

- [INAUDIBLE] Garrison Keillor.

- My ancestors were Puritans who came here from England in 1648 in the hopes of finding greater restrictions than were permissible under English law. And I'm a Puritan myself. I see a lot every day that's offensive to me. But like most Americans, I oppose censorship and suppression.

It's wrong and it just never works. Our First Amendment right to say what we think and read what we want to is too precious to fool around with. Some of my fellow Puritans are pushing government to suppress works they find offensive. They're wrong. Censorship can't eliminate evil. It can only kill freedom.

- The National Endowment for the Arts is under attack by extremists who want to restrict what art, if any, gets endowment funds. Join the battle to save the National Endowment for the Arts from the censors. Call or write your member of congress today. Ask them to stand up for freedom, by standing up for the arts. Sponsored by the People For the American Way action fund.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- This is *Afterwards* for the week of March 10, I'm Frank White.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- Glen Maxey was sworn in by Governor Ann Richards on Wednesday, March 6 to become Texas's first openly gay elected official. Maxey said he believes that his victory shows that openly gay and lesbian candidates can win office elsewhere in Texas.

Texas Supreme Court Justice Oscar Mauzy said, there will be two places where Glenn will make his mark. One will be education and the other will be human services. In an election night victory party interview last week on *Afterwards*, Maxey also said that he would co-sponsor a bill calling for the repeal of 2106. 2106 is the law which criminalizes homosexual conduct in Texas.

- Representative Dan burg and Cain have filed the 2106 repeal bill in the house. I'll become a co-sponsor this next week when I take the oath of office. We will take the-- the Secretary of State will certify this election on Wednesday morning. I spoke to Governor Richards a couple of hours-- he's agreed to administer the oath of office on Wednesday evening here in Austin in a ceremony on the house floor.

And on Thursday, I expect to become one of the lead sponsors to repeal of 2106.

- All right. So you're going to be off and running.

- Yes, sir.

- Maxey was in the closet when he first ran for public office in 1982. He ran against an incumbent Democratic State Representative and lost, receiving only 38% of the vote. Maxey said that he decided to come out in January of 1986 because no one was lobbying state government for help with the growing AIDS epidemic. Coming out helped Maxey fight AIDS quarantine proposals and it also helped acquire sorely needed state funding for AIDS.

One of the most important things his election could accomplish, said Maxey, would be to change the negativism and low self esteem that discourages gay men and lesbians from seeking public office. In a related story, several lawmakers changed seating assignments prior to Maxey swearing in as Texas's first openly gay legislator. Those contacted denied that the seating changes had anything to do with Maxey, but some said jokes have accompanied the desk changes and that a small number of lawmakers have voiced concern about Maxey being homosexual.

One of the relocated lawmakers, Representative Brady from the Woodlands, said that Maxey's being gay should not be an issue and that there is so much else to worry about up here than his sexual preference. Brady said he moved because he's friends with a Wichita Falls representative who changed his seat. The newly elected Maxey said, I'm 39 years old. I've lived for 39 years with bigotry, with ignorance, with irrational behavior towards gay people. Hopefully my election and my service in the Texas House of Representatives will do something to educate people that there is nothing to fear.

Commuters in Houston were greeted with a well-planned out public awareness campaign. Four large banners draped the four overpasses of the Southwest freeways inbound lanes during the height of rush hour on Monday morning. The banners were placed by Queer Nation, Houston's newest, most active and visible gay rights group. The banners were bold and very easy to read.

They read as follows, "We're here, the next. We're queer, the third. Get used to it." And on the fourth bridge, the banner's bright red letters proudly displayed the name "Queer Nation." The local media covered this event, and this campaign was seen by approximately 50,000 passing motorists. The men and women involved with Queer Nation in Houston are on the ball, and this week they will be holding an action at the controversial Bill of Rights display in downtown Houston.

Phillip Morris is the sponsor of this display, and has been receiving very bad publicity from the medical associations across the country, because cigarettes are the cause of death to millions of Americans. Queer Nation is concerned by this display because Philip Morris is the largest financial contributor to Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina, who is the biggest threat to the Bill of Rights that this country has ever seen.

Senator Jesse Helms has fought every piece of legislation extending civil rights to Blacks, women, and other minorities. Senator Jesse Helms fought the Hate Crimes Statistics Act, which would have created a system of documenting crimes against minorities. Jesse Helms also supports government censorship of the arts, and was responsible for the denial of funding to many artists because their themes were considered obscene because they depicted homoeroticism.

Philip Morris must know that we will not support their public relations sham. By them being the largest contributor to Helms, they are also contributing to the destruction of the document they are proudly displaying across the country. They want to stand on the Bill of Rights when it comes to banning cigarette advertising, but yet they support the violation of millions of Americans civil rights by funding Helms.

Be at Tranquility Park at 3:30 today. At 4:00, Queer Nation will march from Tranquility Park to the Coliseum to protest Philip Morris and Senator Jesse Helms. At 6:00, Houston will experience its first Queer Nation kiss-in. Start fighting back. Next week, the Houston tribe of Queer Nation will be at the Capitol in Austin. If you want to be a part of Queer Nation, call David at 529-0100.

- Now.

- What do we want?

- Gay rights.

- When do we want them?

- Now.

- What do we want?

- Gay rights.

- When do we want them?

- Now.

- When do we want them?

- Now.

- The March on Austin for Gay and Lesbian equal rights will be held next Sunday at noon. The route for the march will be the same as the last March on Austin, beginning at the Palmer Auditorium, up Congress, to the steps of the capital. Several contingents will be meeting at the beginning of the march in the field next to the auditorium. Look for the Houston Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus, Sober and Free banner, ACT UP, and Queer Nation.

If you are a member of a group not mentioned, contact your officers to find out the location of your contingent in the historic March on Austin. The events of the weekend will commence Friday night and wrap up on Tuesday evening. The Montrose Singers will be in concert the Saturday before the march at the University of Texas campus. Tickets for this performance are available at Inklings in Houston.

Several performances will be staged throughout Austin, especially for this historic event. The purpose of this March is to demand legal recognition of gay and lesbian relationships, including same sex marriages, passage of anti-discrimination and hate crimes laws, the right of gay men and lesbians to serve in the United States Armed forces, and legislative repeal of the Texas sodomy law. The last March on Austin for gay and lesbian rights attracted approximately 40,000 people.

According to a member of the board, the Texas Gay Rights Lobby, the time is right now for us to send a loud and clear message to Austin. Because the current administration in Austin is listening to us. With the election of Maxey to the legislature and Ann Richards as governor, our chances of being heard are the greatest they have ever been in this state.

We cannot make the same mistake Houston made in the gay rights referendum and not show up. If we don't show up in Austin, in numbers larger than the past, no one will notice us. We must prove to the legislators that we are a political force. The Greater Houston statistical area is said to have 300,000 gay men and lesbians. If you're not out of the closet, come to Austin anyway.

We're at a turning point. We must also convey a message that we are a diverse group of people and that the stereotypes will no longer work to dismiss or invalidate our existence. We are diverse. We must not neglect to show the legislators how politically powerful we truly are. When we can do this, they will listen.

If you stay home and listen to the coverage on the radio, you will diminish our voice. One person can only do a small part. But together, we can unleash power to change history. I ask all gay and lesbian people to put your political, social, and moral differences aside for one day and join together for a common purpose. Equal rights for all men and women.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

The city council of Houston is studying council redistricting. This is being done because of population shifts reported by the 1990 census. The Montrose area could come out of this remapping with a new district. Council member Sheila Jackson Lee will be holding public hearings on the redistricting. Attend these meetings and let them know whether or not you support the plan. The redistricting into 16 districts with no at-large seats would only benefit gay and lesbian people living in Montrose.

Rob Bridges, committee chair of the GLPC redistricting committee, believes that the 16 district plan would be good for this city because of increased minority representation, and would increase the likelihood of a Montrose based council district. Bridges also believes that the redistricting would make the election of an openly gay representative to council possible. Bridges' committee supports a 16-district city council with no at-large positions.

16 seats equates to 100,000 people per district. Bridges told afterwards that you can support this plan by getting on the GLPC Redistricting Committee. You can also attend public hearings. Sheila Jackson Lee will hold District C hearings at the Jewish Community Center, 5601 Brycewood, on March 26th at 7:00. Lee is the chair of the Human Rights Committee for city council.

Bridges and his committee will submit the redistricting plan to the city attorney on April first for a legal opinion, to see if their plan is legally viable. After the public hearings are completed in mid-April, all proposals will be presented to the city council.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Now the Presbyterian Church USA can't decide whether homosexuality is allowable among its clergy. The Presbyterian Church USA appointed a task force to study the matter, and now several churches don't agree with the task force findings. First Presbyterian Church in Houston will vote next week on whether to remain affiliated with the Presbyterian Church USA.

Houston members of the-- Houston members of the church will ask to have the task force dismantled. If the 170 regional bodies that the Presbyterian Church USA would approve the recommendation of the task force in June at their convention, it would take two years of hearings before any policy change would take effect.

- That's right, man. You had it easy. You lost your husband in a nice clean hospital. You know where I lost mine? I lost mine on the street.

That's right. They killed him on the street. 27 years old, laying dead on the street. Killed by a bunch of kids with baseball bats. That's right, mom. Killed by children. Killed and tore by people like you because everybody knows that queers don't matter. Queers don't love. And those that don't what they get.

- Violence against homosexuals was a widespread and growing problem. Last year, increasing significantly over 1989, a gay rights organization said Wednesday. In its sixth annual study of crimes against homosexuals, the Washington-based National Gay and Lesbian Task Force said incidents of violence and other harassment of homosexuals jumped by 42% between 1989 and 1990.

The report we released today shows that anti-gay violence was a widespread and growing problem in 1990. It reveals the terrible magnitude and consequences of this crisis, said Kevin Berrill, who wrote the report. The study cited 1,588 incidents in 1990, including harassment, intimidation, physical assault, vandalism, arson, police abuse, and murder in the six localities surveyed. New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston, and Minneapolis Saint Paul. The survey sites were chosen because they are home to many groups that monitor anti-gay violence and provide assistance to victims of anti-gay crimes.

It should come as no surprise that anti-gay attacks are widespread when White House counsel C. Boyden Gray unapologetically uses the word "fag" in his speech, or when characters in TV shows make queer jokes, or when rap songs include lyrics such as, "I hate faggots." New York City led the nation in reported incidents of anti-homosexual crime in 1990. The study documented 507 anti-homosexual crimes in New York, a 65% increase over the 308 bias-motivated crimes counted in 1989.

The 1990 figure includes two murders of gay men, the only murders classified by the city as bias-motivated last year. Police departments reported only 265 anti-homosexual crimes during 1990. Many victims don't notify police because they fear police abuse and are wary of revealing their sexual preferences. Victims of anti-gay crimes are more likely to report attacks to gay and lesbian groups instead, because they feel more comfortable, said Thomas Swift, a Washington gay rights leader.

In releasing its report, the organization also announced the launch of a national campaign to monitor and fight hate crimes of all kinds. The campaign, Berrill said, will promote self-defense and street safety, education of law enforcement officers about hate crimes, passage of hate crimes legislation, and other measures.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

This has been *Afterwards* for the week of March 10th. I'm Frank White.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Jimmy will be coming up next on *After Hours*, 90.1 KPFT Houston.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- Ah, thank you, Frank.

- Thank you, Frank. Very much--

- Yeah, that guy gets better every week.

- If that's possible.

- Yeah. He could use some too.

- Oh, help with the news?

- Yeah. If you have any kind of news stories or events you want to promote, why don't you drop us a line here at *After Hours* at KPFT Houston, 419 Lovett Boulevard, Houston, 77006. Or you can always call us at the *After Hours* hotline, at 529 4636.

And before *This Way Out*, which is coming up at 1:30--

- We have some more music, right?

- We do have some more music. It's a special song of Buddy's. Buddy, who was out tonight, he's taking the night off. A little something before that. I went to the film festival this week. The gay and lesbian-- yeah. During the week, and it was so very lightly attended.

- Oh.

- And I got to thinking about a lot of things in the gay and lesbian community that are so lightly attended. [SIGHS] I know we bitch and complain about it because it doesn't get advertising. And I thought, well, we can bitch and complain or we can say, OK, look. We're not going to have a lot of advertising, so we as gay and lesbian people have to make that extra effort to find out what's going on in the community, You can--

- You can pick up the local publications--

- You can. But something like even the March on Austin, there's hardly anything in the publications this week about it.

- Huh.

- It's amazing. You just have to find out for yourself. One of the ways is to join the HGLPC and get on their mailing list. You get a lot of things that way. Or just keep in touch with the Switchboard. Call them up once a week and say, hey, what's going on? Yeah.

We have to make that effort because a lot of things in the gay and lesbian community just don't have the advertising dollar to spend--

- They don't have the budget for it, right?

- Or we have problems getting things advertised in mainline newspapers around town. So we have to make that effort. And when you do, you can discover things like the Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, which was absolutely fantastic. I'm sorry for the people who didn't get to see it. It was really great.

- And now it's off to another city somewhere.

- Well, tomorrow is the last day, so--

- Oh, it's here this weekend?

- Yes. Yes, yes, yes, yes--

- Talk about not finding stuff--

- Aha, see?

- I thought it was this last weekend.

- Even all faggots like you, Mike.

- Yeah.

- OK.

- God.

- So this is a Jimmy Somerville song that we play a lot. And I'm just going to have to say instead of what he says, it's read your own lips and find out what's going on.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- This is an education that needs to occur within the lesbian and gay communities. The decision that the government make in Washington or in state capitals have a direct effect on our lives.
- The effort to repeal the ordinance was led by FIRED UP, which stands for freedom involves responsibly exposing decadence and upholding principles.
- Whether or not the federal government continues to allow PACs to survive is yet to be seen. But if it's not, we'll find another way to apply that million to make sure that gay and lesbian Americans have their voices heard in the political process.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- Welcome to *This Way Out*, the international lesbian and gay radio magazine. I'm Greg Gordon.
- And I'm Lucia Chappelle. German unity spawns consent equality.
- Campaign fund goes for a million before possibly packing it in.
- And will Kansas City fire up AIDS discrimination?
- All that and more now that you've discovered *This Way Out*.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- I'm Mark Saccomano.
- And I'm Cindy Friedman.
- With *News Wrap* a summary of some of the news in or affecting the lesbian and gay community for the week ending, February 23rd, 1991. Gay and lesbian activists have won a major victory in the development of the Penal Code for United Germany. The new German parliament has deleted the 120-year-old West German Paragraph 175, which set a higher age of consent for gay male sex than for heterosexual or lesbian sex. And which had led to the arrest of over 500 men each year.

East Germany equalized its age of consent rules in 1988. A spokesman for the German Gay Union said the group's next goal is legal recognition of same gender relationships.

- Repression of gays and lesbians continues to increase in the USSR, according to Roman Kalinin of the Moscow Union of Lesbians and Gay men. As soldiers joined police in patrolling the streets at the beginning of February, it became too dangerous for gay men to cruise. Cafe Sadako, a restaurant which had been a safe meeting place for a decade, closed suddenly in December. We can gather only in people's apartments now, Kalinin reported.

When Moscow Union members were questioned earlier this year regarding the official registration of their newsletter[? *Tema* ?], Kalinin took the offensive by asking the prosecutor for an interview on crimes against gays. The strategy worked, as the case was dropped the next day. But the danger isn't over.

In police interrogations, it appeared that Kalinin and Evgenia Debryanskaya were going to be charged with possession of illicit drugs, a charge which requires little evidence and which has been used to incarcerate a number of young dissidents. Although the official registration of [? Tema ?] guarantees access to a state-owned printing plant Kalinin was not confident that the issue he delivered there in early February would be published because a Moscow printer had stopped producing a dissident newspaper at that time.

Plans for a gay and lesbian pride march in Red Square may have to be canceled, as activist Natasha [INAUDIBLE] warns, they could beat up all the participants.

- At the request of gay and lesbian activists, US President George Bush has awarded a posthumous certificate of recognition to openly gay Vietnam veteran, Leonard Matlovich. The certificate reads, "The United States of America honors the memory of Leonard P. Matlovich. The certificate is awarded by a grateful nation in recognition of devoted and selfless consecration to the service of our country and the armed forces of the United States."

The highly decorated Air Force Sergeant was discharged after coming out in 1975, and became an activist on behalf of gays and lesbians in the military and people with AIDS. He died of AIDS related illness in 1988, and is memorialized by a headstone reading, "They gave me a medal for killing two men and a discharge for loving one."

- In London, lesbians and gays have been protesting the Gulf War even before the first shot was fired. Welsh lesbians organized a peace camp outside the foreign office in early January, with as many as 100 lesbians participating. In mid-January, five lesbians in the camp were arrested for blocking the highway. In two other actions in mid-January, four lesbians chained themselves to number 10 Downing Street and two others entered the House of Commons, blowing whistles and throwing red powder on the MPs.

The gender bending Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence joined the demonstration with a chant. "Saddam with an attitude, Bush and major in a mood. Don't just stand there, let's get to it. Stop the war, there's nothing to it."

- A provision in the Kansas City, Missouri Civil Rights Ordinance, which protects HIV positive people from discrimination, is being challenged by a so-called traditional values organization called FIRED UP. Greg Hanson reports from Kansas City.

- The law is needed to bring the city into compliance with state and federal law, and to enable the city to receive federal money from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The effort to repeal the ordinance was led by FIRED UP, which stands for freedom involves responsibly exposing decadence and upholding principles, a traditional values group led by two women, one of whom has an uncle who is gay and has AIDS. Opponents of the ordinance had 45 days to gather 8,100 valid signatures on a petition which would force the city council to either repeal it or put the issue up for a public vote.

Over 9,000 signatures were turned in at the deadline, however 2,000 of those were declared invalid, and FIRED UP was given an additional 10 days to come up with the required signatures. The Human Rights Project, a broad-based coalition of groups which support lesbian and gay rights, and includes among its endorsers the Diocese of Western Missouri of the Episcopal Church, the human relations department of Kansas City, Missouri, and the National Lawyers Guild, has already begun organizing to fight a referendum.

Since the ordinance to protect HIV positive people from discrimination was passed by the city council by a vote of 9 to 2, it is not likely a motion to repeal the law will be introduced. A public vote on the issue may be scheduled in June or August. In Kansas City, Missouri this is Greg Hansen for *This Way Out*.

- Briefly, in other news, openly gay us Congressman Gary Studds has been appointed to the health and environment subcommittee of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. That's the subcommittee which generates most legislation relating to AIDS.



- A San Francisco Union is the first to offer health care benefits to members with HIV disease. Local Two of the San Francisco Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union will be offering up to \$350 per month to cover a wide range of treatments, including experimental ones.
- In Boise, Idaho, a lesbian prosecuted for stabbing her lover won acquittal based on a battered women's syndrome defense. It's believed to be the first time a lesbian was found to have acted in self defense, based on past partner violence. The same approach failed last year when a Florida lesbian was found guilty of murdering her partner.
- In a special election for a seat in the Texas House of Representatives, openly gay Glen Maxey was the top vote-getter in a field of 13. Maxey, who is director of the Lesbian and Gay Rights lobby of Texas, will now face a runoff election against one of two candidates who tied for second place.
- Also in Texas, the Dallas Gay Alliance Credit Union is now the second gay and lesbian organization issuing a major credit card. Its Mastercard is pink and gray, and proudly stamped "Dallas Gay Alliance." Unlike the Visa and Mastercard issued by Seattle Washington's Pride Foundation, use of the Dallas cards will not result in a contribution to the organization.
- The gay couple is suing the city of Washington DC for marriage license have dropped their claim for \$1,000,000 in damages. While they'd originally hoped an award of damages would give their suit more power as a precedent for other decisions, they now believe the money would only cloud the issue. "When we do go to court, I want the only issue to be whether same sex couples should be allowed to marry," said Attorney Craig Dean, who is representing himself and his partner, Patrick Gill, in the case.
- In Georgia, a survey on harassment by the Atlanta Gay Center found that, of 388 gays and lesbians responding, almost 90% had experienced verbal abuse and over one third had experienced physical violence. More than one fifth had been attacked with weapons, and more than one in seven had been raped. Only 15% of those physically assaulted reported the attacks to police. Nearly half believed police wouldn't do anything about the attacks.
- Openly lesbian writer, Sabrina Sojourner, is the first out person to be honored by the Atlanta Association of Black Journalists. Sojourner won an award from the 14-year-old organization for an editorial published in BLK, the United States' only monthly news publication for African-American lesbians and gays.
- In Mexico, Hermes has succeeded *Macho Tip* as the country's only gay magazine. It offers features, literature, and social analysis.
- Two students at Michigan State University in East Lansing have filed employment discrimination complaints against US military recruiters on campus. John Stryker and Kathleen Ayotte claimed that they were denied career information after identifying themselves as homosexual. They hope military recruiters will be banned from the city of East Lansing under its anti-discrimination ordinance.
- Libya's move to block United Nations recognition of the International Lesbian and Gay Association is drawing protest from the Gay and Lesbian Arabic Society of Washington DC. The Arabic Society's letter writing campaign calling for increased sensitivity to anti-gay discrimination is believed to be the first such communication with an Arab country by lesbian and gay Arabs. The society is considering extending the campaign to Oman and Sudan, which also opposed ILGA's admission as a non-governmental organization.

- In the Netherlands, being outed by a tabloid has turned out well for singer Gerard Joling. He told reporters, "I am glad I am out now. Facades will never be necessary anymore. From now on, it's honesty first."

- And finally, did you think safe sex was for the birds? In Oslo, Norway, the gay health committee is distributing condoms near a nude beach and a gay sauna by putting them in bird feeders. And it's not laying an egg. Spokesman Gary Lindell reports they have to be refilled every day. It's nice to know that new ideas to combat AIDS are being hatched all the time.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- That's News Wrap for the week ending February 23rd, 1991. Compiled from publications and broadcasts throughout the world, and written by Cindy Friedman.

- Remember, an informed community is a strong community. Find out what's happening in your area by monitoring your local gay and lesbian media. For *This Way Out*, I'm Cindy Friedman.

- And I'm Mark Saccomano.

- Rebecca and I went camping. We made camp. We spent some time eating. We were laying down by a stream and all of a sudden there were shocks.

My arm exploded. Rebecca was hit twice and started to bleed to death. Attempted to carry her, I was unsuccessful. The entire walk out of the woods I believe myself to be hunted.

My name is Claudia Brenner. We were identified as lesbians by a stranger with whom we had no connection. He will spend the rest of his life in prison. But Rebecca, who was 28 years old, is gone.

- Homophobia can kill. Education is the only lasting weapon against bigotry, which is why the Lesbian and Gay Public Awareness Project wanted you to hear and think about this message. For more information, write US Post Office box 65603, Los Angeles, California, 90065.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- Two women kiss on *LA Law* and make television history in the process. You are listening to *Naming Names*, a regular broadcast of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation. This program alerts you to instances of defamation or positive coverage of our community in the media and elsewhere. You may want to have a pen and paper ready, because in a moment I'll be giving you some names and addresses where you can write and be heard.

A February episode of *LA Law* featured a historic kiss. Attorney CJ Lamb, after a celebratory dinner with fellow attorney Abby Perkins, kisses her affectionately on the lips. Abby returns the kiss and then flees, startled. The kiss may be the first between two women in television history.

During the rest of the episode, Abby acts tensely around CJ and asserts her heterosexuality. CJ replies that she likes men also, but considers herself flexible. CJ adds that she hopes the revelation of her bisexuality won't affect their developing friendship. Near the end of the episode, CJ invites Abby to attend a play.

When Abby declines, CJ fears that their friendship is in trouble. But after a moment of reflection, Abby tells CJ she's heard the play is awful and asks CJ to come home with her instead and watch a rented movie. CJ teases that she hopes Abby will wear a tight black skirt. When Abby looks startled, CJ grins and says she was just kidding.

The two laugh together, their friendship clearly back on solid footing. This historic smooch makes CJ Lamb, a regular character on the program, the only recurring lesbian or bisexual female character currently appearing on primetime television. *LA Law* is continuing its history of developing sophisticated storylines about gay, lesbian, and bisexual people and their issues. They will soon be hearing from the homophobes. They deserve to hear from you too.

Write to David E. Kelley, executive producer, *LA Law*, 20th Century Fox TV, PO box 900, Beverly Hills, California, 90213. Or call them at 213-203-1361. You have been listening to *Naming Names*, a regular broadcast of GLAAD, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation. Please send copies of any letters you write in response to this program to the GLAAD chapter nearest you, or to GLAAD New York at 80 Varick Street, number 3E, New York, New York, 10013.

Our telephone number is 212-966-1700. *Naming Names* is produced by Peter Schmidt, and I'm Joe Windisch.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- You've tuned in to *This Way Out*, the international lesbian and gay radio magazine. With Lucia Chappelle, I'm Greg Gordon.

[MUSIC - RANDY NEWMAN, "IT'S MONEY THAT MATTERS"]

- Political action committees, or PACs, were created in the United States by major corporate and trade union interests as a way to skirt election laws at the time and to consolidate the financials cloud of businesses and individuals with specific political agendas. Political Action Committee money goes to candidates who support the political positions of the contributing PAC. It has been said that money is the mother's milk of politics.

Maternally speaking, Political Action Committees have played an increasingly important role in the American political process for over a decade. One of the most important national PACs of interest to lesbians and gays is the Human Rights Campaign fund, based in Washington DC. Their board of directors met in Los Angeles in late February. And I had a chance to talk with Human Rights Campaign Fund Executive Director Tim McFeeley and the co-chair of the board, Randy Close.

- Political Action Committees are more and more getting to become a very distasteful thought for the American public in general, in terms of special interest groups influencing elections. And aside from the obvious fighting fire with fire, what's the place of Political Action Committees in the political process in this country?

- Tim?

- Well, I really don't agree with the premise of your question, that they're become distasteful to the American public. I think when the president goes on national television in a State of the Union address and says that he's going to do away with Political Action Committees and 535 members of the House and Senate applaud, that's just a marketing thing. In fact, Political Action Committees provide a very, very important vehicle for ordinary people in our community, ordinary gay men and lesbians, to participate in the process.

If you eliminate political action committees, obviously, what will happen is wealthy people will continue to play and people without those kinds of means will have to find other ways in which to participate. I think that our committee, for instance, provides an important way for us to funnel \$525,000 in the last cycle, to candidates for congress. Without that kind of legal vehicle, I don't think that we would have the same impact.

So I'm hoping that the premise of your question can be changed. You're probably right, looking at the pulse of what people are saying. But I think it's because people don't quite understand that Political Action Committees empower ordinary people.

- I think when someone says Political Action Committee, one assumes the Political Action Committee of the major moneyed corporations in this country, rather than a PAC like Human Rights Campaign Fund. And I use the phrase fighting fire with fire because I don't know whether, in fact, the Human Rights Campaign Fund developed out of people sitting around their living rooms, one day a long time ago and saying, we'd better get our own PAC if we're going to hope to influence elections and candidates the way other moneyed interests seem to be doing in this country.

- Well, that is the way that the Human Rights Campaign Fund started 10 years ago, with the concept of a PAC that we are going to play as well. We want to continue to strengthen our PAC. And our goal for the next cycle, the 9192 cycle that we're in right now, is that this PAC give \$1,000,000 away. Whether or not the federal government continues to allow PACs to survive, in terms of the federal system, is yet to be seen. But if it's not, we'll find another way to apply that million dollars to make sure that gay and lesbian Americans have their voices heard in the political process.

- Has there been a trend in-- and this would, obviously, reflect a growing enlightenment in the Republican Party-- has there been a trend of giving more and more of a percentage of campaign fund contributions to Republican candidates?

- We certainly are very, very focused on trying to be a bipartisan PAC. It's very important for our legislative strategy to have both Republican and Democrat support. And we're finding more and more Republicans are becoming educated on our issues and are supporting our issues. And in large measure, that's because a lot of gay Republicans, lesbian Republicans, are getting involved in the process through their own political organizations, and are educating these representatives.

In the last cycle, we gave over \$70,000 of PAC money to Republicans, which I think, without checking, but I think we probably contributed more money to Republican candidates than any other gay and lesbian group in this country. And what determines who gets PAC money is totally focused on a legislative agenda. We don't care whether people are Republicans, whether they're Democrats, or they're old, young, straight, gay Black, white, whatever. If they're going to vote and support the legislative initiatives that are important to the lesbian and gay community, we will support them.

- What do you think are some of the primary legislative issues on the table?

- There are a couple of issues that are left over, really, from the last congress, as we start the 102nd Congress. Principle one on that list, really, is AIDS funding. We have the authorization in place. The president's budget offered a couple of weeks ago is inadequate, grossly inadequate. He's basically level funding in a time of 4 and 1/2% inflation. It doesn't even keep up with that.

Let alone taking into account the increasing caseload of AIDS. The service of gays and lesbians in the military is one that has taken on increasing importance. It's been an issue for a long time, Lenny Matlovich and other people, obviously, have been talking about this a long time. But it's registering, really, in the public consciousness a lot more now because of the Gulf War.

It's outrageous, obviously, that people might serve their country, bleed, and die, and not be able to get the benefits that other soldiers have. And we're trying to find legislative strategies in Congress and through the administration to affect that. There are many, many other issues. And maybe Randy wants to address some of those, like domestic partnerships.

- I think there's no question that the whole issue of gay marriage is something's happening out there in our community. That they really want this, gay marriages, and they're very charged up about it. And there's a lot of excitement about that. Whether it's your tax codes or your insurance or your health rates or whatever it is, there are a number of issues that affect the lesbian and gay community, moment by moment, breath by breath.

- It's not that people need to attach the word like marriage to their relationship to make it important to them. But what the fight is really about is the dignity. It's the same kind of fight that we're talking about with respect to the military. It's that "I'm just as good as any other person and I'm not going to be put down."

- And aside from dignity, we're talking about some very real, practical aspects. I think I heard some figure thrown around that a gay or lesbian employee is essentially getting 30% less of total benefits packages. For example, their partner is not eligible for health coverage.

- That's exactly right. I think there's a basic equity kind of issue, with respect to our jobs. Our economic system is based around a family model that is a traditional family model. And benefits now can be anywhere from 20 to 25 to 30%, on top of one's take home pay. We all know how costly health insurance is.

To deny that to workers doing the same job because they happen to be gay, as people are starting to understand that, I think that that's what the anger and enthusiasm about trying to do something about it comes from.

- Another thing that's often mentioned is simply being able to visit a spouse, a lover in the hospital. Unless you're a family member, the hospital, legally, can prevent you from even seeing your lover or having any input in treatment.

- What about when people die? The tremendous tax that is exacted from the estates of lesbian and gay Americans when they try to pass on their assets to their lovers or partners, I don't think is recognized by most people. The very same reasons that justify the exemption for straight people, which is basically so that the state doesn't have to take care of a destitute spouse that's left behind, apply just the same in gay marriage situation.

- There's an education that needs to occur within even in ourselves and within the lesbian and gay communities, that we understand the decision that the government make in Washington or in state capitals, have a direct effect on our lives.

[MUSIC - RANDY NEWMAN, "IT'S MONEY THAT MATTERS"]

- If in fact, most Americans are not participating, or fewer and fewer are participating all the time, it's probably because, in their own view, the government is basically doing the right thing. They don't see any particular reason to go out and vote. And that's why they stay home.

That's not true for gay and lesbian Americans. And the disproportionate effect that we can have by participating at higher rates than the population in general, is a great opportunity for us to affect the outcome of elections.

- More with Human Rights Campaign Fund executive director Tim McFeeley and board co-chair Randy Close about money and lesbian and gay politics in the United States. Next time on *This Way Out*.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Thanks for choosing *This Way Out*, the international lesbian and gay radio magazine. This week, Cindy Friedman, Mark Saccomano, Greg Hanson, and Jim Windisch contributed program material. Thanks also to Dave Buell, Gary Taylor, and Peter Schmitz.

- Randy Newman sang "It's Money That Matters," And Kim Wilson composed and performed our theme music.

- *This Way Out* is brought to you by a staff of community volunteers, and is sustained by financial support from the community. Audio cassettes of our programs are available by mail, individually or by subscription. Write to us for more information.

- And write to us because we'd like to hear from you with any comments, suggestions, or questions you might have. Or just to let us know that you're listening. Write to *This Way Out*, post office box 38327, Los Angeles, California, 90038.

- *This Way Out* is produced by Lucia Chappelle--

- And Greg Gordon. And we thank you for listening on WWUH West Hartford.

- KPFT Houston.

- And to YB Wellington.

- Among many others.

- And for supporting this local community radio station.

- To which we know you'll stay tuned.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- There's nothing like it. KPFT's real St Patrick's Day Pub crawl. Sunday, March 17th 1:00 PM to 7:00 PM. Two buses will run continuously along the Pub Route, so that you can stay as long as you like in any of the participating pubs. McGonagall's Mucky Duck, the Red Lion, the Crown and Serpent, Local Charm, Munchies, and Blithe Spirits.

Revel in the music, solve the Blarney [? Stone ?] mystery, witness a snake race, a skaters [? joust ?], listen for the tones of 21 harps. United Cab Company will provide free transportation home to those who need it. KPFT has made special arrangements to recognize your designated driver with free coffee and soft drinks all day long.

You will be easily recognized in your official t-shirt. Celebrate the tradition with KPFT. Call 526-4000 for more information. Tickets are available for \$15 at the participating pubs and at the radio station. All proceeds benefit KPFT, 90.1 FM, Pacifica.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- Hello, I'm Linwood Johnson, president of the Allen Parkway Village Resident Council. The resident of Allen Parkway Village public housing development are working hard to protect tenant's right, build community, and preserve the history and culture of the Freedman's Town Fourth Ward neighborhood. People from Montrose, the Fourth Ward, and the larger Houston community are working with us to establish the right to choose our own future and to participate in the development of our communities.

However, we need your help. To find out how you can get involved, please call 951-9188. That number again is 951-9188. Thank you.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- Kids drag in the darndest things.

[FROG CROAKING]