hour, OK.

[LAUGHTER]

OK.

JIMMY: OK.

SARAH: This is for the community. Well, I mean, I know, I can-- I can be bad. And Phyllis will admit that she can get long winded so--

JIMMY: Dude, I could sit and listen to Phyllis for hours.

SARAH: I tease Phyllis, but it's because I respect her a lot. Phyllis-- I don't know if people realize this, but Phyllis has literally-- literally has achieved international status.

JIMMY: I'm not surprised.

SARAH: The transgender law conference is known throughout the world. She has been instrumental in getting laws changed. You have to remember when Phyllis started, cross-dressing was illegal.

JIMMY: That's right. That's right.

SARAH: And she and she's had to do that for herself. She had to become an attorney because she was blackballed as an engineer. So she's, you know, she's had quite an interesting history herself. So--

JIMMY: OK, so what else is going on? I see something there from Bill O'Rourke.

SARAH: Yeah, my buddy Bill.

JIMMY: Yeah.

SARAH: They are--

JIMMY: And it's a Royal Sovereign and Imperial Court of the Single Star.

SARAH: Yes. They are going to be doing a benefit in memory of [? Chablis ?] Leblanc.

JIMMY: Oh.

SARAH: Now I knew Chica and Bill O'Rourke and Lester--

JIMMY: Yes, Lester Pace.

SARAH: Lester Pace, and Bill O'Rourke, and we were all good friends. And so I have lost [? Chablis, ?] and I've lost Lester in a matter of a month.

JIMMY: A couple of months-- a month or so.

SARAH: A month or so. And they are going to be holding a benefit. It's for AVES, A-V-E-S.

JIMMY: AVES, yes.

SARAH: And that is going to be on-- where did I see they had the date here?

JIMMY: The 19th.

SARAH: December, the 6--

JIMMY: 19th.

SARAH: December-- December the 19th, show is from 8:00 to 11:00 at Cousins. And it's appropriate that it would be a Cousins because this was Lester's home.

JIMMY: Oh, absolutely. Also at Cousins, let's see, Monday the 12th, ninth Anniversary of the Bar. Oh, Bill says, they'll be Dancing Boys there for those of you who want to see Dancing Boys. And Thursday the 15th, Miss Cousins Contest. And New Year's Eve, Miss Cousins Contest.

SARAH: OK, are they going to hold it twice?

JIMMY: Probably. You know, certain events, you know, like talent, and this, and that on the 15th. And then maybe the crowning on New Year's Eve. Maybe that's the deal.

SARAH: That's right. Sometimes these events go for three or four weeks.

JIMMY: Cousins is a little kind of neighborhood bar that is very friendly to cross-dressers. I know this at the switchboard when people call in and say, you know, I don't look all that great but I want to go out somewhere. And we say, hey, Cousins.

SARAH: When I first came to the city of Houston, not only was I not passable, but I was downright atrocious, but I was welcomed at Cousins.

JIMMY: See.

SARAH: So yeah, I can vouch for that, that's true.

JIMMY: OK, so, Saturday, December the 19th in memory of [? Chablis ?] Leblanc at Cousins.

SARAH: Yeah.

JIMMY: Dinner, 7:00 to 8:00, and a raffle. Oh, cool. And a show from 8:00 to 11:00.

SARAH: Yeah, [? Chablis ?] Leblanc was a-- Chica was a wonderful person. And it's-- I've learned to stop counting the number of people that I've lost.

JIMMY: You have to or you'll just go crazy.

SARAH: It really-- it really is true. And I'm not talking about people that I work with, with the AIDS Foundation, or things like that. These are personal friends.

JIMMY: Yeah, I know.

SARAH: So well, let's move on to something that's another topic of interest. And that has to do with hate crimes.

JIMMY: Oh, yes.

SARAH: At the Houston-- there will be a Houston community forum on hate crimes entitled Stop The Violence, Stop The Hate. And that is scheduled for Thursday, December the 15th at 7:30 at Diverse Works.

JIMMY: Oh, OK. That's right over there by the U of H Downtown. It's just right down the-- right off of north main. Like, it's like the first right off of North Main.

SARAH: Well, I'll have to get the directions because I've never been there. And I'm scheduled to be a guest speaker so--

JIMMY: OK.

[LAUGHTER]

SARAH: The other guest speakers will include Diane Hardy Garcia.

JIMMY: Oh, yes.

SARAH: The executive director of the Lesbian Gay Rights Lobby of Texas.

JIMMY: Incredibly articulate woman.

SARAH: And Terry Richardson, the president of HGLPC.

JIMMY: Oh, she's been on after hours before.

SARAH: Hate crimes-- hate is a-- that's-- I don't know that hate cares whether you're gay, lesbian, transgendered, if you're different, you're a target.

JIMMY: Yes. Yes, there is a hate crimes reporting number that's part of the gay and lesbian switchboard. It's 529-9615 to report a hate crime. And these statistics are gathered and distributed to the people who need to know them.

SARAH: You know, it's interesting--

JIMMY: You know, that lesbian and gay task force. So that their records can go against federal records and make sure that nothing's falling in the crack there.

SARAH: I get several phone calls a week from people who feel that they have-- that they have been in situations, whether they ran afoul of the police, and whether they-- or perhaps they've been roughed up. And the single biggest problem that I come across is people won't report it.

JIMMY: You have to report it.

SARAH: They just won't report it.

JIMMY: You have to.

SARAH: And I tell them, and this is really-- I swear to you this is the truth. The police don't care if you are transgendered, if you've been assaulted, they want to know it. It's been my experience that they police, the Houston Police Department, does follow up. But they can't follow up on what they don't know about.

JIMMY: That's exactly right.

SARAH: And it's amazing because I'll say to them, well, did you report this? No. Well, why are you calling me? I can't do it for you. And the police won't allow that, you have to--

JIMMY: You must report. If nothing else, call up the hate crimes hotline and report it. If nothing else--

SARAH: If nothing else.

JIMMY: They'll talk to you. The folks there will talk to you and explain the procedure, and depending on what has happened to you, and what you're reporting, maybe you need to report this to the police.

SARAH: Something else that comes up from time to time, as I've had a few people call, transgender people, who have told me that they've been raped. And that's a real double bind. First of all, there's some masculine ego involved and so they don't want to admit that that actually happened to them. So--

JIMMY: Male rape is so underreported in this country.

SARAH: So they won't-- they don't report it.

JIMMY: Yes.

SARAH: And then secondly, they don't go and have any treatment for it.

JIMMY: Oh, gosh. And this day in time--

SARAH: That just doesn't make any sense. You know, there are people-- there are places you can go in the community--

JIMMY: Yes.

SARAH: --that are very sympathetic. They want to talk to you. They will talk to you. But you have to let them know it.

[AUDIO OUT]