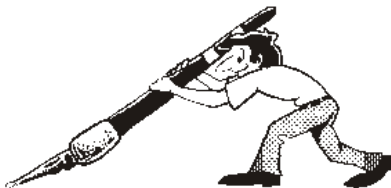


God's on Our Side and We Have it in Writing Stories from Murphy's Manor

I first met Murphy Robinson in February 1982 when he came out of the end of my pen. Ever since I've been writing and drawing four Murphy's Manor comic strips a month, lending new meaning to the phrase "that time of the month." Um, I won't pursue the metaphor any further than that. The continuing story is one of gay/lesbian Weekend Revolutionaries in a mid-sized mid-western city I call Black Swamp, Ohio. Most of the main characters live in a big old house owned by Murphy Robinson. From there, they pursue their livelihoods, happiness and occasionally indulge in political shenanigans.

I have laid out a rather large community in Black Swamp. All sorts of characters spend brief stays in my four panels - Bedouins exploring the caves near Qumran, Alexander Graham Bell and Watson, Charles Darwin, even Joe Camel and a talking rat from the Vatican. In more than 800 comic strips, I've done a lot of stand-alone cartoons featuring my regular characters. There have also been many that form larger continuing story lines. I hope these series cartoons stand on their own - they have to. Some papers that run Murphy's Manor are weekly, some biweekly, some monthly. Continuing series only work in weeklies, and even then I have no assurance that the cartoons will be run in the correct



Kurt Erichsen Cartoonist & Illustrator

mail@kurterichsen.com

order.

In this volume I am presenting some of the collected stories.

The first series I did was a short one, when I'd been doing these strips for about a year. It concerned Jeff Sorensen (one of the tenants at Murphy's Manor) falling for a very effeminate man who turned out to be heterosexual. For me, the high point of this series was when this swishy straight guy tried to teach Murf how to swish.

In this volume I present a few of my favorite series, dealing with a raunchy brand of gay religion, a few fine points of the Ohio Revised Code, and micro-activism. It would be traditional for me to close these introductory remarks by saying that I hope you enjoy reading the cartoons in this volume as much as I enjoyed drawing them. Drawing them involved sitting at my drawing table and staring at each strip for several hours, of ten far into the night while you were doing something trivial, like falling in love or dancing the night away. Be fair, now. Is it fitting for me to wish you as much joy as I experienced? Still, I do sincerely wish you thousands of ecstatic seconds in the world of Murphy's Manor.

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St. Bruce the Pitiabile



St. Bruce continues the saga of the Church of Spiritual Machismo. This time we don't have just a dogmatic presumption that God is on our side, but the direct word of God's emissary.

Or do we? He has a halo, wings, a harp, and seems to know God's fax number. This may sound like strong evidence, but we've all seen odder costumes on Female Impersonator night.

I've been a science fiction fan since I was a kid, and during college, went to Clarion. It's always been hard to resist science fiction or fantasy elements in Murphy's Manor — this is one of the rare times when I gave in.

One characteristic I share with many fans is a pedantic love of minutiae. Sometimes I get tangled in side research projects that are interesting but only add esoteric interest to my cartoons. In this series, I found myself learning how to write the tetragrammaton in Hebrew.

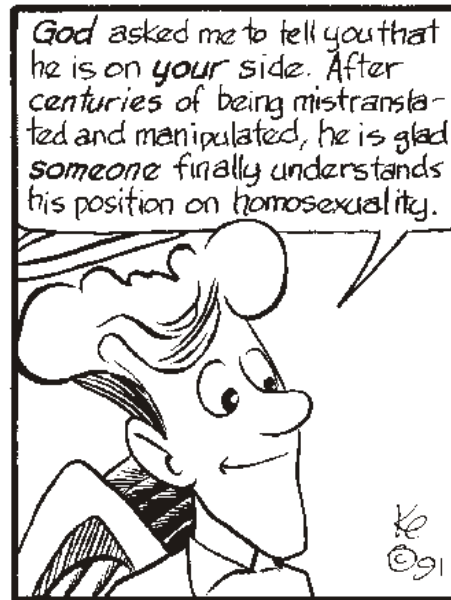
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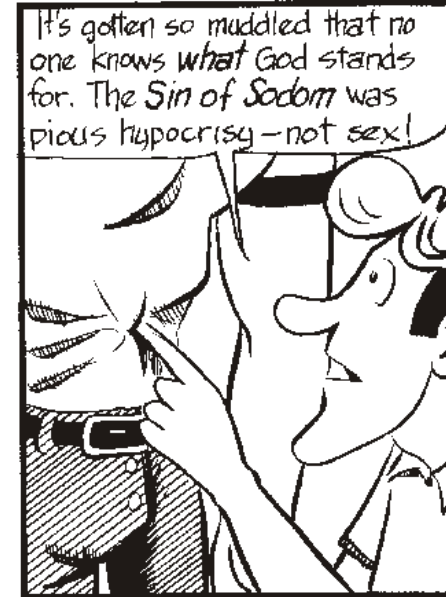
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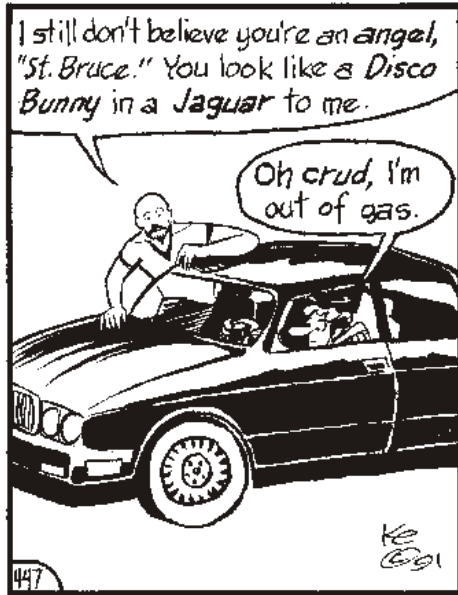
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