

6/17/03



### "NARC" "TULLY"

It's easy to see why director **Joe Carnahan** landed the next "Mission: Impossible" movie and loads of praise for the cops-on-the-take drama "Narc" (\$29.99, Paramount). From the first exciting chase sequence to the final rather deflating revelations, the movie is in sure hands, with **Ray Liotta** and **Jason Patric** doing their best work in years. Too bad the story line (also by Carnahan) lets them all down. Carnahan tells how he did it on a director's commentary, with a featurette giving due praise to director **William Friedkin**. Ideally, **Hilary Birmingham** should have garnered equal attention for her fine drama "Tully" (\$22.99, Hart Sharp), the movie she directed and co-wrote about two brothers, their lonely dad and the absent mother who haunts them. Oddly, the short film offered as an extra isn't by Birmingham.

### "JUST MARRIED"

**Ashton Kutcher**, in the news due to his new girlfriend, **Demi Moore**, was wed onscreen to **Brittany Murphy** in "Just Married" (\$27.98, Fox), which had them cruising Europe in the worst vacation since the Griswold's got in their camper.

### "TOPPER"/"TOPPER RETURNS"

**Cary Grant** and **Constance Bennett** give high concept comedies a good name in the frothy 1937 comedy "Topper" (\$19.98, Hallmark), where they are ghosts plaguing a stuffy banker with practical jokes and wry one-liners till he starts to live it up a little. The second sequel (what, no "Topper Takes a Trip"?) finds Topper in 1941 helping another ghost solve her own murder. Despite the lack of Grant and Bennett, it's actually quite good, too.

### "POWER AND TERROR: NOAM CHOMSKY IN OUR TIMES"

### "MANUFACTURING CONSENT: NOAM CHOMSKY AND THE MEDIA"

Two ways to tackle liberal firebrand **Noam Chomsky**, one of the more iconoclastic thinkers of our time. "Power and Terror: Noam Chomsky in Our Times" (\$24.95, First Run) offers public talks and interviews done early last year. It's a fine primer for anyone unfamiliar with his work. The far more ram-bunctious "Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media" (\$29.99, Zeitgeist) tackles his entire career in a nearly three-hour free-for-all, along with substantial extras like a debate with **William F. Buckley Jr.** and a discussion with philosopher **Michel Foucault**.

### Also out:

Thanks to the success of "Led Zeppelin," which contains more than five hours of concert footage, concerts and music DVDs are getting more respect than they ever did on video.

The very best is "Sinatra: The Classic Duets" (\$19.99, Hart Sharp), offering delightful and rare footage from his TV show, pairing Sinatra with the likes of **Louis Armstrong**, **Ella Fitzgerald** and **Peggy Lee**. The latter gets her own highlight with "The Quintessential Peggy Lee" (\$19.95, Kultur), a 1984 concert which is not perfect but still buoyant.

"**Barbara Cook** in Mostly **Sondheim**" (\$29.98, DRG) is a competent recording of her sublime one-woman show, though one might have wished for more elegant camerawork. Straightforward biographies like "John Lee Hooker: That's My Story" (\$24.95, Docurama) and the terrific "**Joni Mitchell**: Woman of Heart and Mind" (\$19.98, Eagle Vision) leave you desperate to hear more of their songs.

"**Marvin Gaye**: Live in Montreux 1980" (\$19.98, Eagle Vision) is frantic and chaotic (the stage is bursting with musicians) but grooves from first to last.

And the only complaint about "The Intimate **Duke Ellington**" (\$19.99, Image) is that these two delightful half-hour sessions recorded for Danish TV in 1967 are simply too brief.

### Next Tuesday:

A special edition of **Nicole Kidman**'s Oscar-winner "The Hours," more episodes of **Jeremy Brett**'s legendary adventures of **Sherlock Holmes** and **Robert Altman**'s disastrous take on **Popeye**.