

## TEN QUESTIONS WITH

# ROB DELANEY

He made his name on social media and *Catastrophe* – now the actor and writer bares all in a raunchy new drama

American actor Rob Delaney, most famous for ribald comedy *Catastrophe*, which he co-created with Sharon Horgan, stars in new drama *Dying for Sex*. The series, based on a podcast of the same name, tells the true story of the late Molly Kochan (Michelle Williams), who left her husband after being diagnosed with stage four breast cancer, and embarked on a sexual odyssey. Delaney (48) plays Molly's neighbour, and here discusses his disdain for private healthcare, becoming a British citizen and why his hairy body is a political statement.

***Dying for Sex* has a lot of, well, sex – did you work with an intimacy coordinator?**

Yeah, and it's getting better and easier every time, because just from a technical standpoint, why not choreograph that stuff? It makes everybody more comfortable. When people resist it and do whatever in the scene, it usually stinks. I say that as somebody who created a show [*Catastrophe*] that had a lot of intimacy, and that was before intimacy coordinators. We would be like, "Is it OK if I do this?" "Can

I caress this?" Now somebody else does that for me.

**Is it hard to strip down on screen for intimate scenes?**

We scrutinise our bodies, particularly in this business. Sometimes I've been like, "Am I too hairy?" I tried to trim my chest hair once, but that looked weird, so now I just let it happen. With everybody trying to be

perfect, people start looking the same, and that's boring. It's actually a very conscious and focused political decision to be as hairy as I am, to help others appreciate themselves!

**Are you ever worried about your sons seeing some of the scenes when they get older?**

Some of it would horrify them big time. I try to pad my career with other things, like an animated film, or a cartoon – things where I'm not being repeatedly kicked erotically in the nuts by a woman with a riding crop.

‘Being hairy is a conscious decision to help others appreciate themselves!’

ROB DELANEY

***Dying for Sex* is about living life to the full – what's on your bucket list?**

My wife, Leah, and kids asked me what I would do with unlimited money and my answer would be to get a live-in drum teacher and guitar teacher, so I could make music. For my bucket list, I'd force Led Zeppelin to reunite with me on drums. They would hate it, but too bad.

**How did watching Molly using dating apps in the show make you feel?**

I love getting older, getting grey

hair and having vegetarian chilli with Leah and then going to bed at a sensible time after playing Bananagrams. If Leah left me, I still wouldn't use dating apps. I'd be that weird 48-year-old-guy who talks to people in public, says hello and makes eye contact.

**Your character is very open with his emotions in the show. Do you think it's still hard for men to express their feelings?**

On paper, we all know we're supposed to do it, but it takes a while to get engrained. I can still resist leaning into my emotions, and accepting that the stuff that comes from my heart is probably

more important than what comes from my head, but it's great to share the gift of your real feelings. Anger is out of fashion these days, but it's just one of the colours of the emotional rainbow. If you try to fight it or stuff it down, it'll come out in another, more destructive way. Be angry! There's a lot to be angry about.

**What makes you angry?**

Private health insurance is just evil – I really hate it and anybody supporting it. When you see an advert for it in the UK, because private insurance is making

inroads, at the bottom it'll say, "pre-existing conditions not covered", which, for the moment, remains illegal in America. It's like, "Please give us your money, but not for things you want to use us for."

**You were born in Boston, live in London, and *Dying for Sex* was filmed in New York. How do you split your time?**

At the ceremony when I became a British citizen last year, there were people from all over the world and it was so beautiful. For me to leave the UK, it has to be a good job that I really want to do. I strive to stay close to home so I can be around for my kids. Once they're older, I can make stuff in Madagascar, Myanmar and Siberia.

**You write, act and produce. Would you ever direct?**

Never. After a couple of takes, my patience would end. Plus, I don't want to get up too early. The greatest joy is to write something and have it produced. I'm psychotic about what's on the page, so it's really important to me that the thing I wrote gets said the way I wrote it.

**You became known for your comedy on Twitter, now X – are you still a fan of social media?**

I actually quit social media a few months ago, I gave away my logins and passwords [for other people to run the accounts]. I'm almost 50. I'd given enough energy to that stuff, and the fun times were some years ago now. **LAURA RUTKOWSKI**

*Dying for Sex* streams on Disney+ from Friday



BOY NEXT DOOR  
Rob Delaney plays  
Michelle Williams's  
neighbour in  
*Dying for Sex*

## WHAT IT'S LIKE TO...

# train dogs on television



SIT!  
Graeme Hall has  
trained thousands  
of dogs in his career

**Graeme Hall, the dog trainer on 5's *Dogs Behaving (Very) Badly*, has truly earned his stage name, the Dogfather. Since 2017, he's trained between 5,000 and 6,000 dogs – and one fox.**

**ONE MAN, TWO ROTTWEILERS**

While I worked at Weetabix for over 20 years, I volunteered as a special constable and adopted two rottweiler puppies. I wanted them to be good ambassadors for the breed, so I learnt everything I could about dog training. I now have a 15-year-old staffy cross who is a really easy dog. He makes me look good.

**COMMUNICATION KING** I left university with a Hispanic Studies degree. You may think there's no connection to dog training, but it's about communicating in a foreign language. Dogs read body language and facial expressions. I then have to communicate the "problem" to the dog's owners. I often think to myself, "I can't wait to tell you what your dog's thinking," and they say, "I can't believe I didn't see it."

**GOOD BOY** We can focus on the negative too much. If we don't tell

them what we want by praising them, how do they know? The emphasis must be on the positive. It also teaches you to not judge a book by its cover. The mistake is to jump in, spouting advice before asking questions and listening. What drives me is helping people – in a world where telly is a bit cynical, our show is different.

**THE PRESSURE IS ON**

In a worst-case scenario, I can sometimes get only two hours to train a dog – that's the nature of TV, as we also have to film me driving to the owner's house, knocking on the door and talking about what the problem is. If we're lead walking, it has to be filmed outside, come rain or shine. The dog owners are real people, not actors. We want to see a genuine outcome.

**LEARNING THE FOXTROT**

On a visit to a dog rescue centre, I was asked to train this very nervous fox they'd adopted, whose mother had died. They were hoping he'd become a mascot! I trained him to walk nicely on a lead. **CHARLEY ROSS**

*Dogs Behaving (Very) Badly* continues on Tuesday at 8pm on 5