# Exploring the Legacy of Lesbian Icon Xena: Warrior Princess



Steven L. Sears, a writer and co-executive producer, became involved with Xena: Warrior Princess after the success of Hercules: The Legendary Journeys. Xena, portrayed by Lucy Lawless, transitioned from a character in Hercules to the lead in her own series. The show's premise revolved around Xena's journey of redemption, with Gabrielle, played by Renee O'Connor, providing a contrasting, innocent perspective.

Rob Tapert, the show's co-creator, encouraged the team to explore diverse storylines, resulting in episodes ranging from drama to satire. Creative liberties included clones interacting with fans in the present and alternate realities where Xena marries Julius Caesar.

Despite initial studio hesitations regarding Xena and Gabrielle's potential romantic relationship, the creators subtly included this dimension. The show's wide appeal spanned various age groups, from children to older adults.

Renee O'Connor focused on making Gabrielle an empowered character rather than a damsel in distress. Her background in gymnastics aided her in performing physical stunts on the show. Gabrielle's relationship with Xena evolved into more than just friendship, resonating with many fans over time.

O'Connor retained props and costumes from the series and expressed how playing Gabrielle positively influenced her personal growth. She continues to engage with fans, appreciating the impact Gabrielle had on them. O'Connor's portrayal of Gabrielle remains a significant part of her life.