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Weekend Shopping Guide 3/21/08: The Meek Shall Inherit



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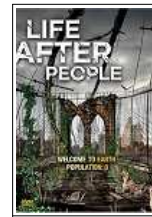
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The weekend's here. You've just been paid, and it's burning a hole in your pocket. What's a pop culture geek to do? In hopes of steering you in the right direction to blow some of that hard-earned cash, it's time for the Quick Stop Weekend Shopping Guide - your spotlight on the things you didn't even know you wanted...

Leave it to the wonderful documentary *Life After People* (History Channel, Not Rated, DVD-\$24.95 SRP) - in which, as the title suggests, we learn what happens to the human legacy and creations if we were to suddenly disappear - to illuminate just how little we leave behind that has any real permanence to it. In fact, the evidence of our lives upon this planet is eliminated depressingly fast if left to the devices of mother nature. The DVD features additional scenes. Definitely check this out.



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M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						
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I'm endlessly fascinated by the Beatles, which is why a documentary like *Composing The Beatles Songbook* (Pride, Not Rated, DVD-\$19.95 SRP) is right up my alley. It's a fascinating look at the songwriting partnership of John Lennon and Paul McCartney in the period from 1957-1965 - in other words, when they were actively writing together. Great stuff.



You know, Will Smith's *I Am Legend* (Warner Bros., Rated PG-13, DVD-\$34.99 SRP) is actually a decent adaptation of the Richard Matheson novel - up to a point. That point is when we leave behind Smith's Dr. Robert Neville - who has stayed behind in a decimated New York City to try and find the cure for a virus that has wiped out mankind, leaving a small survivor base of violent humanity, the immune Neville, his dog, and the hope of more people out there somewhere.

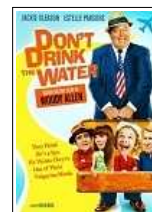


The film begins to flail about in the cesspool of Hollywood mediocrity when the crappy CG infected monstro-humans show up, with their implausible anaconda mouths and plastic skin. It's a shame it all falls apart, because they had something there. The 2-disc edition features an alternate ending that hews closer to the book and a quartet of animated comics.

I really don't get the attraction of *Enchanted* (Walt Disney, Rated PG, DVD-\$29.99 SRP). I saw it in the theater with family over the holidays, and I admit that the conceit was good - an animated fairytale princess (Amy Adams) on the eve of her marriage to the handsome prince (James Marsden) gets banished to the "real world" New York City by the evil Queen (Susan Sarandon) and must find her way while finding new love (Patrick Dempsey) - but the execution was just saccharine and cheap. It's sad, because it could have been a memorable meta romp. Bonus features include deleted scenes, behind-the-scenes featurettes, and bloopers.



Though the recent remake starring author Woody Allen and Michael J. Fox has long been available on DVD, the original adaptation of the cold war farce *Don't Drink The Water* (Lionsgate, Not Rated, DVD-\$19.98 SRP) - starring Jackie Gleason as the unfortunate American family man whose innocent tourist snaps behind the iron curtain are misinterpreted as spying, leading to an international incident - has been MIA. Well, it's MIA no more, and it's worth a peep.



Nothing cries out "prestige Oscar picture" like *Atonement* (Universal, Rated R, DVD-\$29.98 SRP), with its sweeping storyline about love, bitterness, war, and Britishness. The story, in a nutshell, is about a pair of young lovers (Keira Knightley & James McAvoy) whose passionate embrace is witnessed by her younger sister (Saoirse Ronan), whose jealousy leads her to tell a lie that has lasting consequences for them all. Sounds prestige-y, doesn't it? Bonus features include an audio commentary, making-of featurettes, and deleted scenes.



Essentially blended fairy tales, the Jim Henson company's *Unstable Fables* should be a winning



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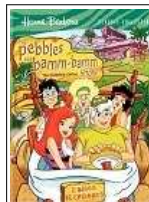
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concept, as it allows for a fun reimagining of classic stories. In execution, though, the first installment - **3 Pigs And A Baby** (Genius, Not Rated, DVD-\$19.98 SRP) is a half-hearted, poorly executed affair that contains none of the Henson wit or magic. What it does feature is a cringe-worthy voice cast bringing an anemic script to life with third-rate CGI. If I'm ever in the presence of Brian Henson again, I'm going to give him a healthy smack upside the head. Bonus features include a trio of behind-the-scenes featurettes.



Not only had the franchise jumped the shark, but it was doing cartwheels by the time the *Flintstones* had evolved into the Saturday morning **Pebbles And Bamm-Bamm Show** (Warner Bros., Not Rated, DVD-\$26.98 SRP), which aged the titular characters into their teens and made the whole thing into a prehistoric *American Graffiti*. The 2-disc set contains all 16 episodes, plus 4 additional Pebbles and Bamm-Bamm episodes from *The Flintstones Comedy Hour*.



The third (and penultimate) season of **Battlestar Galactica** (Universal, Not Rated, DVD-\$59.98 SRP) seems to have been full of the twists and turns that fans of the series delight in. Personally, I'm still not enamored of the show, and find its initially bleak outlook to have turned into a lackluster take-off on *Blade Runner*. Still, fans will delight in the 6-disc box set, featuring all 20 episodes (with "Unfinished Business" getting a 25-minute extension), deleted scenes, commentaries, podcasts, video blogs, and webisodes.



After his last few abysmal flicks, I admit to being a bit leery of taking in Guy Ritchie's latest, **Revolver** (Sony, Rated R, DVD-\$24.96 SRP). Thankfully, he's gone back to the gangster character pieces that defined his best work - *Lock Stock* and *Snatch*. This time around, it's Jason Statham as a grifter out for revenge against a crime boss (Ray Liotta) who finds his revenge may be a bit more complicated than he first thought. Bonus materials include an audio commentary, behind-the-scenes featurettes, deleted scenes, and outtakes.



Sadly, they should have let the accident take the **Bionic Woman** (Universal, Not Rated, DVD-\$29.98



SRP) and not bothered to waste the money keeping her aloof. The resurrection of the 70's *Bionic* spin-off is DOA and annoying in the way that all of these hyper-glossy, utterly boring post-modern sci-fi series seem to be. Whither wonder with your angsty adventure? The 2-disc set features all 8 episodes, plus an audio commentary and behind-the-scenes featurettes.



It's so awkward when a show tries so hard to be like one of your favorite shows, but ends up failing miserably. You just feel bad for the poor mooks. Such is the case with the first season of the ABC Family show *Greek* (ABC Family, Not Rated, DVD-\$29.99 SRP), which tries to do for college what *Freaks and Geeks* did for high school. Remember back when that was called *Undeclared*? It was funnier and more enjoyable then. The 3-disc set features all 10 episodes, plus deleted scenes, commentaries, a behind-the-scenes featurette, an extended music sequence, and a look at season 2.



Things are winding down by the time we get to the eight season of *Married With Children* (Sony, Not Rated, DVD-\$39.95 SRP). Most of the humor had played out, and it was clearly marking time until the end. It's sad, really, since the show was quite groundbreaking and funny in its early seasons. The 3-disc set features all 26 episodes, plus two "minisodes" of *Silver Spoons* and *VIP*.



So there you have it... my humble suggestions for what to watch, listen to, play with, or waste money on this coming weekend. See ya next week...

-Ken Plume

##

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Comments:

ONE RESPONSE TO "WEEKEND SHOPPING GUIDE 3/21/08: THE MEEK SHALL INHERIT"

- [Mark Wheaton](#) Says:
March 21st, 2008 at 9:50 pm

I swear to god, I thought I had a handle on all the stuff that had been made out of Woody Allen scripts. This is the FIRST time I've ever even heard of that Jackie Gleason movie.

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