

DVD Review: Season Two of 'Gossip Girl' With Blake Lively, Leighton Meester

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on August 20, 2009 - 10:36am

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CHICAGO – It's senior year for the spoiled socialites of "Gossip Girl" as the second season of the hit CW show finds the characters applying for college amid scandals, new romances (and old ones), and shifting alliances. It's just another crazy year in the life of "Gossip Girl: The Complete Second Season," now available on DVD in a gorgeous box set from Warner Brothers.



DVD Rating: **3.0/5.0**

The interesting thing about "Gossip Girl," outside of the show's paparazzi-adored young cast of beauties and the plots themselves, is how much the show has redefined what qualifies as a hit in the '00s and even more in the '10s. The show taps into the next generation of TV watchers, the ones who are just as likely to watch something on their iPod as on their cable box.

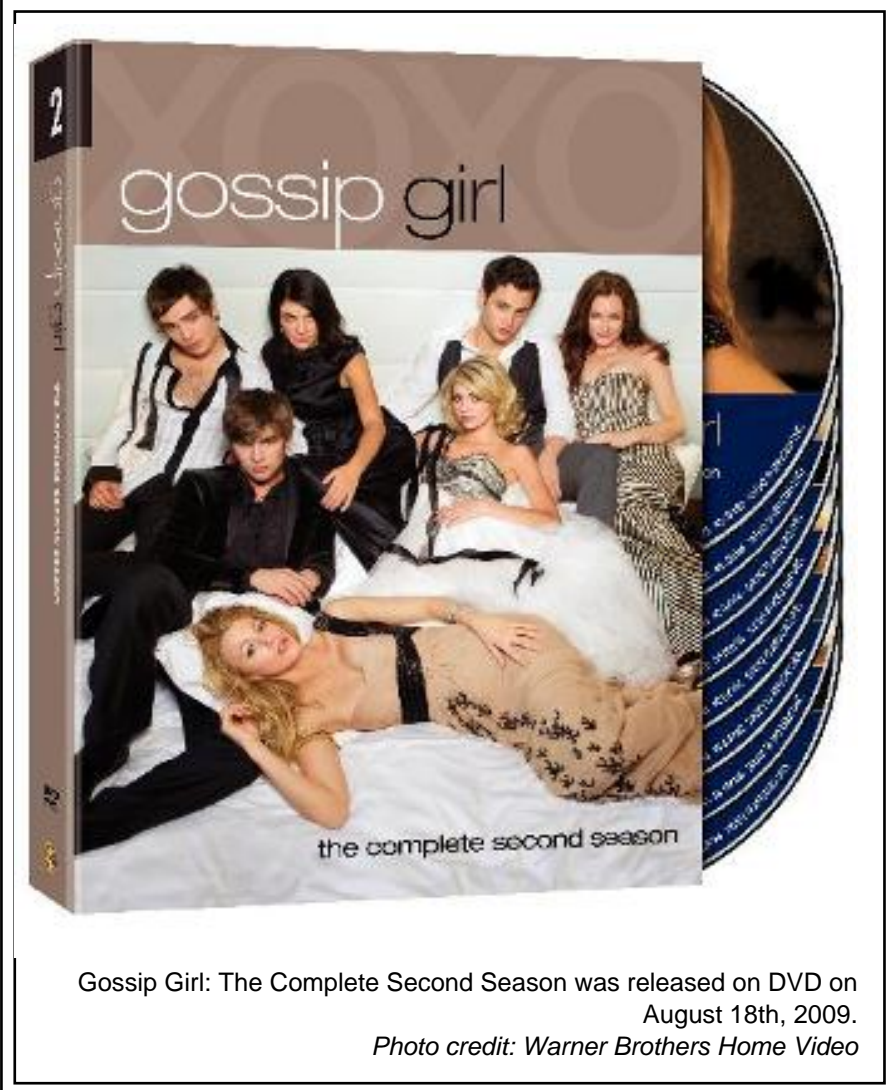


Gossip Girl: The Complete Second Season was released on DVD on August 18th, 2009.

Photo credit: Warner Brothers Home Video

According to a traditional ratings system, "Gossip Girl" isn't really a hit. But it's a show that's watched by the right people for advertisers - teenagers with money to burn at the mall every weekend and twenty- and thirtysomethings trying to find the next "guilty pleasure".

The show always loses its time slot and finished #168 in its second season with an average of 2.8 million viewers. For comparison, CBS' "NCIS" averaged 17.9 million viewers. But you don't see actors from that show on the cover of Us or Star Magazine and you won't see a flurry of text messages after every episode. "Gossip Girl" doesn't have a huge audience but it has the RIGHT audience. The traditional definition of "a hit" has changed.



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Photo credit: Warner Brothers Home Video

"Gossip Girl" could more accurately be called a pop culture phenomenon. But what about the show itself? Is it actually any good? Yes and no.

Blake Lively ("Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants") stars as the spectacularly named Serena van der Woodsen, the most well-adjusted socialite on the Upper East Side. Her best frenemy is Blair Waldorf (the most talented young performer on the show, Leighton Meester). This "Betty & Veronica" for a new generation are surrounded by a revolving door of drama that includes Nate Archibald (Chace Crawford), Chuck Bass (Ed Westwick), and the Humphreys, Dan (Penn Badgley) and Jenny (Taylor Momsen). The series is narrated by a character who calls herself "Gossip Girl" (Kristen Bell). Rumors, catfights, infidelity, drug use - it should all make for a tawdry guilty pleasure.

The problem is that it too often does not. "Gossip Girl" takes itself too seriously. It needs to be straight-up fun, recognizing that it's a soap opera and not a standard drama. More "Days of Our Lives," less "ER". The show delivers when its best actors (Meester, Westwick, Badgley) are allowed to stop being so damn sullen and show off those smiles that drive the paparazzi crazy.

The DVD for the second season of "Gossip Girl" is a beauty. The video is remarkably good on all 25 episodes in this giant 7-disc set (running an amazing 1050-plus minutes) and the audio is adequate in Dolby Surround 5.1. Special features include a well-designed booklet of episode information (something that may not sound like much but is actually a great inclusion that most season sets miss) and a sneak peek sample from "I Will Always Love You: A Gossip Girl Novel" by Cecily von Ziegesar.

Disc special features include "5th Ave. Meets Gossip Girl: Tour the Gossip Girl Crowd's Favorite Haunts," "Faces Behind the Design: Creative Forces Behind the Show's Art and Fashion," Unaired Scenes, "Chasing Dorota" Webisodes, Gag Reel, and a downloadable audiobook of the best-selling novel "Gossip Girl: You Know You Love Me" by Cecily von Ziegesar read by Christina Ricci.

'Gossip Girl: The Complete Second Season' is released by Warner Brothers Home Video and stars Blake Liveley, Leighton Meester, Penn Badgley, Chace Crawford, Taylor Momsen, Ed Westwick, Jessica Szohr, Kelly Rutherford, and Matthew Settle. It was created by Josh Schwartz and Stephanie Savage. It was released on August 18th, 2009. It is not rated.



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By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [20]

Content Director

HollywoodChicago.com

brian@hollywoodchicago.com [19]

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