

DVD Roundup



Spend an Evening With Saddle Creek

★★★
Back story of Bright Eyes and friends

Plexifilm

"It's a hard word to get my head around," Bright Eyes' Conor Oberst says of success in this doc on the first decade of Omaha's premier indie label, Saddle Creek. But as primary role-players are interviewed, the evolution from niche scene into international phenomenon seems inevitable. Unfortunately, the story is told with stultifying tedium, although obsessives will love the vintage footage of a pubescent Oberst spazzing out.

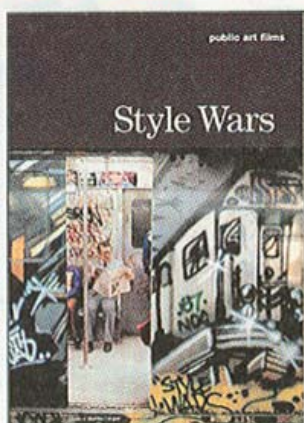


Undeclared: The Complete Series

★★★
Freaks and Geeks' collegiate sibling

Shout! Factory

Following the mania surrounding *Freaks and Geeks* on DVD, all seventeen episodes of creator Judd Apatow's follow-up comedy about freshman dorm life are presented here. The eminently likable ensemble cast centers on gawky Steven Karp (Jay Baruchel), while Loudon Wainwright III shines as his hang-around dad. Key guest star is Will Ferrell as a speed freak who ghostwrites papers and says, "This blows away my old *Bovary*!" *Pixie* fans, note: great series music by Joey Santiago.



Style Wars

★★★★★

Ultimate edition of graffiti's greatest film

Public Art Films

"To some it's art. To most people it's a plague that never ends." And so director Tony Silver begins his stunning 1983 film of graffiti artists risking their lives to get fame by painting New York's subway. Apoplectic detectives, battling break dancers and the greatest rolling artworks of the twentieth century combine in multiple thrilling narratives for this essential hip-hop document. The second disc comes with rare photo galleries, interviews and a tribute to artist Dondi White.

to artist Dondi White. cultural importance. P.R.



Close shave: Clive Owen holds a blade on Benicio Del Toro.

Bloody Hell

Film noir that's black and white and red all over. By Peter Relic



Sin City

★★★½

Mickey Rourke, Bruce Willis, Jessica Alba, Rosario Dawson

Directed by Frank Miller and Robert Rodriguez / Buena Vista

When Frank Miller blew open the graphic-novel genre in the Eighties, the ultraviolence he depicted was startling. Today, such brutality will barely shock the average filmgoer. Still, as the most faithful big-screen comic-book adaptation so far, *Sin City* embraces its origins: In stark black and white, splashed strategically with red, it looks like comic-book panels come to life. Of its intertwined narrative strands, the most resonant involves Marv (Mickey Rourke), a two-bit loser intent on avenging the murder of a hooker named Goldie (Jaime King) who showed him the night of his life. Rourke drolly delivers insipid lines like "You can't kill a man without knowing for sure you ought to." While dubious dialogue is what keeps *Sin City* from being classic noir, compensation involves plenty of opportunities to ogle scalding babes Jessica Alba, Rosario Dawson, Carla Gugino and Brittany Murphy. But the cumulative effect of all the gunplay and eye candy is like having a four-course meal at a Hooters in a war zone, leaving one feeling overstimulated and more than a little nauseated.

Q&A: FRANK MILLER

Sin City

The graphic-novelist on making his comic for the silver screen. It took years to persuade Frank Miller to adapt his graphic-novel series *Sin City* into a feature film. Miller rejected many offers, but director Robert Rodriguez eventually coerced him (and Quentin Tarantino, for one scene) into signing on as a co-director.

Rodriguez was so adamant about giving Miller credit and creative input on the adaptation of his baby that he even quit the Directors Guild of America. We spoke with Miller to discuss the origins of *Sin City*.

What comic book made you want to draw for a career?
That goes back to the dark ages, when dinosaurs ruled the earth.

But *Spider-Man* and particularly *Batman*, because I remember seeing how scary it looked, and I thought it was the coolest.

Do you remember the first idea you had for *Sin City*?

Conan the Barbarian in a trench coat. I wanted to do someone who was completely miscast in the universe, a raging id in a world of superegos. People tend to do stories on stuff they like to draw.

For me, that was tough guys, vintage cars and really hot women. **How did you get along sharing the bill with two prominent directors?** Robert's sincerity was just evident. He said, "The Directors Guild doesn't want to give you credit because we aren't a registered team, so I'd like to give you full credit." I didn't think it was fair, so he quit the guild. It was way cool! With Quentin, it was a natural crossover for him to be involved. When he was on set, the two of us acted like a couple of kids in a tree fort.

KEVIN O'DONNELL



Sinners having much more fun: Miller (right) with Rodriguez

● ROLLING STONE DVD reviews use one- to four-star ratings.