

PERSPECTIVES

Inside the TV closet

No matter how much we deny it, cheese TV is a guilty pleasure for many of us



It all began in eighth grade when I discovered this cool, new TV show called "Beverly Hills, 90210." It took place in California, the characters drove cool cars, they lived in big houses and went shopping all the time. My brother would constantly make fun of the overly trendy program, saying things about Brandon's and Dylan's hair and that Donna was funny looking. However, he never seemed to miss an episode.

Throughout the legacy of "90210," a new classification of viewers emerged: the closet watcher. Oh, you know who you are. You rush home from school government meetings, telling your peers you have "mad studying" when, in truth, you can't wait to see what will happen with Donna, David, Steve, Kelly and whomever else is the new heartthrob on the Spelling spectacular.

You get a little bit peeved when someone calls during the show, and even if it's someone you've been longing to talk with, a vague, abstract conversation results from your end of the line. The closet "90210" watcher claims he or she "doesn't really watch it — you know if it's on or whatever, then maybe ...

Oh, please.

We study until our brains turn to mush, attend super-long lectures and eat rice a lot. "Beverly Hills, 90210" allows us to stare at the idiot-box for an hour or so, let our minds wander into Nine-Oh-Land and become enraptured in the lives of the make-believe characters. Remember when Donna and David finally had sex? Yeah, I thought you did.

Now, just to clear things up, the closet watcher is not limited to "Beverly Hills, 90210." It also accounts for "Friends," "Dawson's Creek," "Ally McBeal," "Just Shoot Me," "Felicity" or any other prime-time show that we watch when we should be doing something else.

The characters have tight groups of friends and eat meals that consist

of all four food groups. Their houses and apartments are always clean, and they never seem to wear the same thing twice.

It is surprising how many closet watchers are out there. My friend Nick sweetly asks me to tape "90210" because he has class on Wednesday nights and whether I know if "Friends" is a rerun.

And speaking of reruns ... "Beverly Hills, 90210" is on four hours every day (five on Wednesdays) while "Friends" is on twice a day (three times on Thursdays). I figure anyone can satisfy their closet kick at almost anytime during the day.

But it has been brought to my attention by a frustrated former roommate of mine that "Dawson's Creek" and "Beverly Hills, 90210" have created a separate section of the closet watcher: the flipper. Seeing how the two shows air at the same time, some viewers are torn between The Peach Pit and Capeside High School, resulting in flipping from one show to the other during commercial breaks. Don't producers and programmers know both shows would benefit from "Dawson's Creek" being scheduled to air after "Beverly Hills, 90210"?

The closet watcher is one of the best people to watch television with. Great attention is devoted to the show when it is on, homework is put aside, or barely looked at, and zone-out time begins. Then there are the groups of friends that gather together every other week or so to watch the desired closet show together. Someone brings salad, someone else a main course, and before you know it, a "90210" party is in the living room — all four food groups if you're lucky. And everyone is murmuring, "Gosh, I haven't seen this show in so long," when really, all of you watched it the week before.

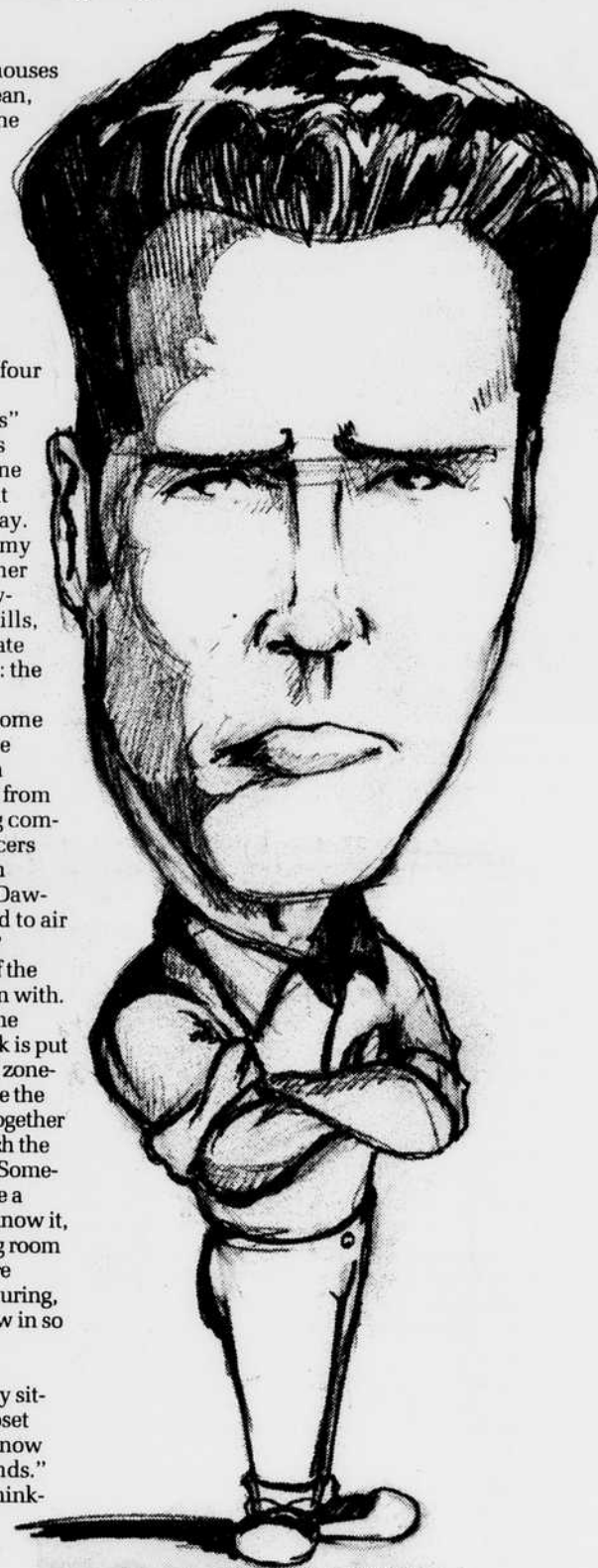
Just think about it — the guy sitting next to you could be a closet "Ally McBeal" fan, and you know your professor watches "Friends." Besides, you're sitting there thinking, "Wait a minute, today is Wednesday — Yes! '90210' is on!"

Amy Goldhammer is a columnist for the Emerald. Her views do not necessarily represent those of the newspaper.

Opinion



Amy Goldhammer



Letters to the Editor

PRIDE fallout

I'd like to express my frustration and dismay with UO Vice President Dan Williams' decision to deny the PRIDE Hall proposal, and President Dave Frohnmayr's subsequent support of the solution.

PRIDE Hall is not a proposal for a separate Queer University. In libraries, classrooms, labs and the student union, the UO will continue to be a sexually diverse, albeit predominantly heterosexual, environment. Establishing a residence hall for queer and queer-friendly students supports a vocal sexual minority on campus which exposes homophobia and initiates discussion of queer issues.

It is crucial for many queer people to talk

about their experiences with other queers. I enjoy discussing queer issues with many straight friends and colleagues. However, being the first gay man that many students meet can be tiring. I look forward to talking to my boyfriend, who understands my experiences with homophobia and gay identity on a deeper level because of our common experience as gay men.

The fact that UO Housing would worry that a hall of queer students would be physically threatened is proof of an unsafe campus. Such a problem is not briefly solvable. Queer students deserve a place on campus now.

Do you really believe the justification for this decision? Does the denial of a queer in-

stitution actually support the empowerment of queer students? Does the UO actually stand for the integration of the UO community, or are they more concerned with the effects (donors, legislation) of supporting queer rights?

Syd Peterson

Robert D. Clark Honors College

Wrestlemania

The idea of our University of Oregon wrestlers wearing rubber suits to lose weight is an unsettling one. I am shocked that in 1999 wrestlers still think that losing weight is the way to become more competitive. Perhaps in the world of college

wrestling this is still true, but our wrestlers ought to be looking beyond college. If they decide to turn pro after college and wrestle for a living, they will be competing in a sport without weight classes. In professional wrestling, bigger is better. Some of the greatest athletes in the sport carry a little extra around the midsection: 'Stone Cold' Steve Austin, Goldberg and Hulk Hogan are not svelte. Heck, even Andre the Giant had quite a gut. A piece of advice to college wrestlers: don't waste your time losing weight, work on your stage presence and chair swinging. But hang on to the rubber suit.

Jim Suruda

Computer Science