

School Sucks

by Denise Kaplan

It's happening! The pinnacle of pregnancy! We've started birthing classes!

I've been so excited for them that I signed up just moments after I triumphantly peed on that stick. In every movie I've ever seen where someone has a baby, birthing class is part of the pregnancy montage. I've always fantasized about being a be part of a movie montage and it was finally happening. True, my first choice is a makeover montage, but this one is a close second.

Much like my fantasy of being one of those adorable pre-natal yoga doing, basketball-bellied pregnant ladies, this, too, had a reality that just did not live up.

I'm going to say it, I don't like birthing class. That's a lie – I don't not like it, I hate it. I hate it with the white-hot passion of a thousand suns.

It's nothing like being in a movie. In fact, now I know why this part of the movie is always the montage – because it's freaking boring as hell. It's much more the instructor talking and you just sitting there listening than movies have led me to believe. In fact, they got a ton of it wrong.

That adorable moment when we lie on the floor breathing? Doesn't happen. First of all, I've never done a single hee-hee-hoo. Our instructor has us doing more of a long low moan which is neither adorable nor fun to hear coming out of the creepy couple next to us. Second, all of the positions are weird, awkward, and our instructor demonstrates them for way too long. Trust me, there's nothing more uncomfortable than sitting in a room full of expectant couples while a woman lectures you as she lies on the floor with her ankles up around her ears.

The parts that aren't totally mind numbingly boring or completely awkward are disturbing as hell. I spent the entire first class trying to decide which I found to be more horrifying – the extraordinarily detailed episiotomy poster our instructor held up every five seconds or the model of a pelvis she kept jamming a doll through. The doll through the pelvis won when she wedged the head in there, put it up against herself and walked around the room like that for what seemed like forever. I used to have nightmares of my child being born with his face was on backwards. Thanks, lady, for replacing it with this.

Another reason? This class is jam packed with nothing but heterosexual couples. We're in Los Angeles and the hospital is in West Hollywood – the homosexual mecca of Southern California. Why is there not a single lesbian couple in the group? Seriously, do I have to pay extra to get a gay couple with their surrogate? It's West Hollywood – I want the show, damnit! And if it's not bad enough that we're all a bunch of heteros, we've got all the diversity of a 1950s lunch counter. Seriously, not even an asian or and interracial couple in there to mix things up.

I had such high hopes for my fellow classmates – they were going to be the main characters in the next chapter of my life. I don't want to do it with a boring pack of straight white people. Where's my sassy black friend who's going to give it to me straight? Or my new catty homosexual bestie that's going to help me rock a nursing top and remind me that jeggings are never the answer? Not at Cedars-Sinai from 2:30 to 5:00 on Sundays – that's for damn sure.

The Birthing Video – to begin with, she just kind of sprang it on us. We're sitting there and all of the sudden a dvd goes in and there's a woman panting on her living room floor.

I had so many question - Why isn't she at the hospital? Why is the production value of this video so

low? Most importantly – why is her nightgown so see-thru?

Is this the best you can do Cedars-Sinai? You're a very fancy hospital with wall-to-wall movie stars and other industry types rolling in and out of there on a daily basis. Steven Spielberg has an entire building named after him – you couldn't hit him up for a couple tips? Why does this look like it was shot on a cell phone without this woman's knowledge?

I understand you're going for realism here, but I'll allow a little artistic leeway so I don't have to watch a woman enduring the first stages of labor in her messy house wearing a flimsy muu-muu while her husband sits on the couch watching reruns of Living Single.

The worst thing about this class is how disappointed I am in it. I wanted so badly to love it. This class was going to make Sundays my favorite day of the week. Our instructor was going to be our birthing Yoda and our classmates our new best friends and confidants. Instead, now I hate Sundays more than Garfield does Mondays, our instructor is no Yoda (she's a Qui-Gon Jinn at best), and the only connection I have with any of my fellow classmates is when I stare at them and wish that they were black or gay.

Luckily, this will be my only disappointment on the road to motherhood and everything else will go exactly as planned. Right?