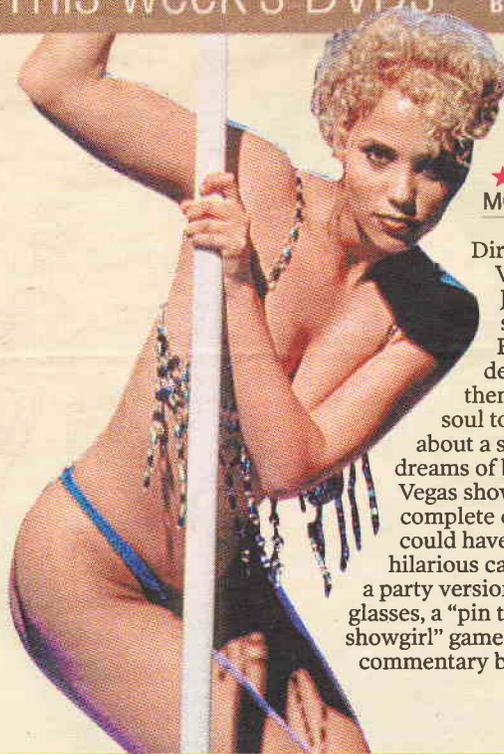


This week's DVDs

By MICHAEL GILTZ


**Showgirls
V.I.P.
Edition**

 ★★ ★★
 MGM, \$39.98

Director Paul Verhoeven, writer Joe Eszterhas and star Elizabeth Berkley all dedicated themselves heart and soul to this 1995 drama about a stripper who dreams of becoming a Vegas showgirl. Only complete earnestness could have created such hilarious camp. Now comes a party version, including shot glasses, a "pin the pasties on the showgirl" game and commentary by strippers.

Pennies From Heaven

 ★★ ★★
 Warner Bros., \$59.98

In this brilliant 1978 British miniseries, a youthful Bob Hoskins plays a Depression-era traveling sheet-music salesman with a frigid wife and dreams of happier days. The groundbreaking script by Dennis Potter ("The Singing Detective") lets characters break out into song by lip-syncing to period tunes and then cruelly yanks them back to reality. Steve Martin starred in a remarkably faithful adaptation for the movies only three years later (Warner Bros., \$19.97) that freaked out fans of "The Jerk."

**Combat! Season 1
Campaign 1**

 ★★ ★★½
 Image, \$39.99

Everything Tom Hanks accomplished with the WW II miniseries "Band of Brothers" — vivid realism, great actors, and spot-on dialogue — was done just as well 40 years earlier with 1962's "Combat!," a TV series that follows a group of GI's (Vic Morrow, Shekya Greene) as they fight their way across Europe. Use of genuine war footage isn't just a money-saver; it's a sober reminder that real people made these sacrifices. Along with 16 episodes, extras include a new documentary and audio

commentary by guest directors such as Robert Altman.

La Ceremonie

 ★★
 HVE, \$29.95

French director Claude Chabrol has gained in stature over the years. But, in truth, he's not "the French Hitchcock." He's just second-rate Hitchcock. This silly 1995 thriller is typically hard to swallow. Isabelle Huppert stars as a servant who seduces the illiterate Sophie (Sandrine Bonnaire) into turning on their employer.

**You Bet Your Life:
The Best Episodes**

 ★★ ★★
 Shout, \$39.98


Groucho Marx enjoyed a 14-year run on radio and TV with this silly game show that served as an excuse for his gently mocking humor. Eighteen episodes are here, featuring guest stars like Johnny Weismuller, Edgar Bergen and a young Candice Bergen. Terrific extras include a "Stag Reel" (racy bits edited out), original commercials and three Groucho pilots for other game shows.