

HOST 1: Next Sunday night. Jack Adams wanted me to make sure we got that on the air. Music tonight on Steven Jerome's segment is Nona Hendryx. He's been featuring a different artist every month. And Nona Hendryx was a-- is, well. She's still alive, folks. But she was a member of Marmalade with Patti LaBelle.

HOST 2: Oh, OK.

HOST 1: You didn't know that?

HOST 2: No. That's the original-- you mean, the people who sang that song--

HOST 1: Yes, originally. Original. Yeah.

HOST 2: Before Pink and Christina.

HOST 1: Before Pink. Yeah, right. Yeah, all those folks. Before it got really slutty.

HOST 2: Back when people were trying to learn French just to say that one phrase.

HOST 1: You got it.

HOST 2: Which I still don't.

HOST 1: Voulez vous coucher avec moi ce soir?

HOST 2: I tried to practice it. I actually rented *Moulin Rouge* a couple of weeks ago. And I like watching programs in captioning.

HOST 1: Oh.

HOST 2: With the captioning. So it's kind of like oh, so that's how it looks like.

HOST 1: Yeah, I guess that helps.

HOST 2: It does.

HOST 1: Anyway, so Nona Hendryx has a wonderful body of work out there. She's done a lot of dance music. She's done some really serious music. She's done some incredible feminist music. We'll be featuring all of it tonight on Steve and Jerome's segment, which is going to come to you in about 10 minutes.

HOST 2: Did you mention the songs you played before *Cultural Baggage*?

HOST 1: I did. I talked about the--

HOST 2: Kinsey Sicks.

HOST 1: The Kinsey Sicks, the MCI, The Rose and Gay Sera Sera.

HOST 2: Yes. Yeah, unfortunately Rainbow didn't hear The Rose. I told him that it was for him.

HOST 1: Was it ever? And Lynn just about lost her coffee on the Gay Sera.

HOST 2: Hey.

HOST 1: Well. Lynn, where have you been?

LYNN: I've been?

HOST 1: You have to get closer to the mic, woman.

LYNN: I have just been.

HOST 1: Lynn is our newest staff member.

LYNN: Trying to behave. Trying to stay out of trouble.

HOST 2: Oh, you keep that up, you aren't going to be allowed to come back.

LYNN: Yes, I know. I know. Trolling is fun.

JIMMY CARPER: You see, yeah, well, that's why she's here, to stay out of trouble.

HOST 2: Right, right, right, right.

JIMMY CARPER: Now, if your wife realizes that she can get on the internet to KPFT.org, she can hear and know that you're here every week.

LYNN: Yes. Then she knows I'm out of trouble.

JIMMY CARPER: See?

LYNN: Her first question to me tonight is, are you going out? Yeah, I'm going to the radio station. Yes, I am.

JIMMY CARPER: KPFT.org.

LYNN: Yes.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

LYNN: Unfortunately, her computer is down.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh. Oh.

HOST 2: Well, if you quit breaking it.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: Let's go to a piece of music before Steven gets here. This is one of my favorite guys. He's a Texas boy, Gary Floyd. He was in a famous group, and I can't even think of the name of it, here in Texas many years ago. He was the driving force between Sister Double Happiness.

He's out on his own. He's got a band now. And this is from his CD called *Backdoor Preacher Man*. And it's called "A Better Man." And you're listening to it on After Hours Queer Radio with attitude on KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station.

GARY FLOYD: (SINGING) Well, I'm really going down.

JIMMY CARPER: (HOARSELY) Ah, yes.

[COUGHING]

Ah, yes. God. Either too much coffee or not enough. That was-- well, first of all, before that, we started out with "A Better Man" by Gary Floyd, followed by Liquid Pie doing "If You Want Me for My Money." and then to start out Steven Jerome's segment. He's featuring the music of Nona Hendrix this evening, and that was the big dance hit that she had way back when called "Keep It Confidential," right?

STEVEN Amen.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Amen, Steven.

STEVEN Good morning.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: I love that song. I never get tired of it, and I've been listening to it since it first came out. In fact, I got the vinyl on it.

STEVEN You're telling your age.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: I know.

STEVEN You're telling my age.

JEROME:

[LAUGHTER]

Good morning.

JIMMY CARPER: Good morning. How are you doing?

STEVEN It's 3:00 in the morning.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. OK. Not yet. It's only 2:48.

STEVEN Oh, OK. Who's counting?

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: It's 2:48, and you're listening to After Hours, queer radio with attitude. I'm Jimmy Carper, and now it's time for--

STEVEN "Black on Black."

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: You got it.

STEVEN Hey. Good morning, everybody out there. Let's get started with this. Like my roadie there said, we're featuring
JEROME: the music of Jimmy--

JIMMY CARPER: Joan-- Nona Hendrix, not Jimmy.

STEVEN Nona Hendrix.

JEROME:

[LAUGHTER]

Y'all do kind of look alike, OK, so don't push it.

JIMMY CARPER: No, her hair was never that big.

STEVEN Oh, OK. Be that way, then.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

STEVEN We also, tonight we have Ms. Dion Redmon, who's a graduate student at Texas Southern University.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Wow.

STEVEN She's working on her doctorate degree, and she's in the counselor educational doctoral program. She originally
JEROME: received her master's from Kent State University in community counseling, and her bachelor's from Central Michigan University in public relations and journalism.

She's an advocate for the GLBT community. She does research on GLBT issues. We have talked in depth on transgender issues in the past, and I just want to welcome her to the program tonight, this morning.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

STEVEN I'm glad I was able to get her up, here it is, very early in the morning.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Until you go to bed, it's still Saturday night.

DION REDMON: That's right.

STEVEN Plus, I told her you would buy her breakfast.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: Hey, hey, hey, hey. I'll hold you to it. That's right.

STEVEN He's a great cook. But I guess we just will get started here. Let's get these little announcements out of the way
JEROME: before we really get into the show. As everybody knows, I'm one of the great advocates of the switchboard. And the switchboard, as always, we need more volunteers. The next training class will begin in January.

So if anybody is interested in becoming a volunteer-- and being a volunteer on the switchboard, it's one of those positions that you can actually keep it confidential. You don't use your real name or identity. For more information about the switchboard, dial 713-529-3211. And if you just leave your name, we will get back in touch with you. You can also go to www.gayboardsswitchboardhouston.org. And if you want to apply to be a volunteer online, you can do it also.

Moving on, H Blog, we don't have anything planned this month, and that is due because I went on vacation courtesy of UTMD for about a week.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

STEVEN But we will be kicking things back off in October, probably have something festive going on for Halloween.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

STEVEN Men of All Shades, Houston will resume meetings also the second Sunday in October. For more information on

JEROME: either H blog or MASH, call 832-455-2032. Let's see what else we got going on around here in the community. For those of you who like to hit the highway and travel, the Dallas Black Gay Pride will be going on October 4 through the 6th.

And for those who can't make it up to Dallas, if you want to stay here at home that weekend, Black Explosion 2002 will be going on. It kicks off on Friday, October 4 with a welcome reception at Incognito, which is located at the corner of Fannin and Alabama.

JIMMY CARPER: Really?

STEVEN Yeah. I'm getting good at this.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: I know exactly where that is.

STEVEN I bet you do. I know what you've been doing.

JEROME:

[LAUGHTER]

We pick on each other.

JIMMY CARPER: I just live a few blocks from there.

STEVEN But I would recommend that everybody and anybody, if you want to know more about the Black GLBT

JEROME: community, please take advantage of the Black Explosion 2002. It will be very educational. There are a lot of workshops going on. It will be an uplifting of the mind, body, and spirit.

JIMMY CARPER: Where is it going to be held?

STEVEN It's going to be held at the courtyard by Marriott at 31-31 West Loop.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, OK.

STEVEN I can't talk this morning.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, you can. You're doing just fine.

STEVEN Yeah, OK.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: You just have to talk now, sing later.

STEVEN You had to rub that in. OK, but moving on before we really get into some good music, thank you, Dion, for

JEROME: coming to the show tonight this morning.

DION REDMON: You're welcome. You're welcome.

STEVEN And we're going to talk tonight about what it's like being an advocate for the GLBT community, especially the

JEROME: Black GLBT community, because I must say, the Black GLBT community is not always as active and as vocal, or as visible, as say, what we consider as the mainstream GLBT community.

DION REDMON: That's true. That's true. That's one of the challenges I face as an advocate, because to get out there and just kind of find out those individuals who want to speak, who want to talk, it's like pulling teeth sometimes.

STEVEN Oh yeah.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: But once you get down to it, you'll meet some who are a little bit more open than others. I've actually been blessed to come in contact with some good individuals who are very comfortable with speaking on different issues, and educating myself, helping me to educate myself as well about the community. The Men's Gathering, first and foremost.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. We all know Paul Dillon.

DION REDMON: That's right. That's right. And it's funny, because I've been able to work with them quite a bit, to the point where they've been calling, hey, would you mind coming to a meeting, and even opened it up, asking, when it comes down to doing your research, let us know. We definitely want to help you out. Maybe we can set up a table for you.

STEVEN Now, I know the Men's Gathering has been very visible within the community. Are you finding that same visibility among lesbians and transgender?

DION REDMON: No. I can say that I really have not had the chance to work with the Black lesbian community. I've made a couple of contacts in that area, but not-- and I guess it's more so because of my own getting out there myself. When Paul came around and I met the Men's Gathering, it was just like full speed ahead.

STEVEN OK.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: And yes, he's been very good at putting me in contact with the right people, but just they're not doing-- We're working on Black Explosion right now.

STEVEN OK.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: So that's all it is. But I think once that comes about, then I'll kind of infiltrate myself into the lesbian community as well.

STEVEN OK. Also--

JEROME:

DION REDMON: Transgender community? Oh no. Let me throw that in there real quick. Real quick. Pulling teeth on that end.

STEVEN I know. That's almost like a very invisible-- I know working with the Coalition and all, we have tried to have

JEROME: several functions for the Black transgender community, and it's just like almost impossible to get participation among the Black transgender community. And I'm not sure if that's because of our difference of definition of what is concluded as transgender within the Black community, because so much-- and so many terms that we use within the White community are different terms.

For one of those terms, I think, bisexual is used in the White community, whereas we tend to say down low in the Black community. When we think of transgender in the White community, that means drag queens female impersonators.

DION REDMON: Cross dressers.

STEVEN Transvestites. Whereas in the Black community, we think of drag queens and--

JEROME:

DION REDMON: Drag queens.

STEVEN And female impersonators, they do not necessarily go under that term of being transgender.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Well, another part of the transgender community is the guys.

DION REDMON: Mm-hmm.

JIMMY CARPER: The female-to-males.

DION REDMON: That's right.

JIMMY CARPER: And they've not been very vocal up to a couple of years ago.

DION REDMON: OK. STAG has been trying to get out there.

JIMMY CARPER: That is the first try at getting the guys together.

DION REDMON: STAG, Some Transgender are Guys, in which I've met a couple. And actually, Sandy, Sandy is going to be-- a friend of mine is going to come on my panel for Black Explosion.

STEVEN Oh, OK.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: Yeah.

STEVEN And now, is possibly the reason for not having Blacks-- how could I say this-- participating in a lot of transgender activities because they do not consider themselves as being transgender? I know a lot of Black drag queens have no interest in looking at the idea of getting a sex change. It's just something that they do on the side.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

STEVEN Some Black drag queens, I guess I can say it, a drag queen, that I know they're very comfortable going to that male role during the daytime when they're on that job and doing their regular life. And when they do the cross-dressing, that's only something that they do as a hobby or something on the side. Also, I do know is that a lot of Black cross-dressers and drag queens, as they get older, they tend to move out of it. It's like a phase that they go through.

JIMMY CARPER: It can be. Especially if they've had the operation, then what they call woodworking, and that's like going back into the closet because they present themselves as female exactly not as transgendered anymore.

DION REDMON: That's right.

JIMMY CARPER: Now, one of the transgendered hosts on this show who moved to Nashville was Monica Roberts. And they're Black transgender. Do you know Monica?

DION REDMON: I know of Monica.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

DION REDMON: Her name always seems to come up, and everyone's always like, oh, she moved.

JIMMY CARPER: I know, I know, because she was she was an incredible activist.

DION REDMON: Exactly.

JIMMY CARPER: Very, very politicized.

DION REDMON: Mm-hmm.

JIMMY CARPER: So you know, Nashville has really gained a gem.

DION REDMON: That's right.

JIMMY CARPER: And we've lost. Now, Monica worked for an airline and she transitioned on the job.

DION REDMON: That's all right. OK.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. Yes.

DION REDMON: And I tend to hear that. I tend to see that a lot within the White transgender community. I know quite a few who are working on that transitioning in the job, talking about moving into the family, that kind of thing, in which they're speaking up. I have not seen that at some of the support groups that I've been at. I'm usually the only Black female there.

STEVEN I have not seen in the Black transgender community-- most of them don't transition.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: No.

STEVEN I don't know if it's lack of financial, which it is a very--

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah you're looking to \$15,000, \$20,000.

STEVEN Hey, that's a car.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: That's right.

STEVEN That's the BMW. We just stick with the BMW.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: And for the guys, for the female to male, you're looking at \$50,000.

DION REDMON: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. The price is-- yeah, there's some. And actually, I guess at this point, finding a good place to go overseas. To do it here in the States tends to cost a little bit more. Of course, overseas, you know, Thailand tends to be a real popular draw.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, that's right. It's a lot cheaper over there, but then you're in Thailand. If there's any complications--

DION REDMON: That maintenance to fly back and forth.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

DION REDMON: I don't know. I don't know. So it just kind of varies.

STEVEN Yeah. So moving, talking more about this, with you being at TSU, what is it like being on a major Black campus? I know I've attended both major Black schools. I went to Southern University. And I have also attended white colleges. And one of the things I noticed was that being gay was much more comfortable on a white campus than it was on a Black campus.

DION REDMON: I agree with you.

STEVEN Do you still see that where a lot of gays, they're just not out on Black campus?

JEROME:

DION REDMON: You know, it's one of those-- what do they call it? It's more, we know that these individuals are here, but there's no labels put on them.

STEVEN OK.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: OK, so as opposed to a white college, there's an organization. There's activism. There's organization parties, those kind of things where you can meet other people. At a Black college, it's still on the DL.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

DION REDMON: You know, if you ask individuals who live maybe in a dorm, if you ask some of the staff or faculty, they say, yeah, we have a population here. Yeah, so we have a community here. But as far as the organization being formed, no, that does not exist at TSU's campus.

STEVEN I don't think it exists at any Black campus. We had a panel a while back, and that's what we talked about. There

JEROME: are no gay GLBT organizations on any major historical Black university campus. And this is not so much because of suppression by their peers. This is really, you have Blacks who just are like, well, I don't feel like I'm in the closet so I don't have to come out. And they just don't want to stick that label.

DION REDMON: That's right. That's right.

STEVEN They don't want to wear this label.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Sure.

DION REDMON: That's right. And that's what I hear. I'm already out. Why do I have to put a label on it, you know? And I will say that some of the campuses, well, specifically TSU, they are acknowledging that there are some concerns about the community. Case in point, I was asked to come on board for a committee, diversity committee, on campus, mainly because the Counseling Center was experiencing an influx of individuals who were in same-sex violence relationships.

STEVEN OK.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: Specifically from some of the teams, basketball teams, that kind of thing, in which they were like, well, we need to do something. I don't think our staff is trained to deal with this. Maybe we need to go through a one-on-one training for our staff as far as staff development. OK, let's do that.

STEVEN Have you found it as being a barrier, because the Black community is very religious? Has religion been a barrier to, say, the teachers and the staff becoming more diversified and understanding the entire population of the student body?

DION REDMON: You know, I want to say yes but I want to say no. I think the religious piece will always be there. But from TSU's standpoint, I'm not exactly certain what the deal is.

JIMMY CARPER: I need to jump in here and remind folks that they're listening to After Hours, queer radio with attitude, on KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station.

STEVEN All right.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: I'm Jimmy Carper.

LYNN: And I'm Stephen Jerome.

JIMMY CARPER: And you have as a guest.

STEVEN Ms. Dion Redman.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: Hello.

STEVEN [INAUDIBLE].

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. I've been told that people who are listening in say, you know, I listen for 30 minutes and you never did say anybody's name.

DION REDMON: Oh, OK. All right.

JIMMY CARPER: So I have to have to start doing that more.

DION REDMON: OK. OK.

STEVEN I'll remember that next month. I'll remember my name next month. OK.

JEROME:

[LAUGHTER]

But with the diversity and how, you know, with Blacks not wanting to wear titles, and I know so many times Jimmy and I have talked about different titles. Even though the Black community does wear titles, but we don't use the same titles as the white community.

I know like the white community will say "gay and lesbian," whereas the Black community will say same-gender loving. The White community says "bisexual." The Black community says "down low." Do you see where there's a possibility somewhere in the future, before another war--

DION REDMON: Which one?

[LAUGHTER]

STEVEN That we can get the Black community, the Black GLBT community, to come out as a recognizable force?

JEROME:

DION REDMON: I think that it's going to take a little time. However, it will take place.

STEVEN OK.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: Slowly but surely, we have activists in the community that are speaking for the Black GLBT community. But we also have advocates and alliances who are not from the GLBT community, but still speaking on behalf, such as myself.

STEVEN Right. And you know, I have actually noticed that, especially in the Black GLBT community, we have more non-GLBT Blacks speaking for the Black GLBT than we have Black GLBT.

DION REDMON: And see with that, I think it's because we have an interest in equal rights.

STEVEN OK.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: We have an interest in just fairness, just in overall fairness, and not wanting to be suppressed, you know.

STEVEN How can we get the Black GLBT to want that same fairness? I know we're talking to a lot of my brothers and **JEROME:** sisters out there, they're very interested in fairness as far as being Black, but they push being GLBT-- they shelve it.

DION REDMON: That's right. That's right.

STEVEN That's not important. As I've heard several times, that's a white thing.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: OK. OK.

STEVEN They want to know about being Black and being fair, and getting equal treatment as Blacks, but not as GLBT.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: And see, we were talking about that. You and I were talking about that, in which it seemed like, when we look at Blacks, there's a label that comes along with us automatically.

STEVEN Right.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: And then all of a sudden, for you to add--

STEVEN Another label.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: Another label, then that keeps you from even wanting to say anything.

STEVEN Yeah.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: So the label piece, there's a lot of-- in our psyche, from a historical perspective, that's coming along to the forefront. that stigma from back then is coming along to the forefront. And I think it will keep in that circle, in that little box, for a tad bit.

STEVEN Yeah.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: But slowly but surely, we're starting infiltrate the system. Don't get me wrong. I was reading a book *Dangerous Liaisons: Black Gays and the Struggle for Equality*. One of the things that they even note was that historically speaking, underrepresented populations did not feel as if we were included within gay rights.

STEVEN Yeah. I know I've heard that so many times.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: Yeah. So if that's the case, then it's kind of like historically speaking, we're not looked upon, and now all of a sudden, you want us to come out, you know. So you didn't do that before.

STEVEN I think in fact, Jim and I have talked about that. One of the big things we've ran across with Gay Pride is like, hey,

JEROME: well, we weren't invited to the table with Gay Pride, so now we have our own--

DION REDMON: Black Pride.

STEVEN We have our own Black Gay Pride. And like right now, I think it's up to like 14 cities across the country that have

JEROME: Black Gay Pride. And I think it says Dallas is having theirs on the same week as we're having our Black Explosion, which is funny, because that's the same week, I think, that Prairie View plays Grambling.

DION REDMON: Oh.

STEVEN It's the same week that the State Fair starts.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Well, when we were talking about that, we mentioned that it's because of different cultural backgrounds. And then the white pride people do not bring that into account, and what's important to Black gay and lesbians or Black GLBTs.

DION REDMON: That's right. That's right. And like I said, that's historical. That's historical. Now, one thing I will say, I think you have individuals currently who are a part of those major organizations, some of your Human Rights Campaign.

JIMMY CARPER: Sure.

DION REDMON: Those individuals who are acknowledging the fact that, OK, well, maybe we need to do something a tad bit different. But that's 15, 20 years later. But it's coming about slowly but surely. So that's how come I think-- I'm keeping hope alive that something will come about within the Black community at some point.

STEVEN I hope so, you know because-- and like during the Black Renaissance period during the '30s and '40s, when we

JEROME: had all our great Black writers out during that period, they were very open about their lifestyles.

DION REDMON: That's right.

STEVEN Thinking of one particular woman was Billie Holiday, you know. She was a bisexual.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: That's right.

STEVEN And it wasn't-- they didn't worry about that label. It was just, OK, this is my life. And I think that's one thing I have

JEROME: noticed that's a uniqueness in the Black community, is we have learned to integrate our personal lives so that it wasn't an issue. It's just a part of our everyday culture. We never stuck it in somebody's face, if we can say it like that.

DION REDMON: OK.

STEVEN I know even like with my church, I'm the minister of music for my church. I have a sticker on the back of my car, rainbow stickers on the back of my car. And the thing is, as long as I do my job, as long as I have a suit on--

JIMMY CARPER: And that's what we were talking about, how church is very important to the Black community.

DION REDMON: Exactly.

JIMMY CARPER: And the pride people don't even put that into consideration.

DION REDMON: No, no, not at all. And that's probably one of the reasons, like for Black Explosion, for instance, that is part of the weekend for us. We wanted to have something a little bit more extensive as far as spirituality, but we end up at least touching on the issue of spirituality and homosexuality as a workshop topic.

So yes, like you said, it's a definite part of the community. When you look at organizations, and as they start to plan those marches and start to plan roundtables, those kinds of things, they do not necessarily look at what the distinctiveness about the Black community is all about. It's not there. And the only way that's really going to come about is if there's more dialogue, because there really needs to be more dialogue. Who was that, GLBT in Power, the convention that took place?

STEVEN Mm-hmm. Yeah.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: They had a roundtable at 1:00. Did anyone go from anybody you know?

JIMMY CARPER: I was there for the very end of it. There were about 15 people there.

DION REDMON: 15. Anybody Black?

JIMMY CARPER: No.

DION REDMON: OK, so this is what I mean, you know. And I was hoping that that would have been an opportunity.

STEVEN Yeah. You know, and this is something I think Jim and I, we have talked about.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: We have talked about that.

STEVEN I've heard it from both sides, one, that we're not invited to the roundtable, and we're not invited to the table to

JEROME: talk. But part of this planning and discussion-- but at the same time, even if we are invited, we don't attend. And I have to say for my own self, I didn't attend because I had an obligation.

JIMMY CARPER: Well, and it may be that you feel that you're not listened to if you do go.

HOST 2: And there was one thing about that. Instead of going to Empower, I was over at the--

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, let's get somebody else in this.

DION REDMON: Right.

HOST 2: Yeah. It takes half a wall, though. I'm hiding behind here.

STEVEN He's in the closet.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: Oh, right then.

HOST 2: Hardly. Rather than being at Empower, I was over at the Pacifica National Board meeting. And I was not in the meeting part. They had a workshop for people who wanted to get into becoming reporters. And during the second half, a former program director from here, Rafael Renteria, came in and talked a little bit about Pacifica and its reporting, and how KPFT started its news back then.

And one of the things he pointed out was, the first thing he did when he walked into the room, he looked at how many African Americans there were. And by fortune, after the lunch break, one African-American man joined the group. And he said, that's something I noticed, is the fact that we're talking about diversity. We're talking about the thing with Pacifica. And one of the pillars of what Pacifica was founded on was ending racism.

And he says, why isn't there more African Americans in here? There was a large number of women in the group, but there was something he said he noticed the first off as soon as he walked in, that there was a lot of Anglos.

JIMMY CARPER: If you don't feel like you've been invited and are wanted, you're not going to go.

STEVEN True. Also, another thing is, we get a lot of information. Like here at Pacifica, we get a lot of information out. We get a lot of information out throughout various media, like the Voice, Outsmart and all this. But how many Blacks read these? See, that's it.

JIMMY CARPER: That may be. Yeah.

STEVEN We don't get-- this information does not get out on mainstream Black stations.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: Is that gay press available at places like Incognito?

STEVEN It should be.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: I have never seen it in there.

DION REDMON: Aye, aye, aye. I'll put that on my things-to-do list. I'll write it in.

[LAUGHTER]

HOST 2: Well, it's true, yes.

JIMMY CARPER: In the Black press, I know I work out in Stafford in Missouri City, where there is a large contingency of African Americans. And going out to some of the restaurants and the grocery stores in the area, there's at least two free newspapers that are out geared to the African American community.

STEVEN Correct.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: And I will say, a majority of the stuff that you see in there, if it wasn't for the fact that you knew it was geared to African Americans, you would almost swear it was a Christian newspaper because of that faith structure in there.

STEVEN It's very religious dominated, most of the advertising. I know which newspaper you're talking about. Yeah, it's very religious dominated. In fact, I'd say close to 90% of all advertising in the newspaper is by religious organizations, and it tends to be a very conservative newspaper. It does deal with Black issues, but it does not deal with, say, Black gay issues.

And I think part of that reason is because we have not really learned to look at Black and gay issues as one issue. We look at as being two issues. Even Blacks look at it like that. You know, Black is one issue. gay is right.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. And Black comes first.

STEVEN Right.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: And it's understandable, because that's where you're coming from. You need roots. You need people around you.

DION REDMON: There's an allegiance. There truly is an allegiance with this.

HOST 2: Right. And even with the basic thing, I mean, you can go into the closet as being gay. I mean, you can closet that. You can't closet your race.

DION REDMON: Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. And when you talk about the difference between Black GLBT and white GLBT, you could look at it as, whites, it's easier for you to transition over, and no one would even know that one could be gay or lesbian or bisexual.

But when you have that, like I said, that double coat, you're Black, and then you're gay, and then you're this, and then you're-- so you have all these different things. The transition is very hard for us. One of the comments that was made to me, I'm on a couple of Listservs in which a question was thrown out there. Is there a different process for whites coming out and Blacks coming out?

JIMMY CARPER: You betcha.

STEVEN Yes.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: Without a doubt. Exactly, exactly. The comment that came after was, there's an allegiance to the Black community first, in which if there's going to be another negativity added or stigma added, then we're going to avoid that. So we'll just go ahead and just be Black first.

STEVEN Right. You know, I remember when I came out to my parents, and I came out at 15, my uncle who raised me, he told me straight off the bat, first of all, you're Black.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right.

STEVEN And remember that you're Black. And the way he put it to me was that, hey, being gay was being intelligent and being artistic. But do not have people accept you for being gay. Have them accept you for being you. And then when they find out you are gay, they don't have a problem with it. So don't make being gay an issue.

JIMMY CARPER: And I think these same things can be applied to the Hispanic community, the Asian community.

DION REDMON: Oh, yeah. Oh yeah. Definitely, and it's the same situation because that family allegiance, that religious allegiance, very strong within the Hispanic community, very strong. So there's some similarities.

STEVEN I know it's like, with some of my white friends and my Anglo friends, when they came out of the closet, they severed all ties with their families, whereas with the Black community, that family tie is so important, that we're not going to sever that tie. So if it means--

I know a lot of guys who have lovers. They live together, been together for 10, 15 years. But they would never come out. And that family knows they live together.

JIMMY CARPER: Sure.

STEVEN That's still my roommate.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: That's right. That's right.

STEVEN They would not come out and just say-- I don't know why. It's just that step of crossing over and saying, I'm gay.

JEROME:

JIMMY CARPER: How many times in the Black community-- because I know this happened to me personally. How many times in the Black community, if you come out of the closet, does your family reject you?

DION REDMON: Going by some personal friends' experience, no. That's not going to happen. Now, what may happen is, the issue may be skirted. You know, you may not want to talk about it.

STEVEN They don't talk about it at family unions.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: Exactly. Exactly. It's a skirted issue, but it's not-- oh no. Don't you come over here. No, no, no. That's not the case. And I think historically speaking, Blacks tend to be a little bit more accepting. So when you look at-- and when I've seen statistics, statistics will show the white community, you may get ousted from the family. You may have to cut all ties. There may even be a little bit more violence that may take place in the home once you come out. But the numbers on the Black side is a little lower than that if not completely lower than that.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

DION REDMON: So it's truly a complete different situation.

STEVEN You know, like I said, I know even with church, the Black community tend to be more accepting as long as you don't make an issue of it. Now, that's where they have a problem. It's not with you being gay, but with you throwing it up into other people's face.

JIMMY CARPER: I know I have seen the most flamboyant men in the choir, and they're just carrying on. But they're not-- they don't say the word, and so nobody goes there.

DION REDMON: That's right. That's right.

STEVEN It's always one of those untalked about issues.

JEROME:

DION REDMON: Uh-uh.