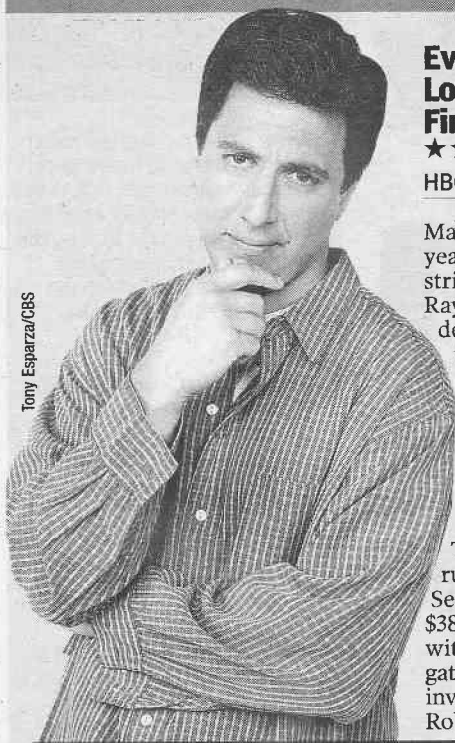


This week's DVDs

By MICHAEL GILTZ



Tony Esparza/CBS

Everybody Loves Raymond First Season

★★★

HBO Video, \$44.98

Many great sitcoms take a year before they hit their stride. "Everybody Loves Raymond" fits that description to a T, with the actors slowly, deliciously digging into the humor of their characters. Modest extras include Ray Romano's appearance on "Letterman" that started the ball rolling. The exception to the rule? "Mork & Mindy First Season" (Paramount, \$38.99), which exploded with humor right out of the gate, thanks to the inventive, original style of Robin Williams.

Lassie 50th Television Anniversary

★★★

Sony Wonder, \$29.98

"Woof! Woof, woof!" If you don't speak dog, that's Lassie telling you this DVD set brings together 24 classic episodes from all five TV shows starring Lassie, not to mention Timmy, Jeff, Ranger Corey and the rest. Extras include Lassie at the Emmys, on "Dinah Shore," etc. Also out is the 1943 tearjerker movie that started it all: "Lassie Come Home" (Warner Bros., \$14.96) starring Roddy McDowall and Elizabeth Taylor.

Young Adam

★★★½

Sony Pictures Classics, \$24.96

Like many noir classics, "Young Adam" (2003) came and went without much fanfare. This tale of a drifter (Ewan McGregor) falling for the wife (Tilda Swinton) of a riverboat captain is simply too bleak to win over viewers the first time around. But the leads are terrific, the score by David Byrne marvelous, and director David Mackenzie is a major talent.

7th Heaven First Season

★★★½

Paramount, \$64.99

Arguably one of the most successful family TV shows in

history, "7th Heaven" is the story of the clean-cut but quietly sexy Camden kids, led by their kind-hearted dad, Minister Eric (Stephen Collins). No extras, because that would be sinful. Just as wholesome, really, but pretending to be edgy is the well-acted "Everwood First Season" (Warner Bros. \$59.98), which indulges in deleted scenes and commentary on four key episodes.

Man On Fire

★★★

Fox, \$29.98

Denzel Washington should make a habit of playing against type. He won the Oscar for "Training Day" as a corrupt cop. Here, he's a hired bodyguard who becomes a vicious killer when trying to rescue the little girl he was paid to protect. Washington is



terrifically effective and the Tony Scott film enjoyed good reviews. Less successful in tweaking his image is Tom Hanks, who suffered a rare mixed reception for "The Ladykillers" (Touchstone, \$29.99), his lark collaboration with the Coen brothers.