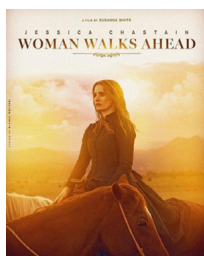


## DVD/Blu-ray Roundup for Aug. 31, 2018

Written by By Glenn Kay For the sun  
Friday, 31 August 2018 03:59

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Once again, it's time to take a look at all of the new releases coming to Blu-ray and DVD. This is an incredibly busy week with plenty of flicks both new and old. In fact, there should be something here for just about everyone. So if you can't make it to the movies this week, be sure to give one of these titles a try!

### Big New Releases!

*American Animals* - Based on a real incident, this heist feature involves a group of unhappy Kentucky university students. Some are looking for creative inspiration, others excitement, while a few just want to rebel. They plot an elaborate heist to steal valuable books from a school library and sell them to a black-market dealer. Reviews were generally strong. There were a few who didn't appreciate the characters or the scenario, but more found that there were enough character tweaks to the crime-movie formula to make it entertaining. The cast includes Evan Peters, Ann Dowd, Barry Keoghan, Blake Jenner and Udo Kier.

*Book Club* - Four lifelong friends form a book club to discuss literature and chat about their lives. All are going through some sort of personal turmoil. One of the ladies is recently widowed, another is struggling with a messy divorce and other problems are addressed. After reading the novel *Fifty Shades of Grey*, each uses it as inspiration to deal with their issues. This effort split the press. Half thought it was amusing and were happy to see a sex-comedy featuring women in their 60s; others suggested the great cast couldn't elevate the familiar jokes and sentimentality. It stars Diane Keaton, Jane Fonda, Candice Bergen, Mary Steenburgen, Andy Garcia, Craig T. Nelson and Don Johnson.

*A Kid Like Jake* - This family drama involves a couple trying to pick out a primary school for their 4-year-old boy, who seems more interested in princesses and fairies than sports and cars. The family must figure out how to address the many complications that arise from the situation in choosing (or guessing) what's best for their child. Again, there was no definite consensus as this film earned both positive and negative response. Some criticized it for being too genial and not dealing with its subject directly. The rest appreciated what it was attempting to deal with, even if it didn't quite hit every mark. The movie features Claire Danes, Jim Parsons, Octavia Spencer and Priyanka Chopra.

*Mary Shelley* - The famous author is the subject of this biopic. It details her early life, including her burgeoning, passionate relationship with poet Percy Shelley. Some time after they elope, the two arrive at friend Lord Byron's guesthouse in Geneva. There, the host challenges his

guests to write a horror story. Shelly invents *Frankenstein*, but faces difficulty due to prejudiced views of female authors. This feature also got mixed notices, with more negative reaction than positive. Some thought the lead was strong enough to hold viewer interest, but a few more complained events were presented in a slow-moving and tame fashion. Elle Fanning, Maisie Williams, Douglas Booth and Bel Powley headline the movie.

*RBG* – Eighty-four-year-old U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg is the subject of this documentary. The picture attempts to reveal her life story and career rise in a field dominated by men, as well as her legal legacy. The movie also features interviews with many familiar faces in government and pop culture who have been in contact, worked with or have been inspired by her actions. Critics enjoyed the feature greatly. One or two thought the material was presented in a very formal and unexciting way, but almost all found the subject of the picture extremely likable and her work remarkable, as well as inspirational.

*Tag* - The children's schoolyard game gets an update in this comedy based on a true story. For one month every year, a group of adults continue a game of tag that they began decades earlier. When the most difficult-to-catch member of the group decides to get married, the others see it as a perfect opportunity to nab him. This flick got mixed notices, although overall there were a few more recommendations than critiques. The cast includes Jeremy Renner, Ed Helms, Hannibal Buress, Jake Johnson, Jon Hamm, Rashida Jones, Isla Fisher and Leslie Bibb.

*Upgrade* - After a man is paralyzed and his wife is killed by muggers, he's offered the opportunity to walk again by having artificial intelligence implanted to his spine. The lead finds he can suddenly move around and sets out for revenge on those responsible for the tragedy. Unfortunately, an inquisitive police detective, the AI itself begins getting in his way. This low-budget action sci-fi effort earned a lot of praise during its run. A few thought the film was clichéd and too violent, but the vast majority commented that it was stylish, exciting and offered plenty of interesting twists.

*Woman Walks Ahead* - This period drama is set in the 1880s and is based on true events. It tells the story of a widowed artist who travels from New York to North Dakota in order to paint a portrait of Sitting Bull. Once there, she faces aggression from an U.S. officer battling with the subject of her painting. Reaction was split towards this drama. The movie stars Jessica Chastain, Michael Greyeyes and Sam Rockwell.

**Blasts from the Past!**

You simply would not believe the number of older titles being upgraded to high definition this week. In fact, it might be a record, so let's get right to it. The MVD Rewind Collection's putting out a Blu-ray of *Bram Stoker's Shadowbuilder* (1998) aka *Shadow Builder*, a made-for-video effort about a demonic force terrorizing a small town. An angry, well-armed priest played by Michael Rooker arrives with the intention of stopping the threat. It's a silly little B-movie, but it does feature a couple of fun, over-the-top moments that may be of interest to horror fans.

The distributor also has the action picture, *Blast* (1997). This one is about terrorists taking over a swimming complex during the Olympic Games. A trapped janitor is forced into trying to save the visitors. They also have *Crazy Six* (1997), a gangster flick with Rob Lowe, Burt Reynolds, Ice-T and Mario Van Peebles.

*Bound* (1996) is a neo-noir thriller and the first film from the Wachowskis (*The Matrix* series, *Cloud Atlas*). The feature involves two women (Jennifer Tilly and Gina Gershon) who fall for each other and plot to steal money from a mobster (played by Joe Pantoliano). This great little movie is being released on Blu-ray as part of the Olive Signature line.

Shout! Factory has the goofy horror picture, *Brainscan* (1994). It's about a teen who orders an interactive CD-Rom video game (which is already dating the movie). The monstrous Trickster from the game decides to make a mess of the kid's life, climbing out of the computer and playing tricks with the kid's mind. The Blu-ray comes loaded with a behind-the-scenes footage, featurettes on the production, a deleted scene and publicity materials.

And Lionsgate's releasing a 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary Blu-ray of *Tucker: The Man and His Dream* (1988). If memory serves, this effort from Francis Ford Coppola (*The Godfather*

,  
*The Conversation*

,  
*Apocalypse Now*

among many others) is pretty strong, telling the story of the man who created the Tucker automobile and the attempts by the auto industry to shut him down. The film has been newly remastered, features an introduction from the filmmaker and a deleted scene (with optional comments from Coppola), a making-of and a promo film from 1948 about the inventor and his vehicle. Sounds like a disc worth catching up with.

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Kino has several releases on Blu-ray as well. They include the Jessica Lange drama *Country* (1984), which comes with a film historian commentary. The distributor also has a Blu-ray of the Spaghetti Western, *A Minute to Pray, A Second to Die* (1968), starring Alex Cord.

I'm most excited about revisiting *Straight to Hell* (1987) on Blu-ray. This very, very eccentric modern-day Western follows a group of bank robbers who find themselves in a ramshackle desert town filled with bizarre, thuggish, coffee-addicted desperados. This flick from Alex Cox (*Repo Man*

,  
*Sid & Nancy*

) has an incredible cast that includes Sy Richardson, Joe Strummer (of The Clash), Courtney Love, Dick Rude, The Pogues (playing the nasty group of town outlaws), Elvis Costello, Xander Berkeley, Dennis Hopper, Grace Jones and Jim Jarmusch. It's weird beyond words and probably only appeals to fans of the musicians featured, but they may get a laugh or two out of it. The opening sequence of the flick is pretty great and the soundtrack is excellent, too.

Universal has some horror flicks coming your way on Blu-ray. This includes the comedy *Abbott and Costello Meet the Invisible Man*

(1951). However, their most impressive release is the box set

*Universal Classic Monsters: Complete 30 Film Collection*

. It pretty much contains all of the famous monster movies created by the studio during the '30s through the '50s. It arrives with loads of bonuses and a 48-page book.

Vinegar Syndrome has some high definition oddities as well. They include Blu-rays of the obscure horror film, *Dear Dead Delilah* (1972), which features a killer taking down visitors in an old mansion full of people looking for a lost fortune. On the action front, you can pick up *Shot*

(1973) aka  
*Death Shot*

, an independently produced, ultra-low budget film inspired by  
*The French Connection*

. The distributor's also putting out  
*Wonder Women*

(1973), about an investigating into the disappearance of athletes carried out by an all-lady army of kung-fu killers.

And there's more! Severin has the creature feature *The Horror of Party Beach* (1964) coming your way on Blu-ray. It's a goofy Connecticut-set horror/musical that features nuclear waste, an amusing-looking rubber monster, and a band playing tunes on the beach between all the attacks.

Criterion's releasing a Blu-ray of the Cuban drama, *Memories of Underdevelopment* (1968). It's told from the point-of-view of a Havana local and set against the Bay of Pigs conflict as the lead character tries to process what is occurring and sees family members flee the area. The disc includes a feature length documentary on the film's director and numerous other bonuses.

Classicflix's putting out a Blu-ray of the romantic comedy, *Merrily We Live* (1938). And on a completely different note, Tokyo Shock's putting out *Zatoichi: Darkness Is His Ally* (1989). The *Zatoichi* series involves a wandering, blind swordsman you don't want to mess with.

Finally, Warner Archive's releasing a Blu-ray of the WWII flick, *The Naked and the Dead* (1958), starring Aldo Ray and Cliff Robertson.

### You Know, For Kids!

Here are some features kids may be interested in.

*Freedom Fighters - The Ray*

On the Tube!

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And these are the week's TV-themed releases.

*Brooklyn Nine-Nine*: Season 5

*Chicago Med*: Season 3

*The Flash*: Season 4

*The High Chaparral*: Season 1

*Lucifer*: Season 3

*Once Upon a Time*: Season 7

*Paterno* (HBO Movie)

*Scandal*: Season 6 and 7

*S.W.A.T.*: Season 1

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