

## Into the Wild...of *The Bachelor* Set

I excitedly tuned in this last Monday for the start to another salacious season of your favorite guilty pleasure and mine—*The Bachelor*. I didn't get very far into it before I had to double-check to verify which channel I was on, thinking that surely my son had grabbed the remote, as he is wont to do, and switched us to Animal Planet—such were the antics of both the female contestants and the camera and editing staff.

I've been a willing fish, taking the bite every time it's offered to the target demographic that I belong to, ever since I was invited to a neighbor's apartment for a 'Girls Night' viewing party along with ten-some other targeted women fish—teachers, nurses—the crème of the girly-girl crop, suddenly seeping from my rugged mountain community's far corners and collecting in one living room, like sap. Household decision-making, young, professional...sap. Wearing lipstick. Suddenly I was hooked (on the camaraderie if not the content of what we were all there for).

But this was the first time the show resembled more of a peephole into a scene from the wilds of the Serengeti than a coiffed, civilized "reality" dating program. I couldn't help but notice—thanks to a few wide panning camera shots of the women hovering and swooping and side-saddling as close as they could get to our Bachelor Du Jour, Sean, that when people are dumped into what is essentially a study on scarcity where the stakes include our own evolution and reproduction—that we, as people, are not that far removed from being appropriate subject matter for an episode of *Life* as narrated by Oprah Winfrey.

It must have been comical to have been in Sean's shoes—sitting down to try and have a productive get-to-know-you conversation with one person, while around you—many others are lurking, darting by, eyeing you patiently for their opportunity to slip in for their own shot at "one-on-one time", like you're a dung pile and they're the flies taking turns to land, all the while trying not to encroach upon each other's personal space bubble.

My favorite shot of this episode, by far, was the one that captured a distant Sean and whichever was his present one-on-one-timer, having sat down for a chat. In the foreground was a contestant who thought it would be a good idea to stand just within their eyeshot and dance. There was no music. It was not dancing in a, 'this is for myself—I've got time to kill' kind of way. It was a table dance without a table, a—what she must have thought—was a seductive, enchanting way; I guess hoping Sean would see a woman dancing alone, her bottom swaying 'just so' in his general direction, as a way of displaying her physical assets in their best light. All I could think, was "peacock"—or, for lack of a more appropriate female example, "baboon". I think it is notable here that I had a hard time thinking of females in the animal world that actually perform courtship displays; but that is another topic for another day.

Suffice it to say, that we are not that far removed from our animal kingdom cohorts. The perspective achieved by this season's *The Bachelor* camera crew seems to be adding another

level of entertainment to this seemingly “mindless” television. I’m thinking Oprah should take it and run with it—supplying ‘nature scene’ voiceover, and replaying it on “OWN”. It might be a crossover hit—bridging the worlds of the natural sciences nerds and the lipsticked nurses. Think about it, Oprah—but don’t forget where you got the idea \*wink\*.