The Plots Sickens

The POZ sweeps: rating the televiral season

June 1, 2005 By Nick Burns

The Emmy Awards may not yet honor Best Portrayal of Disclosure-Related Angst, but prime-time HIV is finally evolving. Thank the 2003 Viacom/Kaiser Family Foundation HIV-awareness initiative (www.knowhivaids.org) and media watchdog Cable Positive's Positively Outstanding Programming Awards for AIDS accuracy and compassion, to be announced June 20. POZ, meanwhile, has been glued to the set and now hands out ribbons (red, of course)—and bitch slaps.

SHOW	SAGA	SCORE	SIZE-UP
Nip/Tuck Fx 9.28.04	Sexaholic Gina—Christian's recurring fling—reveals she's HIV positive. While Christian waits two days for his results, he calls a dozen recent partners to sound the alarm.	2	Homeboy should've opted for the widely available 20-minute rapid test before reliving his entire black book. - Bonus ribbon for adding Gina and her HIV drama to next season's cast.
Extreme Makeover: Home Edition ABC 12.12.04	Team Makeover smashes and rebuilds a house for HIV activist Patricia Broadbent and her three adopted HIVer kids.	4	Host Ty Pennington explains HIV in simple terms, brings in HIVer tots to help accessorize one room and says HIVer kids want to be treated like everybody else.
The Apprentice NBC 3.10.05	Trump wannabes compete to raise bucks for the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, which gets $40K.	1	Trump never mentions the foundation's mission, whom the funds will benefit (hey, Donald, they're only kids!) or how viewers can donate. (Visit www.pedaids.org.) The Apprentice = fired.

Judging Amy CBS 3.22.05	Social worker Maxine takes Tabitha, a 15-year-old foster child, for an HIV test. When Tabitha tests positive and attempts suicide, Maxine introduces her to Melinda, a black role model who tested positive as a teen.	5	Maxine's stellar harm reduction sheds light on safe sex, STDs and HIV-related suicide. A doctor even explains that HIV is not a death sentence. And for once, we meet a healthy and successful HIV positive black woman.
Eve UPN 4.26.05	Eve's character, Shelly, and her boyfriend get tested for HIV before sexing up their relationship. Shelly's friends accompany her to the clinic, where they all end up getting tested too—and come up negative.	3	Why no mention of condoms? Shelly could have enjoyed a safe pretest shag by using latex—and explained its benefits. As for HIV testing as a social activity: We've come a long way from hanging out at 90210's Peach Pit.

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