

The L Word

Lesbians are taking over television!

Unabashed women who love women have finally crashed the dominant culture's private party. *The L Word* is here. Hot throbbing dykes to watch out for have come out of the underground comics and onto the screen.

Since Goddess Ellen first outed a lesbian character to TV-viewing America, we haven't seen much dyke life on the tube. We see gays, but they're all guys. *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* slipped in (excuse the expression) because it makes straight guys more appealing to straight women. *Will and Grace*, after all, are a man and a woman. Even homoerotic *Queer As Folk* are mostly menfolk.

The L Word is about lesbians – a whole, tight-knit community totally enmeshed in each other's lives, loves, and fashion choices. The women are implausibly well-off and urbane with more lesbian chic than any lesbians I know. *The L Word* is cheesy, predictable, and histrionic just like a soap opera should be. Lesbians have been so starved for a reflection of ourselves in the media, we don't even mind that these TV lesbians are played by non-lesbian actors, except for the one true lesbian who, ironically, plays a bisexual – she's kd lang's real-life ex, which only a few lesbians and very astute gay men even know (or care).

Xenophobes (folks afraid of difference), and of Xena herself should be afraid of *The L Word*. Very afraid. *The L Word* lesbians definitely threaten the sanctity of sanctimony. None of the characters have booked flights to Massachusetts to get legally married ... yet. But in one plot line the main couple needs some sperm and a man to supply it in a cup. These days, lesbian mom wannabes can buy the stuff from a cryobank. But *The L Word* lesbians do it the old fashioned way – get a guy-friend to donate sperm, then zip it across town at body temperature to the hopeful mother-to-be. In my hometown lesbian community – about nine months before the first big dyke baby boom – you could hardly encounter a lesbian armpit that wasn't warming a vial of fresh semen.

I ran sperm for my friends Faith and Darlene. The donor was a good candidate – HIV negative and willing to butt out after making his contribution. He completed the anonymous questionnaire: height, hair and eye color, musical proclivities. Other than a few details, the moms wouldn't know who he was and vice versa. I was the go between.

Darlene's temp had spiked that morning – an event we had come to call a standing ovulation – and she and Faith hit the freeway. As soon as my friends got to town they checked into the designated fourth floor hotel room, while the donor entertained himself two floors below. By 8 pm I was riding in the floral-carpeted hotel elevator with two billion spermatazoa.

I tapped our secret code on the Room 406 door. Faith unlatched the lock and greeted me with a hug – long enough to convey affection, yet brief enough to sustain the motility of my little companions in a jar. Darlene was all set, and we hoped her egg was in the mood, too. Faith did the honors (one fateful squeeze of the turkey baster) while I chanted impromptu prayers and blessings along the lines of Go! Go! Go!

The three of us hung out on the bed for an hour, time for even the slowest pollywogs to make it upstream. Darlene rested on her back with her legs propped against the wall, hoping one of the little buggers had the wherewithal to knock her up.

Tina assumed the same position in the insemination episode of *The L Word*. In the televised couple's private moment, just like ours 15 years ago, a merry band of lesbian friends sits on the bed together, making a baby. Maybe next year we'll get a moment like that during the Super Bowl halftime show.

For all the dirt on *The L Word*, go to www.sho.com/site/lword/home.do



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

is so full of myths, omissions and half-truths that it merits a response. The Green Party has now elected more than 200 people to public office in the U.S. alone. The only party in this country dedicated to peace, social justice, real democracy and sustainability, we are also an international success with parties in more than 90 countries worldwide. Elected Greens have been responsible for everything from providing living wages to promoting biodiesel and improving recycling, to eliminating pesticide usage on school grounds, to phasing out nuclear power plants in Germany.

Greens are also champions of electoral reforms from the current Campaign Finance Reform initiative being circulated in Oregon to the successful initiative to use Instant Runoff Voting in San Francisco.

If people want to blame the Greens for exercising our constitutional and human rights, fine. I'll tell you what, Sybil, we'll take the blame for electing George Bush if you and your fellow whiny Democrats take the blame for supporting every evil and idiotic notion that moron has come up with. Sybil, you and the Democrats would be in a lot better position to criticize the Greens if the Democrats didn't overwhelmingly support the war in Iraq, the war in Afghanistan, the war on our civil and constitutional rights and the war on the poor.

This diverse country deserves a multi-party democracy, Sybil, not a dictatorship or duopoly. The Greens are here to stay and we're not going anywhere. As Bob Dylan said: "Get out of the way if you can't lend a hand for the times they are a-changing."

Blair Bobier
Corvallis

THE REAL WEAPONS

We have found the weapons intended to destroy the masses; they are in the Bush budget proposal for 2005. One hundred and twenty-eight government programs will come under attack or planned annihilation. While bombing programs in education, health, housing and law enforcement, Bush will add 7 percent to the military budget and 10 percent to domestic security. I see why he calls himself a "war president."

He is waging war against the middle and working classes.

What is striking about the increase in the military budget is that it will not enhance our security. The big ticket items are ones that were needed for a war with the USSR. The

Missile Defense Agency's 20 percent increase will initiate phase one of Star Wars even though the tests for accuracy and safety of these weapons have failed. The money to continue research on bunker busters remains intact (our tax dollars devoted to the creation of nuclear weapons we may actually use).

This budget omits the price tag of our ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan which are estimated at \$50 billion annually. Last year Congress authorized supplemental spending packages of \$78.5 billion in April and \$87.5 billion in November. How long can we fund this president's multi-millionaire friends, his corporate cronies and his vision of establishing democracy throughout the world while starving the dream of justice and equal opportunity at home?

Susan Cundiff
Eugene

HONORING ETTER

Few persons in the life of Eugene have made such a sustained contribution to the culture of the city as has Orval Etter. A retired UO professor, his commitment to music is significant, even if it may not include virtuosity at his instrument of choice, the cello.

At 88, he continues to manage a Eugene chamber music group that performs every Saturday afternoon at the Atrium in downtown Eugene. During the summer, he schedules and introduces Sunday evening concerts at Washburn Park. He also is founder and moderator of a weekly discussion group on peace issues, the Pacifica Forum.

Tonight (Feb. 19), the Eugene Symphony will honor Etter and his wife, Mary, for their key role in creating the symphony three decades ago. They and three others made personal financial commitments that enabled a rudimentary symphony to begin performing in varied venues under direction of the late Lawrence Maves.

While the Etters' financial contribution to the building of the Hult Center may have been nominal, they are recognized as godparents, as the existence of the Eugene Symphony was basic to the decision to create the Hult.

George Beres
Eugene

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