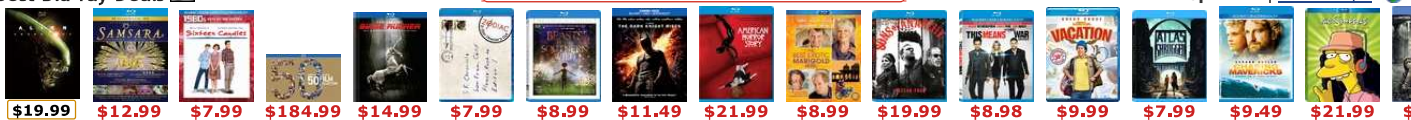


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Anime (2276)
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Drama (28996)
Epic (3640)
Erotic (560)
Family (8155)
Fantasy (10112)
Film-Noir (787)
Foreign (3615)
Heist (1096)
History (3909)
Holiday (872)
Horror (9017)
Imaginary (688)
Martial arts (2160)
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Music (5813)
Musical (2565)
Mystery (7300)
Nature (1418)
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Period (4221)
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Portlandia: Season Three Blu-ray

MVD/VSC | 2013 | Season 3 | 249 min | Not rated | Jul 09, 2013 (New Release)



Large: Front

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Video

Codec: MPEG-4 AVC
Resolution: 1080p
Aspect ratio: 1.78:1
Original aspect ratio: 1.78:1

Audio

English: Dolby Digital 2.0

Subtitles

English SDH

Discs

50GB Blu-ray Disc
Single disc (1 BD)

Packaging

Slipcover in original pressing

Playback

Region A (B, C untested)

Price

List price: \$24.95, Price history:
Amazon: \$19.28 (Save 23%)
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TV show rating

6.7 / 10

6 ratings.

Blu-ray review

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Movie appeal

Comedy 100%

5% popularity, 7 collections, 7 fans

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Blu-ray review
Screenshots (10)
User reviews
Region coding
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Portlandia: Season Three Blu-ray Review

Don't get me started. . .

Reviewed by Jeffrey Kauffman, June 28, 2013

If you live in Oregon, as I do, you know what the acronym SNOB stands for: Society of Native Oregon Born. It's an exclusive society, and it grants you entrée into a level of social discourse that never quite seems to be available to outsiders.

There's a famous bumper sticker that is actually seen in Portlandia which states "Keep Portland Weird", and Brownstein and Armisen seem intent to contribute to that effort. A lot of Portlandia continues to be effective as the show trundles through its third season, but some of the issues that have been on display in previous seasons continue to crop up here, including an emphasis on repetition in place of actual humor and a sometimes overly precious attitude that some may find as off putting as—well, Portland itself.



Portlandia continues to remind me of a series cobbled together out of the remnants of the last thirty minutes of various Saturday Night Live outings—you know, that part of that Lorne Michaels enterprise where occasional very funny hits are interspersed with more tired offerings where "runners" (i.e., running gags) are utilized, as if simply

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repeating a supposed punch line over and over automatically makes it funny. *This* Michaels enterprise tends to be more consistently wry and ironic than *SNL*, but as the show has continued to mine the often impressive array of characters that Arminen and Brownstein have created, it's also tended to become a bit lazy at times, using this "déjà vu all over again" approach a few (maybe *more* than a few) times too many.

There are as always nuggets of hilarity buried throughout this season. The comedy night at the feminist bookstore generates some laughs (virtually none from the "comedians", of course), and the continuing travails of the Mayor (Kyle McLachlan) offer a few giggles (that's our real life ex-Mayor, Sam Adams, as the harried assistant). In fact in one of *Portlandia's* continuing series of "interesting" cameos, Roseanne Barr shows up as a temp who has been assigned the Mayor's job. This actually never goes quite as insanely berserk as might be hoped for, but has a few good moments. (Part of my long history in Portland includes either managing or actually founding two very successful temporary services in Portland, and I have more than enough material to fill *Portlandia* for several seasons to come with the exploits of various temps. Fred and Carrie, have your people call my people—oh, wait a minute, I don't have people.)

Portlandia relies a bit more on through lines in this third season. There are still the requisite one off skits, but there's perhaps a more thoughtful consideration of plot development as the show moves into its third year. This might be most noticeable in longer arcs as with that concerning the Mayor, but there are minimal steps in the same direction with regard to some of the other recurring characters. There are also "one offs" that are used in a sort of aggregate approach, as in several silly public service announcements for various ridiculous groups that crop up now and again.

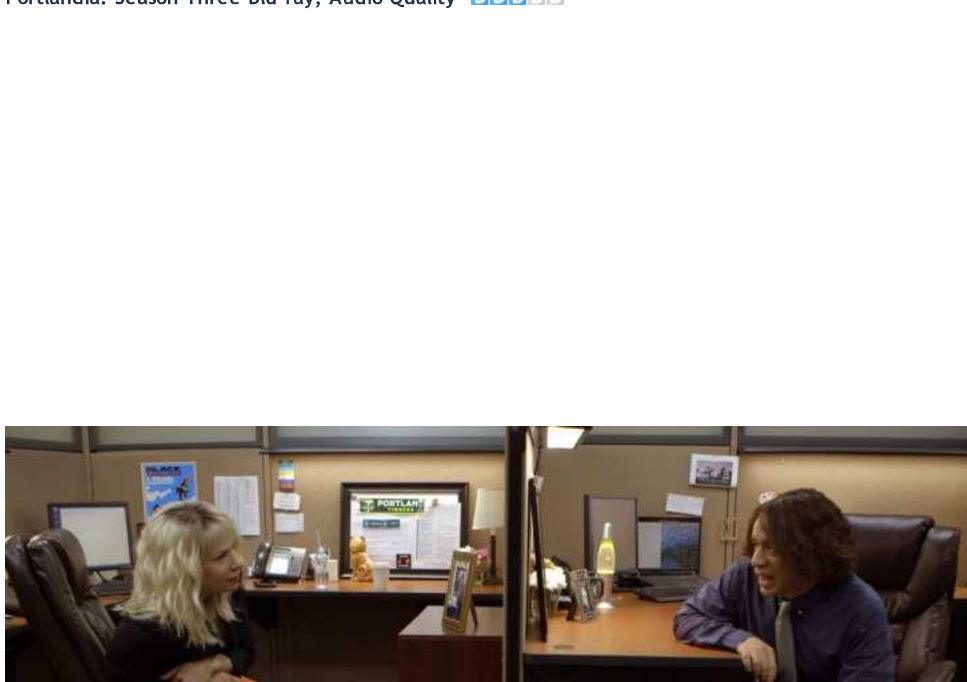
The show perhaps continues to be an acquired taste, much like the city it parodies. Too often Brownstein and Arminen seem to be just a little derisive rather than playfully satirical, something that tends to give *Portlandia* a sometimes slightly bitter edge, at least at times. The show has more often than not been overly twee and precious, winking so hard at its tendency to mock self-important snobs (or SNOBs) that it doesn't seem to realize it's become a bit self-important as well. Still, the show delivers solid, if not exactly gut busting, laughs, and Arminen and Brownstein continue to create some of the most delightfully daffy characters in television comedy.

Portlandia: Season Three Blu-ray, Video Quality **B B B B B**



Portlandia: Season Three is presented on Blu-ray courtesy of MVD/VSC with an AVC encoded 1080p transfer in 1.78:1. The high definition presentation in this season is very much in line with what I've already discussed in both the [Portlandia: Season One Blu-ray review](#) and the [Portlandia: Season Two Blu-ray review](#). There's a bit more playfulness in this season with regard to some video effects and outright special effects (believe me, that ray of sunshine in the season's opening episode is a special effect), something that pumps up the pop of this season at least a little bit (this includes some unexpected efforts like stop motion rats and, no, that's not a typo). The show continues to amble along in a sort of quasi-verité style that means things are never staged or framed impeccably, but the image is usually nicely sharp and clear. As with previous seasons, this "on the fly" shooting mentality tends to mean a lot of the show at least appears to have been lit with ambient sources, and so contrast and fine detail can be variable at times.

Portlandia: Season Three Blu-ray, Audio Quality **B B B B B**



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Hey, Armisen and Brownstein: Portland (and *Portlandia*) deserves better than your feeble, lossy Dolby Digital 2.0 audio. Would you even *think* of doing this if the show were about Seattle? (Sorry, my regional chauvinism is showing.) The show is of course almost totally comprised of small scale dialogue segments, often between only two characters, but it wouldn't have *hurt* to have had lossless audio here, and it absolutely could have helped with regard (as in previous seasons) to the music. What's here suffices quite well, if unspectacularly so. But both snobs and SNOBs may be disappointed by this lack of audio excellence.

Portlandia: Season Three Blu-ray, Special Features and Extras **B B B B B**



- **Portland Tours** (1080p; 24:43) features Kumail Najjani visiting various odd locations. Note to Kumail: you're going to be strung up if you keep mispronouncing our state's name. It's not Ore-ah-GONE, it's Ory-gun.
- **Deleted Scenes** include:
 - *Changing for Roommate* (1080p; 3:35)
 - *Earth Day* (1080p; 2:24)

Portlandia: Season Three Blu-ray, Overall Score and Recommendation **B B B B B**



My sons, who are bonafide SNOBs (if not snobs) love *Portlandia*, although for different reasons. My eldest son, who despises "hipsters" and can't wait to get out of this place, loves the fact that the show constantly makes fun of the overly pretentious people that admittedly make up a rather large percentage of the local populace (though perhaps *not quite* to the exaggerated degree that *Portlandia* proffers). My younger son, who *is* kind of a hipster himself, loves the show for those very exaggerations. Those who have never experienced the peculiar charms of my hometown may well be laughing at us rather than with us as they watch *Portlandia*, and in fact they may assume that what they're seeing comes uncomfortably close to being a documentary rather than an artful comedy, but even those folks may occasionally grow tired of *Portlandia*'s emphasis on repetition in the place of actual punch lines. Despite some niggling qualms (which may in fact be nothing other than a chauvinistic defense mechanism), *Portlandia* is often amusing if not downright hilarious. This third season offers incrementally better video but the same baffling lossy audio. **Recommended.**