

## **TV COMPILATION REVIEW**

### **DEXTER: THE SECOND SEASON**

By Daniel B. Linn

First of all, a little truth in journalism: Like TV Writer.Com's fearless leader, LB, I'm a huge DEXTER fan. It's one of the few series I watch regularly and second only to DOCTOR WHO on my list of faves.

In fact, the reason I like DEXTER so much is also why I go for the Doctor: They're unique individuals who don't really relate to humanity. They feel things, but not necessarily the same things, in the same way, as mere mortals.

When it comes to the Doctor, the reason is clear: He's not human, so why should he behave like one of us? Dexter Morgan, on the other hand, is in fact human, but he's an out and out psycho, possessed of what he calls (in this DVD) a "Dark Passenger" who can only find release by killing others. (Preferably with lots of blood spattering. Although he never says it, I assume Dexter's the kind of guy who just loves "the sound of chainsaws in the morning.")

The first season of DEXTER was an adaptation of the novel DARKLY DREAMING DEXTER by Jeff Lindsay. It followed one storyline from beginning to end: The investigation of a serial killer who turned out to be the screwed up brother Dexter didn't remember he had.

During that season, we learned that Dexter was a blood spatter expert for the Miami Police Department, channeling his homicidal tendencies for the forces of good by killing only murderers who the police couldn't collar. Because of this socially redeeming motive, it was pretty damn easy to root for Dexter, especially when he was pitted directly against the brother, who was so much crazier and more dangerous than Dexter that we couldn't be sure Dex would prevail.

The second season takes a different approach. Instead of telling the same story Lindsay uses in his second DEXTER novel, the series goes its own way. The first few episodes meander a bit, standalone tales that show that the first season's events have softened our hero, making him more human and, therefore, not as efficient a killer.

By Episode 4, though, an overall plot is firmly in place: Dexter's deadly handiwork has been discovered, and the Feds have joined the Miami P.D. in the search for our favorite "Bay Harbor Butcher." From that point on it's not just Dexter vs. bad guys who could be said to "deserve" being cut up into chunky bits, it's Dexter vs. well-intentioned good guys. And, guess what? We cheer for our boy anyway.

For me, the fun of Season Two is in seeing how the writers—Clyde Phillips, Daniel Cerone, Melissa Rosenberg, and others—manipulate us into becoming almost as psychotic as Dexter, with the added bonus that we then have the opportunity to look into ourselves as human beings and try to answer that great philosophical question, "What the fuck...?"

If you're a DEXTER fan and want to relive his angst, this 4 disk DVD collection will do the trick. If you want more, like some insightful extras, you may be disappointed.

There's an interview with star Michael C. Hall and the promise of the first episode upcoming in Season Three, but it turns out that you've got to buy the BROTHERHOOD DVD in order to get that episode, and that most of the DEXTER bonuses are really episodes from other Showtime series: BROTHERHOOD, THE TUDORS, and CALIFORNICATION.

I was also disappointed by the cast bios, which are bare text instead of, say, video reports. Good thing I'm not really as nuts as Dexter, but then, who knows how I'll feel after I watch all thirteen episodes again?