

'Get Rid of All the Heterosexuals': ABC Gay Propaganda Series 'Rise' Goes Extreme

ABC's eight-hour gay propaganda event *When We Rise* isn't afraid to go low. Monday night's episode immediately gets into the leftist activism with a montage bashing Republicans and comparing gay rights to the fight against Nazism and the Civil Rights movement—and it all goes downhill from there.

Created by LGBT activist Dustin Lance Black, who won an Oscar for Best Screenplay for *Milk* in 2009, the four-night miniseries follows the lives of liberal gay activists Cleve Jones, Ken Jones and Roma Guy from the 1970s to the modern day.

"Night I" starts in 2006 with Cleve Jones (Guy Pearce) giving an interview where he quickly runs through the last few decades of LGBT history in America. Clips of hated social conservatives Sen. Jesse Helms and President George W. Bush are shown speaking out against homosexuality and gay marriage, but shockingly, President Ronald Reagan isn't mentioned. I'm sure the left-wing conspiracy theories that Reagan encouraged the spread of AIDS will be coming when the series hits the '80s epidemic. LGBT sacred martyr Matthew Shepard is referenced, "Those who truly hate us ... are trying young men to fences in Wyoming and cracking their skulls open." Of course, we now know that Shepard's murder, horrific as it was, was not a hate crime.

Cleve: I was close to my grandparents. I grew up listening to their stories of World War I, watching the German dirigibles being shot down over London and of course my mother's

stories of the Depression and World War II, how each generation has its own epic confrontations that it must face ... the black Civil Rights Movement, the women's movement, Vietnam.

Reporter: War protesters gathered for a dramatic and unprecedented appeal to the U.S. Government to end the war in Vietnam.

Cleve: I knew what I was called to do. Not as an individual—as part of my generation. But over half of us are gone now. You know, from the beginning of the epidemic, our fear was that everything we'd worked for would just be swept away—our neighborhoods ... the cultural cauldrons ... the freedoms we built and won. And those who truly hate us ...

Sen. Jesse Helms: "Gay" used to be a beautiful word. It has been corrupted.

Man on news: I believe in hell. I believe these (obscenity) are going to hell.

Cleve: ... are tying young men to fences in Wyoming and cracking their skulls open, with George W. Bush threatening constitutional amendments against our families.

George W. Bush: Today I call upon the Congress to promptly pass an amendment to our constitution defining and protecting marriage as a union of a man and woman.

Cleve: I could go to my grave a criminal again.

This, combined with all the gay characters kissing and hooking up in various states of undress within the first 10 minutes, is not exactly a friendly and accessible overture to Middle America, but creator and gay activist Dustin Lance Black insists, "I think a lot of people who voted for Donald Trump will love this show. I don't see this show as trying to speak to only half of the country—I didn't write the show for

half the country.”

Forget half the country, only a tiny fraction of the country would even be remotely interested in this miniseries; it is quite tedious and completely centers on leftist issues to the exclusion of any compelling story lines or character development.

Ostensibly about the gay rights movement, the show quickly makes it clear that it is about all the radical social justice movements of the 70s, with Cleve’s past marching against Vietnam, for the Equal Rights Amendment, and with Cesar Chavez and Roma organizing rallies to stop violence against women and becoming too radical for even the feminist group the National Organization of Women. As Cleve says, they seek to smash societal norms like, “Marriage, military, religious, white, male, cop, supremacy crap.”

There are so many leftist tropes checked off in the first two hours, I can only imagine what’s coming in the next six. Arrogant Vietnam naval leader who ignores his crew’s advice leading to the death of his men? Check. Catholic mom who had 10 pregnancies and wants “better” for her daughter? Check. Racist commanding officer who makes black Medal of Honor recipients go to the back of the bus? Check. Evil, sexist, homophobic cops who beat up defenseless women and gays while they chant, “Stop the violence?” Check. African American character who leaves a black church that rails against homosexuality then is kicked out of a gay bar for being black? Check.

With all the talk today about homophobia, *When We Rise* surprisingly brings attention to heterophobia. Cleve tells one of his lovers, “I say we just get rid of all the heterosexuals. They’re so boring.” Can you imagine if a straight character said, “Let’s get rid of all the homosexuals”? Another woman declares, “The traditional heterosexual model for relationships is monogamy ... so I

suggest that we abandon that model” for a three-way lesbian relationship. Yeah, wouldn’t want to follow heteros’ model of marriage.

Black repeatedly talks about his conservative Christian family, how he wants his work to reach people like them, and how important it is for the show to be on a major network like ABC, not just preaching to the choir on HBO, but this series is the very definition of preaching to the choir: a liberal LGBT activist show, by liberal LGBT activists, for liberal LGBT activists, about liberal LGBT activists.

If its goal truly was to go beyond left-wing gay propaganda to affect a more mainstream audience, *When We Rise* falls woefully short. {eo}