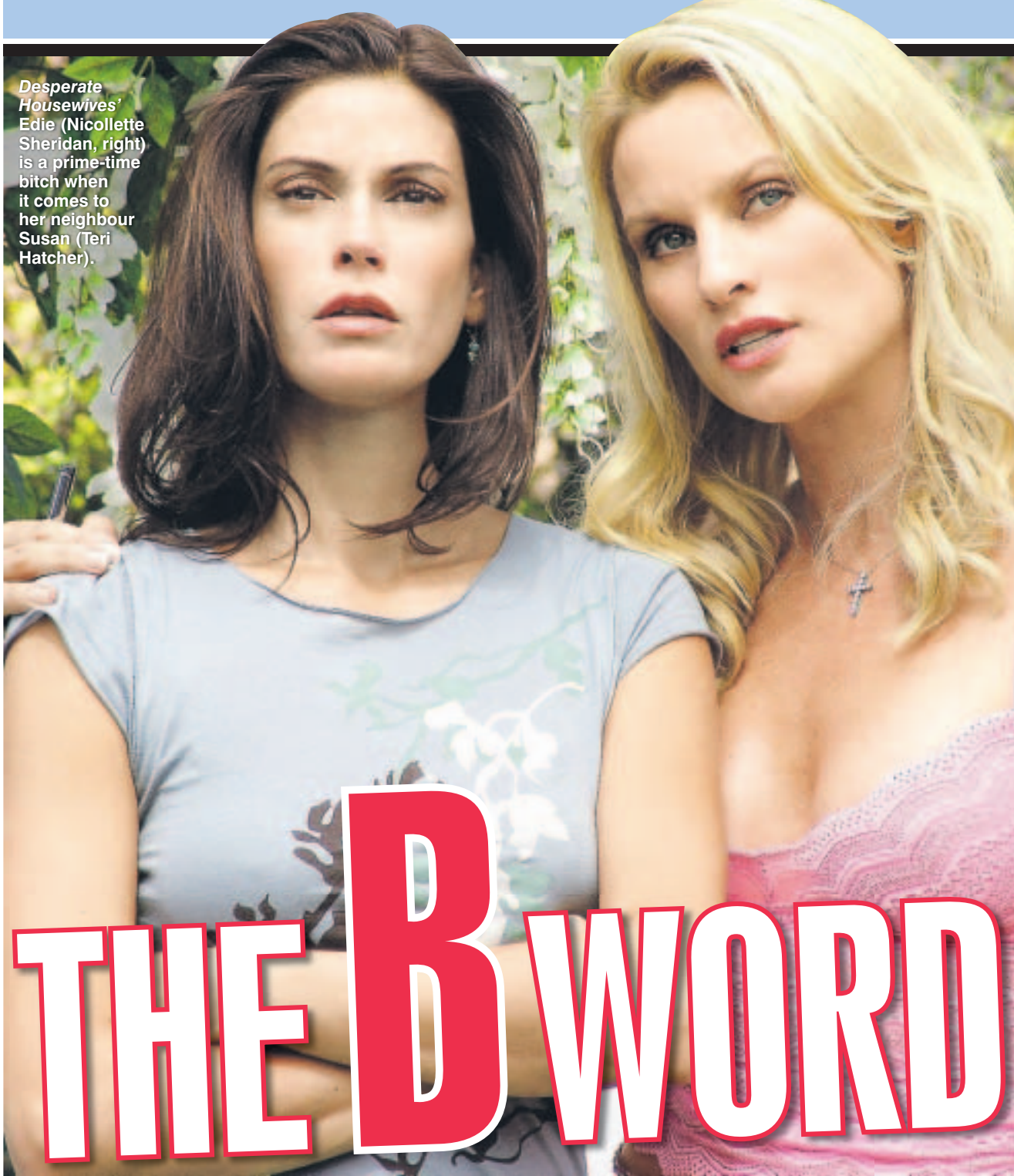


# mxFlirt



*Desperate Housewives'* Edie (Nicollette Sheridan, right) is a prime-time bitch when it comes to her neighbour Susan (Teri Hatcher).



## HOW WAS IT FOR YOU?

DR BELLA



**“Married couples are more likely to have sex outside than those dating. Who would have thought?”**

Summer is over. Goodbye long, perfect Saturday nights, I'll miss you.

Now, to take full advantage of the changing season, Dr Bella suggests:

■ Try to get into our gorgeous blue sea one more time. Submerge all your work worries into the abyss.

■ Have your mates over for a final barbecue.

■ And perhaps, most importantly, consider the value of an outdoor shag.

Does this last recommendation perturb you? If so, you're not alone. In a recent EROS Essentials Outdoor Sex Survey, one in four (27 per cent) of Australians found the idea of sex outside totally inappropriate. This was irrespective of age, gender, marital status and socio-economic standing.

What else did the study discover that may interest you, my curious mx readers?

■ Eight out of 10 Australians interviewed aged 18-39 have had sex outdoors (79 per cent). Aussie Aussie Aussie, oi oi oi. And almost half said alfresco sex was part of their normal lovemaking practice.

■ Married couples (28 per cent) are more likely to have sex outside than those dating (18 per cent). Who would have thought?

■ Younger people, aged 18-24 (68 per cent) and capital city dwellers (71 per cent) have less outdoor sex than older, aged 24-34 (81 per cent) rural/regional people (82 per cent). Another reason to move to the country ...

But why do it outside when surely a bed will suffice and is undoubtedly more comfortable?

Well, in the beginning, sex with someone you're crazy about is generally crazy good. All that

lust, confusion and ... newness. But to maintain a shagadelic sex life, one has to think outside of the box and work to keep routine at bay.

Think about it this way. If every time you got in your car you went exactly the same speed, down exactly the same streets, how long would it take for you to rebel and drive interstate? Novelty is the handmaiden of sexual delight. This Australians' know. Novelty can be achieved by creating greater intimacy with your partner, graduating beyond the missionary position or, by taking your lovin' to the open road.

So where do Aussies do it when not at home? The car (66 per cent), the back yard (45 per cent) – hopefully not with Burke – the beach (44 per cent) the bush (43 per cent), the park (35 per cent) and the field (18 per cent).

If you could believe it, there's a website [www.ishaggedhere.com](http://www.ishaggedhere.com) where one can have a plaque made immortalising their most unforgettable sexual caper. And, there's even a book out, *Sex in the Outdoors*, by Robert Rose MD and Tilton Buck MS. I'll leave you with an excerpt:

“Sex in the outdoors can potentially have a severe impact on an otherwise pristine wilderness area. First consider the visual impact. Imagine the consternation of someone who comes walking over a ridge and sees the natural wonder of a magnificent vista blotted by a couple having sex in a high alpine meadow. Instead, move into some bushes or into a stand of thick timber, well away from the trails.”

Remember: wherever you're having sex, keep it safe, legal and clean up after yourself.

*Best of luck in love*

**CATHERINE JARVIE** explains there are rules when it comes to catty chick chat.

It's probably fair to say that in the land of female clichés, the fairer sex's love of bitching is second only to her love of handbags and shoes.

But while the latter tend to be considered fluffy-headed fripperies, bitching, we are frequently told, is “a bad thing”.

### TRASH TALK

A good bitch in the toilets is fun. In Kate Figes's *Big Fat Bitch Book*, bitching is celebrated as the highly amusing art it can be.

We all know it's good to talk ... well, you'll be mighty glad to know it can be good to bitch, too.

According to the author, bitching, like gossip, is a way of assessing yourself and your surroundings.

We learn the rules in the playground as part of a complex hierarchical game that employs bitching among peers as a way to check out both the competition and our place within it.

### GROWN-UP BITCHES

As we get older, so our bitching develops. We use it to bond with our friends (nothing like a good old moan over a few glasses of wine at the end of another endlessly rubbish week at work) and keep our enemies in check.

Figes notes that women, while brought up to be good girls who do right by those around them, still need a way to let off steam – bitching behind someone's back avoids insulting someone to their face while still getting your message across.

Linguist Jennifer Coates says even that classic move of agreeing with someone to their face only to slag them off for that very same thing as soon as their back is turned is simply a way of maximising the

common ground with that person, while still affording us the opportunity to express our own feelings as well.

Which all sounds rather marvellous and provides an instant conscience salve to anyone who's ever directly praised a friend's cooking/parenting/bungee jumping skills in the full knowledge that you'll be mocking them a nanosecond later.

But this only really works if everyone's playing by the same rules.

At its best, bitching is hilarious and a great way to let off steam.



### DEGREES OF BITCHING

But there's a fine line between sharing a good, honest, gossipy moan and being cruel. Bitching can serve

a useful function in cutting down oversized egos or keeping bores in check, but if it's sustained over a period of time or continually directed at one person, it turns swiftly into bullying.

Bitching might be a

useful way to level the playing field when you're feeling threatened (sexual competition among women is a classic bitch-trigger), undermined (if your boss passes you over for promotion – again) or just plain old bored (nothing like a good old slag-fest to lift the colour of the day), but it's far from a one-size-fits-all activity.

Family members, for example, get away with much crueller and more barbed comments than many others because the strength of the familial bond – the knowledge you'll really be there for one another when the chips are down – balances it out. The same principle works with really close friends, the best of whom you'll be able to volley gently bitchy comments with like star players on Wimbledon's centre court.

However, when it comes to slagging off strangers, ganging up on one person, or pointedly attacking those you know are weaker than yourself, you're no longer bitching. You're simply being a bitch.

■ **SOURCE:** [www.handbag.com](http://www.handbag.com)

BTW

Questions, thoughts, sexual tips?  
Email me at [dearbella@mxnet.com.au](mailto:dearbella@mxnet.com.au)  
or visit [www.drbella.com.au](http://www.drbella.com.au)