

DVD Reviews: ‘Brothers and Sisters,’ ‘Chuck,’ ‘Supernatural’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on September 7, 2010 - 12:00pm

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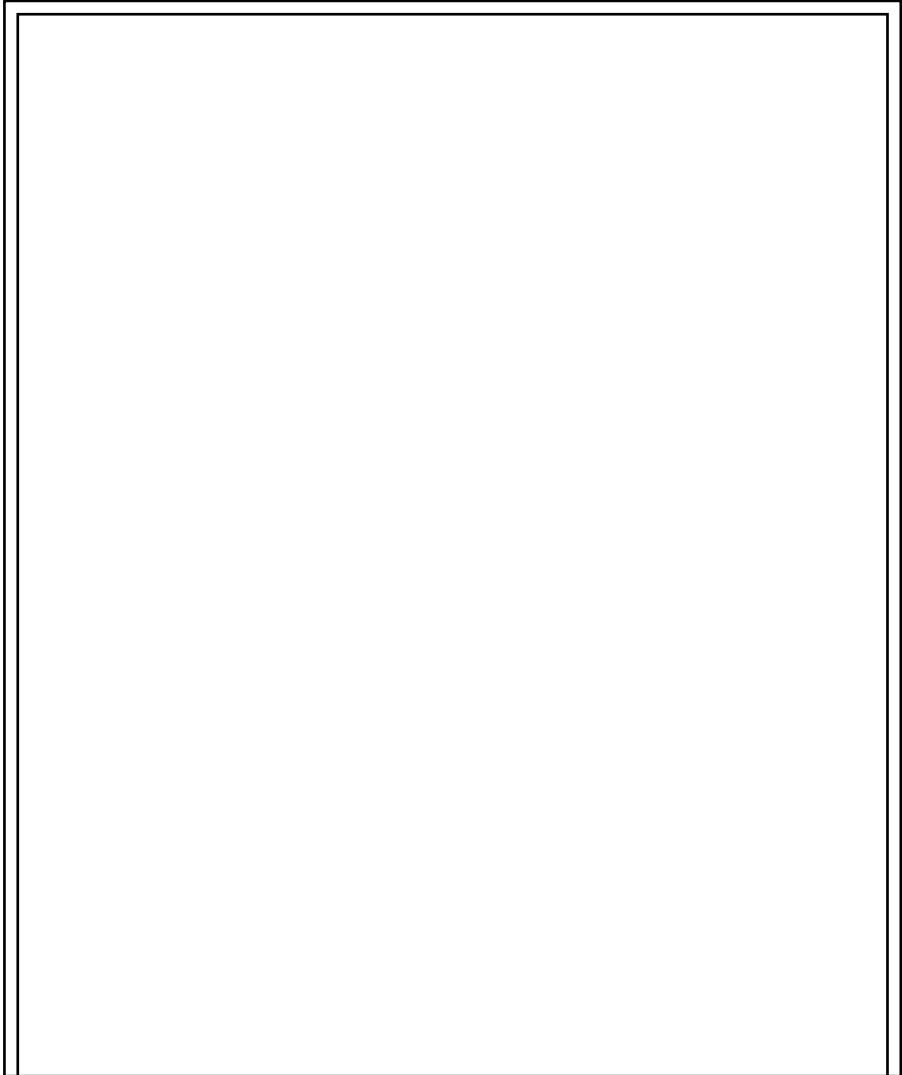
CHICAGO – [Last week](#) [20] we covered several of the more notable rookie programs of the just-passed TV year and their inaugural TV-on-DVD season sets. This week, we’re back with a few of the veterans of the field, three shows that have never become critical smashes but have all developed their own devoted followings for good reason.

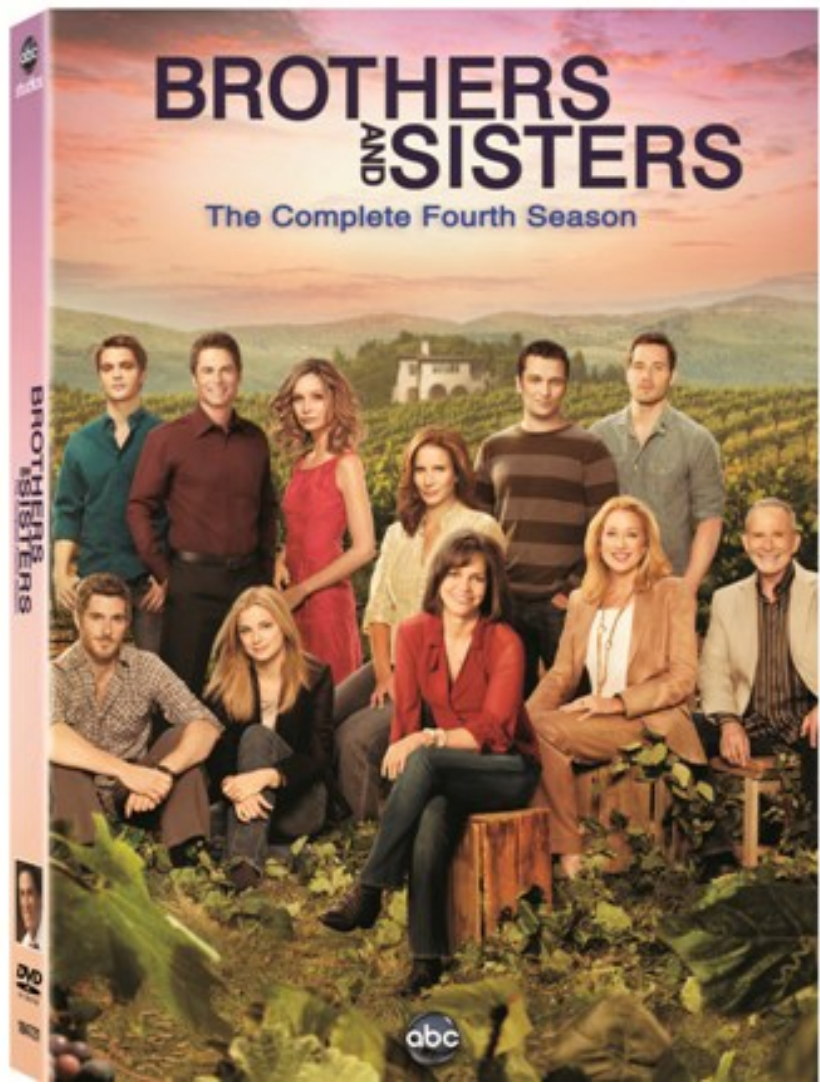
ABC’s “Brothers and Sisters,” NBC’s “Chuck,” and The CW’s “Supernatural” have all recently had a complete season released on DVD in anticipation of their return to their respective networks in a few weeks. Like the programs themselves, the releases are a bit hit-and-miss but all probably more worthwhile than you think. Let us guide the way.

“Brothers and Sisters: The Complete Fourth Season”



Since people first started basking in the golden hue of their television, the family soap opera has been a regular part of the overall schedule. While trends come and go in the world of TV, the simple fact is that people will always like to watch families go through their melodramatic ups and downs on everything from “The Waltons” to “Dallas” to “Brothers and Sisters.” The ABC program is certainly not a buzzed-about program like “Lost” or even “Desperate Housewives” but it’s been a solid performer for the network for years, averaging over 10 million viewers a season and ranking in the top 40 programs on all of TV for each of its installments. That’s a HIT. But you’d never know it considering the small amount of press the program receives.





Brothers and Sisters: The Complete Fourth Season was released on DVD on August 31st, 2010.
Photo credit: Buena Vista Home Video

The reason for the success of “Brothers and Sisters” is two-fold. One, we always love to watch families that are more messed up than our own. It’s a nice little boost of self-confidence before going into the work week. Two, the cast is incredibly underrated. Rachel Griffiths (“Six Feet Under”) helps ground the entire piece in a reality that not every family melodrama has and Sally Field deserves the several nominations she’s received for her work here. Ensemble players like Patricia Wettig, Emily VanCamp, Ron Rifkin, and Calista Flockhart may not stand out on their own but work perfectly within the fabric of the show. “Brothers and Sisters” is far-from-perfect but it’s better than you probably think.

The fourth season of “Brothers and Sisters” is presented in widescreen with a 1.78:1 aspect ratio and a Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround Sound track.

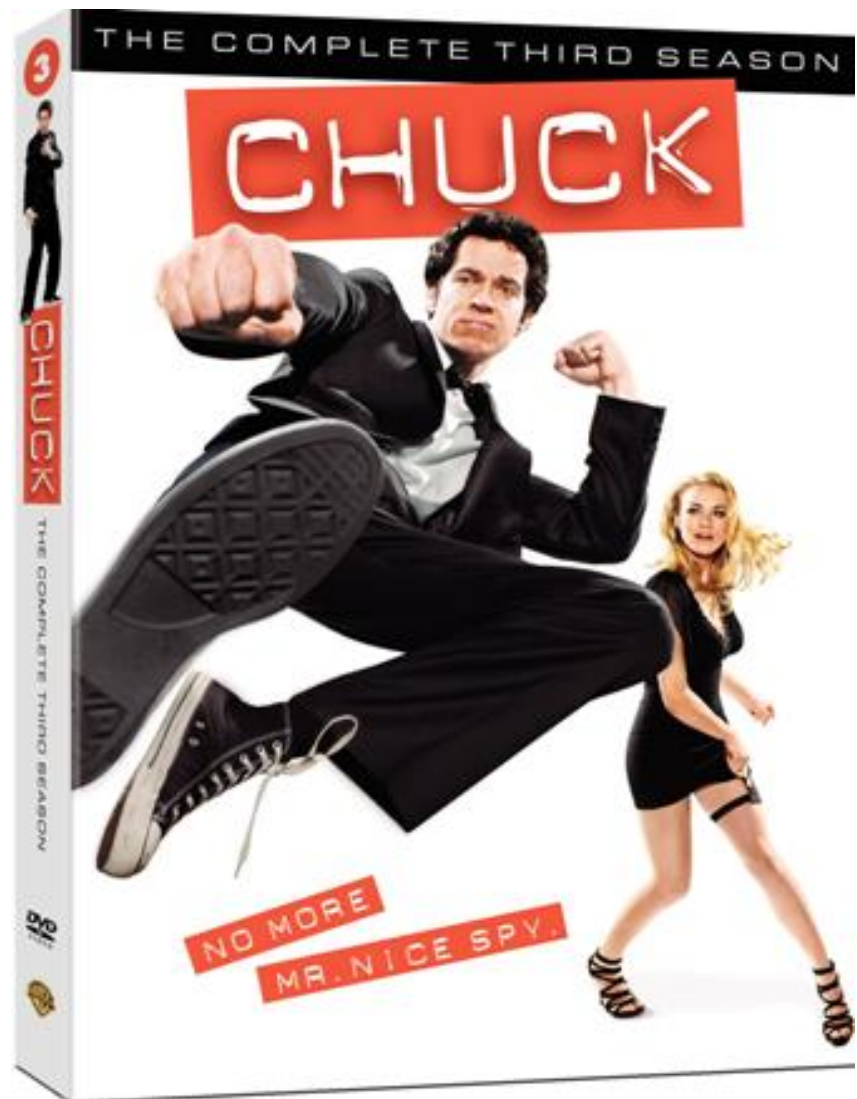
- Special Features:
- o Bloopers
 - o Deleted Scenes
 - o The Red Carpet — Join The Cast and Crew On The Red Carpet At Their Season 4 Premiere Party
 - o Off The Clock — The Actors And The Crew Are Like Family On And Off The Show. See How They Play Together At The Show’s Softball Game, Their Very Own Art Opening And The Malibu Triathlon

‘Brothers and Sisters: The Complete Fourth Season’ is released by Buena Vista Home Video and stars Sally Field, Rachel Griffiths, Rob Lowe, Dave Annable, Matthew Rhys, Ron Rifkin, Emily VanCamp, and Patricia Wettig. It was released on August 31st, 2010. It is not rated and runs 1,032 minutes.

“Chuck: The Complete Third Season”



If “Brothers and Sisters” is the quality show that no one is talking about, “Chuck” is the quality show that no one is watching. Honestly, NBC has been more-than-kind to Josh Schwartz and McG’s comedy/action hybrid, a program that has developed a loyal following but never a very large one. There were several programs that were victims of the drama surrounding “The Jay Leno Show” but the chaos may have actually helped “Chuck” in that even a small fan base was a good thing for the seriously struggling network. As “Chuck” returns for a fourth season, the 19-episode fifth one hits the home market in a relatively lackluster DVD release with quality video/audio but very few special features.



Chuck: The Complete Third Season was released on DVD on September 7th, 2010.

Photo credit: Warner Bros. Home Video

The writing staff of “Chuck” tried to mix it up in season three, changing the very concept of the show from a hapless nerd with just a knowledge database stuck in his head to a hapless nerd who now had the physical skills of a super-spy as well. The promise of a slightly-edgier show didn’t deliver anything in the ratings (in fact, the show finished in the exact same spot on the year-end list — #71) but it did occasionally reinvigorate the writers and actors and fans were generally happy with the new direction. The strengths of “Chuck” hadn’t changed — Zachary Levi’s pitch-perfect timing, Adam Baldwin’s dry wit, Yvonne Strahovski’s incredible screen charisma — but I still find the spy material so much more well-done than the workplace comedy. No offense to the talented cast of the Buy More staff, but I lose interest when Yvonne and Adam aren’t on-screen. “Chuck” is never a horrible program by any stretch, but it still needs some work to become a great one. Maybe that will finally happen in season four.

The third season of “Chuck” is presented in matted widescreen and a Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround Sound track.

Special Features:

- o Declassified Scenes
- o “Chuck-Fu...and Dim Sum” — Becoming a Spy Guy
- o “The Jeffster Revolution” — The Definitive Mockumentary
- o Gag Reel

‘Chuck: The Complete Third Season’ is released by Warner Bros. Home Video and stars Zachary Levi, Yvonne Strahovski, Adam Baldwin, Joshua Gomez, Ryan McPartlin, Mark Christopher Lawrence, Scott Krinsky, Vik Sahay, and Sarah Lancaster. It was released on September 7th, 2010. It is not rated and runs 817 minutes.

“Supernatural: The Complete Fifth Season”



DVD Rating: 4.0/5.0

The CW’s “Supernatural” is easily one of the more underrated shows of the ’00s. The problem is not only that genre product rarely gets the respect it deserves but you can forget about a program on The CW getting critical credit for a long time to come, if ever. The fact is that the network is the ugly duckling of TV right now, barely surviving on life support with anemic-and-dropping ratings for nearly all of its programming. Sure, some people talk about “Gossip Girl” and “The Vampire Diaries,” but even the water-cooler buzz there is getting quieter. And through all of this, most people haven’t noticed that “Supernatural” has been the best program on the network for a few years now. Sure, it’s hit-and-miss but it’s more often the former and WB’s DVD releases for the program have been above-average since year one.



Supernatural: The Complete Fifth Season was released on DVD on September 7th, 2010.

Photo credit: Warner Bros. Home Video

"Supernatural" has been through a few ups and downs in terms of writing but the show's staff took on the surely-daunting task of tackling not just your standard vampire, werewolves, and other urban legends that served as the program's bread-and-butter the first few seasons but the big guns of Lucifer, the Apocalypse, and even the role of God. I wish the show had developed a more consistently-strong writing groove over the years, but the show has always thrived on the strength of its charming leads — Jared Padalecki and Jensen Ackles, two young men who far-too-often get lumped in with the other two-dimensional personalities of their network. These guys are really good at what they do, making this kind of fun material look much easier to pull off than it actually is. With excellent production values, clever dialogue, and two incredibly-charismatic leads, "Supernatural" rises above most of its genre competition on the air right now and easily slams its lackluster brethren on The CW. Don't ignore this program just because its network has been struggling or because it's from a genre that you may not typically watch. It's worth your time, especially with WB's spectacular video/audio transfers and a few interesting special features.

The fifth season of "Supernatural" is presented in matted widescreen and a Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround Sound track.

Special Features:

- o "Supernatural: Apocalypse Survival Guides" — Bobby's Exclusive Video Collection
- o "Ghostfacers: The Web Series"
- o Producer/Writer Commentary on Episode 4, "The End"
- o Unaired Scene on Episode 9, "The Real Ghostbusters"
- o Gag Reel

'Supernatural: The Complete Fifth Season' is released by Warner Bros. Home Video and stars Jensen Ackles, Jared Padalecki, and Misha Collins. It was released on September 7th, 2010. It is not rated and runs 915 minutes.



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