

SARAH That just doesn't make any sense. There are places you can go in the community--

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: 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.

DEPALMA: Well, here's something else that we can-- I just touched on it previously, but I want to give some of the guidelines. As I said, it's time Texas is launching a discrimination documentation program. And here we go again about you have to be able to report stuff.

Here are the rules for this program. One, you have to have verifiable proof that you lost your job specifically because you transitioned down the job or you were denied a position solely on the basis that you're transgender. Number two, you must provide a written, hello, a written statement giving all the details, names, places, and circumstances. And you have to be willing to stand by the story.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

SARAH Now, here's what we want to be able to do with this. At some future point, we're going to have to go to the

DEPALMA: legislature to address the idea of transitioning on the job to get job protection. The first thing that they are going to say to us is, prove it happens.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, brother.

SARAH Prove it. Now, this is not news to the gay and lesbian community. They've fought this battle for decades.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Exactly.

SARAH If we can't prove it, we'll never get it. We have to be able to go to the legislators and say, here's 50 cases. Here's

DEPALMA: 100 cases. Here's however many cases we can get. Not only that, but we can produce these people to testify. Because the legislators are very skeptical of lobbyists, as they ought to be--

JIMMY CARPER: Sure.

SARAH --and say, how do we know you didn't make it up? How do we know you're not lying? So we have to be able to say

DEPALMA: to these legislators, here are their names, here are their addresses.

JIMMY CARPER: And this is the toughest thing, because this is pioneering.

SARAH This is really tough.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

SARAH This is really tough. And yet, we can never get it fixed if we can't prove it occurs.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: That's exactly right.

SARAH It's the old vicious cycle. One of the things that makes me crazy is when people will call me and say, I lost my job. I lost my job. What do I do? And the first thing I'll say to them is, can you prove that it was because you were transgender? Oh, yes. They were all for it until I transitioned. And I'll say, give me a written statement. And they'll say to me, you mean in my real name?

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

SARAH Yes, of course in your real name. I don't want it in the name of Mickey Mouse. I have to have your real name.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: And then that's the end of it.

SARAH Yeah, I never hear from them again.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

SARAH I don't know what the answer to that is.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: It's the same thing with men who were arrested for public lewdness, for having sex in public. It's the same type of thing. They're outraged. But when it comes to doing something about it or standing up or the entrapment thing--

SARAH Right.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: --no, they'll pay the fine and go away. Yes.

SARAH Well, and many of the people who call us are transsexuals who want to be assimilated into society. And so they

DEPALMA: will say to me, well, if I report this, I'll never get another job.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

SARAH Honey, if you can't get a name change done--

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: There you go.

SARAH --and you can't get a gender change done and you're unemployed, you're in pretty bad shape. You might just as

DEPALMA: well talk to us.

JIMMY CARPER: It can only get better.

SARAH It can only get better at that point.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: That's exactly right.

SARAH And people say, well, I'm afraid I'll mess up my next job chance. Oh, for God's sakes. Let's talk some reality here,
DEPALMA: just the frustrations of an activist.

JIMMY CARPER: We've got someone holding on one of these lines here, and I have to go into the other room to put them on the air.

SARAH OK. We'll be glad to take the calls, and we'll get our headphones plugged in and all those good things. Jimmy is
DEPALMA: going into the other room, and he is being an engineer. And this is like--

TOM Hello.

RICHARDS:

SARAH --in an old studio, so bear with us.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: OK. Now, we have to put out--

TOM Hello.

RICHARDS:

SARAH Right. And--

DEPALMA:

TOM Hello.

RICHARDS:

--we'll get some headphones.

JIMMY CARPER: Hold on, Tom.

SARAH We'll get some headphones plugged in here.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Tom?

TOM Yes.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Hey.

TOM Hey. How are you?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Fine. How are you doing?

TOM Good.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Tom Richards, who hangs out here lots of weeks wants to talk about being different.

TOM Yeah. Jimmy, if you use the reasoning of the hatemongers, I guess I'm not different from my brothers and sisters.

RICHARDS: The damn breeders are different. So therefore, if you're going to use their reasoning, it's all right to hate breeders.

JIMMY CARPER: [LAUGHS]

TOM But there's something else that I want to talk to you about that's more serious.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

TOM And that is the Bering Center.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

TOM OK. First of all, I don't celebrate Christmas. But anyway, Raymond and I-- Ray Hill and I wanted to do something

RICHARDS: for the Bering Center.

JIMMY CARPER: Now, we're talking about the Bering Daycare Center for--

TOM Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: --people with AIDS?

TOM Yeah, for AIDS people. Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: And it is a daycare center where you can go and hang out and be served meals and have entertainment. And I know they show movies and stuff like that.

TOM Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: If you cannot really stay at home by yourself, your lover goes to work and you may have problems staying home by yourself or you don't have a home, it's a place to go and have a meal and have care.

TOM Yeah. Well, one thing I wanted to tell you about, I did get my test the other week and I came back negative.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh.

TOM Far out. Yeah. OK.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: But lots of us are positive.

TOM Yeah. I know, but I love you all anyway. OK. Look here, we call--

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: What are we doing for Bering?

TOM Yeah. OK. We called and we asked if we could donate some food. And they said, no, they're not going to hold a dinner this year. But they are looking to pass out some items to gay people. And I said, well, what do you need the most of? And they said the one thing they never get-- some things they very rarely get is underwear.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh. How basic.

TOM And so they like t-shirts and shorts, so we're going to buy several pair to take over there. And also, gloves and **RICHARDS:** caps. And so if people would like to donate those items--

JIMMY CARPER: There are quite a few people who go to Bering for the daycare who are homeless.

TOM Yes.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: So when you're talking about caps and gloves and-- I mean, this is something that, especially on a night like tonight, when Bering closes up in the afternoon, a lot of folks there are like under the bridge until the next morning.

TOM Yeah. But also warm coats, too.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

TOM Yeah. We need to try to find out how to solve that problem, too.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Well, I know there are lots of folks that are working on it. Tim O'Brien with the housing group is working on that, too.

TOM But I thought I would pass that on to you.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Tim O'Reilly. I'm sorry. Tim O'Reilly. Ooh. He's going to hate me.

TOM But like I say, I don't feel different from my friends. You know? I really don't. The breeders were always different.
RICHARDS: God.

JIMMY CARPER: It's a matter of perspective. It just depends on which side of the fence you start with.

TOM That is precisely what I'm getting at. It's a matter of being a bigot. Hell, I don't make any disguise that I can't stand a bigot, and I'm prejudiced against a bigot. It's just that way. You know? And I let it be known, and I've often called them nothing more than two-bit breeders. and of course, that's hard for them to swallow. They don't like that.

JIMMY CARPER: I guess, when you hold a mirror up to someone, that's always tough.

TOM Yeah. Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

TOM Yeah. And that's exactly what I tried to do. Because when they look at themselves, they usually don't like what

RICHARDS: they see. Hey, we love y'all anyway.

JIMMY CARPER: OK. So fill me in a little bit more. You and Ray, are you making a call for the community to donate underwear and stuff to Bering?

TOM They need to have it over there by the 23rd of December. Oh,

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: OK. OK.

TOM OK. At least no later than the 23rd of December. And anybody that wants to go over and help wrap gifts-- I do not

RICHARDS: celebrate Christmas. I hate Christmas, because Christmas is a time when the great Christian church slaughtered literally millions of people so they could have a birthday for Jesus. But anyway--

JIMMY CARPER: Well, there are Jews and pagans and--

TOM I'm not either one.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: --people celebrate solstice or just kind of the warm fuzzy feelings that you get in December.

SARAH I like the food myself.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, there you go. I like the lights.

TOM Yeah.

RICHARDS:

SARAH Yeah.

DEPALMA:

TOM Also, Raymond and I took a trip to the Valley here over Thanksgiving. And we found that the AIDS organizations

RICHARDS: out there are rather uptight about handing condoms out to gay people, believe it or not.

JIMMY CARPER: OK. They're uptight about handing out condoms to gay people?

TOM Yes. And in McAllen.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh.

TOM OK. So I'm going to buy a case of condoms. I hope to buy. I'm trying to get a hold the right people now to buy a

RICHARDS: case of condoms.

SARAH Bart Losure would be a good one to get a hold of.

DEPALMA:

TOM Well, I'll give more information to y'all when I'm able to do that.

RICHARDS:

SARAH OK.

DEPALMA:

TOM And we plan to transport it down there.

RICHARDS:

SARAH OK.

DEPALMA:

TOM And hand it to the bar owner of PD-- what the hell is that? PBD I believe is what the name of the bar is in McAllen

RICHARDS: and let him handle it from there.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

TOM And so that's our next project. But I do want to stress that there are people with AIDS that do need clothing and

RICHARDS: so forth.

JIMMY CARPER: And make those donations to Bering, because those are some good folks.

TOM Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Not only the dental clinic but the daycare center. Bering has a reputation in the Montrose for taking care of people.

TOM And you really haven't lost anything by spending a little money. Matter of fact, you probably have gained a hell

RICHARDS: of a lot.

JIMMY CARPER: Absolutely.

TOM So I want to encourage people to spend a few extra bucks less on themselves and a little more on Bering.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Hey, and maybe something for Stone Soup, too.

TOM Hey. That sounds like a great idea.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Some canned goods, there you go.

TOM Yeah. OK. Well, we do love you all.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: OK. Thanks for calling, Tom.

SARAH Have a good holiday, Tom.

DEPALMA:

TOM Bye-bye.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Bye. Oh, Tom's always doing something in the community.

SARAH The more I get to know him, the more I really like him. He seems like a really sweet person.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: He is very, very sweet. Yeah. And he's going to get to Europe one of these days. He's been planning that trip for a couple of years now.

SARAH Honey, there are some men to cruise in Europe.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. We've been talking about this. He wants to do some interviews in a German brothel for guys and all kinds of a little off-the-wall things that--

SARAH Go to Amsterdam, honey. If it isn't in Amsterdam, it doesn't exist.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: There you go. There you go.

SARAH Let's talk about this tape that we're about to play.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Sure.

SARAH Earlier in the show, we were talking about the medical community and we were talking about gender clinics. And

DEPALMA: I was giving some of my views as to why I was personally skeptical about it, but I don't want people to have the mistaken impression that these clinics don't do good work.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, absolutely.

SARAH For thousands and thousands of people, these clinics have been their salvation.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. It's just that I think the whole philosophy right here at KPFT and *After Hours* and probably most shows that you hear on KPFT is question authority.

SARAH Well, the first book that I remember reading that made an impression on me was Henry David Thoreau, and I've

DEPALMA: been questioning ever since.

JIMMY CARPER: There you go. There you go.

SARAH The tape that we're going to play, these are bits and pieces. They're little teasers of the show that I was talking about in February. The first person that you'll hear on the tape will be Dr. Cole. And then there'll be maybe two or three seconds of silence. They're just breaks between the interviews. But as these go through, you're going to hear some of the women talk about what they have learned at these gender clinics. And in some cases, they're going to talk about what they've learned about themselves. And as you listen to these, remember these are just little snippets. There'll be a lot more of this in our February show.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, OK. Let's go to it.

SPEAKER 1: We had a parent call us recently who was really in pain, really convinced she did something that made her child transsexual. So the parents understand this is not their fault. I don't even like that word. But something they've got to understand, it's not their fault. Can you tell us a little bit about what's known about the origins of transsexuality or transgenderism?

DR. COLE: Well, I think traditionally, in years past, experts tended to feel that this was a psychologically-based problem, that some sort of difficulty in rearing or problems in identification with one sex or the other caused this. But again, we just did not have the technology to fully understand the problem. I liken it very much to the whole problem of childhood autism.

And what I mean by that is that, decades ago, experts came up with the term "refrigerator parent," meaning cold parents who somehow caused this severe disorder in kids. That's all we knew at the time. Now, today, we have the technology. We understand that this is clearly a biological problem, something that goes wrong in the central nervous system. I think that we are on the verge of identifying that same kind of thing when it comes to transsexuality.

Most experts today believe that it is something that goes wrong, so to speak, while that individual is developing in the uterus of the mother. In other words, it has to do with hormones but hormones that are fetal hormones, things that go on prior to birth. As I alluded to earlier, sexuality involves a number of elements and develops across the entire span of fetal development. Some of the first things that occur, of course, are chromosome sex or monosex, development of bodies.

But we tend to think something may go wrong along those critical stages, such that what happens is the person is born with the anatomy of one sex but born with the brain sex of the opposite sex. So we do tend to believe that it is biological. And that's why now basically experts in this area have stopped trying to psychotherapize people out of this and instead listen to them and instead try to help them with medical interventions to be happy and to be successful.

And I might note that some of the follow-up data and published articles that we've done through our program here in Galveston shows that people can lead very happy and productive lives once they complete this kind of treatment. We have folks, truck drivers, doctors, lawyers, computer programmers, homemakers-- I mean, a whole variety. It cuts across the socioeconomic span. These folks can be very, very happy and very successful and typically become more happy and more productive once they start being true to themselves and get involved in something like this.

SPEAKER 1: That's one of the things that I've always most enjoyed about these get-togethers. I'm always amazed at the variety of people. They're airline controllers. They're engineers. They're all sorts of things. And actually, I was told this by a legislator, that they were reluctant to work for transgender issues because, after all, mostly they're just unemployed people. And I had to spend an hour explaining to them that was not so.

DR. COLE: Exactly. Yeah. That's a real myth. I think, again, people tend to think that transsexuals largely are drug addicts, prostitutes, and so on. And, yes, those kind of folks occur, but they also occur in the real world and in other kinds of situations. By and large, however, this represents the smallest percentage of the transgender population.

Most of our folks, as you well know from attending some of our gatherings, we wouldn't make *Geraldo*. We wouldn't make *Hard Copy*. We'd be too dull for those kind of ratings. Our folks are very simple, very ordinary. Their goal is simply to blend in, to develop their own lives, to go through this kind of real-life transition, come out the other end, and get on with their lives. And I think we've been very successful to help those kind of folks that we work with.

[DINGING]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

SPEAKER 2: Yes, darling. Yes. Why don't we take a look at the photographs, huh? Yeah. Oh, no. Take the finger out of your mouth. I know it hurts. It's hard to be a teething baby. Yes. Yes, I do. Yes. OK. You know who that is, don't you? That's Thelma. That's grandma Thelma, uh-huh. And look, that's grandpa Willy.

Yeah. Uh-huh. And that's their friend, Kitty. Yes, it is. It's Kitty. Good. Yeah. She's different. Yes. No. You know who that is. You know who that is. No. Who is that? No, it's not dada. No, it's not. I know it looks like dada, but, no, it's not dada. It's Willy.

There's grandpa Willy when he was younger and looked like dada. Yeah. Yeah. No, that's Willy holding dada. And look, Kitty has her arm around Willy and Thelma has her arm around Kitty. Isn't that nice? Yes. Yes. Kitty. That's Kitty. She's their friend. Remember?

She's mostly Thelma's special friend. She's very nice. We like her. We like her spice cake. Don't we? Yes. You've been there. Look, look, look, look, look. Remember? Remember? We played in the leaves in their backyard. Remember? They were raking leaves, yeah. And Willy was holding the bag open and Thelma was raking and Kitty was picking up the leaves and putting them in the bag. You remember. Don't you? Don't you?

And then we all cooked dinner together. Remember? And Willy set the table and then we ate. Yes. You and me and dada. Right? And Willy, Thelma, and Kitty. Grandpa Willy, grandma Thelma, and Kitty. Yes. You like them. Don't you? Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. They're friends. They're very special friends. Yes.

[BELLS TOLLING]

[MUSIC FADING]

JIMMY CARPER: OK. I did a little experimenting there. That was the East Pacific Symphony Richard Audd. It's electronic music. He's openly gay. He has a CD called *A New Light*, and that was *Carol of the Bells*, bells of Christmas. And on top of that was a piece of spoken word that I picked up in San Francisco by Juliana Leucking called *Willy, Thelma & Kitty, The Story of an Alternative Family*.

SARAH To hear the conservative right wing tell it, a family is a mommy and daddy and a white picket fence and a dog named "Spot."

JIMMY CARPER: That is probably the very minority of families that's available in the US today. I mean, most families I know are not that. It's some other combination of all different people who care for each other.

SARAH I think one of the best things that has happened in our society is the definition of "family" has expanded.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, as it should, yes.

SARAH How many people do we know who were born into families that they would much rather have been elsewhere?

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yes.

SARAH And so we've almost reached a point where you can sort of pick and choose family, create new family, develop

DEPALMA: new definitions of "family." I think that's a good thing for our society.

JIMMY CARPER: Absolutely.

SARAH Even for me, my life partner is going to be out of town this year. But people who are good friends are inviting me

DEPALMA: in to become part of their family.

JIMMY CARPER: There you go.

SARAH And I think that's a neat thing.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. As we grow, things happen. People leave us, because they leave us or they die. And traditions have to change. And lots of times, we have to create our own traditions.

SARAH I always thought that was what life meant, was life meant the ability to change and enjoy that change.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Well, yeah. Yeah. But that's one thing we don't always like. We want things to stay the same always, and that change makes us very uncomfortable. Change like in our perception of things, like what's gender? What's male? What's female?

SARAH I'm a big fan of John Lennon.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

SARAH And John Lennon has a song called *Watching the Wheels Go Round and Round*. And in that song, he talks about the whole idea of change. And he argues, in this song, that, once you find a spot of comfort, you should enjoy it for a few minutes and then say, but if I stay here forever, I will never grow again.

JIMMY CARPER: That's true.

SARAH So change, enjoy it and take a breather. But don't sit it any one spot for too long or you stagnate. [LAUGHS] I'm not sure I personally can follow that philosophy.

JIMMY CARPER: I try to change as much as possible in perceptions.

SARAH Yeah.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: But I have lived in the same place for 25 years. I think I'm very novel in this day and time. Most people change residences a lot more than that.

SARAH Well, it's funny. We bought a house last year. And something I've noticed about as being part of a couple is that how easy it is to sort of stagnate. We were talking about it the other night. An exciting night for us lately is getting the dishes done early enough to watch some television.

JIMMY CARPER: [LAUGHS] Ooh.

SARAH And we kind of looked at each other and said, how did we get here?

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Is this a political activist talking here, folks, or what?

SARAH We sort of have a deal. We leave the political activism at the door so that we can have a life.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: You mean, you're a transgendered person and you own a house and you do dishes and watch TV?

SARAH And I mow the lawn.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: [LAUGHS]

SARAH And I play football with the neighbor kids. And, yeah, we do all of those things.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Gosh.

SARAH We sort of have a deal. I just sort of leave the trans--

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Gee, just like normal people, huh? [LAUGHS] Whatever what the hell that is.

SARAH And I don't think most people would ever believe it of me either. You know what's something that scares me, is, the older I get sometimes, the more I sound like my parents. Things will come out of my mouth, I think, oh, my God, that was my mother.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. Unfortunately, as much as I want to keep up with new things, new music, new trends, I find that deep down inside I'm an older person.

SARAH Something happened that really suddenly made me realize I'm getting older.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

SARAH An activist from Washington DC, someone much younger than I, was calling in complaining about issues that I

DEPALMA: learned to get over as an activist 20 years ago, because it was a matter of survival.

JIMMY CARPER: Sure.

SARAH And I suddenly found myself counseling this younger activist. And it dawned on me. I thought, my God, am I old

DEPALMA: enough to be giving advice to a new generation?

JIMMY CARPER: Yep. Absolutely.

SARAH And all of a sudden, it came home to me and I thought, oh, my God, Methuselah is wearing a skirt in this house.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: See, normally it's the other way around. It's the young activist who is not afraid to take the chance and go against the machine. And it's the older activist that has been through it all and says, oh, no, this is the way you do it. You can't do it that way. You have to do it this way.

SARAH And that goes in a generational thing. I get advice from Ray Hill and Phyllis.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Sure sure.

SARAH But I didn't realize I was old enough to be giving advice to another generation. And I thought, I can't really be

DEPALMA: that old.

JIMMY CARPER: You're old enough that people are looking up to you. Yes.

SARAH You know something else? That scares me. That bothers me, that people are looking up to me.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Why? You're a pioneer in your field. You really are.

SARAH I guess I am. But somehow, it kind of bothers me that there are people are looking up to me, because then I feel

DEPALMA: like I have to live up to their expectations.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, that type of thing. Yeah.

SARAH Yeah.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

SARAH I mean, I'm proud of what I've done.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: That's what's good about radio, because you can do this and then nobody knows who you are when you were out on the street.

SARAH Well, that's true.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Unfortunately--

SARAH --it's come up on television several times.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, you've been on TV and you do the forums and conferences.

SARAH I sort of get a kick out of going. And I've been introducing myself to the news directors of television stations,

DEPALMA: because there have aired several things. And I want them to know the next time they air something that is that incorrect, I'm going to be down at their station. They better talk to me.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

SARAH And I just love it when I walk in, because the first thing they'll say to me is, you look like a short woman.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Well.

SARAH And I say, well, were you expecting King Kong in a skirt? [LAUGHS] And it's kind of nice to blow their stereotypes.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: I guess because it's radio, I need to say this every time you're on the air is that you are a transgendered person and you look like a middle-aged woman.

SARAH Or as Phyllis so kindly put it, a "plump" middle-aged woman.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: OK. A plump middle-aged-- however you want to describe yourself. But I never think of I'm sitting here with a man in a dress or anything like that. I never have thought that.

SARAH Well, I'm very conscious that I'm representing the community. And I think my life partner gets tired of hearing

DEPALMA: that sometimes, but I'm very conscious. If I'm going to go somewhere where I know I'm representing the community, I'm very aware of that and I try to make sure that people get to see that. Now, I come in here and I'm relaxed with you.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

SARAH But if I'm going to go to talk to a news director, I'm very conscious of the image that I'm putting forward to them.

DEPALMA: Because I understand, unfair as it is, they are going to project from me onto the entire community.

JIMMY CARPER: Absolutely. Lookism is in. I mean, it's there. Lookism, ageism. We talk about all these "isms," but they are a part of life.

SARAH Yeah. And so I'm really aware of that, that they are going to generalize from me and say, oh, this is how the

DEPALMA: community looks, which is wrong. But I'd rather have them think that than have them think that we were street walkers.

JIMMY CARPER: Exactly. Exactly. Because I know being a member of the gay and lesbian community, that is what I came into thinking.

SARAH We had a really good time--

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Years ago, when I first knew of the transgendered community, that is the impression I had.

SARAH I was telling you before we went on the air that, at this political breakfast, whoever did the seating plan had me

DEPALMA: seated next to the director of the conservative women's caucus.

JIMMY CARPER: Ooh.

SARAH And we sat through it through the entire breakfast, and we had a fine old time just chatting about one thing or

DEPALMA: another. And it was just dandy until she asked me what group I was there representing. And when I explained it was a transgender group, she actually picked up her chair and moved it.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: Isn't that incredible? Isn't that incredible?

SARAH I felt sorry for her.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: It's sad when you think of that. Here, she's had this great conversation with you and getting along and joking and talking about whatever it is you're talking about. Then all of a sudden, when she realizes that maybe you're different or maybe you're not what she perceived you to be, then there's some sort of danger or she's scared.

SARAH Gays and lesbians--

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: You didn't fit her perception.

SARAH Yeah. And gays and lesbians have an opportunity to do that kind of thing, too, if they want to. Let me relay a

DEPALMA: story that happened while I was at Texas A&M as a male. I was involved in a gay student group, and I had written an article for *The Battalion*, the paper for Texas A&M.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

SARAH So I'm standing in the next room in the restroom, men's restroom, with a member of the corps of cadets. Now, he obviously doesn't know me from anybody. So we're standing there at the urinals and he's looking at this paper, reading my article, and says to me, isn't this awful? Look at what these fags are doing. Look at these damn queers, and he's just going on and on and on.

JIMMY CARPER: [LAUGHS]

SARAH So I got through with my business and I waited till he was about through. And as I was walking out the door, I

DEPALMA: turned to him and said, two things. First of all, I'm the person who wrote that article and, second, you don't have that much to worry about and left.

JIMMY CARPER: Ooh.

SARAH So you see, gays and lesbians have an opportunity to do that, too, if they want to.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. Yeah. It always gives me goosebumps every year at gay pride day when the student group from A&M marches down Westheimer.

SARAH It makes me feel really proud.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. Yeah. And that's the group that gets one of the biggest applause from the sidelines.

SARAH And they're still getting a lot of flak. It's not as bad as it was, but they still get a lot of flak.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: It's very tough to be openly gay at A&M.

SARAH I was part of the first group to come down. It was the first time that Texas A&M had ever brought a gay group to

DEPALMA: March in the parade. And we thought it would be just a wonderful idea, so we came down and imitated Aggie marching band by blowing kazoos. And we had little yells. We would stop and do a little drill team yells. And we had brought a poodle that was supposed to represent Texas A&M's mascot.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh. [LAUGHS]

SARAH Well, not thinking that this was going to turn up on the front page of the Texas A&M newspaper. And when we got

DEPALMA: home, did we ever hear it.

JIMMY CARPER: I'll bet. I'll bet.

SARAH But it was a fun experience. And I'll tell you something, I can't describe the feeling when we got down near Mary's

DEPALMA: and we got a standing ovation.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yeah.

SARAH I don't think there was a dry eye of any person in that group, because we had fought so hard and we didn't know

DEPALMA: that was coming.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, that's nice.

SARAH That was just incredible. It really was.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: And I guess because you and I have done this, folks out there who have not been in the Pride Day parade, just marching down the middle of Westheimer and thousands of people on either side of you, it's just a wonderful feeling.

SARAH It's interesting. The second year that I was there that I went to this parade, there was a conservative Christian

DEPALMA: group who was handing out pamphlets. And they were handing them out to people in the parade. And my comment to them was, why don't you come out and join us?

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

SARAH And of course, they were not going to. The thing that I was intrigued by was the number of people who were

DEPALMA: watching the parade who are closeted.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yeah.

SARAH And the thought occurred to me, what are these people cheering for? They are closeted themselves, and they are

DEPALMA: cheering the people in the parade. What are they thinking, really? I'd love to crawl in their heads.

JIMMY CARPER: Probably how they wished they could do that. It's amazing the number of people who stand on the sidelines watching the parade with sunglasses on.

SARAH Yes.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: As a disguise.

SARAH And when the television cameras appear, they scurry.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

SARAH Yeah.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Absolutely. I know marching with the gay and lesbian switchboard, we have a lot of members who were schoolteachers. Because the gay and lesbian switchboard is in a secret location for anonymity purposes for people who call in, so that makes it a wonderful group for gay and lesbian teachers to do volunteer work. And we had one of our members who is a teacher in the Pasadena school district at the time.

SARAH Oh, boy.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Who marched in the parade with a paper bag over her head with eye holes cut out and a sign that said, I shouldn't have to march with this bag on my head.

SARAH Actually, I like that. That's very graphic. I like that.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

SARAH I marched with the Gay Fathers one year.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

SARAH And we handed pink balloons to the boys and blue balloons to the girls.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: There you go.

SARAH And the parents would uniformly correct this and say, oh, no, no, it's supposed to be the other way around. Isn't

DEPALMA: it?

JIMMY CARPER: Wrong.

SARAH And, of course, that was the whole point we were trying to make to them.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: [LAUGHS] And you're still making that point, aren't you, Sarah?

SARAH Yeah. And I think I probably will have to continue doing that, but that's OK. That's OK. The thing that I am excited

DEPALMA: about doing this show is that sometimes, several days later, I will get a call from somebody who says, I was too scared to call you, but thank God I'm not the only one.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, that's exactly right.

SARAH It's worth staying up until 3 o'clock in the morning to do that, to get that call.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: OK. Now, let's see. Ooh, I'm going to have to do something here.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Ah, yes.

LUTHER (SINGING) Strumming my pain with his fingers.

VANDROSS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

SARAH We're getting close to 3 o'clock here.

DEPALMA:

LUTHER (SINGING) Singing my life with his words.

VANDROSS:

JIMMY CARPER: That's Luther Vandross doing a remake of--

LUTHER (SINGING) Killing me softly with his song.

VANDROSS:

JIMMY CARPER: --*Killing Me Softly*, the Roberta Flack song. And he does not change the gender. So we're going to let that play in the background. And one thing that you normally do that you haven't done yet tonight is talk about or give information about GT--

SARAH GCTC.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: GCTC, Gulf Coast Transgendered--

SARAH Right. I've got two organizations that you need to know about. One of them is called the "Gulf Coast Transgender

DEPALMA: Community."

JIMMY CARPER: There you go.

SARAH Their number is 780-4282. This group is open to everybody, whether you are gay, lesbian, bisexual,

DEPALMA: transgendered. They are a transgendered group. They are primarily a social organization. It is especially a good place to go if you are just starting. You are looking for someplace safe to go, this is the place.

JIMMY CARPER: Safe to go and social to go. And it's very important to be able to identify with like people.

SARAH It really is.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Create this family. Hey, there are other people who think like I do.

SARAH Jackie Thorn, who will be here next month, is the former President of Gulf Coast.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

SARAH And I'm sure she'll talk more about that. There is another organization you should know about, too, called the

DEPALMA: "Texas Association for Transsexual Support." Their number is 827-5913. For those of you who are reasonably sure that you are a transsexual but don't know where to get information, don't know how to go about finding a therapist, just want to be with other people, again this is a really good group. They are in the process of putting together a manual for helping professionals.

JIMMY CARPER: Great.

SARAH And showing professionals what questions they should be asking. So again, these are two really good groups to go with.

JIMMY CARPER: Great.

SARAH And of course, there is the Montrose Counseling Center.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, oh. Absolutely. 529-0037.

SARAH They are transgender-friendly. They are good people. They work on a sliding scale.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: That's very important, yes.

SARAH Yeah. You don't have to pay \$120 an hour to go there.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Exactly.

SARAH And it doesn't matter whether you are just getting started or whether you think you really know what you're

DEPALMA: about, they can help.

JIMMY CARPER: You bet. This has been Jimmy Carper and--

SARAH And Sarah DePalma.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: For this week's edition of *After Hours*. The next couple of weeks, we'll be bringing you more queer Christmas carols. And listen to us on Christmas Eve, because we'll be doing three hours of queer Christmas carols.

SARAH Have a safe, joyous holiday.

DEPALMA:

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[SCATTERING]

Hi, there. This is Joe Bob Finneti from *The Bobs*, and you're listening to KPFT Houston.

[SCATTERING]

90.1 FM.

[SCATTERING]