

TV Review: Charlie Sheen Wastes Your Time on ‘Anger Management’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on June 27, 2012 - 7:23pm

- [Anger Management](#) [2]
- [Brett Butler](#) [3]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [4]
- [Charlie Sheen](#) [5]
- [Daniela Bobadilla](#) [6]
- [Denise Richards](#) [7]
- [FX](#) [8]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [9]
- [Michael Boatman](#) [10]
- [Selma Blair](#) [11]
- [Shawnee Smith](#) [12]
- [Television](#) [13]
- [Two and a Half Men](#) [14]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [15]

CHICAGO – Charlie Sheen opens his new sitcom “Anger Management,” debuting tomorrow night on FX in a new comedy block with “Wilfred,” “Louie,” and “Brand X,” by yelling right to the camera. It’s a spoof of the blow-up that got him booted from the best thing that ever happened to him, “Two and a Half Men,” and it feels like this show could be a clever riff on the real-life Sheen debacle in sitcom form. Then it becomes another generic comedy, one that makes the last show he starred on look like a timeless classic. Sheen isn’t bad on “Anger Management” (his performance is actually the best thing about it), but the writing is sub-sub-par with easy jokes, sexist nonsense, a dash of homophobia, and clichéd comedy that’s too easy for a man with tiger blood.



Television Rating: **2.0/5.0**

Sheen plays Charlie Goodson (Really? Another Charlie? Can he not respond to another name?), a former baseball player who watched his career fall apart after he lost his temper and screwed up his knee when he tried to break a bat over his leg. Charlie knows the cost of anger and how it can lose you something of value. The connection to the real life drama of Sheen and his former hit isn’t just obvious, it’s kind of the only reason for this show to exist. And once the novelty of it wears off, “Anger Management” has to live or die outside of its tabloid-rich foundation. It dies.



Anger Management

Photo credit: FX

The "Two and a Half Men vs. Sheen" story isn't the only angle of "Anger Management" that was pulled straight from the actor's life. In the show, Charlie Goodson has an ex-wife (Shawnee Smith) and a child (Daniela Bobadilla) whom he tries to parent. Clearly, Smith's character is designed to be a play off Sheen's relationship with Denise Richards (who reportedly guest stars in a future episode) but here's where "Anger Management" errs by being TOO close to realism and yet not quite enough. FX takes risks but Sheen's webcasts and performance art tour are the kinds of things that can't really be watered down. Turning his blow-out fights with Richards and his reported drug problems into laugh-track-aided comedy is a bit weird and not in a funny way. Perhaps reminding viewers of Sheen's tumultuous relationship and trouble with anger might be more sad than the creators imagined.



Anger Management
Photo credit: FX

Goodson has turned his issues with anger into therapy by becoming a therapist for other angry sorts including a pretty girl stereotype, an old crank stereotype, and, of course, a homosexual stereotype. The therapy scenes are so generic and cliched that they almost feel like a spoof of this kind of laugh track material, the kind of show that FX has very clearly avoided in the past. It's amazing to think that this kind of cookie cutter nonsense is on the same night as the brilliant and trend-breaking "Louie" (or the same network as "It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia" and "Archer"). FX has taken so many risks. Hiring Sheen may have been one but it was the last risk taken by the creators of "Anger Management." Everything else is familiar in the worst way.

There are some talented people on the fringe of "Anger Management" — including Selma Blair as Charlie's girlfriend/therapist, former "Spin City" co-star Michael Boatman as Charlie's neighbor, Brett Butler as a surly bartender, and Brian Austin Green as his daughter's new boyfriend, a young man who challenges Charlie's anger-handling skills in the first episode. But this is Sheen's show. And, to be fair, he's not bad. His comic timing is strong here and he seems reinvigorated by a chance to find sitcom fame again.

And there's a chance he will. People will tune in to see if Sheen is still winning and what his next move may be. He's a fascinating guy. But they're not going to stay tuned if they don't laugh. They're not going to tune in just to see how Sheen is doing in weeks three, four, and five. And that's where the people at FX made a mistake. Charlie Sheen and his personal drama will get people to attend one session of "Anger Management" but they're not going to keep coming back without a court order.

"Anger Management" stars Charlie Sheen, Shawnee Smith, Noureen Dewulf, Derek Richardson, Barry Corbin, Brett Butler, Selma Blair, Daniela Bobadilla, and Michael Boatman. It premieres on FX on Thursday, June 28, 2012 at 8pm CST.



[16]

By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [17]
Content Director
HollywoodChicago.com
brian@hollywoodchicago.com [16]

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/19106/tv-review-charlie-sheen-wastes-your-time-on-anger-management>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/briantt>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/anger-management>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/brett-butler>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/brian-tallerico>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/charlie-sheen>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/daniela-bobadilla>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/denise-richards>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/fx>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/michael-boatman>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/selma-blair>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/shawnee-smith>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/television>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/two-and-a-half-men>
- [15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dvd-theater-tv-news>
- [16] <mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#BRIAN>