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SPEAKERS

Glenn Holt, Sarah DePalma, Jimmy Carper

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Sarah DePalma 00:00

I feel sorry for these people and I know that they have to live somewhere. But I know that I and my other neighbors do not want them to Rizal reside on Malda Froude. If you have any opinion either for or against them, please attend their meeting at the Crown Inn, etc, etc. Oh, okay. What they're referring to is something that's called the Dyess diagnostic and statisticians manual DSM, okay. And there are many versions of a doubt. But it's the that is where the diagnosis comes from. It's called Gender dysphoria. Now, the latest version of this, this DSM V does not have as listed as schizophrenics. But previous previous DSNPs did. So that's what they're talking about. Now, anyone who's ever met Steven would, anyone who thinks he's schizophrenic, they need their head examined. Okay. I mean, they really do. This is a man who loves his wife and his kids as much as any man I've ever met. Okay, so now you've heard the bad stuff. Now, here comes the good news. This I picked up on the internet. Just the other day a D, McKellar sent me the conclusion of it and thank you did, here's the conclusion of it. Okay, so Steven would says, mirror they were supposed to have a meeting at this pub, right. Okay. The meeting that had been proposed by the Stockport family values to condemn our household was to take place in this local pub this very night. The person who knew the pub who ran the pub, they call them publicans there, knew nothing of the meeting, and was horrified to hear of him.

J

Jimmy Carper 01:40

He didn't even tell the pub owner now

S

Sarah DePalma 01:41

he proposed that it should be allowed to go ahead so the perpetrator could be identified, and he could sue them for using the name of the pub. Whoa. A member of the local judiciary, he also contacted the police. Sarah, not me, that's his wife's name. Sara and I were met by two neighbors who walked down to the pub with us. When we got there, there were already about 10 people who greeted us, as supporters know as supporters, including the local community police officer and his wife. There were two other people there who left after about five minutes,

having muttered and pointed at us, we think it was probably them who sent out the letter. Gradually over the next 20 minutes the pub filled up and up and up with people all in support of us. It was a wonderful feeling to see so many people turn out Holly's from my workplace, the Publican and his friends, many neighbors and their friends. The local newspaper even sent a reporter and a photographer. We didn't ask for them. But they had seen the anonymous letter and they wanted to find out who did. The police officer Adrian Palmer and the Publican spoke to the reporters and suggested that they should do a story about how many people had turned out in our support. Yes, which is in fact, what they did. Hey, so we had our photo taken with all our supporters. And this story is being run in this weekend's evening newspaper. Where there was so we got everyone there to introduce themselves to each other. And we had a good old party in this pub. A great night was had by all a neighborhood feeling was generated. And all we must thank the writer this letter for enabling us to meet so many neighbors we didn't know we had incidentally, about an hour into the event and colleague of mine turned up with our whole evening class of students who had cheated rally to our support. Gosh, okay. Now, I want to point I have to point this out. Okay. What a great ending. If, you know Steven Whittle, Steven would have would have fought these people till the death. Okay. But here's a crime example. And I want to I want to, I say this all the time. I'm gonna keep saying it over and over the right wing are bullies. Sure they are just bullies and they are cowards. In when we stand up to them, I don't give a damn if you're gay. You're lesbian, transsexual. I can't take it. They cannot take it, they can dish it, but they're not prepared for us to fight them. They were not whoever we were. These people were who sent out this letter. They weren't prepared to find out that no one supported That's exactly right. You know, they may you know, it's not any different than than the Klan or the or any right wing group. The answer to this kind of hate is to stand up to it. That's right. It really, really really is. It really is. And so I wanted to point that out because Steven would we've talked about him on the show. This This incident took place in Great Britain but it could just as easily have taken place in Houston. There was an article in the Houston Chronicle. Houstonians are religious or tolerant. Oh, it says although most you Estonians believe homosexuality is morally wrong. A plurality support equal rights for gays and lesbians. According to the most recent Houston area survey in annual poll attitudes among residents in Houston, Texas, to various social questions, including abortion, and homosexuality. This study conducted by Rice University society Professor Steven Kleinberg since 1982, showed that Houstonians are increasingly traditional and religious, but most remain tolerant of others. Kleinberg said the Pope, Paul paints a picture of Houstonians as tolerant traditionalist, there is a strong and important segment of the Houston population that holds traditional values for themselves, but they also support others rights to live in Houston and to follow their own conscience. Even if it leads in a different direction. Kleinberg said, This is what makes Houston a modern city, not a traditional city. 67% of the Houstonian surveyed said that religion is very important in their life 67% The largest percentage ever reported in the 15 year study. Also more respondents describe the Bible as the literal word of God. 38% which was a slight drop from last year. But while 59% believe homosexuality is morally wrong, 45% favor guaranteeing equal rights for gays and lesbians. I was surprised it was that 45% That's that's a lot better. 63% though said gay marriages should not have the same status as heterosexual. So they're really kind of conflicted is what it sounds like, you know, on one hand was why we ought not to persecute gay lesbians, but by God, we're not given equal rights either. I mean, that's kind of the way I read this. And I thought, it backs up Houston image as a live and let live city. Basically,

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Jimmy Carper 06:54

how come if a straight person wants to get married? It's their civil right to do so. And if I want to

get married as a gay person, it's a special right.

 Sarah DePalma 07:05

Well, I guess marriage is kind of special. I don't know, I've never understood what the big deal is. There was an incident in Tallahassee, Florida. Well,

 Jimmy Carper 07:15

you know, they talk about well, that's, that's for children and gay people don't have children together. Well, I beg to differ on that, because many gay people do for one thing. And the other thing is, you know, the divorce rate is about 50%. Right? Well, yeah, that's right. Okay. And there are a lot of women who have children out of wedlock, never get married, right. So I would venture to say that the majority of households in this country have single parents running them. Actually the

 Sarah DePalma 07:47

most recent, the most recent polls that I saw, that I have seen indicate that that's the case. The days of Ozzie and Harriet, if they ever actually existed, are long gone.

 Jimmy Carper 07:57

And there's nothing wrong with a mother and father and children and all of that. But the reality is, that's not what it is.

 Sarah DePalma 08:04

You know, Jimmy and this makes sense to me. Because today there is there's child abuse, there's spousal battery, I mean, these are the issues may always have existed, maybe we just weren't, weren't as open about them. It seems to me that love and caring is so difficult to find that it really ought not to matter where you find it. What's met, what matters is that you find love and caring. And if you find a family that will take care that will provide love, care and understanding for children. It isn't worth a tinker's damn, whether they're gay, lesbian, or transsexual, or whatever the heck they are. That's right. The question is, are they being loved and cared for? I don't understand why that's so difficult. It's like what part of that is illogical people? There was an incident in Florida. I thought that America and I've said it on the show. And I've said in the show many times it is going to be transgendered people, they're going to end up defeating the Defense of Marriage Act. Well, they the Florida House of Representatives, a bill was introduced by Republican surprise. Johnny bird who would bar Florida from recognizing same sex marriages perform legally in other states, not a surprise. But the debate between speakers testifying before the committee turned into a gay and lesbian centered issue. And Jessica Archer fired the first shot for transgender and intersex people who desire to marry or have their marriage recognized. So for the first time, a transgendered person turns up and says, Hey, this is not a moral issue, says archer who is a male to female transsexual. This is

a medical and biological issue. Amen. Sister, Ms. Archer testified in front of the committee explaining the plight of transgender and intersex people who have mixed genders. She asked the legislature legislators to look out in the room and pick out the people who may be members of those two groups. You can't pick them out, she said scanning the PAC chamber, because many transgender and intersex people present themselves as one gender, but may psychologically identify or have the physical anatomy of another. If you pass this law, then every person who wants to get married will be forced to have their gender verified by a medical doctor. How else will you enforce it? I love it. I love it. This is called nail and word hurts. Yeah, religious conservatives, of course, argue the bill would protect and the sanctity of marriage, whatever that is. One conservative even argue that lesbians and gays have enhanced rights and are better off financially than the average non lesbian, gay lesbian person. Representatives of the state ACLU and the National Organization for Women corpse spoke against the bill. Despite impassioned opposition, the Committee voted five to nothing in favor of the legislature. This is just the beginning quipped archer who attended represent as a representative second second bubble blah. She says I guarantee you transgenders will be back. Oh, yes. Anyway, and

 Jimmy Carper 10:58

already, there was an article in one of those, those supermarket rags about a transgender couple getting married. And both they were matching gowns.

 Sarah DePalma 11:12

I'd love to do that. But I would kill to do that if

 Jimmy Carper 11:14

it was legal because

 Sarah DePalma 11:18

the the transgendered woman had not had the operation. You know, if you're still legally a male, you could go down there and pink polka dots and striped shorts if you want to. That's right. There's no, I personally, I would love. It's one of my big fantasies that someday Lori and I are gonna get on the island matching wiped down. You know, and you can do that legally. We know I can't guess my name has been her name. And my gender has been legally changed. Right? That would be a real interesting lawsuit there. If your name has been changed your let your gender is legally changed, but your biology hasn't. Hmm.

 Jimmy Carper 11:56

Mind reels,

 Sarah DePalma 11:57



Sarah DePalma 11:51

yes. I don't even want to get into that. You know, I really don't. But it would be an interesting case for somebody to make. Yeah, I would not want to get into it. Because my fear is the court would say well, then we'll avoid your name and gender change. You know, and I could see where in Texas they might do that. I guess we got to do station right?



Jimmy Carper 12:14

It is you're listening to after hours queer radio with attitude on KPFT Houston and ke O 's College Station. Yeah. This



Sarah DePalma 12:22

is Sarah dipalma. And of course, Jimmy Carter, Jimmy Carter looking nice. And suntan.



12:26

Thank you. I still have the tan. It's been several weeks since I've been back. Well, we say let's go to some music. Okay, I've got lots of new music tonight. Good. I did the one pigs fly thing. And I've got two new, two other new pieces of music one from a lesbian. Well, it's a three woman group. And two of the women are lesbians and they don't want to say which ones they are. They're, you know, give us a break. It's called Sex pod is the name of the group. Okay. And Jean, who is a male from England who has a brand new CD app. This is kind of maybe more rocky rock music, maybe more mentally music and you're used to hearing on the show, but it's all from queers. And that's what we want to bring you so let's let's go with the sex pod in a movie in a piece of music called pretty thing from there.



Glenn Holt 13:26

Hi, this is Glenn Holt, the president of cue patrol. Cue patrol is a nonprofit corporation operating volunteer citizens watch patrols in the greater Montrose area. We've been a visible and successful deterrent to crime for the past five years and we want to do even more. This is your invitation to join us one night a month walking rollerblading, bicycling or driving for your community. Or if you prefer send us a tax deductible donation. Every penny donated to Q patrol goes directly to putting patrols out on the street. We're out there for you, but we can't do it without you. So call today and say you'll donate to Q patrol. Call 528 safe. That's 52872332 patrol is affiliated with the Houston Police Department's citizens on patrol program



Jimmy Carper 14:21

Oh yeah, Q patrol. And before that II cam, which is heard right here on KPFT on Sundays, and before that new music by sex pod.



Sarah DePalma 14:33

I love the name of that group.

J Jimmy Carper 14:34

Yeah, that's kind of our rockin kind of metal II kind of group.

S Sarah DePalma 14:38

Yeah. You know, it's one of my favorite shows. I never missed Lucia and send him off. Oh, yeah. You know, I sit there with my coffee and I check out the blue show. And that's just that one of my favorites.

J Jimmy Carper 14:48

I think that's a highlight of KPFT. Yeah, for the week. Earlier we got a call from Jesse, who is in Seattle, Washington,

S Sarah DePalma 14:57

a long, long distance listener. Hey, aren't we must have really raised our tower.

J Jimmy Carper 15:02

i It sounds like Jesse's there on business or visiting or something. But his lover Luthy is here in Houston. Well, hello loopy. And he wanted to say that he, I love you loopy, and I'll be home soon. Well, that's very nice. And he did request a song that we don't have, unfortunately, hopefully some romanovski and Phillips.

S Sarah DePalma 15:23

So we're getting ready to go to the our interview. And I want to talk a little bit about this interview. Because we've done this in two segments. The person that we're speaking with is Jessica Xavier. Now, Jessica Xavier, is one of those people who will, she's an activist who burns her, she'll burn herself out. And then she takes a break, and then she comes back with a fireball. And lots of folks do that. But Jessica is the hardest worker that one of the hardest workers I've ever met. And Jessica is one of the people who is the least thanked of anyone I know. She succeeded me as the new director of its time, America. And I'm glad because that meant the ITA, we had a director who cared. And that had the energy to go out and do the national things that needed to be done right. And in the first segment, we're going to talk about some of the political aspects of being transgendered. And then in the second half of the interview, it's more discussion about gender, which if those of you who have ever met Jessica have ever heard, Jessica, that is an issue that is near and dear to her heart, and has more to do with gender as a general topic. So with that in mind, let's go we're gonna go ahead and go do

the first part of the interview with Jessica Xavier. Those of you who are regular listeners to after hours, after hours have heard me discuss Jessica Xavier. Now, Jessica, as I have mentioned before, in my opinion, is one of the two or three most active of the activist and I think certainly one of the two or three most effective as well. And it's always it's always a pleasure to be able to interview a friend, in addition to an activist. So ladies and gentlemen, we bring you Jessica Xavier. Hey, Jessica, how you doing over there?

17:11

Good, sir. It's a great privilege to be on your show. And I'm looking forward to this for a while. Well,

S Sarah DePalma 17:17

you know, you and I think by now we're sort of two pieces of the pie. We certainly are sisters. But most of most of our audience, probably he's not familiar with a lot of the issues that we're going to talk about. So let's start out with some basics. First of all, why don't you tell folks what it's time America is in what it is that they are involved in?

17:36

Okay, back in August 94, we had a bunch of trans activists attending the Transgender Law conference in Houston. And a lot of us felt really hamstrung that we couldn't really do focused, organized, grassroots political work in any type of coherent fashion. Up to that point, there's been a lot of efforts, but none of them had been really directed toward the conventional angle of trying to do you know, conventional lobbying in the state houses and at the local level. That's kind of where it's fun American folks found, we really were interested in grassroots organizing, in finding identifying the community trans activists who are interested in doing organized work, and then going from there and getting getting people organized and in the loop and figuring out what would work what, what doesn't, and then being able to share that with other people on kind of like a national scale.

S Sarah DePalma 18:42

Unlike some other organizations, it's kind of America is state based. It's kind of,

18:47

we have about 30 or so state chapters, some of which are more active and more visible than others, but all of them are working hard. We kind of do different types of work. Some of them are just strictly into the research and investigative work. Others are documenting incidences of hate crimes, violence, harassment, and most certainly employment discrimination and denial, public accommodations, and of course, the other stuff, health access, both for HIV AIDS services and for transgendered medical needs. And then there are some other groups that are

openly lobbying in their state houses and ended at the local levels and they're doing a lot of free, groundbreaking work, I'd say right now within their transaction community. We're very encouraged

 S Sarah DePalma 19:39

is to America is kind of patterned after the National Gay Lesbian Taskforce, which I think many of our listeners will be familiar with. And it's not that it's an America that tries to ignore Washington DC on the contrary, they're very active here. It's just that it's America has a belief pretty much I think, that if you needed to see it at the local level, then it's going to be impossible to succeed at the federal level. Okay, sounds about right.

 20:01

Yeah, that's that's quite Ryan, I kind of wish we were the National Gay Lesbian Task Force, we could certainly use their funding base. But we are, we're really kind of a small is beautiful type of approach, we begin, we believe in doing things from the bottom up rather than the top down. It's kind of like a feminist vibe, really, of being able to just, you know, start locally, act locally, while thinking globally. And it's politics is very much the art of the possible. And when you're engaged in a longitudinal civil rights struggle, which is pretty much what anything has to do with sexual minority civil rights issues, we need to be very patient, we need to be very realistic, we need to be very focused. And rather than try and diffuse our efforts over a broad range of issues, we seek to have little state chapters that are empowered to go after specific little agenda of their own choosing its time America is very much a decentralized. Organization, it's really is its chapters, more than anything else, the I'm acting national director, now that part of America. And I think that's a bit of really kind of a blessing and a curse. It's a blessing that it's a nice title and everything, but it's a curse, because I've got to do a lot of additional work that takes me away from my primary interest, which is working with my local state chapters time, Maryland, and also working in Washington, DC and a number of local and national issues.

 S Sarah DePalma 21:30

Just as one of those people who will work herself into the ground, I have seen her do it. And I think to be very good at it. Sometimes I don't think a lot of people understand what's involved with being an activist. I want to start in a little bit more of a basic level, I have been getting phone calls from people who have said to me, Well, what do we need a Trans activist group for anyway? What good is it to be a Trans activist? I mean, my sole purpose here is going to be to do my two years of transition, get surgery and disappear. So why should I care?

 22:06

Well, those of us who come out as transgender, our experiences tend to be very different from those first, our other brothers and sisters, who can't come out with it, who for reasons of their own choosing, tend to not gender transition, or choose not to or choose not to come out and or even pursue, you know, whatever body modification they want to, they're still transgendered,

and they're still a very big part of their community. And I don't disparage them for their choices at all. However, there are those of us who do come out and do gender transition, those of us who think Secretary assignment surgery, our issues become much sharper, and there's a much clearer focus to our lives. Most of us are become subjected to discrimination rather quickly, because of our somewhat obvious appearances, at least in the male to female community, the FTM community tend to enjoy the village, it's a passing mark faster than than the deaf community. So there's a lot of discrimination typically will will will suffer employment discrimination, lose our job, and then be either be forced to be able to, to look for work forever, and maybe not find it or if we're lucky, find the job, but then become employed at a job that's far less than our skill levels or former compensation levels. So the line our life becomes very harsh, and a lot of a lot of it is a tendency amongst certain elements of those people who don't intend to transition and don't seek body modifications within the transgender community to judge those of us who do come out rather harshly as if we're living in a dream world. I think that's a very vicious thing to do. Because it's disparaging choices that we we ourselves make as human beings in our lives. Sometimes. And I think that this is fairly true with a lot of transsexual and transgender people who do transition, we don't have a choice in who we are. Just as much as someone who might be traditionally called a crossdresser has with their lives. We do this because this is who we are. being transgendered is an identity. It's not a behavioral choice. It's certainly not a lifestyle. So we have connections to those types of people, both sides of the community. I think we the reality is there that there is these are our brothers and sisters who are suffering who are having a difficult time with their lives. But I think there's a moral. I feel morally compelled as just as a human being to reach out to those who haven't been quite as fortunate as I have in my transition to help.

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Sarah DePalma 24:52

Well, I'd say one of the things that has occurred to me, I learned the hard way, I guess, is that there are the certain portion of this community that is always at the start of transition, always and forever, will be because there are always new people entering it in for those for that group of people, anything an activist says will be too frightening to their there's another group that will be toward the middle of their transition in which I call that kind of their crisis stage transition. They're making their choices about surgery or not to have surgery, or what kind of hormones to make. They want you know whether to go full time whether they're going to be part time, whether they're a crossdresser. And for those that are Adak, that stage, there are many people who never get out of that stage. Anything activist says is too scary. Those who get to the toward the end and are now focused there. They've either perhaps they're on their way to surgery, they've just come back from the surgery, there's a tendency among them to say, well, I paid my dues. I've gone through my crisis, I'm going to enjoy the fruits of my labor. And I don't care what activists say, the sad part about any of the people that are in those stages, I think, is that they're living in a make believe world, they can be exposed anytime, whether they believe it or not. And I get phone calls every day to prove it. It just doesn't make any sense to me that people think that they're going to be able to hide forever and ever and ever. And in go and transition and not need legal rights. It's it's just mind boggling. How do you deal with that? I'm sure you get the same kind of stuff from all over the country.

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26:35

Oh, yeah. I appreciate the the need for stealth that, that people go to their transitions with and seek to remain pretty much in the closet and try and stay out of the public eye because there's

a tremendous amount of fear out there. Those of us who successfully gender transition are indeed fortunate. And I think a lot of that comes from this, this ability to pass the role quickly and then not to become obvious. And am I quite understand that there's a lot of fear out there. And a lot of the fear comes from just there's not enough of us who have been out who can be role models for the public who can educate who can just kind of put a human face on this hidden phenomenon. And because we've been acquiescence to the public's perception of us, we've inherited this mantle of stigmatization, and I'm sure that part of it, part of the need for the stealth approach on the part of so many of us who do gender transition is probably equal parts fear. And the other part is the guilt. And the shame that we inherit from that mantle and stigmatization in the media seems to treat transgender teen was fair game in this country. And it seems to just knee jerk fashioned ridicule, considered human being any chance they get, and I'm very conscious about a lot of the work that I do with my other hand, transgender nation, is focused on fighting media, poor media portrayals of transgendered people. Because if we don't win the battle for hearts and minds, that we're probably going to lose the war overall, we must be able to convince the non transgender that transgender people are human beings fully deserving of their civil rights. So I sort of understand the the dichotomy that you're talking about there and people's needs. However, we had to think about this with its time, Maryland when we structured our tactics, because we realized that this is going to be a traditionally very closeted community out of some very good reasons. And so what we did, we came up with a list of 12 tactics, we have varying levels of exposure by for instance, somebody could sign a petition, at a support group meeting, protesting some outrage that been committed against our community, or people could, you know, actually even call their representatives on the phone. And, you know, their levels were a risk where you don't necessarily have to come out completely and fully. And that way, we found a way where people can all different types of transgendered people at varying levels of transition or exposure wherever they are, can participate in the political process. And I think that's very key. Politics is very much a numbers game. And we really need to, you know, to mobilize as many members of our communities as possible for us to be successful in some of these initiatives.

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Sarah DePalma 29:41

You were talking about? I need to win the battle for hearts and mind. Which brings me to the next question. Let's talk about battle for the hearts and minds of the gay and lesbian community. And I guess the Human Rights Campaign fund, the Human Rights Campaign is probably as good places You need to begin. Where does that Where does it stand now?

Q

30:03

Well, I'm kind of hopeful about our relationship with HRC. It's changed and it's evolved. I think over the last couple of years, as we've had this kind of sustained contact with them, a lot of this stuff is based on interpersonal contact, and how they become comfortable with us and how we become comfortable with them. I think it's very, very easy as a trans activists for any transect is to bash HRC over the inclusion and end issue. But there are some very good reasons why HRC and why we're not in. And that's not just to do with transphobia. I think that's been greatly exaggerated on behalf of HRC. HRC is very much a political organization in a very political town, dominated by its political culture, which is to say they're going to craft the best political argument that they can get to pass and HRC is also a gay and lesbian organization. It is not a bisexual, transgendered, leather and drag organization. It is a gay and lesbian organization.

Now, that seems to offend a lot of people because they can't say the by word, they can't say the transgendered word. But they, I don't really get the feeling that they're all that representative. And maybe I think we can maybe accused them on some moral level, to a small degree of being of hypocrisy, because they drape themselves in the human rights issue and calling gay and lesbian rights a human rights issue. And to be sure it is, however, they have a right as an organization in this country, to define their own charter. And I think we overlooked that this is something called freedom of association, and freedom of assembly rights, we take all too quickly for granted in this country, as if, you know, they don't mean anything. While I'm a member, as a member, a member of Amnesty International as well. And I write letters 72 letters a year, for people who have been incarcerated if not put to death in other countries across the world, because of their memberships in certain organizations. HRC has the right to determine who they want to represent, and what issues are going to work. Now granted, they're a big, large target. But I think to a certain extent, the hostility that we direct towards them is counterproductive. I think the key toward working with HRC is coalition coalition work. And quite frankly, some of the tactics we use against them, I think are appalling. I think it's just basically just blackmail. And you know, I don't think the price of transgender rights has to be the ruination of gay and lesbian rights. That to me, is a Pyrrhic victory. And I can agree with those of us who call for the defeat of end, simply because it doesn't include transgender people.

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Sarah DePalma 33:01

Well, I don't know I have a, I have a problem with organization that calls itself human rights. And then start saying, well, but it applies to these people and not to those. And it seems to me, we organization does that it stops being human rights. It's special, right? But having said that, I would not advocate that we go out and say, Well, if the if they're not going to include us, let's make sure they'd be defeated. Because I think that's the, the other side of the first coin. And that's equally wrong. I don't know that we could ever or should ever go out and say, if they don't include us, we'll we'll try to ruin them. That sounds an awful lot to me like saying I'm gonna take my ball and go home. And I think we have to be a lot more mature than that. But you're right, I think people don't understand that Washington is not like any other city in the world, that for certain, you know, games get played there that don't occur anywhere else. In the formulation that goes into the passage of a bill really can't be equated to anything that you'll ever see in any other legislature, or maybe anywhere else in the world. In some of the games that get played normally don't do pass. Sometimes they have to do what they have to do.

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34:18

Yeah, I think I think you know, I've lived in Washington all my life, and I'm, maybe I'm just a little jaded, but HRC is what I think is one of the less affected organizations by their own hypocrisy. I think US Congress is gotten to be one of the most ridiculous organizations in the world when it comes to just bald faced lies and hypocrisy and outright thievery. But, you know, we get the government. We have as the government we deserve. We elect these people every two years, every four years, every six years and they represent us. And to a large extent, most of the citizenry is pretty ignorant of what actually goes on in this town. And it's absolutely appalling. The number of scandals, the outright buying of votes that goes on by special interests in this town HRC has to compete here. And they have to craft a very careful political

argument that will have some resonance on whatever ways they can, but I can't fault them for being the consummate professional lobbyists that they are HRC is filled with very, very good people. And I respect them now more than any time in the past. Yeah, when I came into the community, I really disliked them a lot, because they've had this squeaky clean little image of, you know, very passable, gay men and lesbians and, and, you know, that's, again, that's part of their pitch of their position of where they want to take their politics, and, quite frankly, vendor passes, that may create a better climate for transgender people in the future, we have that side. So I think it's not, it's also not productive to necessarily paint a lot of gloom, over a potential loss for the transgender community are not included. And I think, and that is just one battle and a series of them. We've got other battles. And I think a lot of those battles have to be won at the local and the state level first, so that we can educate our congressional representatives by what we're doing in their home states and home districts. And I think once those levels begin to get one and once the message gets out, and we'll do it but this top down approach, thinking we can go straight to Congress, straight into Washington, and and win immediately. I think it's a fantasy. I think it's totally unrealistic. We need to make the efforts at the local and state levels where we might be able to win. Look what happened in San Francisco. Look what just happened in Portland and Pittsburgh, look, what look what happened in Minnesota in 1993. Those there are winnable battles out there, we just need to be able to be more focused and more organized. Stop squandering our resources unrealistically and go after where we can win.

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Sarah DePalma 37:09

Yeah, I completely agree with that. I always point to the example of the equal rights of men for women. I think when you take a look at what happened here, it's a good example of what not to do. They tried to go for the entire pie without ever having built their base of support at the local level. First, they didn't do their homework at the state level. They didn't build sufficient support. And it wasn't good enough for them to win in Congress, they won the battle and lost the war. And I'm truly convinced that for us to ever, ever win in Washington, we are going to have to provide the members of Congress what's called political cover, we need to be able to go to them and say, Listen, we won right in Pittsburgh, we've won rights here in Cleveland, we've won rights in Houston, we have won rights in, in all I don't know, Alaska, you know, it, this is something that's happening all over the country. Any of you vote for us, it won't cost you an election. And I think people don't realize that's really the way politics work. You have to provide political cover in order to win.

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38:15

Well, I think if we don't, if we don't get serious counter arguments that are, you know, balanced by the numbers of out gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered people in this country, you know, all of those, all of those politicians have poll takers out there taking the pulse of the citizenry every single day. And the only way we change perception, you know, we can't do anything with it with a 10% of the country that's radical right and will never listen to it. And will and we've got our 10% is that 80% The middle that we need to go after, and educate as best we can. And the best way of doing that is one on one, which is coming out Sharon, and you don't necessarily have to wear a button on your on your suit coat to work like Ricky and Wilson says this button that says take a transsexual to lunch. And you don't necessarily have to wear your transgender Bennett t shirt to the mall either. Although I wear my transcend a nation t

shirt to the mall every now and then just to freak people out. You do need however, to come out in your professional organization. You need to come out in your churches, you need to come out in your volunteer work, you need to come out in your PTA. You need to let people see you that your transgendered professionals, your transgendered parents, your children to transgender parents, you know, I mean, these things, we need more connections and more different human levels in society. And the only way we can do that is to put our our psychological health in order. And you know, the fear issues are always going to be there and the gody thing. I don't think we can really do too much about this issue. I think I've learned to compartmentalize my fears. But the real things that that we can work on our own shame and guilt issues. There's a lot of reasons, needless reasons why transgendered people incur so much shame in their lives. And we carry so much guilt around in our inside our heads, I think if we can work on those issues, and we can actually build a supporting community that isn't ashamed to come out and show it to us on occasion. Once we get that level, we'll have a community and they will have a fighting chance to affect change.

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Sarah DePalma 40:33

Yeah, that's good. That's perfect. Yes, go because we're running out of time for this segment that when we come back from the next segment, I want to talk about issues of gender, and how the issues of gender lead to that those feelings of shame and guilt, because I get an awful lot of letters and an awful lot of phone calls about it. It's, I would say it's probably the leading reasons that I get from people why they, they can't they cannot find it in themselves to become active or even to write a check to a transgender rights organization. So when we come back, I really want to explore those gender issues because I think you're right on the money on that. Great. That's all we've got for this segment. This is Sarah dipalma and Jessica Xavier. And we'll be back a little bit with the second part of this interview.