

- WENDY:** Towards them-- towards them, and even though a part of me really wanted to be with that group of people over there, wearing those cows, it was just something I wasn't prepared to do yet.
- I'd already gone through the pain and that I'm sure everybody's aware of that that's out there that's anywhere in the gay, lesbian, bi, transgender community.
- SPEAKER 1:** Coming out is a bitch.
- WENDY:** Coming out is a real bitch, particularly when your whole family is from Michigan, and that's a lot of fun. So that was a tough one. And I lost half of my family. I was disowned by my grandparents and basically everybody but my mother disowned me.
- And so I wasn't prepared to go that other step and be disowned by my new family which was the lesbian community. And it took me 10 years to actually get up the nerve to say, hey, you know what, to heck with you guys. I'm going to be who I am. And I'm glad to see that 10 years after I finally decided to do that, they're actually starting to be kind of nice to us.
- SPEAKER 1:** Wow.
- WENDY:** She's qualified but we work on it a little bit at a time.
- SARAH**
DEPALMA: I know I've certainly taken plenty of heat from the lesbian community for things that I've said in the show, and especially for standing up about S&M. And I've been told pretty point blank just how socially unacceptable and politically incorrect it is. My general response has been well if you don't like it, then stop watching.
- SPEAKER 1:** Pretty much covers it.
- WENDY:** Everybody in the gay community wants to be accepted for who they are, so my response is accept us for who we are, and that was the most hurtful thing. My parents loved me and I had no problems coming out to them as a lesbian, I had no problems coming out to them as leather, but my lesbian friends walked away and I had never been hurt like that before. I have a biracial child my family loved him. My family loves my child. I came out a year after he was born as a lesbian. They loved me just the same.
- My mom comes to some of the S&M events. My sister is a lesbian also and she comes and she bartends for some of this stuff. But when the lesbian community looks at me and goes, gross. Now that hurts.
- SARAH**
DEPALMA: Yeah, I've had the same experience and you know I've actually been told on a couple of occasions that I really ought to quit talking about it. Obviously I'm ignoring it.
- WENDY:** And I'm glad you are, because it really is something that needs to be addressed, and it needs to be addressed far more often than it is. Because there are a lot of people like myself, that when we come out, we should be able to come out wherever we want to go and do whatever we want to do. And to feel like there's that social pressure not to do that is wrong.
- JESS:** Try it 40 years ago.

SARAH Oh, my.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: The white male.

WENDY: Yes, I mean seriously. I'm the old woman of the crew here. I've been around a long time, but I've been in the leather scene 32 years. I'm bisexual. My family has no clue that I'm bisexual. My family has no clue that I'm into leather. Would they accept it? No. No.

I have a brother that's 72 years old, probably older than most people's grandfathers, OK? My mother is 86. She would drop over dead of a heart attack, you know? And I don't want to kill my mother. I'm sorry, I just don't want to.

But in my being 56 that I am now, I couldn't come out back then. There was no way. It would never have been accepted. And even in the lifestyle, when I walked into this lifestyle, I walked in with gay men. And I was readily accepted by them, but I wasn't accepted by my own peers-- the people my age. Women, they just had a heart attack. I mean, it was horrible. It was horrible.

I mean, I remember Stonewall, so you know, I go back a long way and through all of it. And it's been rough. It's been rough. It's been a rough road to walk. I mean, I've made inroads and in places in this country where nobody else walked. And each time it got easier and easier and easier, because as a society we are more and more accepted for being gay, being lesbian.

SARAH We'll come back to this in a few minutes, but I think Jimmy has some announcements, don't you?

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Well, we want to talk about membership drive.

SARAH Membership drive.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: I did want to add to that. If people did not think that what you just heard was true, then I'm 53 years old. And at age 17, when my parents found out I was gay, they kicked me out of the house.

SARAH That's right. I remember you telling me that.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: And they have never looked back. I have not spoken to them in all of those years, because they choose not to. They did not want to have a gay son. They didn't understand it. They didn't want-- what if the neighbors find out-- all of this kind of stuff. And they never got over it.

SARAH I went through that whole routine about what if-- what would the neighbors think? And I'm like, I live in Texas.

DEPALMA: What the hell are you talking about?

JIMMY CARPER: I mean, because we were just talking earlier about Hatch and how I ran into this mom who's so proud of her gay son. And it just-- it brought all that back again.

SARAH Times truly have changed.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, yes. And they have changed while you've been listening to this show, because this show has been on for a little over 14 years now.

SARAH Oh that's right.

DEPALMA:

SPEAKER 2: Oh.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right, "After Hours" right here on good old KPFT. And in all of those 14 years, management has stood behind us in-- no, the next four. Thanks, Beth.

BETH: Yeah.

SARAH Thank you.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: See, you lost your breath, forgot about all your engineering things.

SARAH I have, yeah.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: And management has always stood behind the show. And we don't bring in as much money as some of the daytime shows, because we are a nighttime show. It's a smaller listenership. But this show is number 7 in radio shows on Saturdays at midnight.

SARAH And we know that a lot of them are young people listening into us.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: And there's over 50 radio stations.

SARAH Yep.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: We don't have a huge listenership at this radio station, but, I mean, it has doubled in the past several years. We're up to about 150,000 right now per week-- listen to this show, listen to the station.

SARAH To the station, right.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: We have in excess of 20,000 listening to this show right now. And I've got to tell you that a huge percentage are heterosexual people.

SARAH That's something I've always found fascinating-- is why they're listening to us.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Either they're listening because we have fun and we laugh and joke a lot, or because they want to find out. They're learning something.

SARAH We're disseminating worthwhile information.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. So if you think that is worthwhile for you-- if you think this show is worth that, then I urge you to give us a call at 713-526-5738-- 526-KPFT.

We've had some great pledges already this evening, but we're way behind schedule in our pledges for this drive, and I'm looking for quite a few more. I want to thank Beth for a wonderful pledge. Thank you, thank you, thank you. And again Paul, who pledges every--

SARAH Yes, he does.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Every time-- every membership drive. And an extremely generous pledge from Ryan-- we're very happy to get that one.

SARAH Why don't we auction off the *Hedwig* poster?

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, we can do that. I have a poster from *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*.

SARAH If you've seen the movie *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. It is a wonderful poster. I mean, really this is a fun poster.

DEPALMA: And what do you say? Let's make-- this has to be on plastic, Jimmy.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh yeah, it has to be on plastic.

SARAH Has to be on plastic. And how much should we get for this?

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: What do you say?

SARAH \$30?

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Let's go \$50.

SARAH \$50, OK. For the first person that calls in with their pledge of \$50 at 526-5738-- 526-KPFT, they win the poster of

DEPALMA: *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right, and I'll mail it out personally.

SARAH Right. You need to put it on your plastic, though.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Right. Tell the person who is sitting by waiting for your call that you want this *Hedwig* poster.

SARAH All right, that's 713-526-5738, 713-527-KPFT-- \$50 on your plastic wins this poster of *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: And, of course, we have other thank-you gifts for various different amounts going from \$35 up--

SARAH The t-shirts are cool, by the way.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, aren't they nice?

SARAH Yeah, the t-shirts really look cool.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: That's \$75 for a t-shirt.

SARAH Well OK, that's \$75, but it's worth it.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, it is.

SARAH You're not spending \$75 for the t-shirt.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: No.

SARAH You're spending \$75 to keep the station on the air so that we don't have to put out fires while we're on the air.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. We've--

SARAH We've actually done that. Yes.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, we have been on the air, and did not go off the air when we had an electrical fire in the building.

SARAH In the building.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, on this show.

SARAH We don't have to put plastic over the transmitter anymore, because the ceiling collapsed and the water was

DEPALMA: pouring over the transmitter.

JIMMY CARPER: That's right.

SARAH None of us wanted to go near it.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. As a matter of fact, from your past generosity we now have a brand new news director at KPFT.

We've not had that position in a very long time, because we haven't had the money.

SARAH And a nice new transmitter so you can listen to us in Woodville, in Beaumont, and Lord knows where else.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Needville.

SARAH Yeah, that's right. I love the name of that town. And my favorite-- North Zulch.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: And you are listening to "After Hours Queer, Radio with Attitude" on KPFT Houston and KEOS College Station. That number is 713-526-5738-- 526-KPFT. Sarah, take it away.

SARAH OK, and we are back with our crew. We're bringing our microphones back up. Thank you, Beth.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: What's this we business?

SARAH Well, I'm watching Beth do this, going hey, I remember now. That's what those were for. It's been a long time since I've sat over here, Jimmy.

DEPALMA:

OK, so let's go back to the discussion. We were talking a little bit-- well first of all, we should tell the audience what it is that we're talking about. We're having a discussion tonight about S&M, and if you missed part of this discussion, shame on you. Where have you been?

We are talking about S&M and about transgenders in S&M and lesbians in S&M. And I wanted to ask a question. Vendola, you mentioned that you're a professional. What is it like to be a professional I've always been curious about that. I don't want-- I don't want to ask you gory details, but I mean people-- when they approach you, how do they do it? How do they ask?

VENDOLA: Well, I guess people always ask me kind of how I can do this and what I find rewarding about it. What I find rewarding about it is helping someone express a fantasy. When people come to me, they usually can't tell partners, whether gay, straight. I see everyone. I'm equal opportunity. It's fine with me. They usually can't tell their partners or significant others what a fantasy may be.

They come to me. We usually talk a little bit beforehand. I ask questions, kind of get to a main interest. Maybe they share a story with me or maybe something that they've written, and kind of start off from there. The main thing is helping someone express part of their sexuality. That's kind of what I do. It's therapy.

SARAH Are they afraid of you? Well, I guess they wouldn't be if they came to you.

DEPALMA:

VENDOLA: No, otherwise I wouldn't be in business if they were. No, I mean some people want fear-type scenes. And then some people just-- whether it's simple spanking or a role play, maybe something happened in their lifetime that they'd want to fantasize on that they've thought about-- maybe a story they've read in a magazine, online, a fantasy, like for instance a teacher thing, school fantasies. All that's interesting. Usually I end up playing a role, which would be a teacher, however-- whatever that may be.

SARAH But not--

DEPALMA:

VENDOLA: A nurse, yes-- a little bit of everything, actually. I'm the actress. I'm all over the place.

SARAH And they come to you, because they're afraid to tell their spouses.

DEPALMA:

VENDOLA: Yes, exactly. But they can come to me, and in 10 minutes-- because they have to tell me exactly what they're into sexually pretty much. So I find that very interesting myself.

SARAH
DEPALMA: Yeah, I find that fascinating.

VENDOLA: Yes.

SARAH
DEPALMA: So if they--

VENDOLA: I think it's just because I'm a party that they can-- I'm on the back burner. They come and see me.

SARAH
DEPALMA: You're a neutral partner.

VENDOLA: Yeah, they go back to their family or whoever it may be, and they've expressed a fantasy. It may not be with their significant other. And it's something that they can kind of look back on and enjoy.

SARAH
DEPALMA: I just find it so interesting. In talking to cross-dressers over the years, many of the cross-dressers don't tell their wives, because they're afraid to.

VENDOLA: I see a lot of cross-dressers.

SARAH
DEPALMA: Yeah, I would think so. They're afraid that they're going to lose their marriage, so they never tell their wives. Instead, they dress in secret. And when the secret gets out, is it almost always does sooner or later, so often the wife says, I'm not so angry about the cross-dressing. I probably could have dealt with that. I'm mad at your dishonesty, because you didn't trust me enough to tell me.

VENDOLA: Yeah, that's an aspect, I think, with everything-- with even some simple fantasies. I get guys that like to wear, say, lingerie or whatever. And to me that's not a big deal, but maybe to-- there's two aspects. I could either be the fantasy, which is they come and see me, and they don't know me. I'm another person, and they don't want to tell their significant others. Or they can't-- they feel that they can't let it go with someone that they've been with.

SARAH
DEPALMA: So it has to be really a strong drive. I mean, this has to be something they've thought about and considered for quite a while. It's got to be a pretty strong drive to bring them to someone that's a neutral person and say I want to try this.

VENDOLA: Exactly. It's kind of counseling-- therapy, for the most part. I also do couples training. If, for instance-- and I see all types of couples, gay, straight, whoever, whichever coming in-- maybe want to introduce their partners into SM play.

And I do classes. I write my own papers and little booklets and things like that. Education is very important. Sometimes they think of, oh, well, this really wasn't that big of a deal. OK, I can deal with that. And honestly, that's what I enjoy. To me S&M is a wonderful thing if it's with someone that you're in love with.

I like playing with lots of people, all aspects, have a good time. But the special bond-- especially marriages and people that have been together for a long time that you can share that with, that's kind of the point to me. S&M can bring you closer together.

SARAH I know when I was a professional dom, I also found that if they did tell their partner, and their partner went ew,
DEPALMA: that's another reason they would come to me-- and a great stress reliever.

JESS: Yeah, you find people usually that are in high-end jobs-- the presidents of banks and I mean--

SARAH Police officers.
DEPALMA:

JESS: Yeah.

SPEAKER 3: Police officers-- that's interesting.

SARAH Number one customer.
DEPALMA:

JESS: Where they have high-level jobs, high-stress jobs, or they're in charge. They are in charge all the time, and they just want to let go, and they don't want to be in charge. They're in charge of their job. They're in charge of the family. They want to just let go and not be in charge-- have somebody else tell them what to do, you know? And so that's what they want. And for them it's a release. It's a way to get rid of it all for if it's only an hour, a month-- just to get rid of it all.

SARAH Interesting. Well, let's take a look at the other side of the coin here for a minute. Let's talk about the long-term
DEPALMA: relationships.

SPEAKER 3: The what?

SARAH The long-term relationships-- the opposite side of the coin. And Lori, why don't you start that. We can talk about
DEPALMA: our long-term relationship. And then I want Ken and Vixen to talk about theirs, because it's different.

LORI RICE: I've had short-term relationships with bottoms that have come and I've played with. Sarah is the person that I've had a relationship for this long and that's gotten this intense. It's been kind of interesting, because through Sarah's transition, every week the hot spots would change.

SARAH That's right.
DEPALMA:

LORI RICE: Suddenly, it'd be like playing with a new bottom every week almost-- see what works one week, wouldn't work the next week. Think, oh boy, this part does this week. It's kind of fun.

But having a long-term relationship allows you to explore different things in greater depth. Cruelty to one person-- cruelty to Sarah is to make her sit still and not say anything, or to sit a glass of milk and a Girl Scout mint cookie in front of her and say, now you can't have this.

SARAH Yeah, I hate that. Oh God, I hate that.
DEPALMA:

LORI RICE: It's good. You get to be creative in the long-term relationships, and there are-- sometimes getting emotionally attached to your bottom prevents-- you know, makes it harder to sometimes discipline. I don't know if anyone else has found that.

SPEAKER 4: Oh yeah, definitely.

LORI RICE: Because you take other things into consideration than if you just see someone once or twice a week and you play with them. If you see them-- see someone and you really care for them, it affects discipline and how things go. And I'm seeing people nod, saying yes, yes, yes.

KEN: You know, I kind of-- I see the other side of that, though, in the way that Vixen and I play. The fact that we've been married for [INAUDIBLE]--

VIXEN: A while.

KEN: And what I'm doing is I'm still learning.

LORI RICE: Oh yeah.

KEN: I'm still learning the things that turn her on. The fact that we love each other does not seem to interfere in our play. It enhances it. The more things that-- the more times we play, the more I see the kind of things that she likes and what I like to do, and it just makes it so much more of an experience.

LORI RICE: And find new ways to play on old things and enhance it.

KEN: I'm constantly finding new ways to torment her, yes.

SARAH
DEPALMA: And Vixen has got this huge grin on her face, like oh goody, torment. Oh, boy.

LORI RICE: I just came home with a toy I found in an electronic store over the weekend that is an ABS transducer. It's a neat way to have Velcro bondage. It's going to have some very interesting times with this.

SARAH
DEPALMA: Lori is known as the eco dom, because a lot of people-- you know, we use whips and flogs and all sorts of interesting little toys. Lori will use things like branches from pines-- like pine. And now, I know you think, oh geez, what a wimpy little idea.

SPEAKER 4: Feathers.

SARAH
DEPALMA: You have no idea how itchy that pine gets after a few minutes.

KEN: I wonder if she's ever used an enema bag as a flogger.

LORI RICE: I've used a cheese grater.

SARAH
DEPALMA: A cheese grater-- yeah, not as a flogger, but for other reasons. And it is true. I think the longer you're together, the more interesting sometimes the play can get, because you know each other well.

WENDY: Sure.

SARAH Now Wendy, you and Carol have been together a long time.

DEPALMA:

WENDY: Actually, November 4th will be our fifth year together.

LORI RICE: Congratulations.

WENDY: So that's been very interesting five years, definitely together. So that Carol, aside from being my wife, is also my submissive, but she's also switch, which means that she's both a submissive when she's with me and she's dominant with some other people. And she has her own submissive as well. And that person is a part of our family. She spends time in our home. We do activities with her, things like that.

When Carol and I met-- you talk about how things grow-- how you grow as you're together. When Carol and I met, she looked at me and said, no knives-- absolutely no knives.

CAROL: OK, that went away.

WENDY: After a relatively short period of time, that went away. And then-- yeah OK, very short period of time-- about two weeks.

SARAH I've seen you two play with knives.

DEPALMA:

WENDY: Well, now we're at the point where she goes out and finds knives for me. Something-- oh look. Look what I got for you. Doesn't this look fun? You know, so now I have a collection of about 30 different knives ranging in size from a 2-inch blade to one that's got an 18-inch blade, and everything in between, and all different styles, and all kinds of neat stuff. That's my little fetish actually.

But it's one of those things that when you are together for a long period of time, you get to know little things that you can do. And we have a child that we're raising together. She's now 5. And so sometimes at home, we have a pretty normal life.

But you can always slide something in there to make it a little bit more fun. We just have little things that we do all the time, and it makes it a little bit more interesting than just your average relationship. And I think that's one of the biggest appeals to it.

SARAH I was hoping someone would get into the side-- not just the play of a long-term relationship, because there's also the DS part of the relationship.

DEPALMA:

SARAH Well, go ahead and talk about that.

DEPALMA:

SARAH Dominance and submission. And that is indeed something that is kind of a continuum throughout even the vanilla parts of your life together. You still have to do the grocery shopping, and take care of the kids, and clean the house, and go to work, and all that sort of thing.

DEPALMA:

But there's a constant tension or dynamic and also an open level of communication and a closeness that DS arrangement I think provides that doesn't necessarily-- well, I wouldn't say it doesn't exist in all relationships, but it most certainly enhances the relationship we have. And that is something that even when you're not playing-- when you haven't got your knives and bull whips out-- that makes having this kind of an arrangement with your partner real special.

SARAH
DEPALMA: Well, the day-to-day dynamics are definitely different in a D&S relationship. One of the things that was my favorite thing is I don't get to order things in the restaurant, and I just love it. You know, I tell my lady what it is that I want, and then she orders for me. And we--

LORI RICE: Sometimes.

SARAH
DEPALMA: Sometimes. And we have had some of the strangest looks from waiters and waitresses, who kind of look at me. And they'll say, you know, well, did you want to order ma'am? And I'll say, well she just did.

LORI RICE: Sometimes she gets what she wants. Sometimes she doesn't. I change the order if it suits me.

SARAH
DEPALMA: And we've occasionally had some waiters and waitresses that are pretty sharp, and realize almost instantly what's going on, and don't speak to me again the rest of the time we're in the restaurant. They go directly to Lori and ask her what I want.

WENDY: We have a rule in our house that I'm always served my dinner first, or whatever meal it is. I am served first. Personally I don't like paper plates. I don't care if everybody else eats on paper plates. I don't like them, so I don't have to. That's the advantages that I get.

I also don't have to cook for myself or those kinds of things. And that's just part of the relationship that we have, and that's part of the dominant and submission part-- is that she likes to do things for me, and I like to let her.

SARAH
DEPALMA: We have a call from a listener. Said that he noticed that in the S&M-- the TG community, the transgender community seems more willing to experiment with different kinds of things. And the question was, does this kind of creativity carry over into mainstream life? Do the things that we do in S&M or B&D or whatever, does that kind of creativity-- does it carry over to our workplace? Does it carry over into our regular life?

CAROL: I think so. I think that a lot of creativity-- you find better ways of doing things, more creative ways of doing things, and getting more. You find ways of getting what you need a little easier. I can't find the word I'm looking for.

WENDY: I work in the computer field. I deal with desktop support. And sometimes I can be a little tricky, trying to figure out what's wrong with this silly computer that everybody wants to throw out the window. And we call it thinking out of the box-- outside of the box.

And I know that it definitely makes a difference, because when I'm in my S&M life persona, you have to think of all kinds of different things to keep your life interesting, and what am I going to do this time with this person, and what can I do differently? And I can take that same mentality to work with me and go-- say OK, well, I have this problem. Well, what can I do differently to fix this? And it's basically the same kind of thing.

VENDOLA: I think also being open minded to other people's opinions as well, even in the workplace. Even after going to a party or being at a weekend-- like for instance for me, I've met so many people since I've been here. And I'll take a little bit of everyone with me when I go and talk to my friends.

And considering I'm lucky enough to have this as my profession as well, being open minded, mutual respect-- all that is, to me, efficient to run a business. You have to have all that stuff anyway to run a good business and to hold a good job.

SARAH OK, I'm sorry. I was talking to Beth. Beth had a question.

DEPALMA:

BETH: Oh, get the question from the vanilla girl here. OK. So I heard at least one mention of polyamory. Is that common or rare or somewhere in between?

CAROL: Somewhere in between.

JESS: Yeah, it's-- poly relationships, there's not a lot of them. They're hard to maintain. I know, I'm in one. They're hard to maintain.

In my case, I'm very lucky. My two submissives get along fabulously. And in fact, if you turn your back for two seconds, they're necking in the corner, which makes it quite-- it makes it easier.

But poly-- most poly relationships I find do not work. It's a rarity. It's very rare.

CAROL: I think it's very rare that you find one that actually works.

JESS: Yeah, and I think it doesn't work if they're all living together in the same house. That's when it doesn't work.

CAROL: It's the jealousy. If someone's jealous or insecure with themselves, it's not going to work for them.

WENDY: The green-eyed monster kills a lot of things in a poly relationship.

BETH: Besides Sarah and Lori, the only other couple I know that are into BDSM are-- the husband's not into it at all, and so the wife has basically a relationship with her master. And that seems to work very well for them.

JESS: You're describing my relationships, because both my submissives are married to other people. I know their respective partners, OK? I mean, I live with the one couple, OK, and I'm the dominant. And the other I go to dinner and so forth and so on with them. So both my partners have other partners.

And that's why, I think, my poly relationship this time will probably work for a long while, because I am not the center, and they are not the center. They have outside things that are the center of their life.

So I mean, there's children, there's husbands, there's another wife, and that's how it is. So we don't have-- there's not the concentration there. There's not the jealousy issues there. Because how dare they get jealous. They have a husband. They have a wife. You know, how dare you get jealous.

WENDY: One thing I did want to mention was we're talking about polyamory. It's not necessarily sexual, though.

JESS: Yes.

WENDY: For example, there have been several relationships that I have had that were with a third party since I've been with Carol that were not necessarily sexual. Yes, there's a sensuality to the play that we do, but there isn't necessarily sex as it is typically defined. And I don't know if you understand that at all.

BETH: You sort of lost me in there somewhere.

JESS: Most people need to understand that S&M-- well BDSM-- nowhere in there does it have to be about sex. And a lot of people don't understand that.

SARAH
DEPALMA: And often it isn't about sex at all.

VENDOLA: What's the name of your group--

JESS: --sexual overtones.

VENDOLA: What's the name of your group? It's not about people exchanging sex. That's right, people exchanging power. Very good.

WENDY: Absolutely.

LORI RICE: It's not about sex. It's about a consensual exchange of power, giving up the power, and accepting the control of the situation. And if sex enters into it, that's optional, but it's not required by any means.

JESS: That's a good point, because if a submissive-- you can't be a dominant. You can't just go around dominating any submissive unless they're willing to let you do that. They have to be willing to accept.

KEN: There's one of the aspects of the poly relationship-- that it tends to be more of a fantasy, such as maybe living the life with the [? Story of All ?] or 24-7 BDSM-type of relationship. And trying to live it as a poly situation as well, is that more of the situation? Is it a fantasy?

JESS: I believe so. I think a lot of people think that-- well, a lot of people think we live 24/7 where I'm pounding my chest being the dom, and they're on their knees all the time being the submissive. And that's not true. First of all, that's not true.

We all live normal lives. We work. We have to pay bills. We have kids. We have all this stuff in our lives. So first of all, you've got to shoot down the fantasy right from the beginning and say, no, I have to work. I'm sorry. I cannot call up and tell you when to go to the bathroom. I have to work. I don't have time to do that. I have a job.

WENDY: Hey, I've had subs that wanted me to do that.

SPEAKER 5: Yes, absolutely. It's not unusual.

WENDY: We tried that, and it was exhausting.

SPEAKER 5: Yeah, we tried that. It was not possible.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

VENDOLA: I support S&M households. I've had up to three submissives, and I was married at the time. And we all were pretty much in the same house on weekends most of the weeks. Everyone had jobs to do, but everyone was working together.

It's not all about who's paying attention to who, who's getting play this evening? Where are we going? It was all a family. We all contributed to the household. We all sat down and ate dinner together. We all went out together. And then when one person had to go to work, well, one person goes to work.

That's just kind of-- I think with any relationship, you have to contribute to it, and you have to work at it. And if there's a problem, you have to communicate it. And that's just the main things.

SARAH Interesting. I've heard the word children come up now three or four times. And I'm curious how that gets handled.

DEPALMA: I mean, obviously you don't-- your kids-- I don't think most people want their kids to know that they're involved in S&M or B&D or do that.

CAROL: No. I know that my oldest-- she is an adult now, almost 19 years old-- she does know. She was at my wedding. But she's an adult. I have a five-year-old also, and there is no way I would want my five-year-old knowing anything about it. I don't do it in the house when my child's there. We were just playing around and she heard. I mean, we weren't playing playing. We were just playing around, and she popped me on the butt. And she goes, don't spank my mommy.

SARAH Whoa.

DEPALMA:

CAROL: We were-- it was nothing. It was just like a love pat on the butt. And she goes, don't spank my mommy. And there's no way that a child should ever know. I mean, this is your sexuality. Yes, she knows I'm gay. My children all know that I'm a lesbian, and that has been-- I had her in a lesbian relationship. But she doesn't know what I'm doing behind closed doors. It's not appropriate for a child. I just can't. I could not imagine a child needing to know this.

WENDY: Well, she's not emotionally equipped nor, is she--

JESS: Intellectually?

WENDY: --intellectually equipped to deal with that. So we keep it, like she said behind closed doors. And, you know, she goes off and stays with her father or her grandfather or whomever. And we go off and do our meetings and that sort of thing.

SARAH Well, in the time that we've got left, I'd like to talk about some of the groups. We've been getting messages from
DEPALMA: listeners. They want to know how to contact some of these groups. So in the time. that's remaining, let's talk about how you can reach PEP or how you can reach the Open Door or some of the other organizations here.

CAROL: Well, HPEP is www.hpep.org. We have an extensive website, which gives our schedules. It has a calendar. It has the S&M ball on it, which is coming up in March. And it has links to all the sigs and how to contact us and what our newcomer meeting is.

SARAH OK. So give the address again?

DEPALMA:

CAROL: www.hpep.org.

SARAH OK, so it's very easy, and I'd say the website's easy to navigate. And there is an email contact there. It's an easy thing to use. So if you're interested in contacting Houston People Exchanging Power, that's how you would do it.

DEPALMA:

CAROL: And if you're a new submissive, we have a group called Subhaven, which you can just click on. And it's a great place for new submissives to come visit and meet people in a safe place where just submissives-- no doms or anyone like that.

SARAH And I really highly recommend it, if for no other reason than a lot of submissives have a hard time distinguishing the difference between being submissive and being abused.

DEPALMA:

CAROL: Yes, they do.

SARAH And people need to know that in the S&M community, there's no condoning of abuse whatsoever.

DEPALMA:

CAROL: And I have-- on the Subhaven area of the website is a link to a Subhaven website. And on that website, it's called Dating S&M Style 101.

SARAH Which is excellent. But I just-- it was a subject we hadn't brought up, and I just want to make sure people realized that in the community we're talking about tonight, in no way, shape, or form would they ever condone abuse. And it's an important thing. It's an important distinction to understand the difference between S&M, or S&M play, or bondage and discipline and abuse. They're not the same thing.

DEPALMA: So I strongly advise people, especially if you're someone that's new, you want to attend either this dominant group or the submissive group. And really get a handle on this issue, because it's a key issue. It's a very important one.

WENDY: Also, once you go to that website, which is www.hpep.org, there's a Links page there that gives listings for websites for some of the other groups in town, as well as some of the other groups throughout the state of Texas. And also we've added some now that are across the country.

JESS: We have listings-- you have listings now for all 50 states.

WENDY: Do we have them?

JESS: Yes, all 50 states.

WENDY: OK, I haven't looked at it obviously-- just recently.

KEN: I just went and looked again the other day. If anybody does go and look at it, hopefully we get tons of hits off that. Drop a note in the guestbook, and tell the webmaster how much you like the website, because he's done a really great job for us recently.

SARAH And he's our new webmaster.

DEPALMA:

VENDOLA: Also professionally, for people who are interested in asking, a lot of the professional masters that I know are pretty active in the community as well for support groups. And a lot of them I don't mind asking questions, things like that. And there's a list across the country of all of us, and most of them know what groups are in their area as well.

**SARAH
DEPALMA:** OK. And Jess, while we've got a little bit of time, why don't you explain to people what the Open Door is and how they can be reached.

JESS: The Open Door is a D&S discussion group-- dominant and submissive discussion group. It meets twice a month-- the second and fourth Friday. It is one group that is not a play group. We do not play. We sit and we have discussions.

And we talk about the mindset of the dominant and the submissive. And we have some pretty intense discussions.

**SARAH
DEPALMA:** We sure did last night, yeah.

JESS: Last night was very intense. And to get to the Open Door, go to www.hpep.org. Click on Links, and you will find there's a link there. And we also have an e-group where we have discussions on our e-group.

And the Open Door has only-- like I said, it's only been-- we've only been active for a year and two months. And it was started because there was nothing in the city that really talked about the dominant-submissive mindset. And we needed something that didn't have anything to do with play, because you can learn play almost everywhere. But we needed mindset, so that's where I went.

KEN: And did a damn good job of it, too.

JESS: Thank you. Thank you.

**SARAH
DEPALMA:** Last night, just so the audience can get some sense of it-- last night our discussion was on rejection. And boy did we touch some nerves in that meeting last night. Holy cow. You can just imagine a discussion on rejection, and it was fascinating. It really was. So I highly recommend that.

I hope the audience has found this useful tonight. This subject comes up every so often, and recently I've been receiving emails from people saying, I thought you were involved with S&M. How do I find out more about this? So now you should know, and if you don't, we'll get your copy of the tape.

Jimmy, that's pretty much it, I think. Do you have anything that you want to go with from here? Oh, OK. Thank you all very much. We've got a couple of other announcements that we're going to be doing. And if we get any information that comes back from emails and things, we'll pass it along.

WENDY: Thank you for having us.

**SARAH
DEPALMA:** Yes, thanks a lot.

JESS: Thank you. Good night.

SARAH Hang out there. Let's get these-- OK, there we go.

DEPALMA:

OK, Jimmy just handed me some email here. And one of these I knew about, and the other one I'm going to just talk about briefly.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

SARAH The first one has to do with a good friend of this show--

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: You bet.

SARAH --and a friend of mine for many years, April Lauper. April Lauper is part of the prestigious 2001 Women of

DEPALMA: Excellence Award. April and 43 other Women of Excellence received the award at the large gala of 800 plus, which was held Saturday, September the 22nd at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Houston.

April is one of the nicest people I know--

JIMMY CARPER: She is.

SARAH --and an activist in her own quiet way-- very effective, and just an all-around super person. So congratulations to

DEPALMA: her.

JIMMY CARPER: I love when good people-- good, nice people get recognized.

SARAH Let me tell you a little bit about this next announcement. There is an organization called Harry Benjamin

DEPALMA: International Gender Dysphoria Association-- long name. In short, what they really do is they are the guardians of the standards of care for transsexuals around the world. It so happens that their next international meeting is going to be in Galveston.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

SARAH In Galveston-- I was just there last week.

DEPALMA:

JIMMY CARPER: Hey, hey, hey.

SARAH Well, I had-- I should tell the audience. I had to go down and take the last exam before you get approved for

DEPALMA: surgery.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

SARAH And this exam took 4 hours-- no, 6 hours, including a complete battery of psychological tests, which I have no

DEPALMA: clue what in hell they proved-- the fact that you have no cognitive skills, which I could have told them any time I pick up a hammer and some nails. Why I had to pay \$700 to get these tests to find out I have no cognitive skills, I am not sure.

But anyway, they are part of the Harry Benjamin Society, and that was the requirement before surgery. I guess they wanted to be sure that I was really not insane before I left.

JIMMY CARPER: Well, this depends on who you're asking there.

SARAH Anyone who knows me knows I'm insane. I could have saved 700 bucks and just told them that and left, you
DEPALMA: know? But in any case, this meeting is going to be-- starts Wednesday, October the 31st from 7:00 to 10:00 PM at the San Luis Hotel in Galveston. And you'll have an opportunity to meet and speak with doctors, therapists-- the legal experts in this field of gender and gender dysphoria. And tickets will cost \$25 at the door.

But here's the key part. [? Katz, ?] which is an organization based in Galveston and in Brazoria or in Galveston County has purchased 30 tickets and make them available to the community. Here's the key phrase-- for free--

JIMMY CARPER: Free.

SARAH --if you are struggling financially and would not otherwise be able to afford the opportunity. Beth?

DEPALMA:

BETH: Yeah, what that was specifically regarding is the Halloween party on October 31st. The whole conference itself, which runs from October 31st to the 4th of November is \$450 or some such thing. Primarily, it's a professional society's organizational symposium. So it's just that the \$25 deal is this Halloween party.

And by the way, [? Katz ?] is looking for help to find anybody that can help donate decorations for the Halloween party ball. So if you can do that sort of thing, get in touch with them during this week so they can get that set up.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

SARAH So if you've got \$450 laying around, and you don't know what to do with it-- it's just burning a hole in your
DEPALMA: pocket-- you can attend.