

Brenda, Dylan, Brandon and Kelly: stereotypes all



LIA SALICCIA

Welcome to Wednesday night on Fox, home of stereotypes.

It struck me one evening during a rousing episode of *Beverly Hills, 90210* that the show contained just about every negative stereotype about college life there is.

It's no secret that the show is trash. It's no secret that lots of people watch it anyway. It's no secret that I do, even though I irritate my roommates with a running commentary about how many stereotypes are in it.

This season I've spotted: a black athlete flunking out of school who asks his tutor to take his test for him so he can do the

only thing he's good at: basketball; a woman who brought date rape charges against a guy because she was upset about being jilted; a bunch of really stupid women who let their boyfriends think for them; a graduate student who teaches a "power feminism" class and then puts a move on her student's boyfriend; and a "Take Back the Night" rally where the climax of the event is talking about what a hero the alleged date rapist is.

So why waste column space on this when I could write important stuff like scathing critiques of the ASUO?

Because not only are you more likely to read this, but also I believe there's a deeper meaning beyond this rapid show that's captured the brain cells of a nation.

Jungian analysis and basic communication studies emphasize the importance of the archetype. An archetype is a model of sorts, an image that serves as a prototype of the way people in a culture think of themselves.

They work their way into how we act and how we relate to one another. And where do they come from? Stories, which are anything from oral lore to fairy tales to magazine articles to books to myths to television.

If *Beverly Hills, 90210* both creates and sustains myth about our culture, we are in trouble. It means that we are stupid creatures indeed, especially the women. Sure it's fun to laugh at, but have you noticed that the men on that show carry most of the action, achieve most of the success, while the women are content to wait in the wings with some cookies?

Name one strong woman on the show who doesn't measure her success in terms of a man. Name one main character that isn't rich and spoiled. Name an intelligent character. Name one good role model for a young girl watching the show.

Sure it's fun to get drunk and eat munchies and rip apart all those whiny, rich, perfect-looking white people. But haven't you noticed that there's a com-

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munication problem in our culture? Stereotypes have a lot to do with it.

When you think of the potential stories have in bringing people together, *Beverly Hills, 90210* seems like wasted air time.

But until people who are more

numerous and intelligent than me figure out how to unite people in a culture beyond the stereotypes, I guess people will keep watching it.

Lia Saliccia is a columnist for the Emerald.

LETTERS

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Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.

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