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SPEAKERS

Speaker 11, Eric, Speaker 12, Michael Crawford, Speaker 13, Scott Lewis

E Eric 00:02

Outrage is a better group for Michael Cooper. And this is a really important issue. So go back, start talking again. Go ahead. How about Scott?

S Scott Lewis 00:19

We haven't seen a very visible escalation of anti-queer violence in Houston since we had two murders in a three month period two years ago. And I think we've all gotten kind of complacent. In the past year, I have, I've seen that a lot of organizations, most visibly like the Q-Patrol hasn't been as active as it once was. And I think that's because we as a community have kind of setback on our laurels. Nobody's died in a while. So we have fooled ourselves into believing that everything's okay. Everything's wonderful and rosy in the world, when, in reality, it's not, the police aren't, the police aren't doing anything for us. We haven't seen vice versa in two years. So we're gonna have to, as we realized after Paul was killed, and after Phillip Smith was killed, we're gonna have to do it for ourselves. And that's why Michael and I have come together with other people in the community to form a new direct action group that's going to hopefully bring our issues back to the forefront, which they've been allowed to, the media and politicians have allowed and we are the most guilty, we've allowed our issues to go onto the back burner, and no more, no more because it's, it's, people are getting beaten in the street, people ending up in the hospital, or they're ending up dead. And that's something that we're just not willing to put up with any longer.

E Eric 01:51

So how do we get involved?

S Scott Lewis 01:55

Well, Outrage's first action is Take Back the Streets three. And if you will remember, right after

Paul was killed about a week and a half later, we did Take Back the Streets, Queer Nation did it. And a thousand people came into the streets to protest the injustices of hate crimes of kids just driving in from the suburbs, and beating someone up just because they're walking down the streets of a certain neighborhood just because they believe that just because you're walking down the Montrose street, you have to be a fag or lesbian. And so that's ample enough reason to beat you up. A thousand people came out. A year later, we did Take Back the Streets two, we, help me here, Take Back the Streets two,

M

Michael Crawford 02:38

Take Back the Streets two, to, to commemorate the Take Back the Streets one which was after the murder of Paul Broussard, that brought 2000 people out into the streets. And that was a little different from Take Back the Streets one but it was still really intense and really powerful. Take Back the Streets three should have happened in July, but as Scott said, we were lazy and we sat on our asses. And in light of the fact that not only that, Robbie and Christopher had the crap beaten out of him, but also the fact that we're being completely and totally ignored by the mayor and city council and all the people who are running for election in November. Bill Clinton has completely and totally screwed us over, the media refuses to cover our issues, and what passes for queer activism in Houston has been the GLPC, which under the misguided leadership of Chris, well, I shouldn't say leadership, the lack of leadership of Chris Bacon has basically done nothing. And now it's like, I don't know, unfortunately, it's taken two really vicious beatings to get Scott and myself off our asses in order to do something else. And hopefully, I'm hoping that a lot more people will get involved and realize that it's not simply a matter of sitting around waiting, playing the mainstream politics game and going you know, every few years and voting for some obnoxious heterosexual white man who we expect to give us our liberty, that I think it's time for us to realize that, that if we really and truly want our liberation, that we want what we say that we want and need, then we're going to have to be willing to take risks. And I'm hoping that Outrage will be the kind of group that takes those risks.

S

Scott Lewis 04:17

Oh, absolutely. I agree. You know, I think that, as I discussed this with someone the other day, an older, not to stereotype, but an older, late 30s, white, you know, the picture of what a Gora would want straight society to see a gay man as, who had real problem with direct action organizations. And I just had to tell him, you know, when was the last time your phone rang from the mayor's office or city hall, or any elected official that wanted to know your opinion or wanted to know what you thought? I don't even think that GLPC are getting phone calls like they should. It took Queer Nation going out into the streets, and chanting and protesting, a good example is the Randles issue. It took 30, 40 queers running through their store with whistles and posters and screaming and causing a lot of attention on the issue before our phone rang from Randall Olmstead, who said, let's sit down at the table and talk, all the other tactics, all the phone calling and everything we did, didn't work. You know, you can call them as much as you want to. They ignore you. But when you put media pressure on them, when you go in and you disrupt their daily business, then they want to sit down and talk, which is the goal of all of us is to sit down and talk. It's just you have to go through extreme circumstance, extreme measures sometimes to get it. And I think that's what Outrage is about. Because the, the lack of this type of activism in our community, where's it left us? We're nowhere.

M

Michael Crawford 06:04

It's left us nowhere. And one really funny thing about our community and how, and something that I'd like to offer, it's proof that business as usual doesn't work, is the fact that Austin just passed a spousal benefit law for city employees. Now, Houston hasn't even come to the point where a queer rights ordinance is even being discussed. It seems to me that we are like, we have almost a saddle masochistic attachment to 1985 and the failure of the gay rights referendum then, that somehow after it failed, queers just went back into the closet and started doing the whole disco bunny airheaded queen thing. And despite the fact that AIDS happened at the same time, which some people use that as an excuse for not continuing the fight, though I see that as a reason to have fight all the harder, there still seems to be an incredible lack of, lack of interest in political issues. And it seems that people are still under the impression that if we just vote for the right person like Ann Richards, that we're going to get things that we need, well we voted for Ann Richards in 1990, we still have a law that bans homosex, we still don't have a state queer rights ordinance. We don't have anything more from her that, now than we had before we elected her.

S

Scott Lewis 07:23

No, that's not true, Michel, we've gotten quite a lot of lip service.

M

Michael Crawford 07:27

We've gotten lip service. And we've got a couple of people who've been appointed, a couple of token homosexuals, who've been appointed to office. But I think something that we need to remember is that the queer movement is not a job placement agency for Democratic Party hacks. It's about the empowerment of all queers. And unless we focus on issues and efforts to do that kind of thing, then we're not going to get anywhere. Whether or not the public utilities commissioner is a dyke, is no concern of mine, because it in no way makes my life any better. But September 17, Friday 8:30, we're taken to the streets, we're meeting at the site where Robbie Kavanaugh was bashed, California and Wilcrest. From there we march, we're going to demonstrate and we're chanting loudly. This time, we're not requesting or making any kinds of demands, like openly queer cops or a queer rights ordinance or this that or the other. This time, the method is very, very simple and very, very clear. In light of the fact that the public, the Houston Police Department that are elected officials refuse to take efforts to stop hate motivated violence against queers. against people of color and against women. It's unnecessary for us to organize to protect ourselves.

S

Scott Lewis 08:43

And we're willing to do whatever it takes.

M

Michael Crawford 08:45

So, and Outrage doesn't really have like a public meeting place yet, or even a phone number. The group is three days old. Considering the fact that we're only three days old, I think we're

The group is three days old. Considering the fact that we're only three days old, I think we've accomplished a lot. We've helped Q-Patrol with their press release and their media relations kind of stuff. We have a press conference coming up on Wednesday at two o'clock at the bashing site, California and Wilcrest and again Friday, September 17 8:30, California and Wilcrest, demonstration you should all be there, our lives depend on it. If you think, you know, being queer it's not some evil disgusting perverted thing and that we have a right to live without fear of being attacked, you should be there. Anymore words on Outrage?

S

Scott Lewis 09:34

Its time has come.

M

Michael Crawford 09:37

Oh, okay. So what do we do now?

S

Scott Lewis 09:42

Anything but each other.

M

Michael Crawford 09:46

Wait, wait we have a message, our message phone girl. Call on line one. Why is activism dead? Why is radio shut out? Wait a minute.

S

Scott Lewis 09:54

Is it Ray Hill, is that Bernie Hill on the line? Okay, wait, why is Ray Hill shut out? First, if Ray Hill should be anything

M

Michael Crawford 10:06

Hello? You're on the air.

S

Speaker 11 10:07

Good morning.

M

Michael Crawford 10:09

Good morning. How are you?

S

Speaker 11 10:10

Just fine. I love your show.

M

Michael Crawford 10:12

Thank you.

S

Speaker 11 10:13

Yes. My question is this. What is wrong with the activist scene in the gay community of Houston compared to other cities such as Austin, New York, San Francisco, Seattle, West Hollywood, I mean, what is going on? I mean, are we having a huge proportion of gay men trying to pass as straight or something or? What's the deal?

M

Michael Crawford 10:38

Well, I think part of the problem is that we have a huge number of people who are sitting there thinking, if we just pretend to be straight, if we're straight acting and straight appearing, then the heterosexual majority will accept us. And I think that's, that's a result of internalized homophobia and self hatred, that somehow being queer and being openly queer, its not good enough, and when you don't think that you're good enough, when you have no self esteem, that you're not going to fight for your rights.

S

Scott Lewis 11:08

I think one of Houston's, or Houston's biggest problem, in my opinion is that we don't have a leader, we do not have a single person that is willing to take the risks necessary to be an effective leader for our community on all fronts. As close as we have to that is certainly undeniably Ray Hill. But I don't know that Ray even fits the ticket as what I would see it needing to be to be effective.

M

Michael Crawford 11:40

Well, it's probably not even that we need one leader. But the fact that what we need is to realize that we all have leadership potential. And we need to work together collectively, in order to get the job done. Because there are too many different areas that we need to address too many issues that we need to attack, to just put all of that on one specific person.

S

Speaker 11 12:01

I'm originally from San Francisco. And those of us who were in San Francisco, even Greenwich Village in New York City back in the late 70s and the early 80s, we were really admiring and

rooting the gay community in Houston, because particularly at that time, you know, the Montr-- I mean, Houston was booming, and the Montrose was exploding with all kinds of political activity. And we really wanted Houston, the gay community in Houston to succeed, because that would have been a real victory for the national gay community because at last, we would have a, how do I call it, a third coast, Houston would have become the third coast, San Francisco being first and New York second, and not only being the third coast for the national gay community, but being a forum and an irritant in one of the most conservative passages in the Bible Belt, which would have been a real victory. And I think, okay my analysis is, the gay community here just came across what I would call ironclad opposition from the Southern Baptist because a lot of us just don't realize, Houston's a very conservative city. Period. Make no mistake about it, allows the lack of thinking that it would it's, it's semi-Austin, semi-Seattle or semi-Atlanta, and I mean, no way this, this is a hardcore John Birch Society type town. And I think, you almost, I mean, if you want to go into an activist boat, you almost have to have the mentality of the Hydra, Green Beret, or a Navy SEAL. It's a bloody fight out there.

S

Scott Lewis 14:09

Something I'm tired of and hope to accomplish with Outrage is that I'm tired of always reacting to something that's being said or something that's being put out about, I think we have a responsibility to ourselves and to our community to be there before something hits the papers or before something that is, somebody puts something out against us. And we need to be creating the news about our own community and all the news you ever see about our community anymore, is us reacting to something that somebody else has thrown at us and we need to be creating what we want to see in the media about ourselves and not us playing the role of reacting to someone else putting us in, in the, in the media.

S

Speaker 11 14:58

Also another thing I've noticed is, uh, well, ever since the defeat of the referendum back in now, what was it 84, 85?

M

Michael Crawford 15:07
'85.

S

Speaker 11 15:07

'85. A certain type of schizophrenia began to develop in the gay, in the gay community here in Houston, it was almost like you had a huge segment wanting to have the benefits of white male heterosexual privilege. But at the same time, oh, hang by the fingernails to gay culture. And it don't work that way.

M

Michael Crawford 15:38
Exactly.

S

Speaker 11 15:42

I don't know. I don't know where to begin, how to really organize the gay community in this time because, I mean, there just seems to be a huge combination of apathy and schizophrenia.

M

Michael Crawford 15:59

Yeah, I think one of the things that Outrage is going to do, that Queer Nation didn't do was to take a more active role in terms of public education. I mean, we never explained to the rest of the queer communities, why we were doing what we were doing, all we said was that we were going to go and we were going to, you know, storm city hall because of anti-gay violence. And we didn't explain how we got from just, you know, sending a letter to, a letter to the mayor, to you know, storming city hall, which is what we did, we never explained that mainstream politics wasn't working for us. And that if, that if we continue to, you know, simply vote for people and allow them to ignore us and our issues, then we're not going to get anywhere, and that they won't really listen to us unless we take the kind of really intense steps like ACT UP did to force AIDS into the national agenda. And if we don't do that, we're not going to get anywhere.

S

Speaker 11 16:56

Right. And that's another issue that's really beginning to disturb me in the gay community in Houston. I have a few acquaintances and friends in an organization called Man of All Colors Together, formerly known as Black Men, White Men together.

M

Michael Crawford 17:13

Yeah, I've had kind of an experience with the group.

S

Speaker 11 17:19

And they tell me, several of these members tell me what they do, the Black and Hispanic members tell me that they experience on a regular basis, more racist and racial prejudice within the gay community, probably, they experience more prejudice from gay whites than they do from heterosexual whites. That is disgusting.

M

Michael Crawford 17:45

I think it's disgusting, but it's not surprising. But something I should also say about my experience with, with MACT, I mean, I'm black. And at one time, some MACT members were trying to convince the 611 Club on Hyde Park to become their home bar. And during the course of the conversation, the manager Steve Shimer, of the 611 said that he did not want his bar to become a nigger or wetback bar. Well, the one of the persons who was doing the negotiations were MACT, came to me because I was a member of Queer Nation at that time, and Queer

Nation decided, you know, we don't have to put up with racism in our own community, let's fight it. Well, I went to a MACT meeting and said, well, Queer NAtion, I mean, you guys came to us, Queer Nation is willing to help you take action on the issue. And I suggested an action. And what I got from MACT was from the men of color in the room, they did not want to do anything, they would stand up and say that they experienced racism from all of the bars, including the bars on Pacific street like JR's and the Mining Company, but they didn't want to do anything about it. And the only ones who would kind of sort of almost, kind of sort of wanting to do something were the white guys in the room. So while I agree with them that racism is sometime more intense in the queer communities, I also think that they have to be put at fault for not being willing to stand up and take a personal stand against racism. And then this also, this issue also feeds back into the heteros, into the black and Hispanic heterosexual communities, where they go into the gay community. They're going to Montrose area, coming and expecting gay people, particularly gay whites to be somehow sensitive, liberal, open minded in some kind of a utopian society where they are respectful of people of color. And these heterosexual people of color discover that gay whites are not just as prejudiced as the heterosexual whites, but even more so. This gets this gets back to the, to the heterosexual, black and Hispanic communities, word gets around. And then they do have the hispanic and black community in this city criticizing and tearing down the gay community. And it's just a big mess. Yeah, it is a big mess. And I think the only thing that can even begin to deal with that mess is for queers of color, black, Latino, Asian, Native American, to stand up and said that we're of color, and we're queer. And we're not going to accept racism from whites, whether they're queer or non-queer. And we're not going to accept homophobia from people with, from heterosexuals, whether they're white or non-white. And that's what it's going to take. Unfortunately, it's really difficult to get queers of color involved in anything here. But there is going to be actually a show on KPFT dealing with homophobia in the black communities on Tuesday, September 21, between six and seven, it's going to be hosted by Hitaji Aziz. And I'm expected to be one of her guests. And that's one of the subjects we're going to be talking about.

S

Speaker 11 20:29

When is it?

M

Michael Crawford 20:42

September 21, which is a Tuesday, between six and seven.

S

Speaker 11 21:21

And now, when is the demonstration on California?

M

Michael Crawford 21:26

That's Friday, September 17.

E Eric 21:29
This coming Friday?

M Michael Crawford 21:30
Yeah, this coming Friday, and we're meeting at 830. And California and Wilcrest crest is like, right, that little section between Mary's and Charlie's. Yeah, yeah.

S Speaker 11 21:42
Yeah. Okay, well, I enjoy the conversation.

M Michael Crawford 21:46
Okay. Thank you.

S Speaker 11 21:47
Thank you.

M Michael Crawford 21:48
Take care.

S Scott Lewis 21:54
Issues I think that Outrage is gonna have to tackle.

M Michael Crawford 21:58
Yeah, I mean, I must admit, I see Outrage has been a little different from Queer Nation in that Queer Nation was, was being in Queer Nation was really hectic. And because we took, I mean, every time someone came up with an action proposal, we said, yes. Even if there were like a billion things on the agenda. And I see Outrage as being a little more focused and maybe not having so many, as many actions, but still being action oriented. I see, for example, like a group of Outrage members working on repeal of sodomy law, and working on for example, pressuring our state legislators into, you know, voting to repeal the ban, maybe working with, like Lesbian Avengers in Austin, ACT UP in Dallas, to do direct actions, to bring attention to the sodomy law. But right now, like our initial like, next two months, I see really focusing on forcing queer and AIDS issues onto the agenda for the upcoming mayoral elections.

S

Scott Lewis 22:57

Got to put pressure on the politicians. They have to talk about our issues.

M

Michael Crawford 23:01

Okay, so if you want to be in it, participate in Outrage's first action, September 17, Friday 8:30, Wilrest and California, which is the bashing website of Robbie Kavanaugh. And that's between Mary's and Charlie's. So Scooter, I suppose we sit but mood change music on right now but what the hell? We're not going to do it. We're rebels/

S

Scott Lewis 23:28

We'll just do, we'll just make our own mood music. We should also tell them that Outrage poor and that they should send us money.

M

Michael Crawford 23:36

Exceptionally poor except that we have no mailbox. Nothing. Yeah. So but in the next few weeks I anticipate will be announced

S

Scott Lewis 23:46

We need somebody to call and donate a mailbox. That's what needs to happen.

E

Eric 23:49

You need someone to call and donate a telephone.

M

Michael Crawford 23:52

Yeah, well, okay, we do. We need a telephone, a mailbox, a meeting place, and all of that. So hopefully we'll be able to I mean, after ,after the action on Friday, we'll be able to work on getting that stuff. Oh, one other thing that Outrage is encouraging people to do is to speak out at the next city council meeting, which is next Tuesday.

S

Scott Lewis 24:12

Tuesday, you just call Monday morning, call the city secretary, tell them that you want to speak at this open forum, city council on Tuesday. And they'll ask you what it's about and you just tell them whatever you want to, I think it's about gay bashing or whatever. Then you'll go in and Tuesday and you'll have a seat and you can get a list and it'll tell you, you can, they'll ask you to do you want to speak for one minute, two minutes or three minutes. I think each citizen is

limited to four minutes per month. Go ahead and take your full three because you probably won't be back down there within a month to use the rest of that time up and go down and just let them know that we're here to push our issues to the forefront. We're not going to sit back while you do nothing any more.

M Michael Crawford 25:05

Okay, we're gonna take a very short break while we get Vince Ryan to tell you why you should be calling 526-5738 to pledge your money to KPFT.

S Speaker 12 25:15

Hi, this is councilmember Vince Ryan. The race to the finish, I think is a great idea to give all the KPFT listeners an opportunity to actually contribute to the station. And I think the money that can be raised from this will do some good things for KPFT, help keep KPFT strong and vital. And to further that, I'm going to pledge \$100, to the race to the finish. Now if people will match my \$100 each and every time they hear this plug for, they can call 526-KPFT. That's 526-KPFT or 526-5738 and pledge their money also. There's no better radio station for the expression of free voices in Houston than KPFT.

S Scott Lewis 26:08

I'm impressed. Vince Ryan, is that the most he's done for our community, since he's been in office?

S Speaker 13 26:17

Maybe.

S Scott Lewis 26:20

I'm not going to be hateful about Vince, because he will no longer be in office after November. Now we're going to do a little dedication. I'm going to do a dedication. As you all know and people are gonna go, why is he dedicating one of her songs. As you know, I read RuPaul here on the radio. Excuse me, I read RuPaul here on the radio just a few weeks ago, because she was tough to work with, to say the least. I spent quite a bit of time on the telephone this week with her record company who convinced me after about 35 minutes that maybe it was just the person she was traveling with, and RuPaul is really not a horrible person. But there, but there is one song on her CD that has not been released as a single yet, and will not be her next single either. But maybe it'll be the one after that. But it's the only song on the CD that I really, really like. And it means a lot to me right now. Because it's kind of, how can you say, kind of a lovey dovey song, and I've met a very nice person that I feel lovey dovey with. I don't want to, I don't know exactly how lovey dovey I feel or whatever, but he's a very nice person I've met, I've

known for some time and it seems like we went out a couple, about a month ago, and kind of met each other for the first time even though we had known each other for a while. And he made me feel very special that night. And why are you laughing? Why are you laughing?

E Eric 28:12
How special did he?

S Scott Lewis 28:15
He made me feel very special. He said very nice things. And he was very, he's just, you, I don't know. I don't know how to start, he's just like no one I've ever met before. So this is from RuPaul. And I, why are you lau--you are getting on my last good gay nerve.

E Eric 28:37
This is from RuPaul.

S Scott Lewis 28:38
This is, this is actually okay, it's not from RuPaul, this is for Darren from me. And this is just kind of, kind of sums up how I feel ever since that night.

M Michael Crawford 29:03
What song was that?

S Scott Lewis 29:04
"All of a Sudden" by RuPaul

M Michael Crawford 29:07
Who was that dedicated to?

S Scott Lewis 29:08
Darren.

M Michael Crawford 29:11

So wait, wait, have a seat at the mic. So does this mean you and Darren are still on are on again? Or?

S

Scott Lewis 29:17

Um, it's a law. I don't know how into this I want to get. No I don't know, I don't really know. It's, it's one of those things where you know, you know how confusing the whole everything is. It's like we, we went out this one night, had an incredible time, you know, got a little more, got to know each other a little better or whatever. And, you know, then we got in a big fight. He got mad at me for a week, we didn't even speak and so now we're like, back on speaking terms, things are going real well and we're just kind of going real, you know, I don't know. I don't know where things are. It's one of those kinds of things when you know how you're, have you ever been like in that situation where it's real confusing, and you don't?

M

Michael Crawford 30:07

I haven't had a real date since the March on Washington.

S

Scott Lewis 30:13

So but do you know what I'm talking about, the whole confused thing?

M

Michael Crawford 30:20

Well, do you remember when you were a kid? And you wanted to be Wonder Woman?

S

Scott Lewis 30:24

Yes.

M

Michael Crawford 30:25

When you thought, Well, damn, she has a great outfit.

S

Scott Lewis 30:27

Right.

M

Michael Crawford 30:28

And those totally hip boots. That was my way of changing the subject.

S Scott Lewis 30:36
And what a good way it was.

M Michael Crawford 30:38
Thank you. So we're promoting Q-Patrol now. Instead of mood change music, it was a little bit

S Scott Lewis 30:48
Wonder Woman trivia.

M Michael Crawford 30:49
Exactly.

S Scott Lewis 30:50
I wanted those boots, too.

M Michael Crawford 30:52
And the first person that can call us up at 526-4000, I think it is. And tell us the name of, the real name, well, the alias of Wonder Woman, well, Scott will be very, very grateful. We want to promo Q-Patrol because Q-Patrol, it's a really cool group. You're about to say something? You inhaled like you were, you know, had some great thought. Q-Patrol is a really cool group that, that patrols the Montrose area, the bar area, in particular, to stop gay bashing. And recently because of the recent gay bashings, they've decided to expand their efforts, but they need new people to volunteer. If you'd be interested in volunteering for Q-Patrol, and actually, they're probably still out right now. For information and scheduling, please call 666-3125.

S Scott Lewis 30:57
Right. What is, what does Q-Patrol entail if you go out on the patrol?

M Michael Crawford 31:45
Well, basically, they ask you to commit four hours a month, where you will walk on patrol with a walkie talkie and a group of about six other people looking out for people, you know, yelling faggot, you know, out of their car windows or people throwing beer bottles and rocks and stuff

at people and just keep an eye to be sure that people are safe as, as they go about their merry way giving Charles Armstrong all their money.

S

Scott Lewis 32:13

You know, something that they pointed, Q-Patrol pointed out to me last night or the other night, which was interesting, which I didn't really think of, and I think our listeners should know, is that if they're ever victimized by anyone hollering out of their car, or they are down in the Montrose area and see a car driving around that looks like it's out of place, a big suburban or something, that if they can get that license plate and pass it on to Q-Patrol, Q-Patrol has very innovative ways of letting those people know that they know they're there.

M

Michael Crawford 32:42

Exactly. And if you are the victim of a hate crime, either verbal or physical, you can call the hate crimes hotline to report it. That number is 529-9615, see, I think we're gonna play a song now. What's the name of the song? A Passage in Time and it's by Dead Can Dance.