

*Ouch! H-o-i-p-e-e-s!*

The Crazy Shepherd; Vol. 2; No. 2

October 1982

Dr. Benjamin Rogue (aka Kurt Buss)

Herpes has come to the attention of the American society in recent years not so much because of how it affects its victims – like other venereal diseases, it's transmitted via sexual contact – but because of whom its victims are. The greatest incidence of this incurable virus is found in a group that has traditionally been immune to such social embarrassments: upper middle-class whites between the ages of twenty and 40 with at least four years of college. In other words – The Joneses.

Normally, the Joneses only real problem was what kind of new car to buy, or which college to send Susie to, while everyone else in the neighborhood tried to “keep up.” But that's not the case with herpes. Herpes has blemished the snow-white image of America's upper-middle class, and now many people are more concerned with “keeping away from” rather than “keeping up with” the Joneses. There goes the neighborhood right down the tubes.

The spread of herpes (the name comes from the ancient Greek word meaning “to creep”) is often blamed on the increasing use of the Pill and IUDs and the declining use of the condom – which is the only effective precaution against contracting or spreading the disease. It is difficult to determine exactly how many people in this country have herpes because it needn't be reported to the Public Health Service as most other venereal diseases do. But most estimates report that 20 million Americans presently suffer from genital herpes, with about 500,000 new cases occurring each year.

Given the demographic breakdown of the victims as described earlier, it would seem that America's upper-middle class is rather ripe with this non-discretionary infestation, thus urging questions like: “What vile matter doth contrive America's ruling class?” or “How beats the beastly heart of our educated Caucasian elite?” or even, “Has the time come to quarantine the affluent suburbs for the safety of the inner city?”

Deep questions, indeed, but before we're prepared to answer them it's necessary to get a greater understanding of the epidemic as it affects our country. Therefore, the following regional look at herpes in America takes us romping cross-country to see how this disease came to be what it is today, the wound that doesn't heal.

**Los Angeles, CA:** Herpes, like Hollywood, is another west coast bummer we all must bear, for it was there, among abundant sun and surf, that this fad epidemic gained national notoriety. Rumor has it John Wayne was the first Great American to contract herpes, but he always described it as a "saddle rash" if it was ever detected at pool parties.

Now that herpes, like Hollywood, has gone through its initial stages of exposure and revealed itself as one of those things in desperate need of a cure, most Southern Californians try to displace herpes' homeland on San Francisco, Sodomy City to the North.

It was there in Dr. Richard Hamilton's medical clinic that the disease was noted to affect gay males in a higher-than-average proportion. However, Dr. Hamilton has become one of the nation's foremost authorities on herpes, and in his recent best seller, *The Herpes Handbook*, he describes it as primarily a heterosexual syndrome, (The division of the disease is about equal between women and men.) So it's evident that Anita Bryant has been putting a little too much vodka in her orange juice when she blames this social problem on gays; but so blows the horn of a moral zealot. Bunk, bunk, bunk...

**Lander, Wyoming:** Herpes came to Lander shortly after the sheep – right behind them you might say. The sheep return each year as they're driven to the northern pastures and always enjoy their stay at the Lander Lost Lamb Stockyard; so do nearly all of the male residents.

In keeping with frontier tradition, women remain consigned to birthin' and doin' the chores just like the preacher's sermon says they should. Women are very seldom seen in public, and never, ever near the Lost Lamb. Just wouldn't be proper.

The annual "orgy on the hoof" is preceded by a celebrated sighting of the herd via telescope. This gives the dudes and dandies time to go home and get gussied up. The men of Lander do respect their visitors: they want them to return each year forever and ever.

But as soon as the sighting occurs it's every man for himself. They scramble through the streets and out onto the plain in mass exodus. Like bunnies they hop out toward the flock whoopin' and hollerin' to beat the band. They howl and cuss and spit and wail louder than a band of crazed banshees.

When asked why they hurry so, Stretch Bunker (Flem Bunker's older brother) once said, "Well hang-fire! You don't wanna get an ugly one." When asked if he is bothered by his father's activity, Pud Bunker (Stretch's youngest) always says, "N-a-a-a-h. He'll be b-a-a-a-c-k."

Well, that' Wyoming, where men are men and sheep are scared, 'cept for those at the Lost Lamb.

**Birmingham, Alabama:** Governor George Wallace has declared the recent outbreak of herpes as, "more filth tricklin' down from them damn Yankees who know less about morality than they do about the natural order of mankind," which is exactly what he said about the Civil Rights Movement.

The fact is, most of us Yankees don't give a bullwhip about what George Wallace's thoughts are and dwell in the sweet knowledge that he will never be president and that the South aint never gonna do it again.

**Brooklyn, NYC:** Herpes is at the core of the Big Apple. The disease is especially notable in Brooklyn where it's pronounced "hoipes", normally drawn out and said with a slight, excited laugh – "H-O-I-P-E-S-!" Often times the "h" is silent and becomes "oipes" (as in, "Oh no, I got o-i-p-e-e-s-!"). But any way you pronounce it, it's still the same. This disease is epidemic to all dialects. Nice, eh?

John Travolta had herpes in Saturday Night Fever, but the movie doesn't let on to this because he never mentioned it in front of the camera. Actually, most avid disco dancers have herpes, but it's not considered fashionable to talk about. It should be known, though, that tight satin pants have no causative affect regarding herpes; that's a common myth among disco disdainers.

Herpes is viewed with more indifference in New York City than elsewhere because New Yorkers are used to living among such dangers – even worse. They live in a city that is probably the premier civilian nuclear strike target in America, and that means they are posed as guinea pigs for yet undiscussed effects of a missile attack – dismemberment by direct contact.

It's a little known fact, but Soviet Offense Strategists fear that the detonating devices on their first-strike missiles will fail as a result of their exposure to salt air over the Atlantic. In that case, the only casualties that would be incurred in the Soviet attack would be those unfortunate few who would be standing where the missiles fall. ICBM's are extremely heavy and have pointed ends; even without detonating they are wicked. So New Yorkers have a lot to worry about.

Because of that and other real dangers, New York views herpes with tongue-in-cheek. Mayor Ed Koch still maintains that the greatest social threat to his city is the existence of Long Island, where hick suburbanites dwell and give New York a bad name, a soft edge.

But from the Bowery to the Bronx, herpes is established in New York City – like rats ‘n gators in the sewer system. The truth is, there are countless too many aspiring writers and actors in New York to repel social diseases of any kind.

**Milwaukee, Wisconsin:** Ouch! It hurts, but herpes is here, too. We’re far too progressive not to feel the effects of decadent living. Fact is, when Wisconsin became the first state to pass a non-discrimination law for homosexuals we begged divine retribution. We got it.

Mayor Maier is well aware of the problem. He knows that it didn’t start here – none of our problems do – it came up from Illinois. But he has a plan, a “detect and restrain” plan. If events follow their prescribed course, the plague will never creep farther north than Cudahy.

Cudahy, where it’s referred to as “the herps” (silent “e”), is just getting over the harassment of the Couch Potatoes hit release of “You Must be from Cudahy.” Many south siders feel like they are being used as scapegoats and the unfair victims of Milwaukee society. This isn’t true, hey. Only people on the South Side have enough moral and spiritual integrity to combat this invading infection. We on the East Side are basically a godless lot, lacking the scruples to banish bad jokes, much less herpes. And the nicer, residential neighborhoods of the West and North sides are just the areas Mayor Maier is trying to protect.

So, Cudahy, you’ve got to be the high-water mark; you’ve got to be our Gettysburg and repel “the herps” lest we all become eaten by this seething cancer.

It looks grim, but there is hope. In a recent publication of the *World Student Times* (published by CARP – Moonies, not the fish – and distributed in a similar way but not to be confused with *The Shepherd*) Dan Greydon Fefferman gives this advice: “Regular *WST* readers know enough about CARP to understand our prescription for the herpes problem: Abstain. Not out of fear, but abstain, for the sake of others, for the sake of society, for the sake of America, and ultimately for the sake of God and yourself.”

Hear, here Mr. Fefferman. Good counsel indeed. May your lips never blister, your crotch never chafe for truly the meek shall inherit the Earth; and they’d better not have...The Herpes.

