

DVDs this week

By Michael Giltz

Sex and the City: The Complete Third Season (\$49.98; HBO)

At first, "Sex and the City" was as limited as its name implied: Women avidly discussing sex was all the show had to offer and if that didn't shock and/or amuse you, you were out of luck. But Darren Star's best work had more than designer clothes and naughty words on its mind. The characters actually began to matter and their romantic travails sometimes contained sadness and pain. Pregnancy? Marriage? All of that seemed highly unlikely for these gals (unless the pregnancy ended in abortion and the marriage was one their boyfriend was in). It was the third season when all that changed — and one of the most popular shows also became one of the best.

Legend: Collector's Edition (\$24.98; Universal)

This was a silly 1986 Tom Cruise fantasy about a devil (a delicious Tim Curry) killing the last unicorn and bringing darkness to the world. But what made this Ridley Scott debacle so puzzling was how cheesy it looked. He'd already made *Alien* and *Blade Runner*, two landmark sci-fi films — they were both astonishingly real. *Legend* was made after them, but looks about as cheap and unconvincing as a Saturday-morning cartoon. After 16 years, we finally get to see the longer, European cut, which is better, but that's not saying much. You can compare both on this exemplary collector's edition.



CRUISE

Vanilla Sky (\$29.99; Paramount)

Another Tom Cruise misfire. What's admirable about *Vanilla Sky*, just like *Legend*, is that Cruise may involve himself with the occasional bomb, but it almost always comes about out of a desire to try something bold and different. He certainly wasn't slumming by teaming with Cameron Crowe to film this dreary remake of the Spanish film *Open Your Eyes*. Now *Cocktail*, that's another story.

Grass/How High (\$29.95; Home Vision Entertainment/\$26.98; Universal)

Grass is an amusing documentary a la *The Atomic Café* — it uses old movie clips and industrial films to show how goofy well-intentioned warnings about drugs can appear today. (*Reefer Madness* is a particular favorite here.) Like *Atomic Café*, this movie isn't looking for laughs so much as to score serious points in the debate surrounding the war on drugs. Woody Harrelson narrates, appropriately. (No word if Matthew McConaughey played bongos on the soundtrack.) If it gets you in the mood, follow *Grass* with *How High*, a stoner movie about two fellows slipping into Harvard. Redman and Method Man won't make you remember Cheech & Chong, but since even Cheech Marin can't remember Cheech & Chong, that may not be a problem.



HARRELSON

The Naked Gun: From the Files of Police Squad 2 1/2, 33 1/3 (\$19.99; Paramount)



NIELSEN

Diminishing returns for these three movies from the Zucker brothers. Leslie Nielsen does his bit and O.J. Simpson provides comic relief. All three are out, with the first being quite funny. But none of them can approach the deadpan brilliance of the TV series "Police Squad" they sprang from. It's even funnier than *Airplane* and certainly more sophisticated. (If that's the right word.) Why doesn't someone release that on DVD?

Memento: Limited Edition (\$27.95; Columbia)

I frown on movies coming out with deluxe DVD editions so soon after the original release. (They really should put everything out at the same time whenever possible, so fans can choose which one they want.) Having said that, this beautifully packaged set notes ten marks for clever extras and a menu that makes you an-