

DEAN: The first review of this medical marijuana initiative was approved in '96. The court said a medical user can be arrested, but they can get the charges dismissed at trial once they can produce a prescription pad or any other evidence of a doctor's approval. More disturbing news. I'm sorry about that tonight. But our Drug Policy chief has looked at the roots of addiction and this is a White House Drug Policy Director John Walters.

He called on scientists to develop new tools for diagnosing and treating drug addiction, saying that major advances in genetics and neuroscience could help devise medicines that attack the root causes of substance abuse. Now, he said the administration is doubling their federal spending on abuse research to \$933 million to finance work at 10 locations. Walter said drug addiction is a disease of the brain.

Now, I had always thought, you speak of disease of the brain and our society decided long ago that decades behind prison bars or in insane asylums was inhumane and totally inappropriate. And the treatment, compassion, were more appropriate for other types of mental illness or disturbances. And yet the lies and the pouring of, over the period of time, hundreds of billions of dollars down the drain continues.

And it's thanks to the thinking process of men like our Mr. Walters. Hopefully, this will backfire. But it's more attempts by the government to influence how society perceives the drug war. And what's happened is officials with the US Drug Enforcement Agency briefed producers, directors, and writers on the connection between drug trafficking and terrorism.

And they did this too in the hope of consulting on movies and television programs to give us propaganda on a daily basis. Now, about 40 people, including film directors like Michael Mann and Arthur Hiller and other people behind TV series like *Third Watch* and *ER*, gathered at the Beverly Hills Hotel. This was Wednesday.

They were there for several hours listening to the DEA Director Asa Hutchinson, our boy again, as well as the agency's intelligence chief and some former undercover agents. Lord knows what these guys are going to do. But with a legacy like the movie *Scarface* and the eternal *Miami Vice* reruns, we can be certain that the young, the Black, the Brown, the counterculture will be further demonized. Now, I hope that your listeners will, if they get a chance, tune in to my website. They can hear some of these former guests at cultural-baggage.com.

JIMMY CARPER: Cultural-baggage.com.

DEAN: That's correct. Yeah, Jimmy, I appreciate you giving me the opportunity to speak to your listeners. I think it's very important that we begin to rally together because this war is over the day we decide it is over.

JIMMY CARPER: You're so right.

DEAN: They have no ammunition left on the other side. We've all been frightened, and pushed, and pulled, and prodded on this whole thing, but it's over. It's over as soon as we say.

JIMMY CARPER: You're right. You're absolutely correct. Dean, thanks for being our guest again on *After Hours*. And I look forward to every week's report on Cultural Baggage.

DEAN: Well, I thank you. And you all have a great evening.

PATRICK: Thank you.

DEAN: All right.

JIMMY CARPER: Bye.

DEAN: Bye-bye.

JIMMY CARPER: OK. Hunter.

PATRICK: Hunter.

JIMMY CARPER: Hunter, Hunter, Hunter.

HUNTER: Yeah?

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. Hi, dear.

HUNTER: Hello.

JIMMY CARPER: What's up with you?

PATRICK: We're going to have to get a magnifying glass to see him

JIMMY CARPER: I know. He's a little, tiny thing.

HUNTER: I try.

JIMMY CARPER: I know.

PATRICK: Well, I was going to say my thigh, but he's actually smaller.

[LAUGHTER]

HUNTER: Ouch. In my back?

PATRICK: No.

JIMMY CARPER: Nah, nah, nah, nah.

HUNTER: I'm going to drop it there.

JIMMY CARPER: What's up?

HUNTER: Nothing much. How are you, Jimmy?

JIMMY CARPER: I'm just great. Just great.

HUNTER: I'm doing good, Patrick. And I agree. We try and do our little thing.

JIMMY CARPER: OK. But you had something you wanted to talk about.

HUNTER: Oh, I wanted to talk to you about my friend.

JIMMY CARPER: Your friend? OK.

HUNTER: His name is Max.

JIMMY CARPER: Max? And can you get a little closer to the mic, honey?

HUNTER: I'm sorry.

JIMMY CARPER: That's OK.

HUNTER: I don't move things. You have to move them for me.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah But that's not whatever I've heard. Anyway--

PATRICK: Oh, oh, oh, oh.

[LAUGHTER]

HUNTER: My friend, Max, he owns a dental day spa. And so i was--

JIMMY CARPER: A dental day spa? What the hell is that?

HUNTER: He calls it a dental day spa. He said it came up because his title is a DDA because he, I guess, does his little dental thing. I don't know. I wanted to talk to you about it. So he has his own little-- it's called Image Max Dental Day Spa. He does his own little--

JIMMY CARPER: Have you been there?

HUNTER: No. But I met a fabulous drag queen today, who has had work done by him. Apparently looking at it, he did an awesome job. So if my insurance covers it, my ass will be in there.

JIMMY CARPER: Well, we're always looking for new queer dentists.

HUNTER: Yes, he's awesome. I talked to him today and Patrick met him also. And he's got a very, very small, small, tiny just soft voice. He's not loud or anything.

JIMMY CARPER: Where's he located?

HUNTER: 5709 Woodway Suite G.

JIMMY CARPER: Ooh, that sounds like high-rent district.

HUNTER: Yeah, I guess. Woodway, oh, yeah, I rent a rec room there.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, great.

HUNTER: Yeah. And the number is 713-781-0505. Apparently talking to him, he does a lot of stuff, like he straightens teeth, can get rid of wrinkles on the forehead, all that other good stuff.

JIMMY CARPER: This is a dentist?

HUNTER: It's a dental baseball, meaning he can do anything. He can fix a gap in your teeth. He can do acne treatments, laser hair.

JIMMY CARPER: Anything from the neck up. Is that what you're saying?

HUNTER: Instant weight loss too. so--

JIMMY CARPER: Oh--

HUNTER: Apparently.

JIMMY CARPER: --from the neck down.

HUNTER: His ad is in *OutSmart*. And he's really nice. So--

JIMMY CARPER: And he's so dreamy.

HUNTER: I want to get--

SPEAKER 3: No, he's not.

JIMMY CARPER: I want to get this information--

SPEAKER 3: Sorry.

JIMMY CARPER: --to the switchboard because we're always looking for good folks that we can refer people to. Because people call the switchboard looking for doctors, dentists--

HUNTER: Exactly.

JIMMY CARPER: --lawyers.

HUNTER: I wonder if he's in the switchboard. I didn't ask him.

JIMMY CARPER: I don't know. I don't know.

HUNTER: I didn't ask him.

SPEAKER 3: Like 1-800-Gay-Dent.

HUNTER: Right? Ist, ist.

JIMMY CARPER: Well, our next host is Stephen Jerome. And he is the volunteer coordinator for the Gay and Lesbian Switchboard. So--

HUNTER: Maybe I could--

JIMMY CARPER: Maybe we can get him going, there.

HUNTER: I better get something from Max, like a free--

JIMMY CARPER: What?

HUNTER: --gap remover or something.

JIMMY CARPER: What?

HUNTER: Not that kind of thing, honey. Don't worry about that.

JIMMY CARPER: What's wrong with your gap, honey?

HUNTER: No, there's nothing wrong. Fall into the gap, that's all.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, my, my, my.

SPEAKER 3: Patrick's done messed up my teeth.

HUNTER: Try to stick that tongue in between the gap. No--

JIMMY CARPER: We can talk about live 2002 again. This is Don Gill Productions with Don Gill and Bob Bouton hosting. Sunday, Sunday, Sunday, Sunday, August the 18th, 6 PM-- 6:30 PM at Key's West, located at 817 West Dallas. I talked about this earlier in the--

SPEAKER 4: I heard you. I was on the--

JIMMY CARPER: OK, OK, good.

SPEAKER 4: [INAUDIBLE]

JIMMY CARPER: So now, here are some of the people-- I may not be able to pronounce all these names correctly-- Jonathan [? Arknayus? ?]

SPEAKER 4: That sounds good.

JIMMY CARPER: OK. David [? Barron, ?] now I know who he is, yeah. Because he's done stuff--

SPEAKER 4: [INAUDIBLE]

JIMMY CARPER: --with Joe Watt's theater group there. OK, [? Kristuff-- ?] [? Kristoff ?] [? Boam. ?]

SPEAKER 4: Mm-hmm.

JIMMY CARPER: OK, Sean Carter, the guy who's 31 years old today.

SPEAKER 4: Back in your [? world-- ?]

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, yes--

SPEAKER 4: --28-year-old.

JIMMY CARPER: Keith Chapman, Andy Clements, Andrew Flores, Nancy Ford-- hey, there's a woman in there.

SPEAKER 4: No, there's two women in there.

JIMMY CARPER: [INAUDIBLE]-- oh, two women. Yeah, I see that. OK. Don [? Hammel, ?] Clint Harwood-- I love Clint Harwood. What a sweetheart he is. Clay Howell-- I like Clay too, Jules and Glynda McGinnis. Hey. Johnny Montgomery, Chris Poole, TJ Thurman, [? Corey ?] [? Tal. ?]

SPEAKER 4: [? Corey ?] Tal [INAUDIBLE].

JIMMY CARPER: That's a pretty man. Dwayne Walker-- I like him too. And Jessica [? Zamudio ?]

SPEAKER 4: Do you remember Jessica from last year?

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, I do.

SPEAKER 4: [INAUDIBLE]

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, yes.

SPEAKER 4: --hard to look at it, isn't it? Not your type, but I--

JIMMY CARPER: This is going to be great because this is all live entertainment benefiting the Gulf Coast Archive and Museum. Yes it is. OK, let's go to a piece of music. And then we've got-- Stephen Jerome is here. I'm so glad, because I didn't even remind him. And he's new at doing this. And he just remembered it was the third Saturday and showed up.

Great, this is-- let's do the rocking stuff. Yeah, this is by an Anne Engel. It's called "Please, Please, Please." And you're listening to it, After Hours, queer radio with attitude, on KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Yeah, Anne Engel with "Please, Please, Please". And I have been reminded that I did not mention that Beau called in and was the winner for the DVD of "Big Eden" that's been provided to us by Wolf Video. So Beau, it will be coming your way next week, especially if I get on the ball and let Wolf Video know that you're the winner. Yes. OK, we'll do that.

Anne Engel, "Please, Please, Please", and sitting to my right now is Stephen Jerome.

STEPHEN Good morning.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Good morning, honey. How you doing?

STEPHEN I'm OK. What's up? [LAUGHTER] So how's your day going?

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Well, you see it's still Saturday until I go to bed, so--

STEPHEN Rub it in, OK?

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: And you won't be going to bed tonight, will you?

STEPHEN No, I won't. I won't get in the bed until about 1:00 AM tomorrow night.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

STEPHEN But we got some good stuff lined up tonight.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Because you do a lot of church stuff on Sunday.

STEPHEN Yeah.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Now, honey, you've got to get closer to that microphone. I know it's not very comfortable.

STEPHEN That's big.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: You never complained about that before.

STEPHEN No, I was younger. All right, so this is what we've got for this month. A lot going on around the community. Let's

JEROME: start off, I guess, with the organizations.

The Gay and Lesbian Switchboard is getting ready to start their third training session of the year. It will be starting in mid August. So anybody who's interested out there in radio land, if you want to contribute to the community, help some poor soul who's visiting Houston now, give them good information, and listen to somebody who may have a problem, give the switchboard a call.

Their phone number is 713-529-3211. And sign up. In fact, ask for Stephen Jerome. He's the volunteer manager there.

JIMMY CARPER: He sure is. I talked-- when I opened the show, I talked briefly about the Black Expo coming up.

STEPHEN Oh, great.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: And that's October 4 through the 6th.

STEPHEN In fact, I have some information on it, Yeah.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: [INAUDIBLE]

STEPHEN I have to dig it down up in here.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Because we've had a couple of emails on [? Handnet ?] from Paul Guillory, from the Men's Gathering. He seems to be kind of the mover and shaker who's helping putting this together. I don't know if there's a committee, or what--

STEPHEN Actually, the Men's Gathering is sponsoring the Black Expo. And I would tell anybody, if you get a chance, check

JEROME: out the website. They have a real good website.

You can also check out the Men's Gathering website in Yahoo groups. And it has information on it. From their press release, they've got a lot going on that weekend, a vendors' fair, they're having several seminars going on. And they're going to actually wind up, I believe, on that Sunday, out at Tom Bass Park with a large picnic.

So good eats, good food, and nice, pretty men out there also.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, you can send an email to paulguillory@yahoo.com. That's P-A-U-L-G-U-I-L-L-O-R-Y, paulguillory@yahoo.com. That's the information that I have. And he's also looking for some gay parents. They want to do a panel on gay parenting in the Black community.

STEPHEN --which should be very interesting--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, I think so too.

STEPHEN --because a lot of Black gay men out here do have kids. And hopefully this will bring some insight to better parenting techniques.

JIMMY CARPER: We talked about some of that stuff last time you were here, last month. And there's-- of course, different people have different value systems and do things differently. And there's a lot of bisexuality in the Black community.

STEPHEN Yeah, it is.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: It may not be-- people may not refer to themselves that way, but--

STEPHEN No, they actually don't [LAUGHS]

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: But their actions certainly speak that way. And so you end up with a lot of GLBT folks there with children.

STEPHEN Right. And hopefully, from this seminar and workshop that he's doing, it will actually bring Black gay men to play a more important role with their children, which-- and not only just Black gay men, but just Black men play a more important role with their kids and their families in the community, because as we all know, the Black community is a very matriarchal community, with the women basically at the forefront of keeping the Black community together.

And it is time for all my brothers out there to really step up and take your place with raising these kids, because as we all know, without a positive male role model there, it leaves a child with something missing out of their life. This is something they really do need.

JIMMY CARPER: And-- yes, and I see that and I think possibly that may be a contributing factor to the kids getting into gangs and being in the street.

STEPHEN And not only that, being caught up into the judicial system, drop out in high school, in school. And this is because that role model has not been there. And it is time that Black men stand up and step up to their responsibility.

One of the things I do commend the Men's Gathering on is-- that's one of the things that they really look at, is trying to get Black men to accept their responsibility, not only as gay men, but their responsibility within their community. And we do need that.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, I think that's very important. And I know you may have some differences. But--

STEPHEN Oh, yeah. We all have differences. I think that's like the flavors of chocolate. You can get it in 21 different flavors, but it's still chocolate. And more on going on with and around in the community, I'm glad to say Men of all Shades Houston, which meets on the second Sunday of each month at 5:00 PM at the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center.

This is a social, educational organization for men who are into interracial dating. This organization is not only to have fun, but we also look at the dynamics that's involved in interracial dating. So any guys out there who is into interracial dating, come on out to the meeting.

We always have a great time. Normally have potluck, so it's good food, something nice to drink, not necessarily alcoholic. But we have stuff out there.

Moving on, like I said, we've got a lot going on around the community this month. The Houston Black Lesbian, Gay, and Transgender Coalition, we call it short, but just call it the Coalition, is focused-- making August a focus month for the transgender community and within the Black community. And we'll be hosting a series of roundtable discussions with the transgender community. Also, one of the things that will be spotlighting is having a one-day makeup workshop with a--

JIMMY CARPER: Really?

STEPHEN --makeup consultant from Fashion Fair who will be hosting this workshop that day. So for all my divas out there, come on out if you want to find out the latest in the makeup industry, and what's that best color to go with that new dress that you just may have bought.

On a more serious note, this past week, the 14th Annual International AIDS Conference was held in Barcelona, Spain. And some disturbing messages came out of this conference this year. One of the things that-- the facts that came out this year was the fact that one in three men in America is infected with HIV and do not know it. This is really--

JIMMY CARPER: One in three?

STEPHEN It's down to one in three now.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Whoa.

STEPHEN Even worse than that, it is saying that 75% of people who are infected in the United States are African

JEROME: Americans. And they're heterosexuals, are down low bisexuals also, with 2/3 of them being women. And this is really bad to think that 90% of all gay Black men in America have the AIDS virus and do not know it.

JIMMY CARPER: No kidding.

STEPHEN The information is out there, but for some reason, looks like a link has been broken between getting the

JEROME: information out there and the people actually accepting the information. One of the things that the Men's Gathering, the Coalition, and MASH is all working towards is helping get this information out there to the community that, hey, this disease is not for one particular segment of society, but it is striking everybody.

In fact, another sad note during that conference was that they're estimating that approximately 45 million new infections will be worldwide by the year 2010. 6% of the children in Africa will be AIDS orphans by the year 2010. So this is really disturbing.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, it is.

STEPHEN Concerned that we have all this modern technology out that-- it's still not reaching everybody, the seriousness of this disease that we're dealing with. On a lighter note, this past week, the Policy institute of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force was in town at Texas Southern University, where they held a panel discussion that was co-sponsored by the Men's Gathering.

JIMMY CARPER: And weren't you on that panel?

STEPHEN Yeah, I happened to have been there. Back in the year 2000, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force did a survey called, Say it Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud, in which they target Black gay Americans at different Black Pride functions on what their opinion about being Black and gay in the United States was at this time.

As we see, it's still-- there's a big difference in dealing with racism in this country. And there's still a great separation between the different races, even in the gay community. And this is something we want to hopefully bridge that gap within the next few segments, and talk about, and look at the different ways of discrimination, and how can we get rid of some of this racism that we are dealing with, even in the gay community.

We try to think that, hey there's not racism there. But to be honest and to be realistic, it's there.

JIMMY CARPER: Of course it is. Yes.

STEPHEN Not only racism, but sexism--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, especially sexism.

STEPHEN --in the community. And we're trying to find ways to bridge that gap. On a--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: It's really tough. It's really tough because you have to change ways of thinking that was put in there when you were a child. And it's so hard to change it. Once you learn things as a child, it's really difficult to change.

STEPHEN And it's even harder because a lot of people don't want to change. And that's what we're seeing nowadays is, even within the Black community, is like there's a fight against changing, unwilling to change [INAUDIBLE], like OK, we're over here and we want to stay over here. We're going to have to change in order to progress, not only as Blacks, but as Black gays and lesbians also.

JIMMY CARPER: But the whole thing that Paul Guillory has, I think, is standing up and being proud of who you are, and taking responsibility.

STEPHEN Right. And one of the things during that panel discussion that really struck me, and I had never really thought about it, was the Black community looks at it differently as being out and being visible. Some feel that it's OK to be out but I don't have to be visible.

And in order for Black gays and lesbians and same-gender-loving people to make an impact and to get rid of that fear, and the homophobia fear in the community, you not only have to be out, but you have to be visible.

JIMMY CARPER: Mm-hmm, you do.

STEPHEN We cannot make an impact and change the way things are if we're invisible.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: It's changing people's perception of what it means to be gay.

STEPHEN Right.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Because perhaps in the Black community, when you say that someone is gay, you expect to be someone who's very effeminate.

STEPHEN Yeah, and this is an idea that is not only promoted and believed by heterosexuals, but a lot of Black gays push

JEROME: this idea. And we're going to, as Black gays, first have to say, OK, this is not how it is. We are not the stereotype.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. And one thing that I find in Paul's stuff, and in a lot of the stuff coming out of Washington DC with the Black community, is a push for Black men, Black gay men, to find other Black gay men. It's the being proud of who you are kind of thing.

STEPHEN And the thing is, Black gay men have to learn to be proud of who they are, not only in certain situations and in

JEROME: certain environments, but be able, and be strong enough to stand up and say, I'm Black, I'm gay, no matter what the environment is.

JIMMY CARPER: Or I'm bi. Whatever the case may be.

STEPHEN But at least stand up and say, this is what I am and who I am. I do not fit into that stereotype. But on a lighter

JEROME: note, I don't want to get too deep into that--

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, we don't-- yeah.

STEPHEN Um--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Before you get into that, I need to remind folks, because it is the top of the hour, that they are listening to After Hours, queer radio with attitude, on KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station. Yes, indeed. Oh, my. Yes.

STEPHEN And tonight, I actually have a guest that I made sure would show up.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh?

STEPHEN Yeah.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Who?

STEPHEN James Baldwin.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Ah.

STEPHEN He's going to be the spotlight tonight.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Good.

STEPHEN In fact, in the next few weeks, on August 2, we will be celebrating his birthday.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: No kidding?

STEPHEN James Baldwin was one of the great authors of the Black Renaissance period--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: He certainly was.

STEPHEN --that he grew up. And he was also, I can say, an openly Black gay man. And he stood up against racism and

JEROME: homophobia, even during the '50s and the '60s. In fact, at one point, he was so disgusted with the way the racism and the homophobia was here in this country was, he moved to France.

During his period while he was in France came some of his greatest books, "Giovanni's Room", "The Me Nobody Knows". And I would tell anybody, if you get a chance, visit your local library and read some of his books. "Giovanni's Room" is stuck in my head because I think that was one of the very first--

JIMMY CARPER: It was.

STEPHEN --books that I ever read, dealing with a Black author who openly spoke about being gay.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Now that must have been a revelation. I know it was when I read my first novel about a guy who was white, and was stood up and said, I'm gay. And that was such a freeing thing for me.

STEPHEN It was for me--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, I mean--

STEPHEN --because I didn't know that there were really anybody out who was Black and who was important, literary or any

JEROME: otherwise. So also, it really struck me. I remember that book because that was the first time I read about interracial relationship.

JIMMY CARPER: Ah, OK, yes.

STEPHEN And it really stuck in my head like, hey, this really can happen. And the book is really good. And I must say, it's

JEROME: even spicy.

JIMMY CARPER: And when he stood up and said that he was gay, it really did not diminish his standing.

STEPHEN No, it didn't. But with doing more research on the Harlem Renaissance and the Black Renaissance during the '40s and the '50s, I found out something was that more Blacks were out back then.

JIMMY CARPER: Huh, yes.

STEPHEN More Blacks were saying, hey, this is part of my-- but it was more accepted in certain areas. It was OK to be gay back then.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, yeah.

STEPHEN It's like we went into the closet instead of coming out of the closet--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Imagine that.

STEPHEN --considering that they did have armoires back then. So I can kind of understand that. But--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: But that was before the communism, and the McCarthy thing, and all of that. And I think that kind of pushed people into the closet.

STEPHEN He was one of the writers who actually got caught up with it. In fact, his mentor was Richard Wright who wrote, **JEROME:** as we all know, "Native Son", which was a very controversial book back at that time. Later, Richard Wright did move out of this country because he was a communist.

He belonged to the Communist Party. And in fear of being called before the Congressional committee at that time, he moved out of the country. James Baldwin basically did the same thing. I won't say that they had a love affair going on, because we do know Richard Wright had several kids and a wife. Also, at that time--

JIMMY CARPER: Does that stop somebody?

STEPHEN No, not in the Black community, it doesn't. One of the things with Richard Wright that was very ahead of time at **JEROME:** that time, because Richard Wright's wife was a white ballerina--

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, I didn't know that.

STEPHEN --with the Chicago Ballet. So he was like breaking all the molds at the time. And James Baldwin basically looked **JEROME:** up to this guy. They later fell out though, because James Baldwin criticized Richard Wright's "Native Son". And this kind of drew a little friction between the two where they-- their friendship never recovered from it.

And that was on a sad note, because you're looking at two of the greatest Black writers in this country at that time, and even to this day. Even at James Baldwin's death, he was complimented and said to be one of the great writers of this country.

JIMMY CARPER: Absolutely, absolutely was, yes.

STEPHEN In fact, he was even spoken-- mentioned to call it being a prophet of the Black community. What some people don't know, one little tidbit about it, was before James Baldwin became a writer, he was a minister. Why, we're not surprised.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, wow, yeah.

STEPHEN So--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: He would make a great one too.

STEPHEN But that still goes back and shows how important the Black-- the church has played within the Black community--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yes.

STEPHEN --back then.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: And still is.

STEPHEN And it still is. It's very important for good or bad. It's still-- the church does hold the Black community together. It may disdain some of us and give us guilt complex for--

JIMMY CARPER: Well, it depends on the church.

STEPHEN Yeah, because we now are having churches that are very moderate and very accepting. In fact, I will say my own church-- I won't call it that-- but it's very accepting. And that's good. The thing is, the church in the Black community, what they're looking at is trying to hold the Black family together. And they look at anything that breaks up that Black family as wrong, whether it's alcohol, drugs, domestic violence, homosexuality. Whatever they feel is causing that father not--

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, I'm trying to think-- I've always thought, how does being gay tear the family apart? I just don't get it, because technically-- well, we have a long history of-- gay and lesbian people are the ones that take care of the older generation.

STEPHEN Right.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Or the gay son or the lesbian daughter is the one who stays at home and takes care of the younger ones. It's just-- that's been the role.

STEPHEN It's just, I guess, because we don't necessarily, say, fit into quote, unquote, "the standard" type of family.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: I guess, I'd say, yeah, because yeah--

STEPHEN We can't go downtown and get a marriage license.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: They don't realize-- yeah, the society as a whole doesn't really realize that because we're not open about it.

STEPHEN Yeah. And that's where more Blacks need to be more open about being gay. it's time that we quit hiding in the closet. The door has been open. It's time for us to walk out of that closet. And we need to get out of the closet.

JIMMY CARPER: You bet--

STEPHEN I mean, it's getting cramped in there.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: --because there's no need to hide, because every Black gay in the gay and lesbian, bisexual, and transgender person is there for their families, making huge contributions that should be recognized.

STEPHEN And I think where the problem comes in is not with the openly gay, but with the gays who are not open, and who are in the closet, and who are in denial of being [INAUDIBLE] their lifestyle.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, that's the other thing.

STEPHEN And that's what caused the detrimental breakdown of the family.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: It's the self denial, yeah.

STEPHEN It's like with the down-low thing, where we're looking at it as causing such a problem within the community because this is spreading AIDS. And a lot of--

JIMMY CARPER: It's certainly helping to.

STEPHEN --cases, not all cases, but in some cases, we see where one down-low person can infect four people straight off the bat, because normally that down-low person, he has a wife and family at home. He may have a girlfriend on the side. And then he usually has a boyfriend on the side. And according to what the role is, he may have two boyfriends.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, no kidding, yeah.

STEPHEN They're not exactly versatile. We have one boyfriend, bottom one boyfriend, top, you know.

JEROME:

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, that's right. That's right.

STEPHEN In that process, you have just infected four people and countless many more.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: If you're not playing safe. And I think many of the men don't want to-- feel that if they use a condom with their wife, then their wife will suspect that they are doing something on the side. But if they don't use a condom with the wife, then the wife thinks that--

STEPHEN Everything is OK.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, well, and that's where the problem comes in.

STEPHEN And also, not only that, is the fact of thinking, according to what role I play, I won't get infected.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

STEPHEN But HIV is not a top or bottom thing. It's like--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right.

STEPHEN It likes everybody.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. It's not what you do, it's how you do it. And--

STEPHEN And we just need to rethink of how we're doing it instead of thinking of, well, what am I doing. But let's just do it

JEROME: the right way. And so we-- it's one of those things that's really affecting the Black community. But like I said, I do want to say that [? Katz ?] did have a fundraiser today.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, yes they did.

STEPHEN And I heard it was great. I didn't get the bacon.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: I didn't make-- no, I didn't--

STEPHEN I was hanging out at The Castle.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Because-- The Castle?

STEPHEN Yeah.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Ah, ah, that Castle. No, because this was at the club in Conroe.

STEPHEN Yeah.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: And wow, I think that is a magnificent thing that--

STEPHEN And I guess that [? Katz ?] is going to be working along with the Coalition as we work with the Black transgender

JEROME: community--

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, good.

STEPHEN --to get more information out to the Black transgender community so we can all work together, and just see just how far we really can get with this thing.

JIMMY CARPER: No kidding. Get those girls a real job and get them off the streets. It just breaks my heart when I see all of the transgendered hookers out there. And I'm thinking yet the reason that-- I know the reason that they're out there is because they can't get a job anywhere else.

STEPHEN Right.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: And [? Katz ?] is really working to help that out.

STEPHEN Help them get off the street, get them educated--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, you bet.

STEPHEN --that they can have productive lives. And not only that, but go through their transitioning.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. Most of these girls out there are taking street hormones. And you don't know what the hell they are or where they came from. And it's just crazy.

STEPHEN And just doing-- knowledge. Like it says, knowledge is power.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: You bet it is.

STEPHEN The more knowledge we can get to everybody, that's what we're shooting for. And like I said, again, for anybody

JEROME: who needs information about the Coalition, the phone number is 832-455-2032.

JIMMY CARPER: OK, now the name of this--

STEPHEN Is the Houston Black, Lesbian, Gay, Transgender Coalition.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

STEPHEN Short, just Coalition.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: The Coalition. It's like--

STEPHEN Now you don't get talk time.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: --yeah, now that the official bisexual and transgender has been added to the Pride committee, now we just call it the Pride Parade.

STEPHEN Yeah, that's easy.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: That's easy, yeah.

STEPHEN Moving on, I do want to thank a very special lady in my life. During our Pride Parade, for those who didn't get to

JEROME: know it, that was my mother in that car with me.

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

STEPHEN And it is a great feeling to have, not only your mother, but to have any straight person who is willing to, say,

JEROME: stand on side and say, hey, I'm proud of this person.

JIMMY CARPER: You know, you just beamed that whole night. And I just thought that was great, having your mom there.

STEPHEN The only downside to it was when we got by the Christians who was heckling us, my mother was upset because

JEROME: we didn't have anything bigger than the beads to throw at them.

[LAUGHTER]

She actually want to use my shoe and I just refused to take them off.

JIMMY CARPER: Good for her.

STEPHEN But it really-- and like I says, I was very proud because any time your mother or any straight person will stand up

JEROME: and says, hey, I love this person, I'm proud of this person for their accomplishments, even though their lifestyle may be different from mine, we're all still in this boat together--

JIMMY CARPER: You bet.

STEPHEN --it means a lot.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: You bet.

STEPHEN But no. It was fun. In fact, she wanted to do it again.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, I know. [INAUDIBLE].

STEPHEN I had to actually tell her, you have to go home. But she said she'll be back next year.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, good, good.

STEPHEN So we're going to have to find out how to do grand marshals again. I don't know if she wants to be at the back of

JEROME: the parade next year.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, exactly, yeah. That whole experience was just great.

STEPHEN It was. It was like over the hill, really. It was over the top for me, I guess because I'm so used to being behind the scenes--

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, you are.

STEPHEN --on everything, and all of a sudden you're thrust up there--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: You're the guy who has the tough job. You have to go out there and get the volunteers for the switchboard. And I know it's tough.

STEPHEN And with this being our Black-on-Black segment, I'm actually asking and pleading and encouraging, we need

JEROME: more people of color.

JIMMY CARPER: We do.

STEPHEN We need more Blacks. We need more Hispanics. We need more Asians on the switchboard, because the

JEROME: switchboard is out here for everybody.

JIMMY CARPER: You bet.

STEPHEN And we do need, so--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: And women too.

STEPHEN Oh, please, yes.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: In fact, we've got a lot of women actually right now.

STEPHEN We actually-- right now, we're outnumbered by women.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Good, because it's seldom that way.

STEPHEN Yeah, that says we need you. We need everybody on the switchboard because there is never enough people on
JEROME: the switchboard.

JIMMY CARPER: And it's a wonderful way to learn about your community. That's how I got started.

STEPHEN I mean, you learn about your community. You learn about the worldwide gay community.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: You bet.

STEPHEN A good thing, you actually get the first hand on all the gossip in the community.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Ooh, do you ever.

STEPHEN And this is a little light note I even tell all the volunteers, first thing in the training classes, this is one of the few places in organizations where if you're in the closet, you can stay in the closet.

JIMMY CARPER: You can stay in the closet because the switchboard is anonymous and confidential.

STEPHEN So your identity is never known.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right.

STEPHEN Not even for the callers.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right.

STEPHEN So if you want to stay in the closet-- and we have a pretty nice closet. I mean, we have incense and candles in there.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, it's nice.

STEPHEN Jazz music--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: That's wonderful.

STEPHEN --and even have internet service. We'll just tell you to stay off the boys' [? sites. ?] That's all.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, right, yeah, exactly.

STEPHEN But if you want to get on the switchboard, like it says, our next training class will be starting in mid August. And **JEROME:** the phone number 713-529-3211.

JIMMY CARPER: 529-3211. 3211.

STEPHEN Yeah, like straight across the--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, Exactly.

STEPHEN I guess I've been looking at too many commercials.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Now you were looking at the float that Anita and Barbara did.

STEPHEN Oh, yeah, they did a beautiful job in there.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yeah. And we got we won the prize too.

STEPHEN Yes, we did. We won the Edison Award.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: I was there to pick it up.

STEPHEN That just goes to show you-- and ladies, all ladies sisters out there in the audience in radio land, I compliment

JEROME: you. That shows the power of women, because this float was built by women.

JIMMY CARPER: By women, you bet. All the way. One day it was opened up. And the other members came. And so the gay guys were the ones who did painting, painted the pink. That was about it.

STEPHEN Actually, the guys, I think we filed our fingernails. For the girls on the switchboard, it was like a major tool

JEROME: convention. I mean--

JIMMY CARPER: It was incredible.

STEPHEN --they all came out there with their Black&Deckers. I didn't actually know Black&Decker made that many

JEROME: different tools.

JIMMY CARPER: I know it.

STEPHEN I found some stuff. But like I says, the switchboard, one of the things we aim at is not only-- yeah, it is things that

JEROME: we do deal with serious subjects from time to time. But we also try to have fun.

JIMMY CARPER: We do.

STEPHEN We try to bond as a family. And this is the same goal, I think, with all the organizations that I work with. Like with

JEROME: MASH, which is Men of All Shades Houston, we look at some really tough topics, dynamics of being in an interracial relationship, dynamics of how to live in the community when you're in an interracial relationship.

Because I can say the gay community does treat you differently when you're in an interracial relationship. And this is just a reality of life.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, 20, 30 years ago, it didn't matter where you were in this country. There just were very few interracial--

STEPHEN Relationships--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: --of any kind.

STEPHEN Yeah. And now we have interracial relationships out there. But they are still invisible. And that's the thing we're

JEROME: pushing for is not only being out, but being visible and being out. A lot of people say I'm out, but I'm not visible. I don't exactly understand that all the time.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, I don't get, yeah, if you're out.

STEPHEN I guess that's that Casper the Ghost mentality.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Something like that, yeah.

STEPHEN I hear boo, but--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: These are the people who say-- when they mean they're out, it's that they just live their lives. They don't tell anybody anything. They just assume people think that they're gay.

STEPHEN In fact, one of the things I've learned in dealing with the Black community is like, OK, I'm out in certain areas of

JEROME: my life.

JIMMY CARPER: Well--

STEPHEN My close friends know about me. But I'm not out on my job, or I'm not out at church, or I'm not out around my

JEROME: family.

JIMMY CARPER: I've read that even in the most active of queer activists, there's just some area where they're not out. They're not-- there's an aunt or a grandmother or somebody that they're not out to. They're still in the closet. And so they're mostly--

STEPHEN I guess with me, I am so out that when somebody thinks I'm not out, and I'll find out that somebody doesn't

JEROME: know, it just throws me completely for a loop.