

DVD Review: 'Fanboys' For Hardcore 'Star Wars' Junkies Only

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on May 26, 2009 - 12:17pm

- [Billy Dee Williams](#) [2]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [3]
- [Carrie Fisher](#) [4]
- [Chris Marquette](#) [5]
- [Dan Fogler](#) [6]
- [DVD Review](#) [7]
- [Ethan Suplee](#) [8]
- [Fanboys](#) [9]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [10]
- [Jaime King](#) [11]
- [Jay Baruchel](#) [12]
- [Kristen Bell](#) [13]
- [Kyle Newman](#) [14]
- [Sam Huntington](#) [15]
- [Seth Rogen](#) [16]
- [Star Wars](#) [17]
- [William Shatner](#) [18]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [19]

CHICAGO – I really want to recommend “[Fanboys](#) [9]”. The story behind the film is a David-and-Goliath tale of a young filmmaker bringing his comedic vision to life against all odds and the film is finally being released on DVD after years of delays. Sadly, the drama behind-the-scenes doesn't change the mediocre quality of the final product.



DVD Rating: **2.0**/5.0

Just because the producers behind [Kyle Newman](#) [14]'s “Fanboys” meddled with the film and arguably wanted to make it significantly worse, doesn't mean that what has been released is a good movie to begin with. Everyone involved with “Fanboys” appears to have their hearts in the right place and the film has moments and performances that nearly redeem it, but it ultimately doesn't click as either a laugh-out-loud comedy or an ode to the Lucas universe. Only hardcore “Star Wars” junkies need rent or buy.



Fanboys was released on DVD on May 19th, 2009.

Photo credit: The Weinstein Company

The set-up for “Fanboys” threw me off before I could even get into the rhythm of the piece. The first act is all cliched arguments about “Star

Wars" vs. "Star Trek" and generic jokes about the quarter-life crisis. The film starts in 1998 with the two "straight men," the Han and Luke of the piece, Eric (Sam Huntington) and Linus (Chris Marquette).



Eric and Linus have grown distant as the former has given up on his comic dreams to work at his father's car dealership. Linus clings to his youth by spending time with Windows ([Jay Baruchel](#) [12]), Hutch (Dan Fogler), and Zoe ([Kristen Bell](#) [13]). When Eric learns that Linus is dying of cancer and may not make it to see the premiere of "Star Wars, Episode I - The Phantom Menace," the gang head to Skywalker Ranch to break in and see an early cut of the film.

The gang takes off and what ensues is a string of episodic encounters with cameos from a diverse array of people including Seth Rogen, Jaime King, Ethan Suplee, Billy Dee Williams, Carrie Fisher, Kevin Smith, and William Shatner. With the all-for-one fun spirit of the piece, it nearly comes together. There's enough genuine intention on the part of the filmmaker/cast and some strong comic timing from the great Baruchel and gorgeous Bell that "Fanboys" will work as a rental for some people.

For the rest of you, the sad news is that "Fanboys" just isn't that funny. There are maybe three real laughs. What's so ironic about the Weinstein Company's notorious attempt to remove the cancer plotline from the film is that it works better than the humor. The comic timing just isn't right.

The one thing I took away from "Fanboys" more than anything else is that what Kevin Smith does is not as easy as it looks. Remember the conversation about Death Star construction in "Clerks"? That exchange is more like the ones that "Star Wars" junkies have on a daily basis than anything in "Fanboys" but it's clearly the kind of dialogue that Newman was going for in his comedy. What sinks "Fanboys" is that none of it - the emotion, the quarter-life crisis, the sci-fi references - feels genuine. It's forced comedy.



Fanboys was released on DVD on May 19th, 2009.
Photo credit: The Weinstein Company

It’s ironic that years of expectation left many fans disappointed by the “Star Wars” prequels and the same thing is likely to happen to the long-delayed “Fanboys”.

The film may only be slightly disappointing, but the DVD is borderline offensive. Given the long history of “Fanboys,” one would expect a stellar home treatment. Blu-Ray, tons of deleted scenes, featurettes about the troubled road the film took to the big screen, and the story of the fan movement that brought the movie back from development hell, right? Wrong, wrong, wrong, and wrong.

Is The Weinstein Company waiting for a special edition Blu-Ray? Doubt it. This is probably the final word on “Fanboys” and even though I clearly don’t love the film, the people who fought for it deserved better.

First, the actual transfer and presentation of the film is downright awful. The widescreen video is murky and the English Dolby 5.1 track is lackluster.

Even more annoying, especially given the film’s well-known post-production drama, are the depressingly light special features. The deleted scenes and featurettes all run under ten minutes. “The Truth About Fanboys,” “The Star Wars Parallel,” “4 Fanboys & 1 Fangirl,” and “The Choreography” are nothing more than on-the-set, talking-head pieces. The film and fans deserved more.

The best special feature, by far, is the commentary with cast & crew. If some more of the breezy, enjoyable cameraderie on display in that track had made it into the film, perhaps The Weinstein Company would have treated it better in its theatrical and home release.

‘Fanboys’ was released by The Weinstein Company and stars Jay Baruchel, Dan Fogler, Sam Huntington, Christopher Marquette, and Kristen Bell. It was written by Ernest Cline and Adam F. Goldberg and directed by Kyle Newman. The film was released on May 19th, 2009. It is rated PG-13.



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