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DVD Extra

Is that DVD you've got your eye on really worth the investment? Should you wait a few months until the "Special Edition" hits shelves? DVD Extra lights the way.

December 6 DVD roundup

Posted on 12/05/2011 by [Harry Thomas](#)

More summer blockbusters are making their BD/DVD debuts this week.

Mainstream: Cowboys & Aliens; The Debt; The Hangover; The Help; Mr. Popper's Penguins

Independent: Father vs. Son; For Christ's Sake; He's Mine, Not Yours; Mangus!

Documentary: Arabia!

Foreign: Life, Above All; The Overcoat; Triple Tap

Reissue: Mission: Impossible (films)

BD debut: Tora! Tora! Tora!

TV: Designing Women; The Game; Law & Order; The Lucy Show; Portlandia

British TV: The Sarah Jane Adventures

Adult animation: The Simpsons

Music: Michael Feinstein

Stand-up comedy: Carlos Mencia; Colin Quinn

Kids: Curious George; Spongebob Squarepants

Usual rules apply: synopses are taken from the press releases, snarky commentary is extra, and preview links go to YouTube's preview pages.. And just in case you were wondering, the DVD prices are the listed retail prices. You can get them cheaper if you buy at discount stores or online.

Arabia!

Image Entertainment, 46 minutes, not rated

DVD: \$19.98

3DBD/BD: \$24.98

IMAX documentary is narrated by Helen Mirren and explores Arabia and the Islamic pilgrimage known as the Haji, along with tombs, coral reefs, shipwrecks, lost cities, and more. Extras: behind-the-scenes featurettes.

Carlos Mencia: New Territory

Comedy Central/Paramount, 90 minutes, \$16.99

Uncensored and extended version of Mencia's stand-up show that premieres on Comedy Central on the same day.

Extras: featurette.

Colin Quinn: Long Story Short

MVD Entertainment, 75 minutes

DVD: \$14.95

BD: \$19.95

Comedian Colin Quinn in his off-Broadway show taking audience members through a 75-minute comedic tour of the history of the world. Directed by Jerry Seinfeld. Extras: behind-the-scenes featurette, commentary.

Cowboys & Aliens

Universal, 119 minutes, PG-13, 2 discs

DVD: \$29.98

BD/DVD with digital copy: \$34.98

Gunslinger Jake Lonergan (Daniel Craig) wakes up in the Arizona desert with no memory and a strange metal device shackled to his wrist. He stumbles into the nearest town to find that he's a wanted man; and the town patriarch Colonel Woodrow (Harrison Ford) has issues with him. A showdown is looming when mysterious lights appear in the sky; aliens are abducting the townsfolk. Lonergan's wrist shackle reveals properties as the only weapon that can shoot down the alien spaceships. Now he has to team up with the folks who wanted him dead to fight the aliens. Also stars Olivia Wilde. Directed by Jon Favreau and produced by a slew of big names, including Steven Spielberg and Ron Howard. Based on the graphic novel by Scott Mitchell Rosenberg. Extended version adds 17 minutes. The previews looked cool as hell; but the reviews weren't as kind. I still want to see it, though. Extras: featurettes, making-of-featurette. BD adds: BD-Live capacity, cast interviews, commentary, featurettes.

Curious George: Gets A New Toy

Universal, 108 minutes, 8 episodes, \$16.98

Eight more animated episode of the monkey and his friend, the Man in the Yellow Hat. For the pre-schooler set. No extras listed.

The Debt

Universal, 114 minutes, R

DVD: \$29.98

BD: \$34.98

In 1966, three Israeli Mossad agents are assigned to track down a Nazi war criminal hiding in East Berlin. The mission was accomplished at great personal risk and cost. Thirty years later, the participants are shocked to learn that it might not have been after all. Stars Helen Mirren, Tom Wilkinson, Sam Worthington, Jessica Chastain and Ciarán Hinds. Extras: commentary, featurettes. BD adds BD-Live capacity.

Designing Women: The Complete Fifth Season

Shout! Factory, 24 episodes, 4 discs, \$44.99

Fifth season of the Southern lady designers, played by Jean Smart, Delta Burke, Annie Potts and Dixie Carter. Also stars Meshach Taylor and Alice Ghostley. No extras listed.

Father vs. Son

Osiris Entertainment, 97 minutes, not rated, \$24.98

Grant (Josh Dean) finds himself in competition for the same woman (Heather Stephens) from his newly-divorced father (Paul Wolff). Screwball comedy is supposed to ensue. No extras listed.

For Christ's Sake

Image Entertainment, 90 minutes, not rated, \$24.95

Robert (Jed Rees) is a small town priest who loans his estranged brother Alan (Will Sasso) money from the church

emergency fund for cancer treatments. To his horror, he finds that Alan used the money to finance an adult film. Trailer is NSFW. Religious comedy is supposed to ensue; it sounds more sacrilegious to me, and I'm not Catholic. No extras listed.

The Game: The Fourth Season

Paramount, 275 minutes, 2 discs, \$36.98

Fourth season of series detailing the lives of the wives and girlfriends of professional football players. Also available with Seasons 1-3 in a block set for \$129.98. No extras listed.

The Hangover: Part II

Warner Bros., 102 minutes, R

DVD: \$28.98

BD/DVD with digital copy: \$35.99

Phil (Bradley Cooper), Stu (Ed Harris), Alan (Zach Galifianakis) and Doug (Justin Bartha) travel to Bangkok, Thailand for Stu's wedding. Mindful of what happened at Doug's Las Vegas bachelor party, he opts for a safe package trip, sans alcohol. However, two days before the wedding, he relents and allows everyone one beer each, in sealed bottles. Nothing could be wrong with that, correct? Despite everyone's claims that it's absolutely hilarious, I never saw the first one. I doubt I'll watch this one, either. Extras: gag reel. BD adds: featurettes, Ultraviolet digital copy.

He's Mine, Not Yours

Image Entertainment, 90 minutes, not rated, \$14.98

Kent (Jason Weaver) is ready to put the swinging bachelor lifestyle behind him and marry Brooke (Gabrielle Dennis). Brooke isn't convinced that he's not going to stray, so she hires a seductress (Caryn Ward) to test him. However, the seductress falls for Kent; now both women vie for Kent's affections. African-American relationship comedy is supposed to ensue. Extras: behind-the-scenes featurette, outtakes, photo gallery.

The Help

Disney/Dreamworks, 138 minutes, PG-13

DVD: \$29.99

BD/DVD: \$39.99

BD/DVD with digital copy: \$44.99

In a 1960s Mississippi town, Eugenia "Skeeter" Phelan (Emma Stone) wants to become a writer, but when she interviews the black maids of the town's prominent white families, the revelations shock not only the whites but the blacks who have maintained their silences. The changing times also take their toll on the stories being told. Also stars Viola Davis, Octavia Spencer, Bryce Dallas Howard, Jessica Chastain, Sissy Spacek, Allison Janney and Ahna O'Reilly. Based on the NYT bestseller by Kathryn Stockett. My mother has waxed rhapsodic about this film; but she grew up in Mississippi and experienced a lot of the events firsthand. She's still trying to get me to watch it. Extras: music video. BD adds: deleted scenes, featurettes.

Law & Order: The Ninth Year

Universal, 1,098 minutes, 24 episodes, 5 discs, \$49.98

Ninth year of the long-running crime drama series. No extras listed.

Life, Above All

Sony, 100 minutes, PG-13, BD/DVD: \$45.99

12-year-old Chanda's (Khomotso Manyaka) family is destroyed by a rumor that spreads through her small village near Johannesburg, South Africa. She leaves home to find her mother and the truth behind the gossip, prejudice and superstition. Extras: behind-the-scenes featurette.

The Lucy Show: The Official Fifth Season

CBS, 562 minutes, 22 episodes, 4 discs

Penultimate season of the show, with more hijinks from the lovable redhead, now portraying a widowed mother of two. Also part of a Seasons 1-5 box set for \$179.99. Extras: documentary, outtakes.

Mangus!

Wolfe Video, 88 minutes, not rated, \$24.95

Mangus Spedgwick (Ryan Nelson Boggus) hopes to continue his family acting legacy by securing the lead role in the local annual production of "Jesus Christ Superstar." When unforeseen circumstances deny him the role, he fights for his chance to be Jesus. Extras: commentary, making-of-featurette.

Michael Feinstein: The Sinatra Legacy

Image Entertainment, 86 minutes

DVD: \$19.98

BD: \$24.98

Concert video featuring Feinstein singing The Chairman of the Board's greatest hits: Once in a Lifetime, I Thought About You, For Once In My Life, Put On A Happy Face/Lotta Livin', Fly Me To The Moon, So In Love, There'll Be Some Changes Made, Begin the Beguine, Brazil and New York, New York. No extras listed.

Mission: Impossible: Extreme Trilogy Collection

Paramount, PG-13, 3 episodes, 3 discs

DVD: \$19.99

BD: \$29.99

In anticipation of the impending release of "[Mission: Impossible – Ghost Protocol](#)" on Dec. 19. here comes this box set of the first three films in the trilogy, with Tom Cruise in the lead role as IMF agent Ethan Hunt. The BD for "Mission: Impossible" has four featurettes. The DVD and BDs for "Mission: Impossible 2" has commentary and three featurettes; "Mission: Impossible 3" has commentary. I liked the first and third films; the second was too much "one damn thing after another." Director Woo also made too much use of the masks, as I recall. The new one looks intriguing; I hope to find time to see it in theaters this Christmas.

Mr. Popper's Penguins

Fox, 100 minutes, PG

DVD: \$29.98

BD/DVD with digital copy: \$39.99

Mr. Popper (Jim Carrey) is a hard-driven businessman who "inherits" six "adorable" penguins, who quickly unravel his business deals, nearly land him in jail, turn his New York apartment into an ice palace and teach him the meaning of life. Based on the 1938 children's book that won the 1939 Newberry Medal and became a classic book through the generations. The special Ty Penguin Plush edition includes the DVD and stuffed penguin for \$34.98. Another example of why short children's literature should stay that way. Extras: animated short, commentary, deleted scenes, featurettes, gag reel. BD adds: featurettes.

The Overcoat

RaroVideo, 99 minutes, not rated, \$29.98

1952 Italian film based on a Russian story; a poor city-hall clerk (Renao Rascel) only wants a new overcoat for himself. He gets fired for bungling an assignment. When he stumbles upon some bribery involving the mayor (Giulo Stival) and a construction company, he is given his job back and bonus, which he uses to buy a new overcoat. He looks good in it and everybody treats him with new respect for it; but someone steals it and he dies of fever. His ghost then haunts the

mayor's reception for the construction company. In Italian with English subtitles. Sounds like your typically depressing Russian novel with a point to make about the evils of capitalism. No extras listed.

Portlandia: Season One

MVD Entertainment, 144 minutes, 6 episodes

DVD: \$19.95

BD/DVD: \$26.95

Series of comedy shorts features recurring characters in Portland, Oregon, headlined by SNL alum Fred Armisen and Carrie Brownstein. Also stars Kyle MacLachlan, Selma Blair, Steve Buscemi, Heather Graham, Aimee Mann, Sarah McLachlan, Aubrey Plaza, Gus Van Sant and Jason Sudeikis. Extras: alternate scenes, cast interviews, deleted scenes, episode commentary, music video.

The Sarah Jane Adventures: The Complete Fourth Season

BBC Video, 315 minutes, \$29.98

Spin-off of the "Doctor Who" series stars the late Elisabeth Sladen as the title character, who continues her mission of protecting the Earth. No extras listed.

The Simpsons: Season 14

Fox, 482 minutes, 22 episodes, 4 discs

DVD: \$49.98

BD: \$59.99

Fourteenth season of the long-running animated series includes the historic 300th episode. Guest voices include rock 'n' roll legends Mick Jagger, Keith Richards, Lenny Kravitz, Tom Petty, Elvis Costello and Brian Setzer. Also paying Springfield a visit are Elliott Gould, Marisa Tomei, Little Richard and the dynamic duo of Adam West and Burt Ward. Some say this was the season that the show "jumped the shark." I dunno; I never watched it much anyway. Extras: deleted scenes, episode commentary, featurettes, photo gallery, storyboards.

Spongebob Squarepants: The Complete Seventh Season

Nickelodeon/Paramount, 572 minutes, 66 episodes, 4 discs, \$26.99

Seventh season of the yellow dude, in which every episode seems to violate rules set by other episodes, at least as far as I've seen watching it with my kids. The press release claims this is the first season release since they released Season 3. No word on what has happened or will happen when it comes to Seasons 4, 5 and 6. Includes the 50 episodes for the season, plus 16 other shorts. No extras listed.

Tora! Tora! Tora!

Fox, 145 minutes, G, \$34.98 (BD debut)

1970 dramatization of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, just in time for the 60th anniversary. Stars Martin Balsam, James Whitmore, Jason Robards and Joseph Cotton. This is the "Japanese Cut," featuring 10 minutes of previously unreleased footage. Watch this one over the Michael Bay misfire "Pearl Harbor." Then go rent "Midway." Extras: booklet.

Triple Tap

Well Go USA, 94 minutes, not rated

DVD: \$24.98

BD/DVD: \$29.98

A champion competitive marksman named Ken witnesses a robbery. He kills four of the thieves and saves a policeman. The case is investigated by Jerry, who Ken has recently beaten in a shooting match. One thief escapes, to attack Ken later. Now Jerry and Ken try to outsmart the escaped thief, along with each other. In Cantonese, with English subtitles and optional English dub track. Preview makes it look like a Cantonese "Lethal Weapon." Extras: behind-the-scenes

featurette, cast interviews, deleted scenes, photo gallery



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