

a thursday catharsis

**Those Beverly Hills 90210
darlings are headed your way.
Fight it, if you can.**

Stop pretending — you know you live for it. And even if you claim you don't, you're clearly in denial. Wake up and smell the coffee. *Beverly Hills 90210* is bigger than the Beatles. Your Thursday nights have changed forever.

Just what is it about *BH* that leaves us on Thursday nights yearnin' and burnin' for more? Is it merely the superficial obsession with convertibles, sideburns and Peach Pit cheeseburgers? Or is it something deeper... the meaning behind the motive? Four out of five dentists surveyed suggest it is the gang itself that keeps the masses anxiously awaiting "Scenes From Next Week's 90210."

First you've got the Minnesota twins, Brandon and Brenda Walsh. The whole "fish-out-of-water" thing was played to the hilt during the first season when the ever-Wonder-Bread Walsh family adjusted to the Bev Hills nuttiness — "Omgigod, Brandon, what will I wear?" was a staple of dialogue.

As we can see from the summer re-runs, the Walshes have, at long last, assimilated into the *BH* melting pot. Brandon, the PC-meister, has dated everyone within the city limits — including, but not limited to, an Olympic hopeful, new-girl-on-the-block Emily Valentine (who later perpetuated the myth of the hysterical women by reprising Glenn Close's *Fatal Attraction* role) and (our personal fave) someone in a witness protection program.

He is at his most annoying when he pretends he actually needs his after-school job at the Peach Pit. You live in Beverly Hills and drive an excellent Mustang convertible, don't plead poverty to us, guy.

Then, of course, there is Brenda. Does anyone in the viewing public actually like her anyway? Ever since she hooked up with Dylan, Brenda has gone from innocent waif to prima donna supreme.

Not only is she perpetually pissed about something ridiculous, but we also will never forgive her for dissing Kelly's friendship and running right home to

... But, being a recovering alcoholic, Dylan, while a mere 17, has lived at least 1,000 lives.

tell the whole Walsh clan that Kelly's mom was pregnant after she'd been sworn to secrecy. So concerned was Brenda with Dylan's imminent Valentine's surprise (not that she even got him a present) that she didn't even bat an eyelash at her flagrant violation of the sisterhood. Such lameness is par for the Brenda course.

The real question remains: Why is Dylan dating her and not us. Not only is he the hottest guy ever to own a locker, but he also is the most supportive boyfriend (see: Hold-up episode) and a rebel who breaks all the rules for all the right reasons. We are hard-pressed to

find any rules, except for Dad's lame statutory rape claim, that he actually has broken lately (because he doesn't live with parents — score). But, being a recovering alcoholic, Dylan, while a mere 17, has lived at least 1,000 lives.

Also possessing wisdom beyond her years is Kelly, our ultimate favorite character. While she seems, on the surface, to be shallow and snobby, Kelly rules. She always lays her emotions on the line and her mother's cocaine addiction has made Kelly a lot more responsible than is apparent to the naked viewer. So watch fully clothed — lest you miss the subtle nuances.

Not so subtle is Steve, Kelly's ex. Before the two-parter focusing on Steve's adoption angst, we basically had assessed Steve as a big, blond lame-o and could not understand Kelly's attraction much in the same way as that of Dylan's to Brenda. But the bus trip to his New Mexican roots brought out another side of the spoiled, usually piggish Steve. He still is having a perpetual bad hair day, though.

Despite hintage of a potential Andrea hook-up, Steve has yet to get over Kelly. Though we can understand, a new obsession is key at this juncture. We'd like the Andrea sparks to ignite because, like Steve needs to get over Kelly, Andrea, too, needs to get way over Brandon.

Career journalists like ourselves must shake our heads at the importance placed upon the West Beverly Blaze by Andrea. Dude, this is a HIGH SCHOOL paper. Get a life, and prove Brandon wrong for his diss about your lack of experience during the condom episode.

Another 90210 vestal virgin appears in the ever-anorexic form of Donna Martin, who will not do the deed until she's married (no thanks to David Silver's non-suave dropping of green condoms on pizza). While we do respect her for following her heart and flagrantly smooching at-the-time-geek David Silver, her acting abilities never will allow her to live down the Spelling nepotism charges, nor will that heinous Mermaid costume from Halloween.



The whole Beverly Hills gang — Can anyone be this perfect? They think so.

Donna's "I-spend-Daddy's-millions-on-plastic-surgery-but-still-look-kind-a-funny" face and generally sweet demeanor have endeared her to many a viewer, but we can't really get excited by her one way or the other. Maybe if she put on a few pounds. We do give a thumbs-up on her relationship with David Silver, however.

David himself now is in a gray area; the love interest, coupled with loser friend Scott's axing and new step-siblingness with Kelly all have served as important tools in the elevating of David's social status, but it's still somewhat of a stretch to accept him as one of the official gang. A mere year ago he was throwing eggs at people's cars.

Rounding out the *Bev Hills* crew are the parents. While Kelly's mom and David's dad did emerge with their love affair at center court for an episode, and Donna's philandering mom made a cameo as well, in *BH* when you talk 'rents, you still talk Walsh. Not only does Mom want Dylan (you heard the voice-over on the letter she wrote on the last episode of the spring season) and has no life whatsoever that does not involve her offspring, but she completely allows Dad, the sexist pig tyrant, to rule the roost with his irrational hatred of Dylan.

We speculate that Dad's ridiculous behavior is motivated by his own not-so-latent incestuous lusting after Brenda.

What he doesn't realize is that Brenda really wants Brandon (that sure explains all of their late-night talks and rendezvous in the bathroom). How's that for family dynamics?

So, why is *Beverly Hills 90210* our raison d'être? We know the show is at its best when it steers clear of any attempts to tackle the issues bigger than the prom.

Perhaps the questions is moot when asked of a generation that knows the name of the *Brady Bunch's* singing group (the Silver Platters).