

Leisure Suit Larry 6 Shape Up or Slip Out!

By Gregg Keizer

Larry Laffer, the quintessential digital doofus, is back on the hard drive again. And like earlier forays into bad taste and bad manners, *Leisure Suit Larry 6: Shape Up or Slip Out!* lives up, or down, to the Laffer reputation. Devotees of this Sierra series won't be disappointed, but to many of the rest of us, Larry's gotten creaky and predictable, a bit like a Bond film starring Roger Moore.

If you've played any recent Larry, you'll feel right at home in Larry 6, in which Laffer wins a stay at a female-filled resort. No major changes in animation, background graphics, or

close-ups here. And Larry is as inept around

women as ever. A new, always-visible inventory improves the familiar point-and-click interface, and it takes half a minute to fall into the pattern as you pursue simplistic adventure-style hunting and gathering.

Sierra may pitch the "bawdy brain teasers" and "jokes, puns, gags" on its box copy (yeah, and we all read *Playboy* "for the articles"), but the reason you play Larry is strictly to dabble in prurient pursuits at the PC. But if you're prurient and proud of it, why settle for this

Larry, lame and so tame that it rarely goes any further than "NYPD Blue"? That's why Larry's showing his age ... he's been passed by more honest prurience, on and off the computer. Larry's become the one thing that could kill him off—cute.

As sex, as humor, Larry 6 is strictly high-school locker room. But there are scenes that are neither cute nor funny in this cartoon-like context. The



This is about as hot as the images get in Larry. (You may see some bare breasts while you play—not here, though—but you'll die for trying.)

ending, however, is Larry's saving grace. The writing shines when Laffer encounters true love—a character who, if Shirley MacLaine gives up the ghost, could pose for the definitive New Age recruiting poster. I didn't grin but a few times during all the rest of Larry 6, but I laughed hard enough to hiccup at the end.

Since Larry is so clearly a cartoon, why not make it one from start to finish? Why make us wade through complex procedures

that run Laffer from one end of the resort to the other, simply gathering pieces to the puzzle? With such a great payoff, it would have worked.

Oh well! Larry's a tradition now, and traditions don't change. And that's the shame of this game. (Sierra On-Line; 800-743-7725; CD for DOS/Windows, \$69.95)



In a soap—or is that soap—to fairness, a few naked guys show up in the shower.

GAME-WINNING TIPS

Before you start moving Larry hither and yon, hit the Controls to turn up his walking speed. He'll move like molasses otherwise.

Visit all the sets, talk to all the characters, pick up anything that's not nailed down. Good advice in any graphic adventure, but key in Larry.

Inflating the flat beaver before you head into the pool demands a trip to the roach coach.

Keep clickin' on that USMC shirt, but make sure you've got the game saved before you do.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Leisure Suit Larry 6: Shape Up or Slip Out! is more of the same. Same humor, same sort of puzzles, same somewhat tawdry escapades.

