



ABC CANCELS ADAM LAMBERT'S GMA PERFORMANCE BUT IGNORES PLEAS FROM VIEWERS FOR LESS SLEAZE ON GENERAL HOSPITAL

Many General Hospital fans, including supporters of the SOS/Save Our Soap! General Hospital campaign, are confused by the recent actions of ABC regarding Adam Lambert's American Music Awards performance. After receiving more than 1500 complaints (Bauder, Huffington Post) regarding the American Music Awards show performance that drew 14.2 million viewers (Los Angeles Times), ABC made the decision to cancel his performance scheduled on Good Morning America. "ABC Insiders said they ruled the "American Idol" star's sexed-up shenanigans on Sunday's awards show -- which included him groping a female dancer, kissing a male musician and shoving a male dancer's face into his crotch -- were inappropriate for morning TV." (New York Times) Barbara Walters of "The View" mentioned in the "hot topics" portion of the show that it was too racy to show on daytime TV. (Huffington Post) Interestingly, this decision was made based on complaints by approximately 0.0001% of the viewing audience.

What is confusing to viewers of GH about this is that, while many will have differing opinions regarding what happened in that AMA performance, ABC took action based on viewer complaints about the sleaze and whether it would be appropriate to show on 'morning TV', yet GH viewers have complained about the sleaze shown during the daytime on GH for several months and no decrease in the sleaze factor has occurred. Admittedly GH has a fluctuating number of viewers; therefore, assuming an average of 2.5 million daily viewers, only 250 complaints would have to be lodged about the sleaze or inappropriateness on GH for action to be taken using the same percentage. However, in a recent interview, Jill Farren Phelps, Executive Producer of GH, stated that when hundreds of complaints are levied, there's no way to know if there really are hundreds of individuals complaining, or if there are only four individuals out there complaining repeatedly. Are viewers to believe that ABC/Disney values the voices of their nighttime viewership more than their daytime viewership? If not, then what is the acceptable level of sleaze for daytime drama vs. daytime entertainment vs. that for nighttime and who decides that if not the viewership?

Back in October of 2009, an Australian beer campaign drew the ire of ABC/Disney when it depicted "Ho White" blowing smoke rings in a bed with seven semi-naked dwarfs. At that time, the SOS campaign commented that it wished that ABC/Disney would care as much about viewer concerns and complaints regarding GH management's obsession with showcasing sleazy lead female characters and inappropriate storylines involving the male leads as it did about its animated characters. There has been no significant change to note since that time.

In recent storylines, the now deceased Claudia, who had been married to lead character Sonny Corinthos, was culpable for his son's shooting which placed him in a coma for over a year. She slept with Sonny's brother, Ric, under his own roof and also poked holes in Sonny's condoms in an effort to get pregnant to protect herself from his eventual wrath over a number of wrongs she had committed, including many failed hits on Sonny, his friends and family. During their marriage, Sonny had hate sex with his wife, making his character seem like a deviant. He once even said to her, "Don't take long...cause I need it right now!" Claudia was shown talking to her brother on the phone pretending to schedule an abortion to gain Sonny's sympathy. When Sonny finally decided they should keep the baby, he then learned his brother could possibly be the father. Later, even knowing that Claudia might be culpable for his son's shooting, Sonny still had sex with her and, while he said it "should not happen again", he claimed she jumped him, taking all responsibility off of himself.

He eventually went with her to have an amniocentesis to find out who the real father was. Before the test was completed however, he ran off to see another woman, Olivia. Throughout his marriage of convenience, which was created to discover who shot Sonny's bride at the altar, Kate, he was often shown pursuing Olivia, the cousin of Kate, his ex-fiancée and woman he loves. Many viewers have been turned off by him saying that Kate deserves better, basically implying he could settle for "being with" Olivia instead. Having suffered a miscarriage, Claudia had tried to get pregnant again by seducing Sonny's employee, Dominic, whom she had learned is actually Sonny's unknown biological son, Dante. She was unsuccessful and her scheming days came to an end when Sonny received proof that she was culpable for Michael's shooting and publicly called her out on it. Although Claudia is now dead, Sonny wants people to believe she simply disappeared (and was not murdered).

Olivia, who got pregnant by Sonny at the age of fifteen, has kept the secret that he is the father of her son because of his mob connections and her hatred of the mob. She is currently sleeping with Johnny, who was Claudia's brother and in also the mob, a man she met in a bar, took home for sex, and works for Sonny and is slightly younger than her own son. Their relationship has been portrayed as romantic with Johnny often bringing her flowers and her preparing candlelit dinners for him. However, any time Sonny calls on him, Olivia appears to fall for him. Even now that Johnny knows she is Dante's mother and that Dante is in town undercover to bring down Sonny's organization, she still claims to love him, but then rushes to change into a cocktail dress the moment Sonny asks her to be his alibi because of a mob killing. This is the woman whose son, the undercover cop, does not know who his father is because he's in the mob, and who is supposedly in love with a man who is in the mob, but is running to aid the man who is the father of her son, unbeknownst to him.

Meanwhile, lead character, Jason Morgan, began sleeping with Sam in an old church building after being hit in the head by a collapsing balcony while they were supposed to be searching for his nephew, Michael, and Kristina, Sam's younger sister, who were on the run in Mexico. This is the same woman who slept with her mother's husband, Ric, also Jason's nemesis, watched Jason's son being kidnapped, taunted Liz about losing a child, refused to help with a public plea for information on the kidnapping, had Liz, Jake and her other son, Cameron, held up at gunpoint in the park, then purposely set out to have a sexual encounter with Liz's husband, Lucky. Jason and Sam are currently continuing this sexual relationship and have often started to kiss or have sex shortly after discussing Jason's desire to kill Claudia for her misdeeds against his nephew. Even when Jason has questioned his own motives or behaviors, Sam has simply supported his 'intent to kill' by telling him to trust his instincts or has questioned his need for a 'normal life.' Throughout, they have, however, made it a point to keep from discussing any of their former issues, which many agree does not point toward a healthy 'reconciliation', but something more akin to rebound sex with a former partner.

Other storylines showcasing the sleaze GH management promotes include Alexis Davis and her supposed one night stand with the Mayor that occurred on the same night that Sam, her daughter, slept with her husband, which she witnessed. She then left her house, unseen by them, went to the Metro Court Hotel after having been taken to the hospital by Jason for a coughing fit caused by the lung cancer she was fighting, spent time with her daughter and Sonny Corinthos, and then somehow found time to have sex with the Mayor after seeing her daughter and husband committing adultery.

In the midst of all this sleaze, many GH viewers have asked to see more stories focused on the hospital for which the show is named. Recently, viewers were excited to see Elizabeth Webber, a nurse and long time character on the show, working at the hospital but were caught completely off guard by her uncharacteristic behavior of going into a supply closet to have sex with Nikolas, the brother of her ex-husband and current fiancé. Liz has had several daydreams about her sexual trysts with Nik, however they all end with either him being killed by his brother who has walked in on them or her feeling like a whore from him offering her money. Not only is this not focusing on the hospital, but it is obviously guilt producing behavior which many viewers agree they do not want to watch, day or night.

ABC/Disney and GH have booked the highly acclaimed movie actor James Franco as a special guest star hoping many of his fans, who cover a range of ages, would tune in to see him on GH. They have promoted

a story of mystery and intrigue, but, only a week into Mr. Franco's appearances, it is disappointingly apparent that the writers have delivered another story focused on mob, murder, and sleaze.

Maxie Jones, currently supposedly in love with Spinelli, was given the assignment by her boss, Kate, to book reclusive artist Franco for a photo shoot for Crimson. When Maxie met him at the gallery showcasing his work, she didn't know who he was. After realizing he was the reclusive artist, she immediately let him blindfold her and take her to his studio. She then laid on the floor, still blindfolded, while he snapped pictures of her. When she took off the blindfold, she found she was in a chalk outline, which made her think of her sister, Georgie, who had been murdered when meeting a stranger, alone. Rather than running out the door at this horrible remembrance, she blindfolded him then proceeded to have sex with him. This is the police commissioner's step-daughter who is in a relationship with the tech support to the mob. Add to that the fact that she has been emotionally scarred by having a former boyfriend videotape her having sex with him and the memory of her sister's death, and this whole scenario should have sent red flags from the beginning, yet all it really does is draw attention to the sexual promiscuity and sleaziness of the character.

Sadly, not only has any mystery and intrigue that this storyline should or could have had been overshadowed by the ridiculous sleaze already shown, it has been rendered unreasonable by the glaring omissions of Kate, whose magazine, Crimson, sponsored the art show, Elizabeth, the known artist in town, and the wealthy Quartermaine and Cassadine families, causing it to lack any real story credibility.

The latest trend on GH has been to show more teen characters, apparently in effort to draw more teen viewers. With so much focus on sleazy storylines that seem to have little direction or purpose except to showcase sleaze, many viewers not only have quit watching, but will not let their children watch. Viewer requests to showcase other female characters or to create less inappropriate storylines for the male leads seemingly continue to be ignored. How does GH's management expect to draw in more teen viewers if their parents are not watching or do not invite them to watch with them due to the morally lacking and sleaze promoting storylines?

While viewers understand that daytime drama storylines do tend to be more far fetched and stretch the moral thread at times, GH has made it so the thread is not only stretched, but broken completely. In addition, the idea that these storylines and characters are working does not seem valid when looking at the ratings data. Some of the lowest rated days on GH this year have revolved around the main storylines showcasing sleaze. On April 21, 2009, Claudia pretending to schedule an abortion while talking to Johnny on the phone to get Sonny's attention resulted in 1.7/2,213,000. On July 13, 2009, Sonny leaving the hospital where Claudia is getting an amniocentesis to go see Olivia resulted in 1.7/2,330,000. More recently, the October 9, 2009, scene where Claudia tried to seduce Sonny's son, Dante, resulted in 1.9/2,389,000. The August 25, 2009, sex in the church scene between Jason and Sam, while they were supposed to be desperately searching for the missing children, resulted in 1.7/2,315,000. Additionally, **the week of August 24-28 was the fourth lowest in total viewers ever at 2,401,000.**

GH viewers simply want ABC/Disney management to listen to the concerns and complaints that have been expressed regarding the inappropriate storylines and sleazy characters on GH, just as ABC did regarding the complaints of the Adam Lambert performance. Is it too much to ask that ABC/Disney take action by reducing the sleaze and making improvements on a show that is broadcast during the daytime that has received many viewer complaints for months?

Each week, more fans and former viewers of GH are joining together with fans of Sonny and Kate, Jason and Elizabeth, Patrick and Robin, and Jax and Carly as part of the SOS/Save Our Soap! General Hospital Campaign. **All want GH to make changes that will not only maintain, but increase viewership and draw former viewers back for an enjoyable escape with romance, humor and less sleaze.** For more information regarding the campaign, contact Dana L. Meyer or Kecia K. Picard at saveoursoapgh@gmail.com, visit the SOS/Save Our Soap! General Hospital page on Facebook, follow on twitter @SOS_GH or visit the SOS/Save Our Soap! General Hospital website at www.saveoursoapgh.com.