



# Redefining “AIDS” and American Idol

March 23, 2007 By [Shawn Decker](#)

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The term “AIDS” confuses people. In layman’s terms, it used to mean someone with HIV who was sick and near death. Of course, that still rings true today, I just get tired of explaining the history of the word and that, yes, I do have an AIDS diagnosis and, no, I’m not dying from HIV anytime soon.

Eventually, the terms “HIV symptomatic” and “HIV non-symptomatic” will take over... but where will that leave poor little “AIDS”? Well, I have an answer that may surprise you: American Idol Deserves Sanjaya.

 I’ve been so focused on training for the AIDS Walk, that I haven’t weighed in on this important topic. I don’t watch AI, haven’t since the first season. Just as I was about to tune in, Americans voted off that girl who posed naked in the water fountain.

Well, when they came for the girl that posed naked in the water fountain, I said nothing. Now their coming for Sanjaya, and I’ll be damned if I’m waiting around until they come for me too.

Last night, on two different programs, I saw highlights of Sanjaya’s riveting performance of The Kinks “You Really Got Me”, and I realized I was sleeping through a revolution. I was too young to partake in the early days of [ACT UP, the groundbreaking movement](#) started by positoids in the early days of AIDS, but I’m not too young to rally the AIDS community to get behind Sanjaya.

It won’t be easy. A lot of folks are saying that Sanjaya’s singing is unbearable. That he’s too young. Doesn’t belong there and is ruining the authenticity of the American Idol contest.

Well, some people said I didn’t belong in public school in 1987 because I had HIV. And, if we get behind young Sanjaya, the AIDS community could recruit a very influential and powerful spokesperson to go to bat for us on Capitol Hill. (Hey, Elton John isn’t getting any younger.)

Positively Yours,  
Shawnjaya

PS... legally changing your name is optional, voting for Sanjaya is not.

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<http://beta.docker.poz.com/blog/redefining-aids>