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The Emmys: Who To Root AGAINST

Everyone making Emmy predictions tells you who they would root for and who they think will win. Not me. Half the fun of awards shows is rooting AGAINST a certain nominee. For example, at the 2004 Grammys, I really loved Green Day's "American Idiot," liked Alicia Keys' "The Diary of Alicia Keys" and didn't mind Kanye West's "College Dropout." And Usher's "Confessions" was catchy as hell -- just plain irresistible. So I was rooting for Green Day but I was rooting AGAINST Ray Charles even more strongly. Of course I love Brother Ray, but the tepid "Genius Loves Company" (jammed full of tired celebrity duets) is a terrible introduction to such a titanic talent. And the mere fact that he died meant this unworthy final CD could become many people's first (and last) album of his they buy. That would be a disaster, so I rooted against it...and watched it win Album of the Year. At this year's Oscars, I loved "Capote" and "Good Night and Good Luck." But my heart belonged to "Brokeback Mountain," which would be an overdue triumph for Ang Lee. And even Steven Spielberg's "Munich" would have been such an oddball choice, I could have enjoyed it. But "Crash" was virtually my LEAST favorite movie of the year, an empty-headed West Coast look at racism that was about as insightful as an episode of "Diff'rent Strokes" (and not nearly as funny). Lord, how I wanted that movie to lose. Naturally, it won. I could give many other examples (not all of them thwarted desires), but the point is clear: sometimes our greatest passion is poured into rooting against a nominee. So here is my Emmy rundown, highlighting the one choice I would HATE to see triumph on Emmy night and why.

AND THE WINNER HOPEFULLY ISN'T...

BEST DRAMA -- please not..."The West Wing." A worthy show at first, though winning four years in a row also reflected Emmy's worst tendencies of repeated knee-jerk nominations and wins. Sure, it regained a little momentum for its last hurrah, but it and "The

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