



IN THE LIFE

Documentary stories from the gay experience

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IN THE LIFE PRESENTS “WOMEN THROUGH THE LENS” REPRESENTATIONS OF LGBT WOMEN IN TELEVISION AND FILM



NEW YORK—IN THE LIFE, the only three-time Emmy nominated public television series documenting the gay experience, commemorates Women's History Month by focusing its lens on popular representations of LGBT women in television and cinema, highlighting the stories and the collaborations behind them.

Historically, images of lesbians in film and television were largely defined by the lack thereof. Rarely surfacing, if represented at all, lesbian characters were skirted—made palatable to male audiences as the third-wheel in a love triangle or the best “friend” sharing an intimate relationship with a heterosexual woman, often demonized as sociopaths or “vamps,” deserving of their eventual grim fate. Hungry for real reflections of themselves, generations of LGBT women have been left to imagine their own lesbian subtexts for the characters in their favorite shows. Actress Leisha Hailey, who plays Alice Pieszec on Showtime’s “The L Word,” did. “I would go into this sort of fantasy world when I watched television,” she said. “For instance, ‘Facts of Life.’ I really thought Jo and Blair had something special going on.”

This month, IN THE LIFE celebrates the pioneers who have broken the silence—bringing unveiled, unapologetic lesbian characters to the screen. We take a look at the iconic cameos and cult classics that punctuate the history of lesbian depiction in TV and film.

In January 2005, IN THE LIFE went behind-the-scenes of the, then, new and groundbreaking hit drama, “The L Word.” The show inspired as much controversy as acclaim for its representation of LGBT women who were unlike any we’ve seen on mainstream television before—glamorous, powerful, and sexual—these were Hollywood lesbians.

As the provocative series enters its 6th and final season, we take a nostalgic look with the cast and creators who made it the cutting-edge portrayal of lesbian life and culture on television.

In A CONVERSATION WITH..., long-time collaborators, screen actress Julianne Moore and Killer Films co-founder and producer Christine Vachon talk about lesbian representation in film, the state of queer cinema and homophobia in Hollywood.

And in our REEL TO REEL series, IN THE LIFE looks at the 1986 classic film, "Desert Hearts." Long abundant in the rich canons of lesbian literature, love stories between women have survived, hidden away between the pages in a way that wouldn't be tolerated on camera. Lesbian readers have taken refuge in the quiet corners of libraries and the privacy of their homes with books that reflect their own lives and characters that share their experiences. And so it was with great boldness that, film director, Donna Deitch, dared to bring Jane Rules's "Deserts of the Heart" to the bright lights and wider audience of the big screen. Critics hailed it as a one of "undeniable power," and it remains one of the top-grossing lesbian features of all time. The film's star, Patrice Charboneau, and director Donna Deitch remember the excitement of its production.

"Women Through The Lens" begins airing March 1st, and will be available for free video streaming and downloadable podcasts from the IN THE LIFE website starting March 2nd. To find out when it will air in their local areas, to stream or download it, viewers should go to www.inthelifetv.org.

About In The Life Media

In The Life Media provides information about the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities, documents the ongoing LGBT civil rights movement, and produces diverse images of the LGBT community to create better understanding and acceptance.

About IN THE LIFE

Produced by In The Life Media, IN THE LIFE is the longest running television show documenting the gay experience. IN THE LIFE is a three-time Emmy Award nominee, a Lambda Legal Liberty Award honoree, and the recipient of the Courage Award from the New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project. In 2004, GLAAD honored our organization with the prestigious Barbara Gittings Award "for contributions to LGBT media." In 2006, it won the Seigenthaler Award from the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association for "excellence in network television."

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