

**SPEAKERS:** --instead of right.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Oh, yeah, that was "The Gay History Rap." And we had somebody call in and request that cowboy song. And, boy, do I have one surprise, surprise. And I'm going to play it right now for what's his name, Cy? Cy's been calling me? Adam Brookshire. OK, this is Doug Stevens in The Out Band, and it's "Out in the country." OK, Cy, that one's for you. Doug Stevens and The Out Band doing "Out in the Country."

And before that, we had faith no more because Rodney Bottom came out doing "We Care a Lot," a good song for the community and started it all off with "Erasure." and "No It's Not Always, It's I Love Saturday." Now we're going to go to a tape that we affectionately call The Old Farts' Tape.

**MS. G:** Because you're playing it?

**JIMMY CARPER:** No, not because I'm playing it. Ms. G.

**MS. G:** Yes, miss thing.

**JIMMY CARPER:** It's a tape that Ray Hill and I did, oh, a few years ago. And we are interviewing a few of the community leaders were around pretty much adults during Stonewall and try to find out what they were doing back then and how stonewall affected them.

**MS. G:** Weren't you an adult back then?

**JIMMY CARPER:** I have never been an adult, and I never will be. I am the original Peter Pan.

**MS. G:** Uh-huh. More like beauty school dropout.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Oh. Dish night. Dish night, uh-huh. And here I am without my rag.

**MS. G:** I bought my library card.

**JIMMY CARPER:** You need more than that. OK. So we're going to go to that right now. And we'll be back in oh, about 30 minutes. And we'll do some QMZ, queer music zone. You are listening to *After Hours*, a continuing tradition on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM, *After Hours*, the most popular show that no one knows about.

Hello, happy Gay and Lesbian Pride Day. This is the time of year that we remember the Stonewall riots in New York City circa 1969. I'm Jim Carper. When Ray Hill and I got together to interview people, we decided to concentrate on those who would remember that era, 1969. Everyone was given the same questions and what follows are their responses.

**LEE HARRINGTON:** Lee Harrington is my name. And I began to deal with my sexual orientation in 1977 really. And it was a disconcerting experience so much so that when I came to Houston in 1979, I had to wear a mask at the first Gay Pride Parade.

I might also add that also I had turned left on Westheimer or South by the Tower Theater the first week I was here. And I had Michigan license plate still on my car. And so the police stopped me. And I said what have I done wrong. And they said, well, you turned on to a one way street. And the other officer realized that they'd made a mistake, and it was only one way on the other side of Westheimer.

And the people in front door with mirrors were standing there watching all this take place. And so since they had to save face, they looked and found that my I still had Michigan plates, asked me how long I'd been here. So finally he just says, well-- he just says, where are you going?

And I was not quite as bold as I am now. And I wasn't quite sure what to say. And so I pointed between Mary's and Booby Rock, and I looked that day straight enough that they thought I was going to Booby Rock. And I've regretted it ever since.

**ELEANOR HANLEY:** My name is Eleanor Hanley. And I came to accept being lesbian approximately three years ago. And the best way to describe it, it was like coming home. I felt like I finally got the whole picture together, what my life was all about. In 1969 I was living in a little town upstate New York called Holly. What I was doing was being a wife and mother. I had four children, ages 4 to 9. And that's what I was doing.

**JIMMY CARPER:** What was it like?

**ELEANOR HANLEY:** What was it like? Good and bad I enjoyed it a lot. And part of it was pretty difficult.

**PAT GANDY:** My name is Pat Gandy. And I first came to accept the fact that I was a lesbian actually five years ago. When I came out, I had strong suspicions of it all my life. But I didn't do anything about it. In 1969, I was living in Deer Park Texas teaching in Pasadena and trying to sympathize with all the four adolescents who were getting drafted for the Vietnam War.

And as always, all my life I've always been sympathetic with oppressed peoples. I suppose that was a projection of my own hidden non-acceptance of myself for what I actually knew. I was a lesbian. And I projected by helping other folks.

And I sympathized with these adolescents. And it was a very upsetting time for me because I could see the power and the awfulness of the federal government as it and society stomped on any young person who dared to disagree. And I feel that it's somewhat similar to the fact, the way the situation we are in many times by society that they want to squash and step on us the same way.

**LARRY LINGLE:** OK, my name is Larry Lingle. I accepted being gay in 1974 when I was 37 years old, calculate fast. It was very liberating when I finally came to terms with it. I'd known, I think, for some years I was gay but really came to terms accepting it-- it was about a year after my divorce. And it was, as I say, very liberating. 1969, I was married. I was living in Fort Worth, Texas. I was teaching history at Texas Christian University. And that was it.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Lee, Eleanor, Pat and Larry now tell you when they first heard about the Stonewall Rebellion and what they thought of it. You will find out what gay and lesbian pride means to them and how they will celebrate their pride this year.

**LEE** Well, I was not aware of it at the time of course. When I first heard about it probably was when I began to deal  
**HARRINGTON:** with leaving East Lansing, Michigan, where I had gone after I graduated from University of Alabama. And I really can't remember exactly, which troubles me because it's such a profound moment.

But I would have remembered it like I remember the day that Kennedy was shot because-- I mean, where I was. But I wasn't aware of all this enough at that time to remember where exactly the spot. But in 1977, I would say I began to hear about it. But in '78 when I arrived in Houston and saw the likes of you and others at the Astro Hall in town meeting one, I certainly knew it then.

Well, I think it's a glorious moment for all liberated people and a special moment for gays and lesbians. It's the thing I look forward to most each year. I always want the parade to be bigger and better. I want the mainstream businesses to enter floats. And I worry myself to death all year long, but I'll finally go down to Foley's and talk him into it and work with Academy and talk them into it.

And I always am so busy with other projects, I never get to go and help gay Pride Week do that. I'll celebrate this year, of course, by being at the parade and thinking back when I wore the mask in the first one and how far I've come and I think also how far we still have to go.

**ELEANOR** I heard about the Stonewall Rebellion about two years ago, shortly after I came out. From what I've heard about  
**HANLEY:** it, when I heard about it from other people, they had good reason to ride in the streets and ride on. Lesbian and Gay Pride means-- it means my own personal pride since I am a lesbian and proud to be one.

I feel like there's a lot of work to be done for us to have to have the real recognition that we should have as citizens of this world. I will be celebrating Pride Week. I already started celebrating by going to the dinner last Saturday, the awards dinner. I will be marching in the parade. And this will be the second year I've marched in the parade. And it'll be the third year I knew there was a parade.

**PAT GANDY:** Well, I probably heard about it when it happened. But I don't remember because I usually read the paper very avidly. I wasn't out there. But I spent most of the first part of my life as an alcoholic, trying to suppress the fact that I was a lesbian. So there are a lot of-- I have a lot of blank spaces in terms of memories of things.

But after I sobered up and when I was in the process of coming out, I read about it. And being an old sort of semi mover and shaker and radical myself, I thought that they were probably long overdue in doing it. And they should have done it sooner, but I thought it was wonderful.

Lesbian Gay Pride means to me accepting who I am and being cool with that and participating in the life of the community and doing what I can to further the cause of gay and lesbian rights. And I plan to celebrate it by doing as I do normally and then participating in the events of gay Pride Week such as going-- I went to the banquet last Saturday night. I will attend several events and participate in the parade on Sunday.

**LARRY LINGLE:** Well, of course I heard about it when it happened because I read the New York Times. My feeling was-- again, secretly knowing I was gay, I was very sympathetic. I was involved in the anti-war demonstrations myself at the time. I thought it was a great thing. Well, let me say celebrate it by being-- I'll be in the parade Sunday.

The store, our store Lobo will have a booth at Star Night '91. So I guess in that sense that's part of how we celebrate it. We decorate the store. We celebrate gay Pride Week actually year round at Lobo, but we do get a little more involved during gay Pride Week.

What Gay Pride means to me, again, I think it's something that everybody should experience year round. I think it's very important that we take pride in being gay and lesbians. First of all, because it's good for us individually. Everybody, I think, should have a very positive attitude towards themselves. And that comes, I think, with pride. And I think they should be proud if they are gay and if they're lesbian.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Now, Lee, Eleanor, Pat, and Larry will tell you how gay and lesbian people have changed over the years in their perception. You will hear what they think of young, gay, and lesbian people today and what advice the four of them offer.

**LEE HARRINGTON:** I think that there has been a lot of change. I'm a perfectionist. And I don't please easily. But there's no question that there are more people who are out now. I think one of the things that colors my thinking on that is the dilemma in Houston, because I do think since 1985 and the January 19 referendum that we have gone downhill.

I think more people are scared. But I do see a lot of young people out in the bars coming out at an early age. And that's exciting. I really love them. I go to the bars, and I'm a late person. And I'll work at my desk on scripts or on a production schedule until midnight or so.

And I'll jump up. And my friend's kid me about using that as an excuse. But I'll go to the bar sometimes maybe for only 30 minutes. And I'll see young couples in the bars, especially on under 21 night. And they'll be embraced, and I'll be jealous and envious. And finally I'll watch-- because I didn't do that at an early age in my life.

And so I'll wait for until they break. And I'll usually walk up to them and tell them how jealous I am and tell them that they need to have two goals, that one they need to come out at work within two years and at home within three years. That's where our power is.

**ELEANOR HANLEY:** If I go back to what I thought gay and lesbian people were like, they definitely have changed because it was only what I thought. It wasn't what I knew because I didn't know any gay and lesbian people. I don't really know a lot of young people.

But the ones I do know, they seem to have a lot of pride. And they seem to know who they are. I think the advice I would give them is to be true to themselves and to keep working for the rights that we all need and deserve.

**PAT GANDY:** Oh, well, yes, I'd say so. Back when I first suspected my tendencies, I was 6, 15 years old, just out of high school in a small rural high school in Texas not far from Houston. And I went away to college. By then I was all of 16 years old. And I strongly suspected I was one of those homosexuals.

So I went to the library and read about homosexuality and found out that it was a sickness that was visited upon folks. And I determined that I didn't want any of that. So it took lots of bottles of alcohol for the next 30 years to keep that from-- to try to change myself. And it didn't work of course.

But I remember definitely I went to a girls school. So there were a lot of lesbians there. It's affectionately known among some of us today is the dyke factory of Texas. However, I purposely avoided all those people because I know who they were. I don't know how I knew, but I knew.

I knew the ones that were rather obvious or I felt like fit the stereotype actually. And some of the rest of them I didn't know because I've run into her here in Houston since then, and I had no idea about her. But everything was very closeted and nobody talked about it.

If I hadn't been so shy and retiring and less bookish-- of course, some people would find that hard to believe about me, but I was. And everything was hidden. And it's wonderful today that you can read newspapers, things in the newspapers.

Even the straight press says some positive things in between the rest of the time that it's not. And we have access to a gay press and to information that's uplifting and helpful. That's how I eventually came out is other people helped me. But I got some of my-- I did a lot of reading. So that's pretty much-- it's changed for the better but not nearly fast enough.

**INTERVIEWER:** Special question just for you, how important is sobriety to your wholeness and your pride?

**PAT GANDY:** Sobriety is the most important part of being a person that's proud and happy with their selves and with their gayness or their lesbianness as you may say. I can't say too strongly or too often that the advice I'd have to all people young and old is to-- they're not going to ever come to grips with their sexuality with their problems in life if they don't get sober.

And I think that's especially important in our community because we have been so oppressed and so downtrodden and so maligned by so many people, families, by society, by everybody that we've often turned to drink. I did, and I'm no different than a lot of folks. It's no respecter of economic conditions. It's no respecter of intelligence. It's no respecter of anything.

But it's a very important thing. If we don't deal with the alcoholism, we can't deal with ourselves, and we can't be proud of ourselves. And to me that is crucial, crucial. I'll never drink again.

**LARRY LINGLE:** And, again, my experience of gay life is since 1974. As far as changes, yeah, radical changes I guess since I came out. AIDS has completely changed our community. I think the main thing I notice is-- and Bill White my lover and I have discussed this often-- in the early years, we seem to know very few women, gay women or lesbians.

And we find now that some of our best friends are women. I think that's been a radical change I think for both men and women, gay men and women, discovering suddenly that there's this whole other community that we actually do have something in common. And I think part of that is because more and more gay men are realizing that there's a hell a lot more to being gay than sex.

And once they get that through their heads, then they realize that we have a lot of common goals and just common ideals that we share with gay women. I think that's been the biggest change I've seen, and it's been radical. Well, I guess my only my contact mainly with younger members of the community is primarily through the store or through the caucus or other activities. I find them much more liberated than I ever was at that age or even after that age.

If I have any concern is-- I think a lot of younger gay men don't always understand the impact of AIDS. I think there's a tendency to slough off safer sex among younger men. That concerns me. But otherwise I find they're much more together, much more dedicated, much more comfortable with themselves than certainly younger men and women were years ago.

**JIMMY CARPER:** The last question for Lee, Eleanor, Pat, and Larry concerns how they think their lives will be in the future.

**LEE** I have no idea. I've learned to go with the flow, not quite as rigid as I used to be. I try not to expect things to happen quite as fast. But I do feel like that it's going to be more radical than I've ever been.

**ELEANOR HANLEY:** Well, right now my life is pretty wonderful because I'm in a relationship with a person that I expect to be in a relationship for the rest of my life, and I'm very happy, very fulfilled. In the future I expect my life to just continue on as it is and perhaps even get better.

**PAT GANDY:** Oh, I have a wonderful life now.

**LARRY LINGLE:** As far as the future, I think I take the attitude-- I don't know. Maybe more people take the attitude. I think, we or at least I think more in terms of day to day at this point. Given the health crisis and everything else, I don't really plan even in terms of the business. I don't really plan that far ahead.

And as far as life, we really do take it a day at a time. And we like to think it's getting better every day. We watch all the reports that are coming out of Italy right now in terms of the AIDS conference. There seems to be a lot of, I think, hopeful signs on the AIDS front.

**JIMMY CARPER:** Now for a different perspective we talked to John Burgo a 22-year-old gay activist. We asked him all the same questions we asked everyone.

**JOHN BURGO:** My name is John Burgo, and I first came out to myself when I was 16, a junior in high school in 1986. And I've been dealing with it ever since I was like 10 or 11 because things that happen in Boy Scouts and everything and denying it myself even at the same time that I was lusting for all the men that were around me.

I was really lucky when I came out. The reason I came out was that an exchange student, a German exchange student was living with my family and sharing a bedroom with me. I was madly in love with him. And I had a terrible crush on him. And that's the point where I could no longer ignore the fact that I was gay, where I was just like totally-- I was really upset when he wasn't there. I was incredibly jealous of his girlfriend.

And I just said, the reason you feel this way is because you're gay. And so the very first person I told was a teacher in high school. And she was my best friend. And things were great. I mean, things were great. She was very accepting. She really gave me a lot of support in dealing with stuff and also in dealing with my feelings about him, which was the big stress in my life.

And I just started telling people and probably by the end of that year, I had told maybe a dozen people in my high school and people that I knew. And except for when I told my mother, I got nothing but fairly positive responses. And so it made me feel very confident about coming out a lot, to a lot of different people.

I was being born in September of 1969. So my life was pretty simple, just a little queer baby doing the things that little queer babies do, like most other babies. I first heard about when I was in high school when I was a junior. And I told that teacher I was still dealing with a lot of problems. And there was this youth counselor that came to the school once a week.

And so my teacher helped me arrange a time to go see her. And I went and talk to her. And then she went back to the county agency that she worked for and found everything she could in their files about gay people. And she made huge copies for me and brought them back to me.

And one of them was an article in the American Library Association journal that talked about Stonewall. And I was just really excited because almost as soon as I came out, I was an activist. I would get really pissed off when I heard people in Congress, like Jesse Helms, saying stupid awful things.

And when I just heard about it and the police raiding the bar and all of the patrons fighting back and everything, I just got so excited and energized. I think it's a time for us to remember everything that we've accomplished in the last 22 years and to be really angry about the things that haven't gotten done, not angry at ourselves but angry at all the stupid people and the stupid society that stands in our way and to remember all the things that we still have to do in dealing with AIDS and helping gay and lesbian youth. And getting some real political power for ourselves to represent ourselves in government and end the violence and all these problems that we still have to face, but to celebrate the fact that we have come so far and that we really have a community of people who are working to end these problems.

And what I'm going to be doing this year is going to events like I've done every year. As soon as I came out, like that first year when I was 16, a lesbian teacher that I knew in school, who I came out to, took me to see *Parting Glances*. It was my first gay Pride Week event.

And ever since then, I've done something. And so I went to see a play this week and going to the parade, of course and marching with the people from U of H and just trying to be with as many as my friends as possible.

Well, I don't think that gay and lesbian people have changed too much since the time that I came out to the present because it was only six years ago, five years ago. But I think in talking with people and reading about the last 22 years and even before then, I think people have changed a lot. And people are coming out more.

And people are realizing more and more that when they get a negative reaction from people about them being gay, it's not their problem. It's the problem with the person who's giving them the negative reaction. And I think that's a big change in the last-- I mean, it's a big change for myself from when I was 16 and I was terrified about my mother, having a fit if she found out I was gay to saying, well, she has to deal with it. It's her problem, not mine.

And I also think that people are starting to realize that the problems that we face as gay and lesbian people, no matter what group we come from or what gender we are, or what color our skin is, or what language we speak, or what we like to do in bed, are a lot of the same problems and that we really have to work together to overcome them. I think that young people in the community today have-- I think they see a lot of those things that other people saw as dividing factors like men and women or Black and white that divided people in the community.

I think for not all young people, but for a lot of young people, they're getting over that. Young men are learning to change their behavior towards women so that they're not patronizing, and they're not behaving in even unconsciously sexist ways. And younger women in the community are learning that there are young men who want to change and giving them a chance to change.

And I think there's a feeling more that rather than being gay or lesbian or Black and white, we're all queer, and we're all together. And there's a strong feeling of community. The advice I would give is that I think a lot of young gay people also tend to overlook the accomplishments of the generations before us and that they look at the past 20 years, and they see older people as not having accomplished very much.

And I think they really have to look at everything that's happened and look at everything they've done and learn from what the community has accomplished and also the mistakes that the community is made to learn. We can't just start over, and we we're not just-- we're not coming from nowhere. We have a whole past behind us that we have to respect, I mean, better and better all the time. I think in Houston I see a lot of changes that people are coming out more, that people are getting more involved in the community. People are saying that they can do their own thing and do what they want and not feel ashamed of themselves.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

(SINGING) *After Hours, After Hours*. Boy--

**GARLAND**

Hi, I'm Garland Ganter General Manager of KPFT. On behalf of everyone here at KPFT, I want to thank you for

**GANTER:**

your support during our recent membership drive. Once again KPFT's listeners came through with generous pledges of support for Houston's most unique radio station. If you made a pledge during the drive, please take a moment today and send your check or credit card information to KPFT.

We keep our promise to you 24/7 hours a day, 365 days a year. And we're counting on you to keep your promise to us. Please send your payment today. Thanks for your support of 90.1 FM.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

**RADIO HOST:**

It's Saturday night. Or was that Sunday morning at 3:00? You're wondering what that is creeping up on you right now. Why, it's Eric. And you're tuned to the carbon dating game, where I'll bring you a mess of tunes from precambrian to neo-nuevo right here on KPFT, Houston.

[MUSIC PLAYING]