

BONES: SEASON THREE
Fox Home Entertainment

Well established as a character-driven forensic procedural, *Bones*' third season tried to raise the stakes with the introduction of an elusive, cannibalistic serial killer dubbed Gormogon. The season's first nine episodes tease at Gormogon's identity, hinting he may be one of Brennan's (Deschanel) colleagues at the Jeffersonian Institute. Unfortunately, last year's writers strike hit *Bones* particularly hard, cutting its usual twenty-two episodes to fourteen, spoiling plans for a longer chase.

That said, there are many memorable character moments in Season 3: Brennan tries to find common ground with her imprisoned father (Ryan O'Neal) and fugitive brother (Loren Dean); the annoyingly young Dr. Lance Sweets (John Francis Daley) is assigned to psychoanalyze Booth (Boreanaz) and Brennan's partnership; Angela and Hodgins (Conlin and Thyne) hire a P.I. to track down Angela's surprise husband, who kept them from getting married in the second season finale; and of course, the creative decision leading to a regular's departure that has reverberated well into Season 4.

The Season 3 set includes "Player Under Pressure", a Season 2 episode about the murder of a college basketball star, preempted in the wake of the Virginia Tech tragedy. This episode is available in its aired version and an original unaired version. Also included are "Director's Take" featurettes visiting various *Bones* sets, a gag reel, two extended episode cuts, and three bonus episodes from Season 4 to round out a five-disc package.

Gerald So

BOTTLE SHOCK
Fox Home Entertainment

In 1976, the wine world was rocked when, in a blind taste test, wines from the Nappa Valley went toe to toe with those of France

Bottle Shock tells that story (among others). Alan Rickman stars as Steven Spurrier, a wine salesman living in Paris. Spurrier organizes the tasting, certain that the sad little wines of California would not even come close to those of France. The Last week in Paris is organized in hopes of giving his shop a boost.

Bill Pullman plays Jim Barrett, owner of Chateau Montelena vineyard. He is struggling to make a go of it, with creditors snapping at his heels and a son that less than motivated.

When *Bottle Shock* focuses on Pullman, Rickman and the wine, it is quite enjoyable. Unfortunately, there are other storylines, including a love triangle that should have been left on the cutting floor. Had this film focused simply on the primary tale, I would give it a fairly enthusiastic thumbs up. But the subplots drag and make *Bottle Shock* uneven. The cast is surprisingly loaded, with bit appearances by Denis Farina, Bradley Whitford and Eliza Dushku. But Rickman and Pullman are the ones that really shine. I can't think of any other Brit that can do the prickish Brit character as well as he. From the first time I saw him (*Die Hard*), I knew he was one of the good ones. Time and time again, he rewards my faith in him. Watching Rickman eating KFC and drinking wine from a jelly jar is great fun.

There is a commentary track that is enjoyable enough, with a couple of featurettes and some deleted scenes that are nothing special.

Jeremy Lynch

CANNON: SEASON ONE,
VOLUME 2
Paramount Home Entertainment

Canon is another of those classic PI and cop shows that I remember fondly from my childhood. I also remember making fun of the sheer girth and size of William Conrad. Watching the show again as an adult I have a new take on it. While not the best of the show from the early 70's it is a good show and the way they work around Canon not being the most physical of PIs is interesting and it works. Canon likes to live well, good food, nice things, nice place to live. He takes on cases from around the country, and even out of the country to pay for his lifestyle. He goes undercover, he investigates and because he's not exactly going to chase too many people he uses his head.

Canon came from Quinn Martin Productions, the same company that did *Barnaby Jones* with Buddy Eason and they even crossed over on occasion. It was part of a trend to have non traditional *Private Eyes*. Older, physically challenged etc. A real nice look at 70's television and fairly typical for its time. Is it as good as *Mannix* or *Banachek* or *Rockford Files*? No. I watched all the episodes from season 1, both volumes, and I actually enjoyed it a lot more than I thought I would. I would recommend this for fans of television from that era.

Jon Jordan

**THE LAST DETECTIVE:
THE COMPLETE COLLECTION**
Acorn Media

Based on the books of Leslie Thomas The Last Detective follows Detective Constable Dangerous Davies(Peter Davidson) as he gets dumped with cases that no one else wants to take. Dangerous is a nice guy and that may be part of his problem, but it also works to his advantage as he almost always manages to solve the case.

Dangerous is a very average guy in the scheme of things and for me that's part of the appeal. He's in an office with two other detectives who want the flashy cases and want to move on. His boss, DI Aspinall just wants to get through the day and go have drinks. Davies gets on his nerves for just this reason, rather than write off a case as a suicide or accidental death and move on he wants to dig into it. As it happens Davies is almost always right and closes a lot of cases as a result. The back story for Davies includes a wife he's separated from (Julie, played by Emma Amos) who he still loves madly. The series starts with them living separately with contact between them happening because of the St. Bernard they own together. This aspect of the show doesn't detract from the stories and adds a nice depth to the series. Davies also has a friend named Mod played by Sean Hughes. Mod doesn't have a steady job, ever. He's a nice guy and Davies is loyal to him, but he's the kind of guy that would make most people crazy. Strangely he and Davies are great together and he is often, usually by accident, instrumental in helping solve cases. The dynamic between Mod and Julie is what makes us like him, it's his doggedness and perseverance that make him a good copper, or at least an entertaining one for the viewer. Viewers will most likely recognize Davidson, he was Dr. Who for a while and also played Tristan on All Creatures Great and Small. He's aged well as an actor and is perfectly suited for the role which he plays to a T.

The Last Detective is a wonderful series for fans of British procedurals, and while it may be a bit tame for some, it is actually quite charming and at times engrossing. My only complaint is that I wish there was more.

The set has 17 episodes and also a bonus of the 1981 movie featuring Bernard Cribbins as Davies. The whole set comes in at 20 hours plus 110 minutes of bonus features.

Jon Jordan

MANNIX: THE SECOND SEASON
Paramount Home Entertainment

I really enjoy Mannix and I think it holds up well and is one of the better classic Television PI shows. Of all the older TV shows to be released Mannix is the one I wanted the most.

The biggest change up in season two is that Mannix has left Intertect and opened his own agency. He has one other employee, Peggy Fair played by Gail Fischer. Peggy is the widow of a cop buddy of Joe Mannix and she is now a single mother. Peggy adds a new dynamic to the show in that she helps Mannix not just by being a good secretary but by keeping Joe focused. She occasionally has a chat with people at Intertect when Joe needs a lead and she does it on the QT so as not to make him feel obligated. Peggy was with the show for the rest of its run till 1975. In addition to making the show stronger, she also has the distinction of being one of the first black women to have a major television role. In today's society it wouldn't seem like much, but in 1968 it was pretty big deal.

Joseph Campanella is back in season 2 in a few episodes and it's nice to see them as friends and not boss and employee. Other guest stars in Season 2 include: Cloris Leachman, William Windom, Barbara Rush, Barbara Babcock, Hugh Beaumont, Jill Ireland, Eve Plumb, Harry Dean Stanton, , Yaphet Kotto, and Sally Kellerman. Also along for the ride are a number of actors playing cops that lend Joe a hand including Larry Linville of M*A*S*H fame and Robert Reed from the Brady Bunch.

Mannix handles all the cases with typical Mannix style, which means someone is going to get punched. I think my favorite episode was the one that had Mannix working for a publisher to find the last chapter of a book by an author who had been murdered. Small town setting, corruption and damsel in distress. Classic Mannix.

Unlike season one, season two has no extra features, but that's fine by me, 25 more episodes of Mannix in my home to watch over and over again is a real treat. I'd read on a few websites that some of the older television show being released on disc have new or different music (including the Fugitive). Mannix has all the original music and I have to say it looks and sounds great.

Jon Jordan

MOONLIGHT: THE COMPLETE SERIES
Warner Home Video

The popularity of Vampires seems to ebb and flow. In the mid 80s, Anne Rice had them a popular as ever. Joss Whedon

brought them back in the late 90s with Buffy the Vampire slayer and Angel. Recently the Twilight novels have young ladies swooning all over again.

Moonlight features Mick St. John (Alex O'Loughlin), a private investigator that also happens to be a vampire. In the 21st century, vampires have adapted to modern life and integrated themselves into society. They strive to maintain the secrecy of their existence (Well, kind of...more on that later) and co-exist with humans.

Of course there has to be a romantic angle: Mick is drawn to Beth (Sophia Myles), a reporter. Mick saved Beth many years earlier from being Vamped by his then-wife. Since then, he has kept an eye on her.

Moonlight, like many other fledgling shows, was a victim of the writer's strike. Ideally a show should not have to make changes mid-season, they should have an entire season to see what works. Sadly that is a thing of the past. There are some changes that occur that feel a bit abrupt.

Moonlight had the potential to be something pretty damn good, but it never seems to find its rhythm. Too many of the stories are similar and lack the energy needed to draw casual fans. Moonlight is fun, and fans of vampires will likely enjoy the series, but I can't help but think about what could have been done, instead of what was done.

Jeremy Lynch

NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN: Collector's Edition.

**Buena Vista Home
Entertainment**

Years from now, it is likely that NcfOM will be viewed as the crowning achievement in the storied career of the brothers Coen. A loaded cast, armed with excellent direction and a fantastic script, took what was a promising project and parked it in the cheap seats.

As is often the case, the Coens do an excellent job of casting. With any other director's) we would have likely been handed a star-studded cast. Each of whom was picked for their name, not what they would have brought to characters.

Anton Chigurh will, quite simply, scare the hell out of you the first time you watch this film. He is the most dynamic, disturbing villain (or monster) to walk onto the silver screen since Hannibal Lector. While some of you might think I am exaggerating, I am not. Anton might very well take out Mr. Lector. If not, he would at least impress Hanny. Javier Bardem recently snagged the best supporting actor Oscar for this role.

Llewelyn Moss (A very nice performance by Josh Brolin) stumbles upon the remains of a drug deal gone bad. He makes away with a briefcase of cash, but ends up going back to bring water to the one survivor. This act of charity puts him in the crosshairs of Anton, who has been given the task of tracking down the cash.

So begins an extraordinary game of cat and mouse that leaves an enormous amount of wreckage in its wake.

I have mentioned Brolin and gushed about Javier, but I would be remiss if I did not talk about Tommy Lee Jones.

Jones plays Sheriff Bell. Bell could have walked right out of a classic western. Sadly for him, this is not a western. Bell is a weary man that realizes that he is a stranger to the world around him. As time has gone by, his principles and ideals become further and further out of synch with society.

Sheriff Bell is an observer to the conflict between Moss and Chigurh. This battle adds fuel to his feelings of obsolescence.

The true magic of this film (and the book it is based on) is that while it is a splendid story on the surface, there is so much more to it than meets the eye. NcfOM has a subtext that is just as powerful as that surface tale.

When the first DVD release came out, I mentioned that it should have had a much stronger collection of extras; this set is exactly what was needed.

we get the previously released stuff, plus another five or so hours worth of goodies. We get Josh Brolin's Unauthorized Behind the Scenes, a new Q & A with the Coens, Roger Deakins as well as the sound and production design teams. Also, damn near every promotional appearance done for NcfOM is included. My fav is the Coens, Brolin and Bardem with Charlie Rose, but also included is EW.Com with Bardem, WGA West Q & A panel as well as another twelve other pieces. If you have the previous release, pick this up. If you did not buy it the first time around, pick this up. NcfOM is the kind of film you should go back and watch every couple of years to remember just how good films can be.

Jeremy Lynch

**THE ROCKFORD FILES:
SEASON SIX
Universal Studios Home**

Entertainment

I'm an unabashed James Garner fan and *The Rockford Files* (Universal) season six is among his best. By this, the last season, he's so comfortable in the role he could have done it in his sleep, but seems to add greater and greater depth to the character. Co-stars like Lauren Bacall, Tom Selleck and Mariette Hartley from the hugely successful Polaroid camera commercials they did together a few years before didn't hurt either. The stories for the most part were a reason to bring Jim and his crew together but that was plenty. And some, like Katheryn Harrolds reprisal of the blind Psychologist and deep love interest Megan, are downright tender, as is Noah Beery's caring but somewhat befuddled father role as Rocky.

For the one or two of you who have been living in a Yurt in Lower Slobovia the last several decades. or are too young, I'll give a brief backstory. Ex-con Jim Rockford is a Private Investigator (a neat trick in itself) barely hanging on. He lives in a trailer in the low rent district of Malibu. He has a friend, Angel, another ex-con who if he were your or my friend we would throw under a bus A.S.A.P. (My Editor said that would have made a great episode explaining why Jim didn't). Jim is not your usual iron jawed, steel fisted P.I. He gets the stew knocked out of him at regular intervals and will fight if he has to and run when he can. The anti-hero hero that was a hit because he played you and me only better.

I'm not going to belabor the point. This is good stuff and stands up well considering it's thirty plus year age. There's something for everyone here from comedy to angst and you youngsters owe it to yourselves to check it out. Us old schoolers already know.

Lee Crawford

THIS IS SPINAL TAP

(Blu-ray)

Fox Home

Entertainment

The first time I saw *Spinal Tap*, I was not sure if it was real or not. At least until the very end. As Nigel says, there is a fine line between brilliance and stupidity. I can honestly say that *TISP* is brilliant. One of the greatest comedies of all time, *Spinal Tap* tells the story of an old heavy metal band looking to make a comeback.

The tale starts off as they prepare to release an album and head out on tour. Damn near anything that can go wrong does. Shows are canceled, stage props fail and they get lost backstage in Cleveland.

When in college, I worked in radio...metal radio for the most part. I can tell you that one of the standard interview questions we always asked was: Do you have any *Spinal Tap* road stories?

The things that happen to *Spinal Tap*? They happen to real bands on the road. Record signing events in which nobody shows up. Shows canceled at the last minute, leaving the band stuck in the middle of a strange town. All of these things happen in the real world.

That is what makes *TISP* so funny, this stuff happens. You feel for them, but also laugh at them.

The video transfer used here is quite good. *Tap* is lucky because it became a cult classic almost right away so the prints were always taken care of. Being a 20+ year old film, you can only do so much without undergoing a complete frame by frame restoration. *Tap* may look as good as it did the day it was released, but it is still a film made in the early 80s. I really can't imagine anyone not owning this film. It is one of the funniest (and best films) of all time. Buy it, watch it, memorize it.

Jeremy Lynch

WITNESS TO THE MOB

Koch Vision

Originally aired as a miniseries on NBC in 1998 *Witness to the Mob* is the story of Sammy the Bull Gravano and was based, in part at least, on the book *UNDER BOSS* by Peter Maas. The cast is a who's who of mob films and shows. The lead roles are Nicholas Turturro as Sammy The Bull and Tom Sizemore as John Gotti. Among the other players we have Jeffery Donovan of *Burn Notice* in a small role as an FBI agent and Abe Vigoda as Paul Castellano. Cast members of the *Sopranos* can be seen throughout along with Frankie Valli and other perennial mob actors.

The total time comes in at 173 minutes and it shows us Gravano rising through the ranks to eventually come to be the number two under John Gotti. Gravano eventually turns states evidence and helps put away over thirty members of the Cosa Nostra.

I can't tell you how factual it is as I don't know enough about the material to say (though I will now be looking for some books on it) but for a made for TV production it is impressive. Tom Sizemore as Gotti was wonderful. Turturro has never

been what I considered a strong actor but in *Witness to the Mob* he does a really nice job. I imagine his portrayal is a little gentler than the real man was, but it works here hinting at the real violence involved.

No extras here, but if -you are a fan of mob movies put this on your list.

Jon Jordan