

Written by Lesleyann Coker  
Wednesday, 02 July 2008 07:15

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The Daytime Emmys Tank Except for Two Saving Graces; OLTL Drains Valuable Actors and AMC Rises to the Top

### {mosimage}{mosimage}Busted: Emmy Edition and OLTL

There were few good things about the 35th Annual Daytime Awards, because most of what occurred was a boring replay of what has happened in the past.

Out of the six acting categories, five of this year's winners had won previously, some even multiple times. Tony Geary (Luke, GH) is a living legend and a phenomenal actor, but does he really need six Emmys? Think of all the deserving leading men in daytime who don't have a single Emmy win under their belt, let alone some who have never even been nominated. The divine Robert Newman (Josh, GL) has never won in his 20 plus year career in daytime, neither has B&B vet John McCook (Eric). The great Phil Carey (ex-Asa, OLTL) was never nominated in his 25 plus years on daytime, same with Walt Willey (Jack, AMC). Where is the love? When it's the same people nominated year after year, followed by the same people winning, it causes the rest of the entertainment industry to regard the Daytime Emmys as a joke.

No doubt Jennifer Landon (ex-Gwen/Cleo, ATWT) is a talented actress, as were Jennifer Finnigan (ex-Bridget, B&B) and Sarah Brown (Claudia, GH; ex-Carly, GH) before her. However, this habit of anointing young actresses with three consecutive Emmys is out of control. Were any of these actresses more deserving or talented than Eden Riegel (ex-Bianca, AMC) who finally won one Emmy in between Finnigan and Landon's reigns? How about Alicia Minshew (Kendall, AMC), Kristen Alderson (Starr, OLTL) and Caitlin Van Zandt (Ashlee, GL) who are more than qualified but have never been nominated?

I think there should be a rule that if you win three Emmys, you're done. How often do people win multiple acting Oscars? While there are a few actors who have won twice, the number who have won three or more Oscars is a select group indeed. Only three actors have won three Oscars – the late Ingrid Bergman, the late Walter Brennan and Jack Nicholson. Only one person has won four – the late, great Katherine Hepburn. When put in this context, are Tony Geary, Erika Slezak (Vikki, OLTL) and Justin Deas (Buzz, GL) - all of whom have won six Emmys - better actors than Hepburn and other acting legends?

It's frustrating to other actors – not to mention soap fans – to see the same names on the ballot year after year. Daytime is a diverse place with diverse actors, and that diversity should translate into the one show that is supposed to honor daytime's best.

Since I will be on vacation next month (My column will return in September), I'd also like to take a moment to acknowledge One Life to Live's recent bone headed move to kill off the popular character of Nash Brennan. Forbes March is an appealing and charming actor who shared sizzling chemistry with Bree Williamson's Jessica/Tess. To kill the character seems random at best, but to kill the character by having him punched in the jaw and then fall through a skylight is inane.

It's a horrible way to lose a popular character and actor, but it's even worse when it leads to

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weeks of on air hyperventilating without tears from his co-star. I was relieved when Jessica turned into her alter ego Tess, as hopefully this means no more heavy breathing and whining from the usually spot on Williamson. If you can't cry, you shouldn't try.

### {mosimage}{mosimage}Blissful: Emmy Edition and AMC

There were two good things about the 35th Annual Daytime Emmy Awards. One was the telecast's telegenic co-hosts (Cameron Mathison and Sherri Shepherd) and the second was Jeanne Cooper (Katherine, Y&R) finally winning an Emmy for Outstanding Lead Actress after 11 prior nominations.

Mathison (Ryan, AMC) and Shepherd (one of The View's co-hosts) had tons of chemistry and shared an easy banter. Their scripted dialogue came across as unforced and natural, and at times it even seemed like they threw in an ad-lib or two. Some smart executive should give these two a sitcom.

On a repetitious evening filled with familiar faces at the podium, never was there a more welcome sight than Cooper. With her brilliant quip, "I bet you thought I died," as the lead in to her acceptance speech, Cooper had the crowd in the palm of her hand. She continued to complain as only Cooper could about the effects of hi-definition TV and then to reference the fact that everyone who wins thinks they have the best cast, directors and crew. Cooper proceeded to thank her "lousy" cast and crew. It was funny, irreverent and touching at the same time, much like the lady herself.

As I've already mentioned above in my Busted column, there was much more wrong than right with the Emmys this year. I've just illustrated the only two good things I thought about the show, so let me move on to something else that I enjoyed.

The recent reunion of Tad (Michael E. Knight) with his long lost daughter Kate (Alexa Gerasimovich) on All My Children was one of the best things I've seen on TV - daytime or primetime - in a long time.

It was an ironic and emotional end to a compelling, years in the making story to have Tad's arch rival Adam (David Canary) save the day with the news that the little girl Tad knew as Kathy was really his missing daughter Kate.

Knight and Canary have always been delightful to watch as verbal sparring partners, but they each brought new depth to their characters in the scene in the hospital room when Tad thanked Adam for telling the truth. While Adam – and the audience – were expecting Tad to unleash a tongue lashing, instead Tad quietly held out his hand.

Knight brought so much intensity to that simple gesture, that it felt like we were intruding on a private moment between two real people with a shared history. When Tad said, "I can go back to hating your guts tomorrow, but now I just want to thank you," I got choked up and I bet I wasn't alone. It was a full circle moment for the characters – and the actors. Knight and

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Canary have never been better than in that scene, and that's saying a lot.

Knight was also incredibly endearing in his scenes with young Gerasimovich when Tad told Kathy he was her dad. The only thing lacking from Kathy's reaction to learning Tad was her daddy, was the six-year-old asking a question about who or where was her mom. Other than that one glaring omission, the scenes were well written and beautifully acted.

Knight is one of the few actors in the business who can share screen time with a darling six year old girl and not be upstaged. His wit and professionalism and all around good humor are always firmly in check in his scenes with his young co-star, and it is a joy to watch them together.

If there is any impartiality left to the Daytime Emmys, Knight will be a shoo-in for a nomination next year, if not a win for Outstanding Lead Actor.

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*{mosimage}Lesleyann Coker is a reporter and monthly opinion columnist for Soapdom.com. She is also the co-author of Boob Tube, a forthcoming novel that goes behind the scenes of the soap opera industry. The book is available in ebook form at <http://www.smashwords.com/books/view/3> . She was previously a reporter for Soap Opera Weekly Magazine.*