

- The following program contains language or images of a frank or sensitive nature that may be considered objectionable by some. Listener discretion is advised.

- It's all right. You may all come out.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

- It's all right. You may all come out.

- A few words for KPFA.

- Come on out. Join us. Bring your friends.

- What do you think about the turnout?

- Well, it's never enough, never enough, never enough.

- It's all right. You may all come out.

- "The Good Homosexual" by James Carroll Pickett. The good homosexual accommodates himself, checks fantasies, behaves properly, purchases good taste, practices impeccable hygiene, begs respect from oppressors. The good homosexual reads only what is recommended, attends all the Westwood Cinema, obtains season tickets to the Music Center, votes the straight GOP slate, retires from controversy, amasses financial security, no matter the social toll, finds AIDS embarrassing but donates \$50 a year anyway, anonymously.

The good homosexual subscribes to *GQ*, laughs the loudest at fag jokes, laments the demise of *After Dark*, prefers porno in brown paper bags, browses Crown Books, where he purchased *After the Ball*, displays *National Geographic*, misses *Dynasty*. The good homosexual restrains impulse, sustains racism, objects to, gay, as too frivolous, refers to himself as a bachelor, contains passion, remains invisible, maintains there is nothing amiss.

The good homosexual swallows bigotry, suppresses ecstasy, drives the family sedan, just like old dad did, kisses with a dry mouth and closed lips, wears a condom on his tongue, just in case. The good homosexual nurtures propriety, derives morality from TV shrinks, believes there might be something to inanity, shushes all profanity, insists on anonymity, despises sodomy fails to see why dykes have to be so pushy.

The good homosexual drinks Coors beer as advertised in good homosexual publications, keeps up appearances, longs for the cops to crack down, engages a female for social occasions, relishes assimilation, irons crisp creases in casual jeans. The good homosexual quells excess, attacks radical fags, experiences madness, in discrete little doses, waters down intensity, embraces mediocrity, reaps his own self-righteous vanity, does not grasp why silence necessarily equals death. The good homosexual kills queers.

- That's right, ma. You had it easy. You lost your husband in a nice clean hospital. You know where I lost mine? I lost mine on the street!

That's right. They killed him on the street. 27 years old laying dead on the street, killed by a bunch of kids with baseball bats. That's right, ma, killed by children, children taught by people like you because everybody knows that queers don't matter. Queers don't love! And those that do deserve what they get!

[DANCE MUSIC]

- We're not going back. For love and for life. We're not going back. For love and for life, we're not going back!
- I think that's Robin Tyler on the stage, leading the chant. For love of for life, we're not going back.
- Good afternoon, and welcome to the National March on Washington, DC for Gay and Lesbian Rights and choral reciting! Let's hear it out there!

[CHEERING]

I'm Lea Delaria.

- I'm Bruce Hopkins!
- I'm a dyke!
- I'm a faggot!
- And we're best friends!

I want you to savor this next moment. I have the proud task of telling you that the official count of the Lesbian and Gay Rights March-- the official count is over 500,000. 500,000 strong!

- It's all right. You may all come out.
- Look at you! 500,000 strong!

[CHEERING]

500,000 strong! One of the largest marches in United States history! One of the largest marches in United States history! 500,000 strong!

- We parents want to persuade society that our gay children are not acting out of defiance and self indulgence. They're being true to their own nature. Our children are fine men and women, and we say to society, the parents and friends of lesbians and gay men will support their children.
- They've got to understand something. They've got to understand something! We are not talking about crotch politics! This is not a movement from the waist down! We are talking about our right to love and to choose and to live!

And I don't care about straight providence. And I don't care about straight understanding. You better hear me in Washington. We are demanding-- we are demanding our civil rights!

- Harvey, do you have a few words for KPFA?

- Come on out. Join us. Bring your friends.
- What do you think about the turnout so far?
- Well, it's never enough, never enough.
- We must destroy the myths, once and for all, shatter them. We must continue to speak out. And most importantly-- most importantly, every gay person must come out.

[CHEERING]

As difficult as it is, you must tell your immediate family. You must tell your relatives. You must tell your friends, if indeed they are your friends. You must tell your neighbors. You must tell the people you work with. You must tell the people in the stores you shop in.

[CHEERING]

And once they realize that we are indeed their children, that we are indeed everywhere, every myth, every lie, every innuendo will be destroyed once and for all. And once-- once you do, you will feel so much better.

[CHEERING]

- When do we want it?
- Now!
- What do we want?
- Gay rights!
- When do we want it?
- Now!
- What do we want?
- Gay rights!
- When do we want it?
- Now!
- What do we want?
- Gay rights!
- When do we want it?
- Now!
- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?

31

MARCH 2000

S. M. HUSSAIN

Wheatley et al.

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Wheatley 13

Copyright

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?

- Now!

- What do we want?

- Gay rights!

- When do we want it?

- I ask people all over this country to do one thing. Come out. Come out, America. Come out!

- OK, girl.

- Yeah, good morning. How are you doing?

- Well, I'm doing great. I got my income tax check today.

- I'll bet that's not the only reason.

- What do you mean?

- You got your income tax-- [LAUGHS]

- What are you talking about?

- Well, there's this hairy dude sitting behind you.

- I know. I'll tell you about it someday.

- Don't give everything away.
- Oh, OK.
- You just tell everybody everything.
- Yeah.
- She goes on there-- on the radio every week and starts blabbing everything she knows.
- You're not wearing your glasses anymore. What happened?
- I found what I was looking for.
- Whoa.
- I don't know. This is *After Hours* radio, celebrating live from the heart of Montrose, 90.1 FM, KPFT Houston. We're here.
- And we're queer.
- We certainly are. [LAUGHS] Edit that out later. I'm that faggot that works for the Houston Police Department.
- And I'm that faggot who doesn't work at all. And I'm a hateful bitch-- not really.
- And we're moving things around.
- We are.
- Next week, we won't be here.
- What?
- Well, *This Way Out* will be on at 12:15, right after the BBC News. And then, at 12:45, Frank will do the local news.
- Oh, so nobody will hear us until 1:00?
- I know.
- Aw.
- [LAUGHS] Anyway, here's Alan to say, we're queer.
- To Alan, thank you, Alan. Thank you, Alan.
- Anyway, I do have this hairy man I have to tell you about. It's a long story. But he was here two weeks ago, and you weren't.
- Well, I was doing New York.
- What were you doing, Mary? Where have you been? Now, you were here last week.
- I was here last week. I was queer last week, too.
- Oh, that hateful war.

- Yes. Oh, yeah, well, more on that later. Now we have to figure out how to pay for the damn thing there's a little old lady in the basement of the Capitol building with a calculator-- chh, chh, chh.

- She better have a moneymaking machine along with it.

- She is adding some stuff up. Anyway, we're here--

- And we're queer.

- And we've got some great news for you.

- Yeah?

- Yeah, the room is full of men.

- It is. And it's getting hot, too.

- But they're still dressed. What is--

- [LAUGHS]

- Oh, wait a minute.

- We've got some guests tonight.

- Yeah, and we're going to be talking to some Gay Fathers-- Fathers First.

- Is that right?

- Yeah.

- OK, we'll do that.

- I believe that's the official.

- Hang on a minute. We'll be back. have cleared off the

We shouldn't play this song yet.

- Why?

- We should play this other one because we have got something tonight in Texas that's a first. Now, don't say anything.

- I know what it is.

- Let me get some music for this queen so she can make an announcement. We'll edit this all out later.

- Does it have anything to do with this phone line that's--

- It may.

- [SIGHS]. Where is that? Queen makes money, queen goes to the bar, queen goes to the bars, queen finds a husband.

- I did that.

- Here it is. Queen makes an announcement. I think this is the right one. Is this the one we used?

- We'll find out. Are you ready?

- I'm ready.

- OK, let's see if this is the right one. She's got an announcement.

[FANFARE MUSIC]

OK, put your skirt down, girl.

- Oh.

- [LAUGHS]

- OK, tell us what it is. Is it the news that Frank had?

- Yeah.

- The big news.

- The big news, tonight.

- Tonight, Texas, which is the state we live in, the one that has the sodomy law. I work for the police department-- openly gay, queer radio, the whole bit.

- And for the first time in Texas history--

- The history of the state, boys and girls.

- --we have an openly gay elected official in Glen Maxey.

- Yes, he was elected tonight. Let's hear a little round of applause.

- And why did he get elected?

- Well, because there's just something inside so strong.

- Well, a father is a thing that is forced to endure childbirth without an anesthetic. A father is the thing that growls when it feels good and laughs very loud when it's scared half to death. A father is sometimes accused of giving too much time to his business when the little ones are growing up. That's partly fear, too. Fathers are much more easily frightened than mothers.

A father never feels entirely worthy of the worship in a child's eyes. He's never quite the hero his daughter thinks, never quite the man his son believes him to be, and this worries him sometimes. So he works too hard to try to smooth the rough places in the road for those of his own who will follow him.

A father is a thing that gets very angry when the first school grades aren't as good as he thinks they should be. He scolds his son, though he knows it's the teacher's fault.

A father is a thing that goes away to war sometimes and learns to swear and shoot and spit through his teeth and would run the other way, except that this war is part of his only important job in life, which is making the world better for his child than it has been for him. Fathers grow old faster than people because they, in other wars, have to stand at the train station and wave goodbye to the uniform that climbs aboard. And while mothers can cry where it shows, fathers have to stand there and beam outside and die inside. Fathers have very stout hearts, so they have to be broken sometimes or no one would know what's inside.

Fathers are what give daughters a way to other men who aren't nearly good enough so they can have grandchildren that are smarter than anybody's. Fathers fight dragons, almost daily. They hurry away from the breakfast table, off to the arena, which is sometimes called an office or a workshop. There, with callused, practiced hands they tackle the dragon with three heads-- weariness, work, and monotony. They never quite win the fight, but they never give up. Knights in shining armor, fathers in shiny trousers-- there's little difference as they march away to each workday.

[JAZZ MUSIC]

Fathers make bets with insurance companies about who will live the longest. Though they know the odds, they keep right on betting. Even as the odds get higher and higher, they keep right on betting more and more, and one day, they lose. But fathers enjoy an earthly immortality and the bets paid off to the part of him he leaves behind.

Now, I don't know where fathers go when they die. But I have an idea that, after a good rest wherever it is, he won't be happy unless there's work to do. He won't just sit on a cloud and wait for the girl he's loved and the children she bore. He'll be busy there, too, repairing the stairs, oiling the gates, improving the streets, smoothing the way.

- What did you say, Mary?

- I was just saying, well, that may be a little different for this group. I don't think [INAUDIBLE].

- Oh, well, what can I say? So what's going on?

- Well, it's time to introduce some guests here.

- I've seen this guy before. Where the hell have you been?

- Away, around, everywhere.

- Really? How are you?

- Doing great.

- Good.

- Oh, I'm sorry.

- Yeah.

- Go ahead, Jim.

- OK, who the hell are you, queen?

- Who am I? My name is Lloyd Powell. I'm a gay father. I've got two sons.

- Ah, and we have here?

- Robert Khan-- a gay stepparent.

- Jerry Fenske-- I have two daughters.

- Bo Briggs-- two children.

- I remember Bo.

- Oh, you do?

- Yeah, we've sat across an auction from each other, trying to outbid each other.

[LAUGHTER]

- Just like a queen to want to spend some money.

- Especially this one, when it's Stanley's.

- Somebody else's money.

- You've been here before, right? Gay Fathers?

- Yes.

- Gay Fathers, Fathers First. Now, this is something new, isn't it? Two groups that have merged together?

- It was just recently-- about eight months now-- we've just merged. And Al Morrow was the president of Gay Fathers, which-- who called me, and I'm president of Fathers First. And they wanted to go ahead and merge. And they asked what we thought about it, and I told them that I get back with him and get with the body of our group.

And it just worked out, and now we're just one. And it's just Gay Fathers and Fathers First. And we're just we're real pleased to be all together, and we have a wonderful support group.

That sounds a lot better than groups everywhere, doesn't it? We've seen that we see that happening all over the community now-- the community coming together?

Yes, the nice thing about this group is that we all have different issues and values. When they came into the group-- and we like to say, we merged-- we all worked together as a team. And that is the nice part about it. We're there for each other.

So what's the group going to be called now?

Gay Fathers and Fathers First.

The nice thing about this, and I think that maybe some people really don't want to say-- and but this says something I think good for the community, rather than bad, is that, at one time, there was only Gay Fathers of Houston. And the group had a parting of ways. And that's why there were two fathers groups. But those two groups have realized that they can be stronger as one.

- That's great.

- So there's been a reemergence of the two groups. And I think it's great. I think it does a lot of good.
- What's the group all about?
- It's just a support group. We get together, share our experiences, share our griefs, our problems.
- Problems like what? We've talked about this before.
- Problems with the ex-wife. She's trying to get you back in court to get more child support out of you, or she doesn't like the fact that you've got a new lover and are bringing the kids into the house with the new lover or problems with the children themselves.
- You've got children. What do the kids think about this, when they come over and they're two guys, two daddies?
- I don't have a lover right now. My children both know that I'm gay, and they accept it pretty well. I think one of the other things that our group does that's so neat is that we have a lot of people that have been coming into the group lately, since the groups have merged, that are gay men that are just going into the process, that they're going-- they're starting the coming out process. Some of them are still married. Some of them are separated.

And I think that what's good about our group is that there's a lot of us there who have been through this, and we can really offer a lot of support to these people who are just starting that road. And it's a long, tough road. And it makes me feel good to be able to be there for people when they need that.

- Children are more perceptive than we give them credit for, though, right?
- Definitely.
- I've never had a child. That's the only thing I hate about this gay thing-- about being gay. I wish I could have a child. I really do.
- I want to sell you one.

[LAUGHTER]

- No, no, I have straight people at work that want to sell me their kids. But children are not as-- I don't know what the word is. They're more aware of what's going on around them than we really give them credit for, right?
- Very much so.
- So the things that make everybody else gasp, kids just look out and go, yeah, well-- and go on about their business.
- It's really funny because I have an 18-year-old daughter, and one of my biggest fears-- would how her friends except it, would it scar her. And these are the things that was my biggest fear.

She's got to the point now that she just doesn't associate with any of her friends that were so bigoted. Her father comes first.

- That's great.
- That's the nicest part of it. So all the things that we had biggest fears of sometimes are at least fears.
- You said that there are a lot of fathers who are just coming out and they just realize that this is-- that marriage and that whole mold that society wants us all to fall into-- husband and wife-- isn't really for them. So they're having to deal with the fact that they may possibly-- and in most cases, fathers do lose their children, right? Because the mother gets custody?

And they're dealing with that plus the trauma of the family falling apart and all the pressure that society is putting on us, plus the pressures of coming out into a new world. How in the hell do you--

- I think pretty much, you just--

- --lay all this out?

--have to start answering the questions that are asked. New people will come to a meeting. And they'll have something, usually specific, on their mind. There'll be a particular issue that'll be troubling them.

And I think, really, what you end up doing is addressing the first question. They'll keep coming back. And the other questions will follow, although, really, a lot of us do have our kids. I have a 15-year-old who'll be moving in with me at the end of this school year on a permanent basis. And that's going to be interesting.

- [LAUGHS]

- One of the biggest fears I think that a lot of the fathers come with is that they're preparing to leave a wife, a family, a home, an entire way of life. And we can look at this as-- there are some people who came out when-- fortunate, who realized they were gay when they were 12 or 13.

There were people who realized when they were 18 or 20 or 21, and maybe they dated the girls in high school and went through this thing that society expected of them. But before they really got heavily involved with someone, they realized they were gay and adjusted their life in that way.

But there are those of us who did what society expected of us and married and had children, and our families see us this way. And then, suddenly, we're tearing down not only our world but the world of our friends around us, our family around us.

- Family, yeah.

- We're tearing apart everybody's world. It's a very, very scary thing.

- We're also getting involved in a very unsympathetic legal system, in many cases.

- This is true.

- What about the gay community itself? Are they sympathetic?

- A lot of the gay community itself is not aware of the situations. You're facing a double standard of-- you're not fitting into the straight community or the gay community because you have children and you're gay, so you're facing a double wall there.

- Sometimes the gay community has its head just as deep in the sand as the-- as the heterosexuals do.

- It's amazing how many fathers in the group, who don't have a lover, will go out and tell someone that they're interested in that they have children, and they never see this person again. This person is afraid to get involved with someone who has children. That's amazing. And there are so many gay people, like yourself, who would love to have children or just be in a role where they can nurture children.

- Yeah, just take them to the zoo or to the movies or--

- Also, too, as being a parent, you're also faced of-- am I going to meet the right person that I can introduce to my children. That could be a person that would care and love them like I do.

- That's important, too.

- That's very, very important. It's a big fear in a lot of us, especially coming out and meeting a man and sharing our life with him. It's very important.

- Obviously, you guys are out or you wouldn't be here. But just being in the group, everyone's not out and politically involved, right?

- Right.

- The key word I think I hear-- I keep hearing over and over is, support.

- That's right.

- Very much.

- We go so far with that as to, if you want to come to the support group-- and your name may be John Smith, but you don't want anybody, really, to know your name, you want to walk in and say, I don't want you to know my name, or for your purposes, my name is, Joe, then you can be Joe while you're there. Your privacy and your anonymity is respected because it's a very, very difficult thing, coming out when you've got a job to protect and a family to protect and everything.

- It's a big step for a lot of people just to go to that first meeting. I've heard stories of people saying how many times they've driven around the block before actually having the nerve to walk in the door because it's just-- people are intimidated. And I think probably a lot of us were there at one point in time.

- We're just scared, yeah.

- It's a big step.

- How many of us drove around the block many times before we went into our first gay bar?

- Well--

[LAUGHTER]

I was hungry, OK?

- Some of us just ran in and said, boys!

- Some of us have been waiting for too long.

[LAUGHTER]

- We're talking to members of Gay Fathers and Fathers First. What, Louisa?

- I remember, a little while ago, there was something at the switchboard about Gay Fathers or Fathers First or both supporting some lesbian mothers because there wasn't a group for them. Is this still going on? Or what's happened, as far as that goes?

- Well, Gay Fathers of Houston was getting a lot of calls from lesbian mothers because, in the past, there had been a couple of lesbian mothers groups that did not hang around. And although we had, really, nothing to offer, we did offer our services for source of information. And there was discussion for several months about how to handle this. There is another parenting group here in Houston, and that's called the Gay and Lesbian Parents Support Group, and Gay Fathers of Houston helped to start that group.

- Oh, great.

- So tell us about meetings.

- So these guys are lending support.

- What about meetings, and how can people get a hold of you?

- Well, we're in the *TWT*, and a lot of times in *The Voice*. We're at 900 Lovett every Monday night at 8:00. And there's two numbers in the back that they can call.

- Plus, you could always get the number from the switchboard.

- You betcha.

- Now, you guys have something really exciting coming up in June, I hear.

- Right, in June, we're handling the 12th annual International Conference of Gay and Lesbian Parents here in Houston. Parents from all over the world will be coming to Houston to share ideas and information about gay parenting.

Along with that conference will be a conference for youth of gay parents and a separate conference for children of gay parents children being up to the age of 12-- youth being 12 to adulthood. It's basically sharing ideas, workshops, things like that, entertainment, letting them see the city.

- Well, Robert, I know you and Lloyd have been working on this for quite a while. And before we went on, you told me something about a little bit of entertainment you're going to have for this. Can you elaborate?

- Yes, for our banquet entertainment on that Saturday evening, we will be having Lynn Lavner come in as entertainment.

- Yay!

- And we will be selling tickets to the community so that other people who are not involved in the conference can come and hear Lynn Lavner that evening.

- Now, when is this?

- That will be Saturday evening, June the 15.

- As that gets closer, you why don't you guys come back?

- We'd love to.

- We're getting ready to move everything around because, with the BBC at midnight now, we're short of time. We're going to start having things happen at 1:00. So can you guys come back and see us?

- Sure.
- We'd love to do that.
- Especially when it gets closer to that? Anything else?
- I think we just need to make it a point for people to know that we're there and available. I think that we've really done a lot of good for a lot of people.
- Oh, you're available?
- The group is available for support of gay fathers. Anything else we could discuss at some other time.
- No, I'm just [INAUDIBLE].
- A lot of fathers feel like they're in a situation where there's nobody else in that situation.
- And a lot of times, they are, right?
- And we want to let them know that we're there to share our ideas and our experiences and that they're not alone because they do face that isolation from the straight community and from the gay community. And a lot of our fathers-- our fathers have been through many different situations. And we might not have their particular situation, but we can share ideas with them and let them know how we handle things.
- Sounds good.
- And we're there to help.
- So you'll please come back and tell us about the conference?
- Love to.
- Definitely.
- OK, you guys do a lot of social things, too, I've noticed, over the years. There really is support, not only during the meetings but afterwards, too.
- Mm-hmm. We do things like guest bartending at some of the local bars. We have toy drives for the Children's House. What else do we do?