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Reviews

Frosty Reviews Queen and [ER](#) Season Four

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Review by [Steven Weintraub](#)

Queen: Under Review 1973-1980

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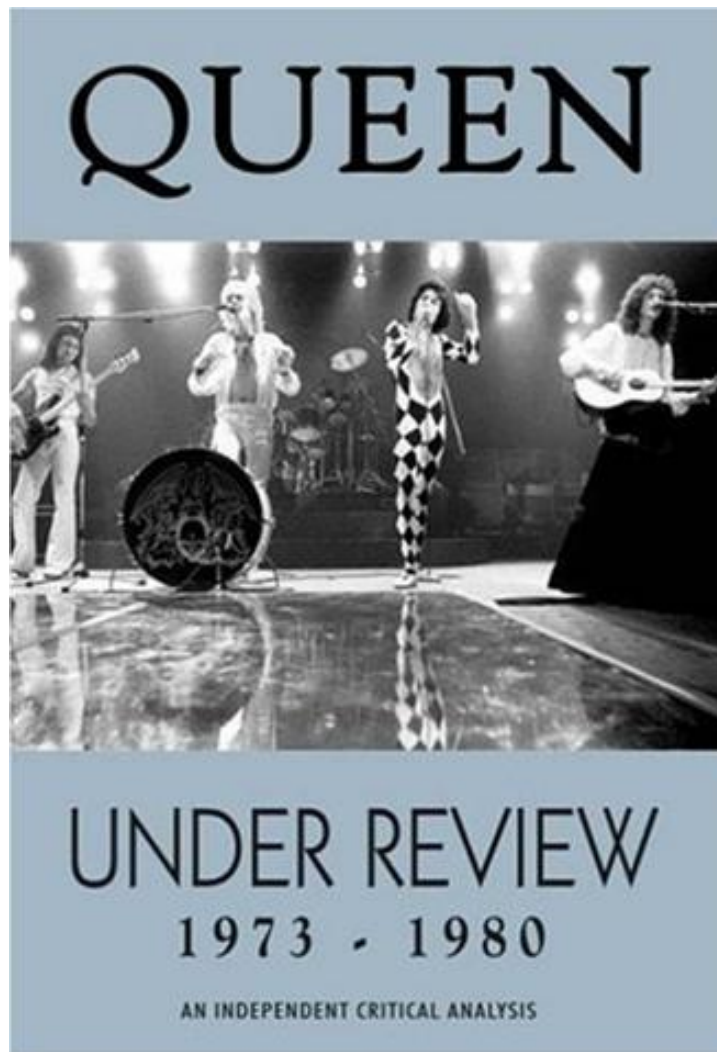
I first discovered Queen sometime during my early teenage years. The one thing I really remember was how different they sounded than anything else I was hearing. I was fascinated that one [song](#) could be heavy metal (stone cold crazy), yet the next song would be a flashback to the 1950's (crazy little thing called love). Every other band I listened to could be pigeonholed into a genre, but Queen wasn't rock, and they weren't pop, they were something between avant-garde and mainstream, they existed in a universe all to themselves. As a kid just discovering what [music](#) was all about, they completely fascinated me.

Now as an adult, I still listen to their music and I definitely consider myself a fan. Over the years I have seen hundreds of live performances and I can say without a doubt the one act that I wished I could have seen live would have been Queen. I have seen plenty of video on Freddie Mercury and he was one of those rare individuals who could command a stage and lead 60,000 strong in singing along. Queen was a stadium band before most others were in arenas.

Now that you know my history with the band, you can understand that when I was offered a [DVD](#) on Queen, I jumped at the chance to check it out.

The DVD is called *Queen: Under Review 1973-1980* and it is an independent critical analysis of the band during those years. The key thing to know is this DVD was not produced with the band in anyway; it seems to have been done by the BBC as an independent look at those seven crazy years when the band was producing an album a year. The film seems like a behind the music on VH1, except instead of talking with the band and watching a lot of behind the scenes footage, we get interviews with critics and rock journalists.

The DVD runs 103 minutes and for the most part is a lot of talking heads. The great thing is the DVD chapters are divided up by each album, so if you just want to hear about *A Night at the Opera* or *Sheer Heart Attack*, you can go right to them. Primarily there are five journalist/music experts who talk about each album. Some are extremely effusive in their praise, and some come across as those angry journalist types who seem never able to enjoy anything



mainstream. Mixed in with the talking heads are a few rare performances by the band during the time period.

As a fan of the band I was really interested in what they were saying and it was really interesting to learn how the band came together, how they discovered their unique sound and what these critics thought of each album during what is arguably their most prolific period. However... this DVD is really for fans of the band as a huge percentage is talking heads, casual fans or people who don't know the band will definitely get bored.

Also the actual DVD itself is not well done. On my home computer I could have made a better menu system and the sound is not even mixed in surround. The only good thing, as I said earlier, is the chapters are divided up into each album. Otherwise the DVD menu system looks like one produced back in the dawn of the digital age, and that is not a good thing.

Final Words

If you are a Queen fan you will get a kick out of this DVD even with the poor quality of the menu system. However if you only have a passing interest in the band, or you have never heard of them, this should not be your starting point.

ER – Season Four



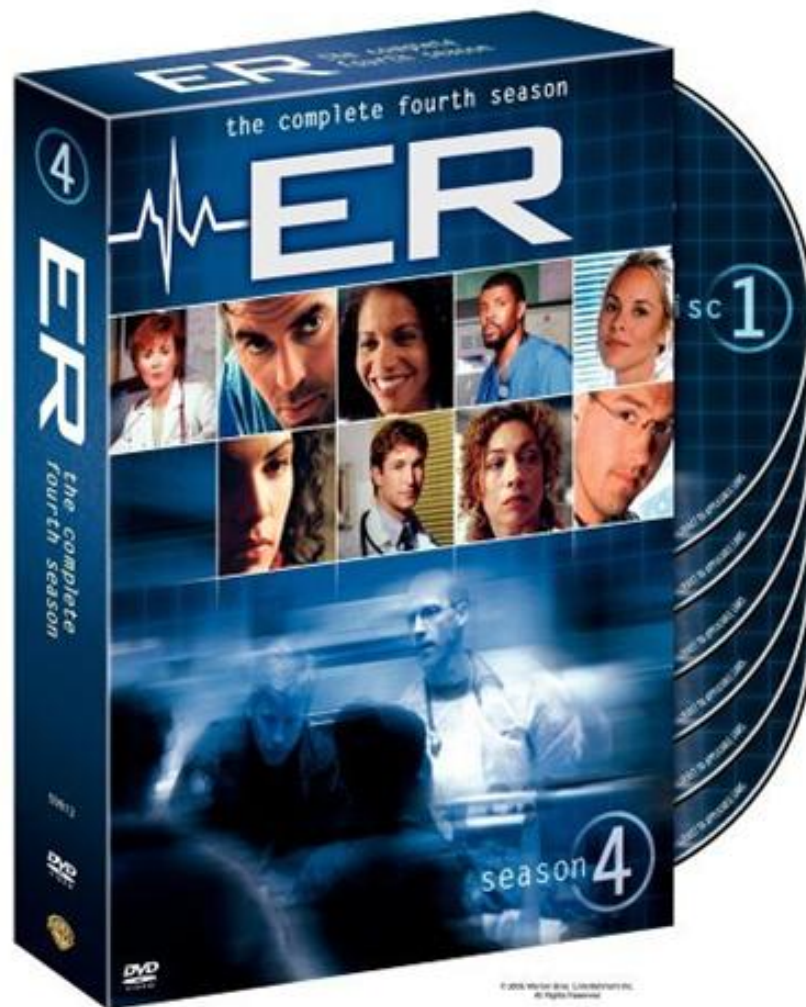
Remember when *ER* was the biggest show on TV? Back when George Clooney wasn't a movie star and the cast consisted of Anthony Edwards, Noah Wyle, George Clooney and Julianna Margulies. Back in 1997/98 Season Four was originally broadcast and the season began with a bang. Starting off with a live episode that was filmed two different times, once for the east coast and once for the west coast, the season introduced new characters like Dr. Corday (Alex Kingston) and went further into the lives of the characters we already knew.

Season Four really was a great season on the most popular show on television. This season the show really felt like a finely tuned machine, one where the writers, the actors and the crew were definitely more comfortable in their roles. For those who have never watched this season I will try and keep the overview brief, as I hate spoilers.

This was the season that Dr.

Ross and Nurse Hathaway's relationship was explored further, will they or won't they get together/married. Also with the huge interest in George Clooney in the mainstream media, the show tended to focus quite a bit on his character in general, with him dealing with a death in the family and his constant struggle with medical issues at County General (the fictitious hospital they all work at). The show seemed to always make sure his character was around. Also this season there was a new baby and an emotional visit home for one of the main characters.

If you have never seen the show you can easily jump right in and watch this season. Obviously it would be more rewarding to start with season one. Recently I have seen the first two seasons of the show on sale for twenty dollars each, which is quite a deal for the amount of content you get. The question really is do you have the time to watch all of this television on DVD. You really have to wonder if the popularity of these television box sets has something to do with theatre attendance being down. When you weigh paying ten dollars to go see a new



two hour movie versus paying twenty dollars to have twenty five hours of content at home, can you wonder why more and more stay at home?

Video / Audio / Extras

The Season Four Box Set comes has all twenty-two episodes over six discs. All the episodes from the fourth season are presented in Anamorphic Widescreen with Dolby Digital Stereo audio. Overall the show looked and sounded great.

Also it is worth mentioning after the Queen DVD above that the menu system for this season is really well done. Everything is organized extremely well so you can see what is available as an extra on each DVD. A bunch of the episodes have deleted scenes which can be watched all together, or on their own. Also on the last disc there are a few extras/featurettes.

The first is a "post" show after both the east and west coast airing of *Ambush*, the title of the live episode. This feature runs around 11 minutes and has some quick interviews with the cast and crew.

The second is called *Anatomy of Ambush*. This featurette mixes old interviews from rehearsals of the live episode with new interviews with some of the cast and a lot of the crew. Overall this extra was really well done as I have seen a bunch of these that are not worth your time. This was well crafted and even shows some of the differences between the east and west coast version.

Next up is called *CUTups*. This runs around ten minutes and features everyone messing up lines and laughing. Even though it is the same thing over and over again, I always enjoy watching these kinds of bloopers, especially on a show that is so serious.

Final Words

I really enjoyed watching some of these "older" episodes of *ER*. Back in '97 I was watching them when they first aired and revisiting the show brought back a bunch of memories. What I also really enjoyed was watching them without commercials, which was my first time ever



enjoying the show without interruptions. If you watched this season back when it first aired, I think you would get a kick out of the box set. Nevertheless I must say *ER* is still on the air today, and while the episodes now are not as memorable as these older ones, they are free. Even though I dug this season, it is hard to recommend to purchase. However if you want to go back to when *ER* was still shiny and new, or you have an old cast fetish, this is definitely your season.



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