

## Loose Lips

**Foxy Sharon Lawrence plays a professor getting in touch with her heart.**

By: **Brian Scott Lipton**



Nicholas Gonzalez and Sharon Lawrence  
in *Dialectics of the Heart*  
(Photo © Ed Krieger)

### LAWRENCE OF CALIFORNIA

Having spent several seasons on *NYPD Blue* as the girlfriend and then wife of an older man, **Sharon Lawrence** turns the tables in **Dale Griffiths Stamos's** *Dialectics of a Heart*, opening January 20 at Santa Monica's Edgemar Center for the Arts. She plays Dr. Elizabeth Drewer, a renowned philosophy professor who becomes sexually involved with her hunky teaching assistant, Richard (film star **Nicholas Gonzalez**).

"I wasn't aware of how stringent the policies at colleges have become about teachers fraternizing with their students," says Lawrence. "Even though Richard is not a kid, this relationship poses ethical problems for Elizabeth because she's been very vocal when other professors have crossed the line." The actress has been doing lots of research for the part, including reading many of the world's great philosophers. "I really like Espinosa," Lawrence tells me, "because he was very clear about stilling your mind."

She feels that Elizabeth's biggest dilemma is "facing a different way of thinking about life," and adds that the same thing applies to her since she married **Dr. Tom Apostle** in 2002: "I've had to learn to be a more integrated version of a female and to recognize that I don't have to be as ambitious and driven in my personal life as I was in my professional life. I've even learned how to cook; I've become a pretty good one, and no one is more surprised about that than me! I always thought I didn't need the hearth and home, but now I realize that wasn't true."

Lawrence's reluctance to leave her husband for long periods of time may limit her New York stage opportunities, but she'd be interested in a Broadway transfer of the L.A. production of *Paint Your Wagon* that she did last year at the Geffen; or she might turn up in NYC in a production of *No Time for Comedy*, which she starred in last summer at the Bay Street Theatre in Sag Harbor. Fortunately, there's plenty of television work for her in L.A. -- including the upcoming Lifetime film *Augusta Gone*, in which she plays the mother of a troubled 14-year-old girl. "It was a challenging role," she admits, "but such an important film to do. Everyone on the set knew someone who had gone through this with their teenager. I think the big difference is, when I was that age, teens weren't pressured to sexualize themselves so early."

Speaking of sex: Might she return as dominatrix Maisy Gibbons on the smash hit *Desperate Housewives*? "I know [series creator] **Marc Cherry** is very much interested in having me as part of the show," says Lawrence. "I originally tested for the role of Bree [which went to **Marcia Cross**], but I'm so happy to be able come and go and do such juicy things as a guest star. Maisy is in prison, but she's gotta get sprung sometime!"