

CITIZEN SAM  
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just turns to me and says, "I think we're going to get along great!" It turns out he was gay, too (laughs).

JO: Have you ever resented being born gay? Ever wished you were born straight?

SA: I've never resented it but, yeah, there were times when I wished I were born straight; growing up in a small town where I didn't know anyone else gay. I didn't even know what the concept was, really. And I definitely didn't know anyone who felt like I did. So, yeah, there were times when it was just incredibly lonely. And being teased was, well, you know, hard to bear. It's just ... this was back in the 70's, and you're completely alone ... it was mortifying being called "faggot." Yeah, it was mortifying.

JO: Knowing all you know now, would you run for mayor again?

SA: Absolutely. This has got to be one of the best public service jobs in the entire world. We have a city that has high expectations, plus a willingness to roll up our sleeves to meet and exceed those expectations. There is no more wonderfully challenging job than being mayor of this city. I love this job because I love the people in this city. It's a combination of high expectations and very participatory residents. Which is great! I love it!

JO: What's your approach to working in a job that invites constant public criticism?

SA: For me, it's about keeping an ear open to all of it. Because even if the intent is malicious, I'm still looking to test my assumptions and make sure I have as clear a picture of something as I possibly can. That I've thought about all the potential questions and potential answers, and that they're as accurate as they can be.

You have to be tough in this job, but, I'm on guard and my staff is on guard for making sure I have a clear understanding of what is going on. You have to listen to the criticism. Even the meanest, most vicious criticism you still have to listen and ask, "Have it I got it right?"

JO: How did it feel when you learned that [former Just Out owner/editor] Marty Davis had called on you to resign?

SA: Of course it was very disappointing. But ... you know, I am very understanding of everybody's reaction to that issue. I made a mistake. I lied. And, so while her call

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