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BY MICHAEL GILTZ & FRIENDS

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"Deadwood" -- Out Not With A Bang....

...but a whimper. In my book, last night was the series finale for "Deadwood." It had a terrific first season, a very good second season (that started slow but ended well) and a terrific third season with 11 great episodes that absolutely flew by -- and a final episode that sputtered to a halt. Gunmen were amassed for battle, violence hung in the air, Powers Boothe was desperate for something to do, Trixie was desperate to die and it all just sort of...ended. It wasn't a bad episode, mind you. But clearly, the story isn't over and the feeling that this was it probably overwhelmed the creators. Surely they sensed their days were numbered, even though the official word didn't leak out until after the episodes were filmed. But maybe HBO wasn't answering David Milch's phone calls as quickly. Just like the last few episodes of "American Dreams" and countless other great shows who heard the clock ticking, "Deadwood" failed to do justice in its final moments. That pair of two hour movies will probably be even worse, with forced arcs and a reaching for finality that really needed another two seasons. Don't let these hard words fool you into thinking the show failed to meet expectations. Most every week it met and exceeded them. Then it got shot in the back by the penny-pinching cowards known as network executives. That's no way for a gunslinger to meet death.

POSTED BY MICHAEL IN NEW YORK AT 3:24 PM



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