

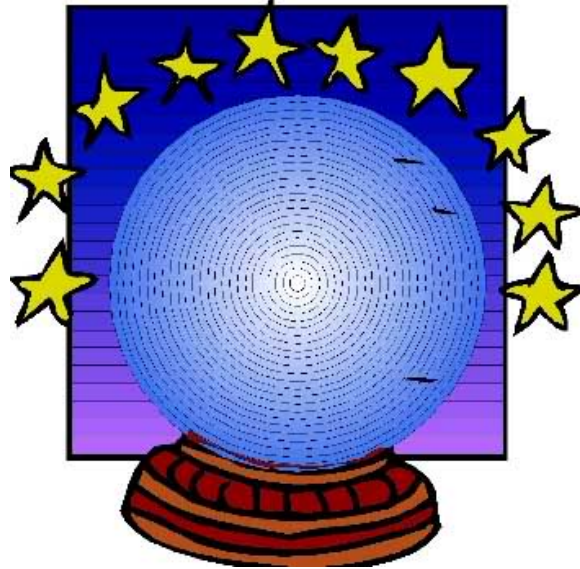
## The Crystal Ball - September 19 Releases

Written by {ga=mitch}

Thursday, September 18 2008 7:00 PM -

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As predicted, a good week last weekend. At least as far as movies go. When it comes to the other "entertainment" we saw on Saturday and Sunday nights...that's an entirely different subject. In this week's Crystal Ball, Mitch hits on last week's releases, the films set to hit the theaters and out on DVD this weekend, and also teases some of the mega movie releases headed our way this fall.



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I will say that watching a black comedy like "Burn After Reading" on Monday, I was probably a lot more receptive to the idea of a really nasty, cynical film, as it matched my mood perfectly. The review will be coming shortly for that film, but I think it probably got an extra half football just because that movie totally fit my sour mood for the week.

## News and Rumors

~ Guy Ritchie has found a Watson to go along with Robert Downey Jr. as Sherlock Holmes in Mr. Madonna's upcoming movie. Jude Law is said to be onboard as the great sleuth's trusty sidekick. It looks like this action-adventure version will come out before the comedic version featuring Sacha Baron Cohen and Will Ferrell.

~ It's not looking good so far for "The Sarah Conner Chronicles". The second season has started out very slowly, with viewership down substantially from last year.

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Things weren't helped at all by the second episode, which might have been the worst I've seen from this normally excellent series.

And how many freaking cyborgs can they actually send back in time?

The way they keep stretching the believability factor in this series, the worse it is becoming.

Perhaps it's also slipping because people know that Emo-John and Sarah don't succeed in stopping SkyNet...or else there wouldn't be the big budget Christian Bale movie coming next year.

~ Since Ben Affleck actually avoided sucking in his directorial debut "Gone Baby Gone", I'll give him some early slack on this: Ben plans to rewrite, direct, and star in "The Town", a mystery-thriller about a love triangle between a bank manager, a longtime thief who stole more than her heart, and an equally smitten FBI agent trying to bust the crook and his gang before they can pull off another major heist.

~ Here is some great news on the TV side of things. Microsoft has announced that they are going to stop it with those idiotic Jerry Seinfeld/Bill Gates commercials.

Evidently, the outcry has been so loud, that Microsoft realized that they were getting more bad publicity than good.

To that I can just say; "thank you".

~ Here's an interesting news item. ABC wants to postponed next year's Oscars until March. Why?

Because they are certain that there are going to be major technical problems due to the analog-to-digital switchover that will take place on February 17.

Gotta make sure those blue-hairs with their old Curtis Mathis consoles that weigh as much as a Buick.

## Stupid Remakes and Sequels: □

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~ Cheech and Chong are considering a reunion movie, given the success of stoner films like "Pineapple Express" and the Harold and Kumar movies. Just what we need; geriatric stoners.

~ Vin Diesel is looking to return for another run in the "xXx" series, after abandoning it following the first film. I guess that's what a continued string of flops will do to you.

### This week's new movie releases:

#### Lakeview Terrace

Starring: Samuel L. Jackson, Patrick Wilson, Kerry Washington

Plot: An LAPD officer will stop at nothing to force out an interracial couple living next door to him.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: Looks like a pretty standard "crazy, dangerous neighbor" flick. Having Samuel L. playing the bad guy is an unusual twist...one that didn't work well at all in "Jumper" (then again, having a totally lame script did more damage than SMJ being a villain).

In any case, I wouldn't recommend wasting the money to see this in a theater, but it'll probably be an OK DVD rental in a few months.

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### **My Best Friend's Girl**

Starring: Dane Cook, Kate Hudson, Jason Biggs

Plot: Story of a jerk who earns his living by being an uncouth womanizer hired by guys who want their girlfriends or wives to reconsider leaving them. Seems the Jerk dates them, acts like the biggest lout on the planet, so the women run back to their jilted lovers.

Then the Jerk runs into a woman who likes dating someone like that.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: Someone actually greenlit another movie starring Dane Cook after last year's disastrous "Good Luck, Chuck"? This one looks to be a rip-off of that horrible flick...but even worse. If anyone can look at this trailer and think "this looks to be highly entertaining", please go have yourself sterilized immediately, because you need to leave the Gene Pool.

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### **Ghost Town**

Starring: Ricky Gervais, Greg Kinnear, Téa Leoni

Plot: A man who dies on the operating table for seven minutes wakes up to discover he can communicate with the dead. And one of the ghosts has a mission for him; stop his widow from marrying the Wrong Man.

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[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: This is actually the highest reviewed film on RottenTomatoes this week, at nearly 80% positive. Quite surprising, as the trailers made it out to be a comic take-off of "Ghost", but instead of Swayze and Demi, we get Ricky the obnoxious Brit, and Greg Kinnear playing another bland nice-guy. But evidently, there are some good plot devices and a decent script with this one.

Another one that may end up on my Netflix list

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## Igor

Starring: The voices of John Cusack, Molly Shannon, Steve Buscemi

Plot: Tired of playing second fiddle to his Master, a talented lab assistant looks to win the annual Evil Science Fair with his own creation.

[View Trailer](#)

The BeerBuzz: So MGM gets their addition to the animated film landscape for 2008. And it's a piece of crud.

If your kid even suggests to you to take them to this, ground him for a month.

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## ***DVD Releases for Tuesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>***

**Leatherheads** - This had so much potential, and though it didn't completely suck, it really missed in a lot of ways. Great give-and-take banter between George Clooney as the over-the-hill professional football player and Renee Zellweger as the ever-so-rare female reporter.

Also some great visuals from the 20s, before the NFL made its mark as the biggest entertainment sport in the country.

But a very lame plot and stale dialog for everyone but Clooney and Zellweger can't be compensated for.

**Sex and the City** - Here it is...the one movie that can turn up as much stomach acid as a picture of Ugly Ben Toothlessburger. There are two certainties concerning this DVD.

One is that my wife will buy it.

The other is that I will NEVER watch it again.

**Run Fat Boy Run** - How could I not like a movie starring Simon Pegg, who was so great in "Hot Fuzz" and "Shaun of the Dead"?

When it's a movie directed by David Schwimmer featuring a script from first time screenwriter Michael Ian Black, previously known as a two-bit character actor on TV.

Awful movie about a fat guy trying to lose weight to regain the woman he dumped at the alter five years earlier.

**Deception** - - An awful lot of star power here. Hugh Jackman, Ewan McGregor, and Michell Williams in a sordid tale of sex clubs, bank robberies, and kidnapping. So why haven't any of us really heard about it?

Because it stinks, that's why.

## ***Calendar Watch***

Next week: [Eagle Eye](#), [Miracle at St. Anna](#), *Nights in Rodanthe*, *Choke*, *The Lucky Ones*

Upcoming Biggies (click on the hyperlink to view the available trailers).

[The Express](#) - October 3<sup>rd</sup> - A must for Browns fans, the biographical tale of Syracuse running back Ernie Davis, the first African-American to win the Heisman Trophy.

[Appaloosa](#) - October 3<sup>rd</sup> - Viggo Mortensen, Ed Harris, and Renee Zellweger in a Western about two lawmen defending a town against a ruthless rancher (Jeremy Irons).

[Body of Lies](#) - October 10<sup>th</sup> - Russell Crowe and Leonardo DiCaprio in Ridley Scott's spy tale of intrigue in the Middle East.

[Max Payne](#) - October 17<sup>th</sup> - Mark Wahlberg stars in the adaptation of the video game about a DEA agent out to avenge the deaths of his family.

*Pride and Glory* - October 24<sup>th</sup> - Edward Norton and Colin Farrell in a story about a family of prominent NYC cops who are shaken to their core when a scandal is uncovered.

[RocknRolla](#) - October 31<sup>st</sup> - Guy Ritchie hopefully back in form for another tale of London gangsters. Gerard Butler, Thandie Newton, Tom Wilkenson, and Jeremy Friggin' Piven star.

*Changeling* - October 31<sup>st</sup> - Clint Eastwood's latest Oscar potential, with Angelina Jolie as a Prohibition era mother who begins to think that the kidnapped son who was returned to her might not really be hers.

[Quantum of Solace](#) - November 14<sup>th</sup> - The next James Bond film, picking up shortly after the events ending "Casino Royale";

[The Soloist](#) - November 21<sup>st</sup> - Rober Downey Jr. and Jamie Foxx star about a talented musician who is now living on the streets.

[Australia](#) - November 26<sup>th</sup> - Baz Luhrmann's epic tale set in WWII Australia.

With Nicole Kidman and Hugh Jackman.

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Think &quot;Gone with the Wind&quot; with kangaroos.

*The Road* - November 28<sup>th</sup> - Viggo Mortensen as a man walking with his son for months across a ravaged, post-apocalyptic landscape in search of civilization.  
Charlize Theron co-stars.

[\*The Day the Earth Stood Still\*](#) - December 12<sup>th</sup> - Keanu Reeves in a remake of the classic 1951 sci-fi film.

[\*Twilight\*](#) - December 12<sup>th</sup> - the adaptation of the popular book series concerning a relationship between a non-blood drinking vampire and a teenaged girl.

[\*Defiance\*](#) - December 12<sup>th</sup> - Daniel Craig and Live Schreiber as Jewish brothers in WWII Russian, leading a band of refugees in striking back at the Germans.  
A major early Oscar contender

*Revolutionary Road* - December 19<sup>th</sup> - Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet as a young couple raising a family in a Connecticut suburb during the mid 1950s.  
Sam Mendes (&quot;American Beauty&quot;) directs the &quot;Titanic&quot; stars in their on-screen reunion.

[\*The Spirit\*](#) - December 25<sup>th</sup> - Frank Miller's next comic book adaptation, done in the same style as &quot;Sin City&quot;.

[Frost / Nixon](#) - December 26<sup>th</sup> - Ron Howard's latest Oscar attempt, adapting the stage play of the disgraced president's attempt to re-habilitate his image on David Frost's TV show, and Frost's attempt to drag out the truth from Tricky Dick

[The International](#) - February 13, 2009 - Clive Owen and Naomi Watts in a thriller about an Interpol investigation of a world-wide bank funding murder and corruption. And you thought Wachovia was bad?

[Watchmen](#) - March 6, 2009 - The screen version of what is arguably graphic novelist Alan Moore's greatest work.

**Blockbusters on the Distant Horizon** (movies that would seem to be big hits...as soon as they get made or released).

*X-Men Origins: Wolverine* - May 1, 2009 - Hugh Jackman goes it alone as the adamantium enhanced anti-hero. With Live Schreiber as Sabertooth, and Ryan Reynolds as Deadpool.

*Star Trek* - May 8, 2009 - J.J. Abrams and a young cast reboot the franchise, going back to Kirk and Spock's days at Starfleet Academy.

*Angels and Demons* - May 15, 2009 - Tom Hanks and Ron Howard follow-up to "The DaVinci Code";

*Terminator 4* - May 22, 2009 - Christian Bale as John Conner as the franchise moves into the apocalyptic future.

*Transformers 2* - June 26, 2009 - The next chapter of Robots In Disguise!

*Public Enemy* - July 1, 2009 - Johnny Depp as John Dillinger. Co-starring Christian Bale, and directed by Michael Mann

[\*Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince\*](#) - July 2009 - The sixth of J.K. Rowling's seven books, setting the stage for the two part conclusion in 2010 and 2011.

*The Taking of Pelham 123*- August 7, 2009 - Denzel Washington, John Travolta, and James Gandolfini in a remake of the classic 1974 film about a hijacked subway car.

*Shutter Island* - October, 2009 - Martin Scorsese working once again with Leonardo DiCaprio in this mystery set in 1954.

*Nottingham* - November, 2009 - Ridley Scot and Russell Crowe together again in a retelling of the Robin Hood legend, this time through the eyes of the Sheriff of Nottingham (Crowe). With Sienna Miller as Maid

Marion.

*Avatar* - December 18, 2009 - James Cameron's sci-fi/CGI extravaganza. The C.I.A. should take lessons about secrecy from Cameron, as he's keeping info about this film very much to himself at this time.

*Iron Man 2* - May, 2010 - Right on the heels of the success of the first one, Marvel is quick to get Robert Downey Jr. back into his titanium suit.

*The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* - May, 2010 - The series goes off in a bit of a different direction, as those of you who love the books already know.

*Thor* - June 2010 - Another Marvel superhero...but the Nordic God is about as bland personality-wise as Superman, so we'll see how it goes.

*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part I* - 2010 - The start of the End for the boy wizard and his battle against He-Who-Shall-not-Be-Named

*Lincoln* - 2010 - Steven Spielberg directs the biographical film of the 16<sup>th</sup> President (Liam Neeson)

*The Hobbit* - 2010 - Guillermo del Toro directs and Peter Jackson will produce the prequel to "Lord of the Rings"; Ian McKellen will return as Gandalf

*Fantastic Voyage* - 2010 - Roland Emmerich ("The Day After Tomorrow", "10,000 B.C.") remakes the classic 1967 movie about a miniaturized sub and crew operating on a scientist from inside his brain.

*The Avengers* - 2011 - Iron Man, Hulk, Thor, and Captain America open up a can of whoopass on bad guys everywhere.

*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part II* - 2011 - The end of the line for what will be beyond doubt the most profitable series in the history of film making.

*The Hobbit 2* - 2011 - del Toro and Jackson again, this time covering the time between the end of Tolkien's book, "The Hobbit"; and the start of LOTR.