

HUGS EAST

MARCH/APRIL 2001

Volume 3, Issue 2

Become a Bigot Basher

(part one)

You're a together homo. You're out almost everywhere. You feel that lavender glow as you dance on that float in the gay pride parade. And judging by the rainbow decal on your car, plus the fourteen other bumper stickers declaring your preferences and allegiances, someone would

TOP TEN REASONS WHY BIG BERTHA CREATED BIGOTS

- ▲ To give us the right to question Darwinism.
- ▲ To fill daytime talk shows.
- ▲ To challenge just how out we are.
- ▲ Because Big Bertha had bodies left over, but not enough brains to go around.
- ▲ As a gift to gay stand-up comics.
- ▲ To supply a market for fried pork rinds.
- ▲ To give a reason to live near a coast.
- ▲ To demonstrate the starting point of evolution.
- ▲ Because someone has to go to tractor pulls.
- ▲ To inspire us to have tolerance for people who are different from us.

have to be mentally retarded not to know you're queer. Oh, you're so confident, you've quit therapy. "I'm queer, I'm here, I'm fabulous!"

And just when you're feeling like a proud little homo, along comes this one person, this right wing, tobacco-chewing, redneck, white trash, trailer-park, dumb-ass, Wal-Mart-shoppin' bigot that throws you for a loop. It can be someone sitting across from you on Thanksgiving at your parents' house. It can be someone on a bus. It can be a coworker eating lunch next to you in the cafeteria. Whoever. You hear the words *faggots!* ...*dykes!*

And for some reason this person scares you and you don't say anything. The score bigot—1; home—0.

Coming out to someone we know will disagree with, even hate, us is our constant challenge. We can choose to hate them or we can choose to see them as gifts. Okay, not the kind of thing we hope to receive on our birthday, or at Christmas or Hanukkah, but a gift nonetheless.

Hugs - Hope * Understanding * Giving * Support
To the Gay & Lesbian Community of Lake, Geauga, and Ash-
tabula Counties.

Bigots are gifts because they are forever creating another opportunity for us to choose love and pride over hate and shame and to grow in our own humanness. Perhaps there is a synchronicity to our paths crossing with one of these people. When something comes into your life the exact moment you're ready for it, perhaps it isn't a coincidence. Maybe it's an event that you created yourself to give yourself another coming-out challenge. Either that or you live in Utah.

Being gay may not be about choice, but coming out is. In coming out to bigots it's important to know the difference between your homophobic aunt Bee and a gang of skinheads. Chances are your aunt Bee doesn't have a tire chain in her pants and razor blades in the toes of her shoes.. Sometimes it's a real good choice to hold your tongue when someone is holding a gun.

WHEN NOT TO COME OUT

- ▲ When it's not a barbecue but a cross burning, and the only weenie they are going to roast is yours.
- ▲ When people are wearing white hats that come to a point, and it's not Halloween.
- ▲ When there is one of you and a truckful of beer-drinking seventeen-year-olds with a bumper sticker that says, "People kill people, not guns!"
- ▲ When you're around any postal worker.
- ▲ When you're waiting in line for Rush Limbaugh tickets.

DIFFERENT KINDS OF BIG- OTS

Bigots generally fall into two groups; violent and nonviolent. But be warned, they both can cause a lot of damage if you're not careful.



The Quintessential Bigot

(Continued on page 5)

Contacting Hugs East

HUGS EAST
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[HTTP://HUGSEAST.HOMEPAGE.COM](http://HUGSEAST.HOMEPAGE.COM)

E-mail your questions or comments to:

HUGSEAST@HOTMAIL.COM

Calendar of Events

March, 2001

- 03/01 Movie "Anatomy of a Hate Crime: Matthew Shepard." — Bob
- 03/08 Happiness Fact or Fiction. — Rhonda
- 03/15 Music Night. Bring in your favorite artists music. — Mary Jo
- 03/22 Board Game "Cranium." — Mark
- 03/29 Foolish Mistakes. Share a story or two of a mistake(s) that you have made. In honor of April fools day.— Brenda

April, 2001

- 04/05 Terry's Shenanigans. — Terry
- 04/12 Movie "What Makes a Family." — Blanche
- 04/19 Board Meeting & Planning Meeting. — Rhonda
Board members please arrive at 6:30 PM
- 04/26 Getting Gray. — Mary

Hugs Social Activities for March & April

- 03/10 5:00 PM Dinner at Bennigans.
7814 Reynolds Road., Mentor, OH
- 04/21 6:00 PM Dinner at Empress Taytu Ethiopian Restaurant. 6125 St. Clair Ave., Cleveland, OH

Directions: Shoreway (Rt 2 or 90 heading West towards Cleveland)
Exit at E. 55th, turn left onto E 55th
Follow E. 55th to St. Clair Avenue
Turn LEFT onto St. Clair
The address is 6125 St. Clair Ave, the restaurant is on the left hand side of the street.

There is a small secured parking lot. Carpooling would be a good idea, since the lot is small

Other Activities for March & April

- 03/01 7:00 PM Lecture on "Homophobia: How We Pay The Price." Speaker Warren Blumenfeld. Building H. Room 101. Lakeland Community College. 7700 Clocktower Drive, Kirtland, Ohio 44094-5198

03/15 - 24th Annual Cleveland International Film Festival
03/25 at Tower City Cinemas, Cleveland, OH. For more information visit www.clevelandfilm.org on the internet or call (216) 623-3456.

For more details regarding any social event or meeting topic please call the information line at (440) 974-8909.

The Thursday evening meeting begins at 7:00 PM and is located at: 8521 East Ave., Mentor, OH 44060



HELP...

The Lake County AIDS Taskforce is asking for cash donations to provide Easter dinner to their families. Please mail or drop off your cash donations by Thursday, April 5, 2000. Thank you.

Fund Raiser

HUGS East will setup a booth, this spring, at the flea market located at the Lake County Fairgrounds. Between now and this coming spring, please give some thought to an item or items that you can donate.

There will be more information available, as spring approaches.

Membership

HUGS wants to increase the number of members.

Any suggestions, that you may have, to increase membership would be appreciated. Mail, E-mail, or phone in your suggestions.

Why Gay Guys Are a Girl's Best Friend

- ▲ A gay guy sends flowers just because you are you. (A straight guy sends flowers when he has screwed up big-time.)
- ▲ A gay guy hugs you to show he cares. (A straight guy hugs you to determine if your bra is front or back-opening.)
- ▲ Gay guys like Van Gogh and Van Cliburn. (Straight guys prefer Van Halen and Van Damme.)

Rauch, K. & Fessler, J. (1995). Why Gay Guys Are a Girl's Best Friend. Chicago: Fire side Books.

Help! Dr Laura Help!

Background: Laura Schlessinger is a US radio personality who dispenses sex advice to people who call in to her radio show.

Recently, she said that as an observant Orthodox Jew, homosexuality is an abomination according to Leviticus 18:22 and cannot be condoned in any circumstance.

The following is an Open Letter to Dr. Laura penned by a US resident, which was posted on the Internet:

Dear Dr. Laura:

Thank you for doing so much to educate people regarding God's Law. I have learned a great deal from your radio show, and I try to share that knowledge with as many people as I can. When someone tries to defend the homosexual lifestyle, for example, I simply remind them that Leviticus 18:22 clearly states it to be an abomination. End of debate.

I do need some advise from you, however, regarding some of the specific Bible laws and how to follow them.

- a) When I burn a bull on the altar as a sacrifice, I know it creates a pleasing odor for the Lord (Lev. 1:9). The problem is my neighbors. They claim the odor is not pleasing to them. Should I smite them?
- b) I would like to sell my daughter into slavery, as sanctioned in Exodus 21:7. In this day and age, what do you think would be a fair price for her? She's 18 and starting University. Will the slave buyer continue to pay for her education by law?
- c) I know that I am allowed no contact with a woman while she is in her period of menstrual uncleanness (Lev. 15:19-24). The problem is, how do I tell? I have tried asking, but most women take offense.
- d) Lev. 25:44 states that I may indeed possess slaves, both male and female, provided they are purchased from neighboring nations. A friend of mine claims that this applies to Mexicans, but not Canadians. Can you clarify? Why can't I own Canadians?
- e) I have a neighbor who insists on working on the Sabbath. Exodus 35:2 clearly states he should be put to death. Am I morally obligated to kill him myself, or should this be a neighborhood improvement project?
- f) A friend of mine feels that even though eating shellfish is an abomination (Lev. 11:10), it is a lesser abomination than homosexuality. I don't agree. Can you settle this?
- g) Lev. 21:20 states that I may not approach the altar of God if I have a defect in my sight. I have to admit that I wear reading glasses. Does my vision have to be 20/20, or is there some wiggle room here? Would con-

tact lenses help?

- h) Most of my male friends get their hair trimmed, including the hair around their temples, even though this is expressly forbidden by Lev. 19:27. How should they die?
- i) I know from Lev. 11:6-8 that touching the skin of a dead pig makes me unclean, but may I still play football if I wear gloves?
- j) My uncle has a farm. He violates Lev. 19:19 by planting two different crops in the same field, as does his wife by wearing garments made of two different kinds of thread (cotton/polyester blend). He also tends to curse and blaspheme a lot. Is it really necessary that we go to all the trouble of getting the whole town together to stone them? (Lev. 24:10-16) Couldn't we just burn them to death at a private family affair like we do with people who sleep with their in-laws? (Lev. 20:14)

I know you have studied these things extensively, so I am confident you can help. Thank you again for reminding us that God's word is eternal and unchanging.

Your devoted disciple and adoring fan.

Submitted by Blanche

Insensitivity Remains at St. Ignatius

At a pro-life demonstration held on January 22, 2001, students from St. Ignatius' all-boy Catholic high school were bused to Public Square to speak about the sanctity of life. In 1997, students from St. Ignatius harassed and ridiculed 14 year old gay student, Robbie Kirkland until he committed suicide.

A pro-choice supporter yelled out, "Remember Robbie Kirkland", and other members of the pro-choice group took up the chant.

The football players, many of them wearing St. Ignatius football jackets LAUGHED.

Out of respect for Robbie Kirkland, and his family, please let St. Ignatius' faculty and administrators know what you think of their institution's homophobia.

Send e-mail to kesicki@ignatius.edu (Father Timothy P. Kesicki) and rlark@ignatius.edu (Mr. Richard F. Clark, Principal). Also, send copies to ARACleveland@aol.com (Anti-Racist Action group)

Author: Withheld (2001, February 9). Letters to the Editor. Gay People's Chronicle, Cleveland, p. 6

Submitted by Rhonda

RECIPES

Bacon Wrapped Water Chestnuts

- Ingredients:** 1 cup ketchup
1 cup brown sugar
1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
16 ounces sliced bacon
2 cans whole water chestnuts, drained
- Directions:** Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
In a sauce pan, combine ketchup, brown sugar, and Worcestershire sauce.
Heat just to boiling.
Cut bacon slices in half. You may want to cut some of the bigger chestnuts in half.
Wrap the chestnuts in slices of the bacon and secure with toothpicks. Place in a 9x13 pan. Brush or spoon or pour the ketchup mixture over the chestnuts. Bake in the oven until bacon is completely cooked, about 45 to 50 minutes.

Submitted by Virginia

BOOK REVIEWS

Don't Get Me Started by Kate Clinton 1998

Available: Morley Library, Painesville (306.766)

This is a comedy about herself. Kate taught English for eight years before her professional stand-up career, using politics, Catholicism and her lesbianism as basic themes. She writes columns for "Progressive" and the "Advocate", performs one-woman shows, has four comedy albums to her credit but this is her first book. It is dedicated to her lover, Urvashi. It is funny, I recommend it.

Submitted by Blanche

Farm boys : lives of gay men from the rural Midwest / collected and edited by Will Fellows 1996

Available: Morley Library, Painesville (306.766 Fa)

The book contains interviews of Gay men that grew up in the rural Midwest. The book is divided into three parts (men born early in the century, those born after WWII but before Stonewall, and those born after Stonewall), these narratives of varying length show how each succeeding group came to grips with being gay without the assistance of role models, help groups, or even knowledge that other men and boys like them lived in the same area as they

Submitted by Mark

Roberts' Rules of Lesbian Break-ups

- ▲ There is *still* no such thing as lesbian divorce. There is only thermonuclear war. (And then best friends.)
- ▲ It's only over when it's over. (But not *necessarily*.)
- ▲ You will not like her new girlfriend. (Unless you choose her.)
- ▲ It is possible to have a good break-up. (Not *common*. Not *ordinary*. Not *usual*. But possible.)
- ▲ She *used* to be your best friend. She may well *someday in the future* be your best friend again. (But during a break-up, you need a *new* best friend.)
- ▲ **Revenge** is completely and totally ignoring her. (The stereo system is the hardest thing to divide.)
- ▲ The Ex of your Ex is fair game.
- ▲ Take full blame. (Your friends will respect you for it, and it'll drive *her* nuts.)

Roberts, S. (1997). Roberts' Rules of Lesbian Break-ups. Duluth: Spinsters Ink.

You know you're absolutely gonna be gay when...

- ▲ All you can think about in study class is playing strip poker with your best buddy Brad.
- ▲ You'd give the world to have Wally Cleaver move in next door.
- ▲ The first thing you build with your Erector set is a doll house.
- ▲ The only thing you want for your 15th birthday is a Cuisinart.

You know you're gay when...

- ▲ You dress your dog in nothing but black.
- ▲ You've got a collar and leash and you don't own a dog.
- ▲ You've got a corner office and a company car but you still can't put your boyfriend's picture on your desk.
- ▲ Straight couples can smooch all night in a restaurant but you've got to settle for an under-the-table-tickle.
- ▲ You realize life ain't always fair.

Cohen, J. (1999). You KNOW you're GAY when..... Chicago: Contemporary Books.

(Continued from page 1)

Violent, Gay-Bashing Bigots

These are usually young men with more testosterone than brains. These are people who consider bashing a “fag” or a “dyke” their initiation into manhood. They travel in packs and have SAT scores equal to their age. There is nothing you can say or do to change them. Short of frontal lobotomy.

Basically, the only way to deal with these idiots is on a political level, not one-on-one. Give your money to pro-gay PACs such as the ACLU, Lambda, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, GLADD, or other organizations. These organizations are working to create laws to protect against gay bashing and educate the police and the public on the issue. Violent gay-bashing jerks may have guns, but you have a pen.

“Now that it is increasingly clear that HIV can be transmitted to heterosexuals ... the self-righteous must find another reason for gay bashing.”

—Bishop Desmond Tutu

Nonviolent Bigots

These bigots are everywhere—in your church, at work, and in your family. Some of these bigots are homophobic and some are just ignorant. If some of these bigots truly knew the effect that their words had, they might stop.

Take for example the story that appeared on the 20/20 TV show about a farmer in the Midwest who was homophobic and didn’t know that his brother was gay. The brother had led a very secretive life until his shame about being gay was so great that he hanged himself. His brother was devastated and came too late to realize that his off-handed remarks about gays contributed to his beloved brother’s death. He had a huge realization of how he had become a product of homophobia and how homophobia truly kills. As he became accountable, this self-professed redneck farmer became an activist for gays. He now crosses the country speaking at churches, spreading his message of love and acceptance.

Do not underestimate the negative force of homophobia. It’s so all-pervasive and subtle that it seeps into the psyches of even card-carrying members of the ACLU, liberals, Democrats, prochoicers, the NAACP, feminists, and, unfortunately, other homos.

“Jerry Falwell is so homophobic that he quit the church he was going to because the choir insisted on singing ‘Go Down Moses.’”

—Comic and Producer Robin Tyler

Corporate Bigots

Homophobia affects company policy. They don’t want to hire, work with, or promote homos. Sometimes it’s subtle: “You just aren’t a team player.” And sometime it’s overt: “You’re fired, you big homo!” Yet there is hope as more people come out and more companies make homopho-

bic behavior unacceptable. Let’s face it, the people who tell fag and dyke jokes today are the same kind of insensitive people who ten years ago were discriminating blatantly against women. They just need to be told clearly and repeatedly—as they have about sex discrimination—that it is not acceptable behavior.

Liberal Bigots

Homophobic card-carrying members of the ACLU, NOW, and the Sierra Club. These people tend to be more subtle about their feelings. In some ways these folks can be more dangerous because you don’t know what you’re dealing with. They contribute to liberal causes but don’t invite their son’s lover over on Thanksgiving. When confronted with their own homophobia, they generally turn as red as the AIDS ribbons they wear.

“The air force pinned a medal on me for killing a man and discharged me for making love to one.”

—Former air force Sergeant Leonard Matlovich (1943—1988), who in 1975 set himself up as a test case to challenge the U.S. Military’s policy of automatically discharging homosexuals.

Gay Bigots

J. Edgar Hoover, Roy Cohn (Senator Joseph McCarthy’s lawyer), gay U.S. generals (yes, there are some) who support the “Don’t ask, don’t tell” position, gay governors who veto gay rights bills. Don’t be fooled. Many members of the anti-gay, right-wing Christian Coalition who are judging during the day have been seen cruising gay bars at night. One way or another, they are screwing us.

“If God dislikes gays so much, how come he picked Michelangelo, a known homosexual, to paint the Sistine Chapel ceiling while assigning Anita Bryant to go on TV and push orange Juice?”

—Chicago columnist Mike Royko

Religious Bigots

These are the self-righteous, holier-than-thou, Bible-totin’ homophobic bigots. It’s hard to enlighten someone who believes that they have the will of Big Bertha on their side. Maybe instead of carrying the Bible, they should read it and really try to understand it.

“You will never be rid of us because we produce ourselves out of your bodies.”

—Write Martha Shelley

Q: Dear Abby: A pair of gay men is moving in across the street. What can we do to improve the neighborhood? A: You could move.

—Abigail Van Buren

Carter, J. (1996). *The Homo Handbook*. New York: Fireside Books.

Be a part of HUGS EAST

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Due to the increased cost of the mailing of our newsletter we can no longer afford to continue our current mailing to non-paying members. This will be the last to those not currently with paid dues or who do not mail their dues prior to the next newsletter mailing in March.

Please send your dues to Hugs East P.O. Box 253, Mentor, Ohio 44060. If you not currently paid and would like to remain on the mailing list, please submit your dues by the next scheduled newsletter. Current newsletters will still be available on Thursday nights at the Mentor site for those who are not on the mailing list.

2001 HUGS EAST MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME: _____	<u>Membership</u>	
ADDRESS: _____	Individual:	\$8.00
CITY & STATE _____	Student:	\$5.00
ZIP CODE: _____	Household:	\$10.00
PHONE #(optional) _____	Supporter:	\$25.00
EMAIL (optional) _____	Contributor:	\$50.00
	Benefactor:	\$100.00
AMOUNT ENCLOSED: _____		

*Dues run from January thru December.

To update our membership list we ask that you complete the above information. Even if you were a current member, we would like to update our records to show current information. This will ensure your copy of the newsletter. Membership dues are suggested amounts. Please feel free to pay more if you can, less if you cannot. All members share the same privileges. Make check or money order payable to: HUGS EAST P.O. Box 253 Mentor, Ohio 44061-0253, or bring to the Mentor site any Thursday evening (7pm to 9pm).

_____ Do not send HUGS EAST newsletter to my home.

**\$8.00-\$10.00 dues are not tax deductible; amounts paid over said dues are considered contributions and are tax deductible.