

# ISSUE BRIEF

Spring 2004

## Entertainment Education and Health in the United States

Many groups have come to believe that entertainment media can play an important positive role in educating the public about significant health issues. In the United States and around the world, public health organizations are increasingly turning to entertainment media—from soap operas to sitcoms to reality shows—as a way to reach the public with health messages.

### What Is Entertainment Education?

Entertainment education, also referred to as *enter-educate*, *edutainment* or *infotainment*, is a way of informing the public about a social issue or concern. The entertainment education (E-E) strategy involves incorporating an educational message into popular entertainment content in order to raise awareness, increase knowledge, create favorable attitudes, and ultimately motivate people to take socially responsible action in their own lives.<sup>1</sup>

Television is the primary medium for entertainment education in the United States. Over the years, the E-E strategy has been applied in a variety of ways and raised a number of social and health issues in entertainment programming, including substance abuse, immunization, teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, cancer, and other diseases.<sup>2</sup>

Entertainment education, in which health-related storylines are incorporated into popular TV sitcoms, dramas or soap operas, is distinct from the use of public service announcements (PSAs), which can also be an important tool in public health communication. Some groups have been effective in combining PSAs with entertainment education for a wider impact.<sup>3</sup>

There is no single formula for getting educational messages into a script and onto the screen. Some messages are generated by producers and scriptwriters themselves because they have a particular interest or personal connection to the issue, or by staff consultants with expertise who review scripts and suggest ways to make the story and characters more realistic. Other messages result from outreach efforts of special interest groups or health agencies to deliver their message to audiences. These groups often work with Hollywood-based advocacy organizations that serve as liaisons to the entertainment community via industry forums, roundtable briefings, and technical script consultations.<sup>4</sup>

### Examples of Entertainment Education

As early as the 1970s, entertainment television has been recognized as a source for delivering important messages to audiences. An episode of “Happy Days” in which the character Fonzie goes to the library to meet girls and ends up getting a library card reportedly inspired thousands of young people to do the same. According to those involved in the effort, the nationwide demand for library cards increased about 500 percent after the episode aired.<sup>5</sup>

In recent years, the use of entertainment media to disseminate health messages has increased markedly as more groups include entertainment education in their strategy. Some efforts are issue-specific and for a limited time period, while others involve ongoing outreach to the entertainment industry. Following are some examples from American television, beginning with the earliest of these efforts:



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- The Harvard Alcohol Project's National **Designated Driver Campaign**, developed by the Harvard School of Public Health's Center for Health Communication, is widely considered to be the first successful effort to partner with the Hollywood community to promote health messages in prime time programming. During the 1988–1992 TV seasons, more than 160 prime time shows, such as "The Cosby Show," "Cheers," and "L.A. Law," included subplots, scenes, dialogue, and even entire half-hour or hour-long episodes devoted to the campaign theme. By 1990, public opinion polls indicated that 9 in 10 adults (89%), and virtually all (97%) young adults 18–24 were familiar with the designated driver concept and rated it favorably. In 1991, the term "designated driver" was included in the *Random House Webster's College Dictionary*.<sup>6</sup>
- Since 1980, **The Media Project** has operated in Hollywood as an ongoing, full-time project of the Washington, D.C.–based group Advocates for Youth (AFY), working with the entertainment industry to incorporate adolescent sexual health messages into popular TV shows (the Kaiser Family Foundation partnered with AFY in operating the Media Project from 1997–2002). The project organizes three informational briefings a year, operates a helpline for writers and producers, and provides one-on-one assistance to shows during script development. Each year, more than 100 shows contact the helpline, and dozens of episodes of popular TV shows include storylines containing sexually responsible messages. One recent example involved an episode of the popular show "Felicity," in which the lead character, a college freshman, visits the campus health clinic to learn about birth control, gets a demonstration on using a condom, and asks her prospective partner to get tested for HIV and other STDs. Other shows the project has assisted include "ER," "Dawson's Creek," "Moesha," "Boston Public," "Strong Medicine," and "Judging Amy." The Media Project has also worked on storylines for the preteen audience that demystify puberty, underscore family communication, and emphasize self-esteem in shows such as "Lizzy McGuire," "As Told by Ginger," and "The Proud Family." The group also launched a Spanish Media Initiative to provide resources and script consulting for writers and producers of Spanish-language television in the United States and Latin America.<sup>7</sup>
- For more than a decade, **Mediascope** has played a role in promoting health and social issues within the entertainment industry through creative community roundtables, program briefings, information forums, script consultations, and online resources. The group placed anti-bullying and violence-prevention messages in storylines on shows such as "7th Heaven" and "Law and Order" for the Youth Violence Prevention Initiative. In addition, their efforts on behalf of the National Youth Anti-Drug Campaign, a project of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, resulted in plot and character development around the issue of substance abuse and prevention strategies in shows such as "Judging Amy," "24," "The Shield," "7th Heaven," "Boston Public," "The Guardian," and "All My Children."<sup>8</sup>
- In 1994, the Harvard School of Public Health's Center for Health Communication launched the "**Squash It!**" campaign to prevent youth violence with a media initiative targeted to urban teens. The "Squash It!" walk-away message, which uses the phrase accompanied by a hand gesture based on the time-out signal used in sports, was incorporated into scripts on shows such as "Beverly Hills 90210," "Dangerous Minds," "ER," "Family Matters," "Hanging with Mr. Cooper," "Living Single," "NY Undercover," and "South Central." A national survey of junior and senior high school students conducted in 1997 indicates that African American youth were the most likely (43%) to have seen the "Squash It!" message on TV.<sup>9</sup>
- **The Kaiser Family Foundation** has worked with a variety of networks and shows to incorporate health messages into popular

entertainment programming. For example, the Foundation organizes annual briefings for the writers and producers of the NBC drama “ER,” which have resulted in numerous storylines on topics such as rapid HIV testing, emergency contraception, chlamydia, insurance coverage of experimental treatments, teen sexual activity, the working uninsured, and Medicare and Medicaid. The Foundation has also partnered with the TV networks BET, MTV and Univision on public education campaigns that have included not just PSAs, but also a large number of full-length shows designed to entertain and educate audiences at the same time. For example, 19 different full-length shows have appeared on MTV as part of this partnership, reaching an audience of over 95 million viewers. Some of the programs include popular musicians and other celebrities to help draw an audience to live call-in shows with health experts; others are documentary style shows chronicling the lives of real young people as they grapple with sexual health issues.

- **The UCLA School of Public Health** and Department of Film and Television, in collaboration with the Immunization Branch of the California Department of Health Services, launched an entertainment education campaign to raise public awareness about the importance of immunization. During the 1996–1998 broadcast seasons, stories about immunization were incorporated into scripts of over a dozen TV shows, including “ER,” “High Incident,” “Frasier,” “7th Heaven,” “Step by Step,” “Sabrina the Teenage Witch,” “Guiding Light,” “Days of Our Lives,” and “Mister Roger’s Neighborhood.” For example one episode showed the lead character of “Frasier” overcoming his fear of needles to get a flu shot, and included a discussion about flu strains and how they are spread.<sup>10</sup>
- **The Last Acts Writers Project**, organized by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, is an ongoing effort to improve the accuracy and sensitivity of depictions of terminal illness and death in TV and film. The project provides experts, background information, and real-life story ideas about end-of-life care, pain management, biomedical ethics, and rights of

the terminally ill. Episodes of several shows, including “ER,” “NYPD Blue,” “Homicide: Life on the Street,” and “The Guardian,” as well as the Hallmark Hall of Fame telefilm “My Sisters’ Keeper,” incorporated death and dying themes as a result of the project’s roundtable briefings and online resources.<sup>11</sup>

- **Hollywood, Health & Society** is a partnership of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the University of Southern California’s Annenberg Norman Lear Center. Since its inception in 2002, the group has provided the creative community with a range of health resources via story consultations, online tip sheets, and information briefings and interviews, including some in collaboration with the Writers Guild of America West. Recent efforts resulted in storylines about child injury prevention on “ER,” SARS transmission on “Law & Order,” and breast cancer (with the National Cancer Institute) in “The Young & the Restless” and a telenovela on Telemundo.<sup>12</sup>
- **KNOW HIV/AIDS**, launched in January 2003, is a cross-platform HIV prevention and awareness campaign conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation and the media company Viacom. One component of the campaign involves incorporating HIV/AIDS messages in television shows and movies produced by Viacom-owned companies or broadcast on Viacom-owned networks (CBS, UPN, MTV, and BET, among others). Certain messages have been designed for the public at large, while others have targeted groups most at risk, including youth, people of color, women, and gay men. Episodes in numerous shows such as “Becker,” “The District,” “Enterprise: Star Trek,” “Touched by an Angel,” “Girlfriends,” “Half and Half,” “One on One,” “Soulfood,” “Presidio Med,” and “Queer as Folk” have included the HIV/AIDS theme, with storylines ranging from educating a teenager about the risk of HIV/STDs to asking a boyfriend to get HIV tested, to the impact of HIV/AIDS on family and friends.<sup>13</sup> In 2003 alone, more than 58 million viewers tuned in to campaign-related entertainment programming, and more than seven million visited the campaign’s website.

- The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation spearheaded the first **“Cover the Uninsured Week”** during March 2003 to draw attention to the millions of Americans who are uninsured or have inadequate health insurance. As part of the strategy, a workshop for writers was held to provide information for “issue placement” in storylines of daytime and prime time shows. The weeklong campaign resulted in references to the need for universal health coverage in at least seven shows, including “Strong Medicine,” “Passions,” and “Law & Order: Special Victims Unit.” Subsequent campaigns are planned for the same week in future years.<sup>14</sup>

#### Entertainment Education Awards

Several groups sponsor annual awards to recognize the entertainment industry for accurate and socially responsible depictions of health issues. For example:

- The **Prism Award** is presented by the Entertainment Industries Council, in partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the National Institute on Drug Abuse, for accurate depictions of drug, alcohol, and tobacco use and addiction in television, films, music and comic book entertainment.
- The **Sentinel for Health Award for Daytime Drama** is presented for exemplary portrayal of health issues in television soap operas by Hollywood, Health and Society, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Population Communications International.
- The **SHINE Award** (Sexual Health IN Entertainment) is presented by The Media Project to recognize accurate and honest portrayals of sexuality and sexual health in entertainment programming.
- The **Turner Prize** is awarded by the Environmental Media Association for the television episode that best deals with a population growth issue such as teen pregnancy, contraception or abstinence, overcrowding, or empowerment of women.

#### Effectiveness of Entertainment Education

A body of research is emerging that assesses the impact of entertainment education as a strategy for reaching the public about health issues.

#### Prime Time Entertainment

A survey of prime time TV viewers conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2000 found that:

- A majority of viewers (52%) report picking up health information that they trust to be accurate from prime time TV shows, and 1 in 4 (26%) say that these shows are among their top three sources for health information.<sup>15</sup>
- Nine out of 10 (90%) regular viewers report learning something about diseases or how to prevent them from television, and almost half cite prime time (47%) or daytime entertainment shows (48%).<sup>16</sup>
- Almost half (48%) of regular viewers who heard something about a health issue on a prime time television show say they took one or more actions: told someone about the storyline (42%); told someone to do something or did something themselves, such as use a condom or exercise more (16%); visited a clinic or doctor (9%); or called a clinic, health care facility, or hotline number for information (5%).<sup>17</sup>

#### “ER”

During the 1997–2000 TV seasons, the Kaiser Family Foundation surveyed 3,500 regular viewers of the popular NBC drama “ER,” and found that:<sup>18</sup>

- Slightly more than half of regular viewers said they learn about important health issues while watching “ER” (53%) and talk with family and friends about these issues (51%). Approximately one-third (32%) said information from the show helped them make choices about their own family’s health care, particularly those viewers with less education (44% with no college vs. 25% with some college education).<sup>19</sup>

- As a result of viewing “ER,” more than one in five viewers (23%) said they had gone to other sources for additional information about a health issue, and one in seven (14%) said they had contacted a doctor or other health care provider because of something they saw in an episode.<sup>20</sup>
  - Many regular “ER” viewers demonstrated significantly increased awareness about specific health issues that were addressed on the show. After a brief vignette about emergency contraception was included in an episode, the percent of viewers who were aware that a woman has options for preventing pregnancy even after unprotected sex increased by 17 percentage points (50% to 67%). Among those who had heard of emergency contraception, one in five (20%) said they had learned about it on “ER.”
  - Similarly, after an episode aired about the sexually transmitted disease human papilloma virus (HPV), the proportion of viewers who had heard of HPV nearly doubled (from 24% to 47%), and the proportion who could correctly define HPV tripled (from 9% to 28%). Among those who had heard of HPV, one-third (32%) volunteered that they had learned about it from “ER.”
  - In both cases, however, viewers’ awareness decreased over time, as indicated by separate samples of regular “ER” viewers surveyed two months later. These results underscore that health-related messages must be repeated for viewers to retain the information.
  - A separate study from the Harvard School of Public Health compared a sample of regular “ER” viewers interviewed the week before an episode about smallpox prevention with a sample of regular “ER” viewers who saw or heard about the episode. After viewing the episode, more viewers were aware (57% vs. 39%) of the need for getting a smallpox vaccination immediately after exposure to prevent the disease.<sup>21</sup>
  - According to the Kaiser Family Foundation’s National Survey of Physicians, one in five doctors say they are consulted “very” or “somewhat” often about specific diseases or treatments their patients heard about on TV shows such as “ER.”<sup>22</sup>
- “Friends”**
- In 2002 the Kaiser Family Foundation helped finance a RAND Corporation survey of teens ages 12–17 who were regular viewers of the TV sitcom “Friends,” to assess the impact of a storyline about an unplanned pregnancy. According to RAND’s analysis, entertainment television can be most effective as an educator when teens and parents view together and discuss what they watch.
- Among teens who had viewed a “Friends” episode about the risks of sexual activity, two-thirds (65%) remembered that the specific storyline depicted an unplanned pregnancy caused by condom failure.<sup>23</sup>
  - Four out of 10 (40%) teens who reported watching the “Friends” episode watched it with a parent or adult, and 10 percent of them talked with an adult about the effectiveness of condoms as a result of the episode. Almost half (47%) who discussed the episode with an adult recalled the characters describing condoms as being 95% or more effective.<sup>24</sup>
  - Compared with their peers who watched alone or with another youth, teens who watched with a parent or adult were twice as likely to say they learned something new about condoms from the episode (38% vs. 15%), as well as to recall that condoms were said to be between 95% and 100% effective (40% vs. 20%).<sup>25</sup>
  - A follow-up survey six months later found that teens who watched the episode about condom efficacy were more likely to rate condoms as 95% to 100% effective than teens who did not view the episode (30% vs. 18%).<sup>26</sup>



### **Daytime Dramas**

A 1999 survey of soap opera viewers, conducted by the CDC, found that many daytime viewers also report learning about health issues from TV:

- Among regular viewers of daytime drama, almost half (48%) of those surveyed said they learned something about a disease or how to prevent it from watching soap operas, and 4 in 10 also reported learning about disease and prevention from prime time television shows (41%) and talk shows (38%). More than one-third (38%) of regular soap viewers agreed that they would like to see more health storylines on television.<sup>27</sup>
- One-third (34%) of regular daytime viewers reported that they took action in their personal lives after hearing about a health issue or disease on a soap opera by telling someone about it (25%), telling someone to do something to prevent the health problem (13%), visiting a clinic or doctor (7%), or doing something to prevent the problem (6%). More than 4 in 10 regular soap opera viewers (43%) say they have asked their doctor about something they heard or read in the media.<sup>28</sup>
- Black women (69%) were most likely to cite soap operas as a source of health information, as well as to report taking action in their own lives about the health issue, followed by Hispanic (56%) and White (48%) women.<sup>29</sup>

### **Entertainment Education and PSAs**

A public service announcement (PSA) linked to a health storyline in a television show can motivate viewers to seek information by calling a toll-free telephone hotline.

- PSAs aired at the end of a show have generated a substantial number of hotline inquiries. For example, after an episode of “Chicago Hope” that included a storyline about a cardiac disorder that can cause sudden death in children and young adults, a PSA was broadcast that resulted in 1,500 calls to the

organization CARE (Cardiac Arrhythmias Research and Education Foundation). Similarly, when a trailer with the telephone number for the Tourette Syndrome Association followed an episode of “The Practice”—inspired by the co-executive producer’s children who are battling the disease—the organization received 500 calls.<sup>30</sup> A rape hotline number screened at the end of a “Felicity” episode on date rape received more than 1,000 calls.<sup>31</sup>

- With the help of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the executive producer of the daytime drama “The Bold and the Beautiful” developed an HIV/AIDS storyline, and CBS aired PSAs following two different episodes with key HIV plot points. The first PSA generated a total of 1,426 calls to the CDC’s national HIV/AIDS hotline during the soap opera time slot, compared to 88 calls the previous day and 108 calls the day following the episode. Ten days later when the PSA was shown again the call volume spiked even higher to 1,840 calls originating during and shortly after the episode. In comparison, there were 94 calls the day before and 234 calls the day after the HIV episode.<sup>32</sup>
- A PSA tied to a character’s diagnosis of breast cancer on the soap opera “The Young & the Restless” displayed a toll-free number for the Cancer Information Service (CIS) sponsored by the National Cancer Institute. A survey of viewers who called the hotline found that compared to regular CIS callers, inquiries stimulated by the PSA were twice as likely to come from a minority group (18% vs. 9% were Hispanic, and 21% vs. 9% were African American) and were more likely to be interested in prevention (15% vs. 6%) and screening (11% vs. 7%), and less likely to be interested in treatment (14% vs. 30%).<sup>33</sup>

## Entertainment Education and News Pegs

- The Kaiser Family Foundation and the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health, in collaboration with the NBC News Channel and the prime time drama “ER,” developed a new model that linked health messages in the show “ER” with 90-second news segments broadcast after the episode in local newscasts. On the air from 1997 until 2001, “Following ER” was produced by NBC affiliate WBAL in Baltimore and featured interviews with medical experts and real people who had experienced the health issue addressed in the show. Each segment also offered access to additional information via a toll-free telephone number or online resources displayed on-screen.<sup>34</sup>
- The “Following ER” news series, which reached an average of one million viewers nationwide each week, addressed a range of health information and prevention strategies, including teen pregnancy, violence prevention, gun safety, fetal alcohol syndrome, organ donation, doctor-patient communication, cancer, HIV/AIDS, eating disorders, vaccinations, nursing home care, and health insurance. The success of the series spawned a partnership between Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions and CBS for a similar news segment called “Living with Hope,” based on the drama “Chicago Hope,” which is reported to have reached an estimated 30% of the American public.<sup>35</sup>

## Key Organizations

American Academy of Pediatrics  
Media Resource Team—Pediatricians on Call  
[www.aap.org/mrt](http://www.aap.org/mrt)

Entertainment Industries Council  
[www.eiconline.org](http://www.eiconline.org)

Harvard School of Public Health  
Center for Health Communication  
[www.hsph.harvard.edu/chc/](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/chc/)

The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation  
[www.kff.org/entmedia/index.cfm](http://www.kff.org/entmedia/index.cfm)  
[www.kff.org/entpartnerships](http://www.kff.org/entpartnerships)

Hollywood, Health & Society  
USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center  
[www.entertainment.usc.edu/hhs](http://www.entertainment.usc.edu/hhs)

Last Acts Writers Project  
[www.lastacts.org/writers](http://www.lastacts.org/writers)

The Media Project—A Program of Advocates  
for Youth  
[www.themediaproject.com](http://www.themediaproject.com)

Mediascope  
[www.mediascope.org](http://www.mediascope.org)

National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign  
White House Office of National Drug Control Policy  
[www.drugstory.org](http://www.drugstory.org) and [www.MediaCampaign.org](http://www.MediaCampaign.org)

Population Communications International  
[www.population.org/programs.htm](http://www.population.org/programs.htm) (select U.S.)

UCLA School of Public Health  
Health and Media Research Group  
[www.ph.ucla.edu/hmrg](http://www.ph.ucla.edu/hmrg)

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Arvind Singhal and Everett Rogers, *Entertainment-Education: A Communication Strategy for Social Change* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999).

<sup>2</sup> For an overview of the field and a discussion of early E-E efforts, see Arvind Singhal, Michael Cody, Everett Rogers, and Miguel Sabido (Eds), *Entertainment-Education and Social Change: History, Research and Practice*, (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003); Michael Suman and Gabriel Rossman, *Advocacy Groups and the Entertainment Industry* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2000); Kathryn Montgomery, *Target: Prime Time* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1989).

<sup>3</sup> For an example, see the description of the KNOW HIV/AIDS campaign in this issue brief.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> "From the Desk of Norman Lear: The Fonz, Drunk Drivers, and Trash," <[http://www.ema-online.org/what\\_we\\_do\\_briefings.htm](http://www.ema-online.org/what_we_do_briefings.htm)> (13 November 2003).

<sup>6</sup> Jay Winsten, "The Harvard Alcohol Project: Promoting the 'Designated Driver,'" *Advocacy Groups and the Entertainment Industry*, eds. M. Suman and G. Rossman (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2000), 3–8.

<sup>7</sup> Advocates for Youth, "The Media Project—Entertainment Media's Sexual and Reproductive Health Resource," <<http://www.themediaproject.com/about/mission.htm>> (13 November 2003); *Advocates for Youth Annual Report 2001–2002*, <<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/about/annualreport.pdf>> (12 December 2003).

<sup>8</sup> Mediascope, "Shows and Storylines: A Sample Listing," February 2003; "Major Programs and Initiatives: Entertainment Industry Projects," <<http://www.mediascope.org>> (13 November 2003). The broader effort on the part of the ONDCP to place storylines on drug abuse into TV shows generated some controversy when it was revealed that the government was offering networks financial credit in exchange for the show content, an arrangement many writers and producers were unaware of.

<sup>9</sup> Harvard School of Public Health Center for Health Communication, "The Squash It! Campaign to Prevent Youth Violence," <<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/chc/squashit.html>> (13 November 2003).

<sup>10</sup> Deborah Glik, et al., "Health Education Goes Hollywood: Working with Prime-Time and Daytime Entertainment Television for Immunization Promotion," *Journal of Health Communication* 1998 (3): 263–282.

<sup>11</sup> Last Acts Writers Project, "Who's Doing It Well," <<http://www.lastacts.org/writers>> (13 November 2003).

<sup>12</sup> "Hollywood, Health & Society: Overview," <<http://www.learcenter.org/html/projects/?cm=hhs>> (12 December 2003); Vicki Beck, "Working with Daytime and Prime-Time Television Shows in the United States to Promote Health," *Entertainment-Education and Social Change: History, Research and Practice*, eds. A. Singhal et al. (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003): 207–224; Mandy Shaivitz, Project Manager, Hollywood, Health & Society, USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center, e-mail, November 12, 2003.

<sup>13</sup> "KNOW HIV/AIDS: The Campaign," <[http://www.knowhiv aids.org/utility\\_campaign.html](http://www.knowhiv aids.org/utility_campaign.html)> (12 December 2003).

<sup>14</sup> Laurie McGinley and Emily Nelson, "Health Insurance Issues Get Scripted Into TV Shows," March 4, 2003, as cited in David A. Ridenour, "Hollywood Goes Political Yet Again: 'Issues Placement' Strategy Promotes Government-Run Health Care," *National Policy Analysis*, March 2003 <<http://www.nationalcenter.org/NPA456.html>> (13 November 2003); "Cover the Uninsured Week 2003 Results," <<http://covertheuninsuredweek.org/news/index.php?Next=199>> (12 December 2003).

<sup>15</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Prime Time Viewers and Health Information," 2000 *Healthstyles Survey Executive Summary*, October 24, 2001.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Mollyann Brodie, Ursula Foehr, Vicky Rideout, Neal Baer, Carolyn Miller, Rebecca Flournoy and Drew Altman, "Communicating Health Information through the Entertainment Media," *Health Affairs* (Jan/Feb 2001): 192–199; Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, "Survey of ER Viewers: Summary of Results," <<http://kff.org/womenshealth/1358-ers.cfm>> (12 December 2003); "The Impact of TV's Health Content: A Case Study of ER Viewers," Survey Snapshot, June 2002. The results are based on 10 separate national random-sample telephone surveys conducted between March 1997 and April 2000 of more than 3,500 regular "ER" viewers aged 18 and older (300–500 participants per survey).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Harvard School of Public Health, "After ER Smallpox Episode, Fewer ER Viewers Report They Would Go to Emergency Room if They Had Symptoms of the Disease," Press Release, June 13, 2002.

<sup>22</sup> Brodie, et al.

<sup>23</sup> Rebecca Collins, Marc Elliott, Sandra Berry, David Kanouse, and Sarah Hunter, "Entertainment Television as a Healthy Sex Educator: The Impact of Condom-Efficacy Information in an Episode of Friends," *Pediatrics* 112 (November 2003): 1115–1121.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Soap Opera Viewers and Health Information," 1999 *Healthstyles Survey Executive Summary*, November 15, 2000 <<http://www.cdc.gov/communication/healthsoap.htm>> (13 November 2003).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Andrea Petersen, "Episode Illnesses: How Rare Ailments Get on Prime Time," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 14, 1998.

<sup>31</sup> Jane D. Brown and Kim Walsh-Childers, "Effects of Media on Personal and Public Health," *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research*, eds. J. Bryant and D. Zillmann (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2002): 453–488.

<sup>32</sup> M.G. Kennedy, A. O'Leary, V. Beck, W.E. Pollard, and P. Simpson, "Increases in Calls to the CDC National STD and AIDS Hotline Following AIDS-Related Episodes in A Soap Opera," *Journal of Communication* (forthcoming).

<sup>33</sup> Beck, 2003.

<sup>34</sup> "Linking Health Promotion with Entertainment Television," *American Journal of Public Health* 89 (July 1999) 7:1116–1117.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

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