

# THE Hollywood REPORTER

## *Frozen* Helps Disney Exceed Second-Quarter Expectations

By Paul Bond

**T**HE WALT DISNEY CO. SAID Tuesday it earned \$1.11 per share, excluding some items, in the second quarter on \$11.65 billion in revenue, beating expectations on both the top and bottom lines.

Disney was expected to earn 96 cents per share on revenue of \$11.24 billion.

A year ago in the same quarter, Disney earned \$1.04 per share — excluding some items — on revenue of \$10.55 billion.

Shares of Disney closed fractionally lower to \$81.03 on Tuesday but initially jumped 3 percent in after-hours trading.

The company's "studio entertainment" unit recorded 35 percent revenue growth to \$1.8 billion, helped by international theatrical results of *Frozen* and *Thor: The Dark World*. Television and subscription VOD titles like *Monsters University* and *Iron Man 3* also made big contributions.

*Frozen* also helped Disney's studio



*Frozen* helped Disney's studio entertainment division report operating income that more than quadrupled to \$475 million.

entertainment division report operating income that more than quadrupled to \$475 million.

During a conference call with analysts on Tuesday, Disney CEO Bob Iger said *Frozen* is the best-selling Blu-ray + Digital in history, and he confirmed plans for a

Broadway-style stage play of the title.

The fastest-growing unit was interactive, which posted \$268 million in revenue, up 38 percent compared to the same quarter a year ago, the video game *Disney Infinity* being the primary driver.

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The biggest unit, media networks, posted 4 percent revenue growth to \$5.13 billion after cable grew 5 percent but broadcast remained flat.

Parks and resorts grew 8 percent to \$3.56 billion and “consumer products” was up 16 percent to \$885 million, in part due to strong sales of merchandise based on brands associated with the Disney Channel as well as Mickey and Minnie Mouse and *Planes*.

Iger told analysts that even he and other top executives have been amazed by the “pent-up demand” for more *Star Wars* movies, the evidence being the attention paid in the media to every new detail about the making of *Star Wars: Episode VII*, due Dec. 18, 2015.

Iger also reiterated that film is a growth industry, especially due to international markets. He predicted China will be the No. 1 film market by 2020.

## ZERO DARK THIRTY'S BOAL LAUNCHES PAGE 1 BANNER

By Rebecca Ford and Borys Kit

MARK BOAL, THE OSCAR-WINNING writer and producer behind *Zero Dark Thirty* and *The Hurt Locker*, has secured funding from Megan Ellison's Annapurna Pictures for his Page 1 movie and television production banner.



Boal

At the same time, Boal has tapped former *New York Times Magazine* editor Hugo Lindgren, who most recently served as acting editor of *The Hollywood Reporter*, to run the shingle, acting as company president. Lindgren will be based in New York.

Matthew Budman, a co-producer on *Zero Dark Thirty*, will be Annapurna's executive overseeing Page 1, which has a goal of teaming journalists and authors with film producers to make movies and TV out of compelling ripped-from-the-

headlines stories. Jonathan Leven, also a *Zero Dark Thirty* co-producer, will act as a development and production exec for Page 1. He was previously a vp at Bauer Martinez Entertainment.

Boal, a journalist who embedded with troops during the Iraq War, earned the best picture and best original screenplay Oscars for 2009 bomb-squad drama *Hurt Locker*, helmed by Kathryn Bigelow. The film won a total of six Oscars.

He again collaborated with Bigelow on 2012 film *Zero Dark Thirty*, which was backed by Ellison's Annapurna and was nominated for five Oscars, including best picture and best original screenplay. Boal is currently writing an undisclosed script for Bigelow, but she is not involved in Page 1, which hopes to follow in the steps of such movies as *Lone Survivor* and *Captain Phillips*, telling stories based on nonfiction books and events.

Lindgren served as *THR*'s acting editor for three months as Janice Min, co-president and chief creative officer of the entertainment group of Guggenheim Media, expanded her duties to include oversight of *Billboard*'s editorial content. Lindgren served as top editor for the *New York Times Magazine* for three years. Previously, he was deputy editor of *Bloomberg Businessweek* and editorial director of *New York* magazine.

“I am excited to seek out the most enterprising journalists, develop scripts and match them with Mark and Megan, the best one-two punch of writing and producing in Hollywood,” Lindgren said in a statement.

Boal is repped by CAA, Management 360 and Jackoway Tyerman.

## SABAN GROUP BOWS DISTRIBUTION VENTURE

By Rebecca Ford

HAIM SABAN'S SABAN CAPITAL GROUP has launched Saban Films, a distribution company will plans to acquire 8-10 feature films per year for North American distribution.

RLJ Entertainment vet Bill Bromiley has been tapped as president of the new company. Bromiley will begin in Cannes this month, looking to acquire commercial, talent-driven films in various states of production.

Saban, the billionaire producer behind *Power Rangers*, *Masked Rider* and *VR Troopers*, has plans to partner on the films with a major studio distribution partner, and those talks are ongoing.

“I have a long-standing and deep affection for independent film and saw an opportunity in the theatrical distribution arena as well as an emerging distribution platform strategy that focuses on cable, satellite, and telco VOD. Film is a natural progression for Saban Capital Group with existing interests already in television, media and brands,” Saban said Tuesday in a statement.

The management team of the new venture will also include chief financial officer Shanan Becker and director of business development Ness Saban.

“We've put together a team led by a forward thinking industry veteran who shares the vision, scope and principles which are at the core of the Saban brand,” said Adam Chesnoff, president-COO of Saban Capital Group.

Bromiley previously served as chief acquisitions officer of RLJ Entertainment, formerly known as Image Entertainment, where he was responsible for the acquisition of all content. While at Image, Bromiley shepherded such titles as *Management*, *The Way Back*, *Before the Devil Knows You're Dead* and *Encounters at the End of the World*.

Becker also joins Saban Films from RLJ, where he served as executive vp, business operations, overseeing finance, planning and analysis along with cash management of the feature film division. He has previously held senior positions at Paramount Home Entertainment and DreamWorks Home Entertainment. **THR**



Saban



Bromiley



In January, The Weinstein Co. took *Grace of Monaco*, a biopic of actress-turned-princess Grace Kelly, off of its schedule.

## Weinstein Nearing Deal to Keep *Grace of Monaco*

By Tatiana Siegel and Pamela McClintock  
 WITH THE *GRACE OF MONACO* premiere at the Cannes Film Festival looming, Harvey Weinstein has decided to keep the biopic of the late Princess Grace after all. The Weinstein Co. is in final negotiations to retain U.S. distribution rights to the film that has sparked more headlines than any other Cannes title this year.

The move comes after months of public feuding between Weinstein and the pic's director Olivier Dahan and producer Pierre-Ange Le Pogam over the tone of the film. Weinstein was looking for a breezier rendition, while Dahan's version painted a darker, more cautionary tale.

In recent weeks, TWC has been trying to renegotiate the \$5 million fee it was originally poised to pay the film's India-based financier Yash Raj Films to distribute *Grace* in the U.S. TWC believed the filmmakers breached their contract by not submitting a completed film as stipulated and was looking to reduce the fee to \$3 million or walk away. TWC also was demanding a new version of the Nicole Kidman starrer that took into consideration Weinstein's notes.

CAA, which reps the filmmakers and Kidman, has been working to find a resolution before Cannes. TWC's decision

to keep the film is just the latest twist in what has been an ugly war of words between the French auteur (who also directed 2007's *La vie en rose*) and the mogul. In October, Dahan was quoted in French newspaper *Liberation* saying that he would fight to keep his version of the pic. "It's right to struggle, but when you confront an American distributor like Weinstein, not to name names, there is not much you can do," he said at the time. "Either you say, 'Go figure it out with your pile of shit,' or you brace yourself so the blackmail isn't as violent."

In January, The Weinstein Co. took the biopic of actress-turned-princess Grace Kelly, who died in a car accident at the age of 52, off of its schedule (TWC was set to release the film March 14 in the U.S.). Weinstein was taken off guard when the following day *Grace* was selected as Cannes' opening-night film. The fest will screen Dahan's cut.

*Grace*, which also stars Tim Roth as Prince Rainier III, was originally set to open in November for an awards-season push, but the Weinstein Co. pushed back the release to March, saying it wouldn't be ready in time. It is currently undated.

Further stoking the flames of controversy, the Monaco royal family blasted the pic, calling it "totally fictional."

## TATUM TO STAR IN UNTITLED CRIME THRILLER FOR SONY

By Borys Kit

CHANNING TATUM IS GOING undercover with Sony Pictures.

The studio has picked up an untitled crime thriller with Tatum attached to star and produce.

Joining Tatum as producers are his partner Reid Carolin as well as Craig Zadan and Neil Meron, best known for movie musicals such as *Chicago* and producing the recent 86th Academy Awards.

Set in the late 1970s, the untitled project is described as the inspiring true story of an ordinary family man who decides to risk everything by going undercover to take down the biggest mob boss in the country.

Kristin Gore, who worked with Zadan and Meron as a writer on the Academy Awards, is set to write.

Michael De Luca and Jonathan Kadin are shepherding for Sony.

Gore, repped by CAA and Alan Herriott, has sports drama *Racing Dreams* in development at DreamWorks.

Tatum, repped by UTA and by Craig Jacobson and Stewart Brookman, stars with Jonah Hill in Sony's *22 Jump Street*, which opens June 13. The actor has a busy year ahead as he stars in *Jupiter Ascending*, which opens July 18, and in *Foxcatcher*, Bennett Miller's follow-up to 2011 sports drama *Moneyball*. This fall, Tatum will shoot *Magic Mike XXL*, the sequel to the 2012 dramedy that he co-wrote and will produce with Carolin. Tatum also stars in the pic.

Zadan and Meron are currently developing *Monster High*, Universal's adaptation of a Mattel topline that has a script by Josh Schwartz and Stephanie Savage, and an untitled Beach Boys project for Fox 2000. The duo will also be reprising their roles as producers for next year's Oscars. **THR**



## BUTLER DROPS OUT OF POINT BREAK REMAKE

By Borys Kit

GERARD BUTLER HAS EXITED *POINT Break*, Alcon's remake of the 1991 classic action movie.



Butler

The actor was to have played the Zen-infused thief originally played by Patrick Swayze. Luke Bracey is playing hotshot FBI agent Johnny Utah,

portrayed by Keanu Reeves in the Kathryn Bigelow-helmed original.

Sources said the parting of ways occurred because of a confluence of factors. There have been creative differences and a scheduling conflict: *Point Break* is set to start shooting in late June, lasting several months, and will take its actors to international locales. But Butler also has on his docket *London Has Fallen*, the sequel to *Olympus Has Fallen*, which shoots in the fall in London.

Insiders said Alcon is intent on maintaining its start date and will recast the part in the coming weeks.

Ericson Core is directing the movie, which has a script by Kurt Wimmer. Alcon's Broderick Johnson and Andrew Kosove are producing, along with John Baldecchi, Chris Taylor and Wimmer.

## LIONSGATE INT'L BOARDS PENN DRAMA LAST FACE

By Pamela McClintock

LIONSGATE INTERNATIONAL HAS come aboard to handle Sean Penn's directorial effort *The Last Face* overseas and will launch the project to foreign buyers at the upcoming Cannes Film Market.

The drama, set against the backdrop of war-torn Africa, stars Javier Bardem and Charlize Theron. Bill Pohlad's River Road Entertainment (*12 Years a Slave*) is financing *Last Face*, which Penn is set to start shooting in August (River Road also financed Penn's *Into the Wild*).

Thanks to its A-list cast and Penn, the film should generate keen interest among foreign distributors.

Written by Erin Dignam, *Last Face* stars Theron as the director of an international aid organization working in Liberia who embarks on a love affair with a stubborn and impulsive relief-aid doctor, played by Bardem. Their mutual passion for the value of life is matched by the intensity of their opposing opinions on how best to solve the conflict that surrounds them, creating a seemingly insurmountable rift.

Producers of the film are Pohlad, Matt Palmieri (*Martha Marcy May Marlene*) and Bill Gerber (*Gran Torino*).

*Last Face* has been in the works since the mid-2000s. At one point, Ryan Gosling and Robin Wright were attached to star.

CAA packaged the project and is handling U.S. rights.

## ROTHMAN'S TRISTAR SETS RELEASE DATES FOR 2 PICS

By Pamela McClintock

SONY HAS SET RELEASE DATES FOR the first two films from Tom Rothman's TriStar Productions — Jonathan Demme's *Ricki and the Flash* and Robert Zemeckis' untitled biopic about high-wire artist Philippe Petit, who walked between the World Trade Center towers.

*Ricki*, starring Meryl Streep and written by Diablo Cody, will open June 26, the same corridor used to launch Streep's femme-fueled *The Devil Wears Prada* when Rothman was at Fox.

Zemeckis' 3D movie stars Joseph Gordon-Levitt as Petit, and will debut Oct. 2, the same weekend that *Gravity* opened last year. The untitled film, pitched as a fun caper meant for all age groups, is based on Petit's memoirs *To Reach the Clouds* and also stars Ben Kingsley, Charlotte LeBon and James Badge Dale.

"These are auspicious dates with a great history," Sony vice chairman Jeff Blake said in announcing the dates. "We are confident that summer moviegoers will

respond to another classic Meryl Streep character, and in the fall, as we saw with *Gravity* on this same date, the first weekend in October is prime real estate for a visually-stunning 3D experiential film."

*Ricki* will open opposite Universal's *Ted 2*, while the Zemeckis movie goes up against Fox's *Frankenstein* and Focus Features' *London Has Fallen*, a sequel to action movie *Olympus Has Fallen*.

## LIONSGATE TO DISTRIBUTE D'SOUZA DOC AMERICA

By Paul Bond

LIONSGATE WILL DISTRIBUTE DINESH D'Souza's *America*, which opens wide July 4 after a limited release on June 27, insiders said Tuesday.

*America* is the follow-up to the right-leaning *2016: Obama's America*, which is the second-most-successful political documentary in U.S. history after 2004's *Fahrenheit 9/11*, the left-leaning Michael Moore pic also distributed by Lionsgate.

In *America*, D'Souza explores the most prominent complaints — usually emanating from the political left — about the U.S. and, judging from several trailers and clips from the film available online, finds them wanting.

Liberals who appear in the film include Ward Churchill, Alan Dershowitz, Noam Chomsky, Bill Ayers, Michael Eric Dyson and Charles Truxillo.

In one clip from what will no doubt be a controversial film, Truxillo — a leading progressive voice on the topic of immigration — says that those who immigrate to the U.S. "don't have the all-consuming desire to lose their identities anymore. For what? What are you losing it for? You want to become like what? The white brats in the mall?"

In a trailer, George Washington is shot dead in battle for a scene that imagines the rebels lost Revolutionary War and therefore the U.S. never existed.

Representatives of *America* and Lionsgate did not respond to requests for comment. **VIII**

# Former NBC News Chief Capus to Oversee *CBS Evening News*

By Marisa Guthrie

NEW YORK — Steve Capus, who left NBC News last year after Pat Fili-Krushel was brought in to reorganize the news division, is heading to rival CBS News. Capus was named executive producer of *CBS Evening News With Scott Pelley* and executive editor of CBS News, CBS News chairman Jeff Fager announced Tuesday.



Capus

Capus will report to CBS News president David Rhodes and begin July 7. He replaces Pat Shevlin, a CBS News veteran who earlier this year moved to *60 Minutes*, where she continues to work with Pelley.

Capus spent two decades at NBC News. He led MSNBC and produced Brian Williams' newscast at the company's then-nascent cable spinoff. He would go on to produce *NBC Nightly News*, first with Tom Brokaw and then with Williams. Capus was president of NBC News for eight years before resigning in early 2013. When he left, rumors abounded that he would join his former boss and ally Jeff Zucker at CNN. But Capus has lately been executive in residence at IESE Business School.

Rhodes and Capus have been in discussions for several months with more specific talks about the *CBS Evening News* role evolving over the last few weeks.

Asked if he called Williams, with whom he had worked since 1986 when they were both at Philadelphia affiliate WCAU, Capus told *The Hollywood Reporter* he did give his former colleagues at NBC News a "heads up."

"There's no question that the friendship will endure," said Capus. "I have so much respect for Brian and what he does every night with *Nightly News*. I think it's great that we have three terrific nightly news broadcasts and one darn good one

on PBS, by the way. That's good for our beloved profession. It really is. At one of them, a very good friend happens to be the anchor. So I want them to do well.

"But I've got a new home team that has been extremely welcoming. And my allegiances are now on West 57th Street," he added, referring to address of CBS News headquarters in Manhattan.

In his capacity as executive editor, Capus will be charged with coordinating coverage of big, breaking stories across the news division.

"We don't coordinate on major and on-going stories," admitted Rhodes. "I think we cover them well, we don't coordinate them well. Sometimes you're in the field or you're pursuing a big story and you just need someone to bounce ideas off of. You need people in these places who can make decisions."

The *CBS Evening News* broadcast has been on a ratings uptick since Pelley took over, notching a gain of six percent so far this season among total viewers. But it is still stuck in third behind *NBC Nightly News With Brian Williams* and *ABC World News With Diane Sawyer*. So far this season, *CBS Evening News* is averaging 7.1 million viewers a night compared to 9.3 million for *NBC Nightly News* and 8.3 million for *ABC World News*.

"I'm so impressed with the quality of the *Evening News*," commented Capus. "I'm going into a shop that is very, very strong. Yes, everybody would like the ratings to be in a different place. There's only so much you can do to effect that. At the end of the day, my focus will be to make the *Evening News* as strong from an editorial perspective as it possibly can be. And we hope the audience will respond accordingly."

In the 25-54 demographic upon which most news programming is sold to advertisers, the race is tightening. *NBC Nightly*

*News* is pulling in 2.3 million viewers compared to *ABC World News*' 2.1 million so far this season. And *ABC World News* has bested *NBC Nightly News* in the demo for three of the past four weeks. *CBS Evening News* is averaging 1.8 million demo viewers this season, up eight percent year-over-year.

Asked if he's frustrated with the broadcast's long-standing third-place status, Rhodes responded: "I don't know that I would say there's frustration. There isn't complacency. If we were complacent we wouldn't be doing a big hire like this. There aren't a lot of numbers separating these different broadcasts. There just aren't."

"As these news divisions continue to differentiate in their approach, if we're smart about it, we ought to be able to be a little more competitive," he added.

## TV RATINGS: FOX'S 24 COMES BACK STRONG

By Michael O'Connell

JACK'S BACK — AND 8.1 MILLION viewers joined him.

Fox revived its flagship drama of yore on Monday night, and the two-hour *24* opener was largely in line with its last season that aired in 2010. All told, *24: Live Another Day* averaged a 2.6 rating among adults 18-49 — steady throughout the broadcast.

The last year *24* was on the air, the series averaged a 2.8 rating in the key demo and 9.1 million viewers, so it did lose some of the crowd in its return. Still, the losses are minor considering how much same-day ratings have fallen across the board since 2010.

Fox's *24* came in second place to time-slot rival and perennial Monday victor

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*The Voice* (3.0 adults). The NBC show led the drama over the same two-hour period by 15 percent in the key demo. *The Blacklist* tied 24 as the No. 2 show of the night, sharing its 2.6 rating among adults 18-49. NBC took a 2.9 demo rating and 10.7 million viewers for the night.

ABC's *Dancing With the Stars* looks to have lost the most to the 24 competition. The show lost eight-tenths of a point, averaging a 1.8 rating in the demo. *Castle* (1.6 adults) lost four-tenths, giving ABC a 1.8 demo rating and 11.5 million viewers for the night.

Over on CBS, the trio of original comedies all fell from last week. Both *2 Broke Girls* (1.9 adults) and *Mike & Molly* (1.8 adults) fell four-tenths of a point, the former posting a series low, and *Friends With Better Lives* (1.6 adults) dropped three-tenths. CBS took a 1.3 rating with adults 18-49 and 5.1 million viewers.

*Star-Crossed* (0.3 adults) and *The Tomorrow People* (0.4 adults) were both even on The CW.

## ABC'S KIMMEL RENEWED THROUGH JANUARY 2017

Staff report

ABC HAS GIVEN JIMMY KIMMEL a two-year contract extension, *The Hollywood Reporter* has confirmed.



Kimmel

The new deal keeps the late-night host on the network through January 2017.

ABC's move to maintain stability in its late-night programming comes amid shake-ups at rivals NBC and CBS. NBC recently completed high-profile hosting changes at *The Tonight Show* and *Late Night*, moving Jimmy Fallon and Seth Meyers into the hosting chairs. At CBS, longtime *Late Show* host David Letterman recently announced his plans to retire in 2015, with the network quickly naming Stephen Colbert as his successor. Not long after the Col-

bert announcement, *Late Late Show* host Craig Ferguson announced his plans to leave CBS at the end of this year.

Elsewhere in late-night, E! host Chelsea Handler has said she'll leave the network at the end of the year, and Comedy Central is looking for a replacement for Colbert's *Colbert Report* when that show ends at the end of this year.

In the key 18-49 demo, Kimmel pulls in 917,000 viewers, outpacing Letterman by 162,000 viewers. At the time of his departure, Leno outranked his broadcast rivals with 1.13 million demo viewers, but Kimmel's momentum undoubtedly factored into NBC's decision to move Fallon into the 11:35 p.m. *Tonight Show* slot. As of February, Kimmel's first complete season at 11:35 p.m. was up 28 percent over the previous year, when he ran almost exclusively in the 12:05 a.m. slot.

But in his first two months since taking over *Tonight*, Fallon has pulled in more viewers in the 18-49 demo than Letterman or Kimmel.

## DANIELS, SPENCER DRAMAS GET SERIES ORDERS AT FOX

By Lesley Goldberg

FOX IS ADDING TO ITS DRAMA SLATE for the 2014-15 season. The network has picked up hip-hop drama *Empire* and its remake of Spanish drama *Red Band Society* starring Octavia Spencer.

From *The Butler*'s Lee Daniels and Danny Strong, *Empire* is a family drama set in the world of a hip-hop empire. Taraji P. Henson stars as Cookie Lyon, the ex-wife of Lucious Lyon (Terrence Howard), the head of a record label at the center of the drama.

Strong, who wrote the script for *The Butler* — which was produced and directed by Daniels — penned the script for *Empire*, while Daniels will make his TV directing debut with the project.



Daniels



Spencer

From 20th Century Fox TV and Imagine, Brian Grazer will executive produce *Empire* alongside Daniels, Strong and Francie Calfo.

Gabourey Sidibe co-stars alongside Jussie Smollett, Malik Yoba, Kaitlin Doubleday, Trai Byers, Grace Gealey and Tasha Smith. The drama will feature original and current music, with Timbaland on board as a songwriter/music producer.

The project had been generating solid buzz throughout pilot season, with the additional revenue streams to come from the original music sales likely also contributing to the network's decision to pick up the drama. Fox picked up *Empire* after a multiple-network bidding war, ordering it to pilot with an eye toward series pickup under its new development model.

The series will become the third scripted musical show on broadcast TV, joining Fox's *Glee*, which also hails from producers 20th Century Fox Television, and ABC's country music drama *Nashville*, from producers Lionsgate TV.

*Red Band Society*, meanwhile, is described as a dark dramedy that focuses on the daily lives of a group of teenagers living in a hospital who become unlikely friends. The depth of the unexpected friendships allows them to survive the challenges of growing up under such intense circumstances.

Spencer stars alongside Dave Annable in the project from ABC Studios, DreamWorks and Amblin Television. Spencer will make her series TV debut in the drama, which hails from *Boardwalk Empire*'s Margaret Nagle and executive producers Steven Spielberg, Justin Falvey, Darryl Frank and Sergio Aguero. The series marks a rare off-network sale for ABC Studios.

*Empire* and *Red Band Society* mark the fourth and fifth new drama pickups at Fox for the 2014-15 television season. They join Batman prequel *Gotham* and Hart Hanson's *Backstrom* as well as Egyptian drama *Hieroglyph*, the latter of which were picked up straight to series. **THR**

## MOMS' NIGHT OUT

By Sheri Linden

ALL HECK BREAKS LOOSE WHEN A trio of churchgoing stay-at-home mothers take a rare leap into nightlife in *Moms' Night Out*. The second feature from the Erwin Brothers (Jon and Andrew) is the kind of film that spikes its wholesomeness with just enough wild to appear modern while holding tight to tradition. Through its central characters it commiserates with hardworking mothers, and through just about everyone else in the pic, it pays tribute to them.

Having focused on abortion in the drama *October Baby*, the directors dial down the faith-based angle several notches as they aim for comic hijinks. The comedy tends toward the broad and frenetic, but there are nicely observed bits too. The material is designed to resonate especially with young parents and multigenerational families for whom small doses of non-judgmental Christian sermonizing aren't anathema. Opening wide on Mother's Day weekend, against the raunch of *Neighbors* and the animation of *Legends of Oz*, the Sony specialty-label release might prove just the après-brunch ticket for moms and their entourages, and social-media buzz could boost the picture's staying power in smaller markets.

The story, decidedly more caper than parable, is grounded in a recognizable sense of maternal angst, albeit one that's explored in only the most superficial ways. As a young mother of three, Allyson (Sarah Drew) is a woman on the verge of a nervous breakdown. Attempting to find a sense of worth as a mommy blogger, she posts mostly self-deprecating rants: She's a clean freak, a germaphobe and a hopelessly helpful type.

To avoid a meltdown, Allyson puts a Groupon to use and enlists her best friend, Izzy (Andrea Logan White), mother of toddler twins, and their pastor's wife, Sondra (Patricia Heaton), who's dealing with the demands of a teenage daughter (Sammi Hanratty), for a night out. Donning heels she hasn't worn in years, Ally-



Sarah Drew needs some me-time in *Moms' Night Out*.

son and her pals head to fancy restaurant Chez Magique, where a harpist contributes to the "aura" and the manager is called "the visionary." The screenplay, credited to Jon Erwin and Andrea Nasfelli, has an ear for the way people talk, at least in sitcoms, and an eye for such everyday annoyances as uncooperative automatic towel dispensers and pretentious types.

One reservation snafu and a few missed connections later, the women find themselves searching for a missing baby in a tattoo parlor, involved in a car chase (David Hunt, Heaton's real-life husband and fellow exec producer, plays a Cockney cabbie) and finally hauled into jail, where unbelievable comic mix-ups can always be sorted out unbelievably.

The evening's shares of ineptitude and haplessness are divided among the genders: While babysitting the kids, the men — Allyson's supportive hubby (Sean Astin), his mildly unconventional buddy (Kevin Downes) and Izzy's absurdly skittish husband (Robert Amaya) — run a parallel collision course of wackily unwelcome events. The forced hysteria runs out of steam with multiple arrests, which include an accidental Taser for good measure.

Country star and occasional actor Trace Adkins, playing a biker tattoo artist who comes to the women's rescue, cuts through the delirium with his honeyed twang and droll line readings. His naturalness is hard to maintain, though, when it falls on his broad shoulders to deliver a

climactic one-on-one sermonette to the self-doubting Allyson. Stating the movie's theme, he invokes Jesus as well as his mama, and urges Allyson to be kind to herself — a valuable, compassionate lesson, to be sure. But it's at this point that people start calling one another "girl" and the celebration of motherhood threatens to turn mawkish.

It never quite does. Neither does it locate an emotional vein. Without creating fully fleshed characters or truly involving conflict, the film aims instead to provoke howls of recognition and tears of gratitude by appealing to very basic notions of parent-child love — what the executive producers call the "craziness of the joy of parenting."

Drew overdoes Allyson's frenzy, straining for a Millennial Lucy Ricardo effect. She has a relatable quality, though, and a believable rapport with White and Heaton's characters, both well played within the constraints of the scenario.

Perhaps as intended, the Birmingham, Alabama, locations lend little in the way of defining flavor to the action; the unnamed setting feels like a generic American small city. As a whole, the production feels suited to the small screen. Its distinguishing visual characteristic is the directors' use of illustrations, graphics and onscreen text messages to propel the story, which they do well, especially at a book-club scene that combines mobile tech with Allyson's self-consciously wry voiceover: "Reading books," the harried mom says, "is something I aspire to do."

**Opens:** *Friday* (Sony/TriStar Pictures).

**Production:** *Affirm Films and Provident Films, with Pure Flix Entertainment and Four Boys Entertainment.*

**Cast:** *Sarah Drew, Sean Astin, Patricia Heaton, Andrea Logan White, Trace Adkins, David Hunt, Robert Amaya, Harry Shum, Jr., Sammi Hanratty, Alex Kendrick, Kevin Downes, Anyelah Johnson, Abbie Cobb, Maxwell Reyes.*

**Directors:** *Jon Erwin, Andrew Erwin.*  
*Rated PG, 98 minutes.*

# TV RATINGS

R=Repeat D=Debut S=Special Winner of time period  
0.0/0.0 Program Name 00.0  
18-49 Rating/Share Title of Show Millions of Viewers

# CHART

Week 32  
May 7

	ABC			CBS			NBC			FOX			CW		
<b>MON</b>	<b>2.4/7</b>		<b>14.1</b>	<b>1.6/5</b>		<b>6.1</b>	<b>2.9/8</b>		<b>11.3</b>	<b>1.2/3</b>		<b>4.4</b>	<b>0.3/1</b>		<b>0.9</b>
8:00	2.4/8		15.2	2.3/7	2 Broke Girls	7.8	2.8/9		11.2	0.9/3	Bones	3.8	0.3/1	Star-Crossed	0.9
8:30	2.5/7	Dancing With the Stars 2.6/7 15.9	16.1	1.9/6	Friends With Better Lives	6.1	3.1/9	The Voice	12.3	1.0/3	0.9/3 4.0 R	4.2	0.3/1	0.3/1 0.8	0.8
9:00	2.6/7		15.7	2.2/6	Mike & Molly	7.6	3.0/8	3.0/9 11.6	11.4	1.5/4	The Following	4.8	0.3/1	The Tomorrow People	0.9
9:30	2.8/7		16.4	1.7/4	The Big Bang Theory R S	6.2	3.0/8		11.3	1.5/4	1.5/4 4.8	4.9	0.4/1	0.4/1 0.9	1.0
10:00	2.1/6	Castle 2.0/6 10.4	11.2	0.9/2	Person of Interest	4.4	2.8/8	The Blacklist	11.4						
10:30	1.8/5		9.7	0.8/2	0.8/2 4.3 R S	4.2	2.5/7	2.7/8 10.8	10.3						
<b>TUE</b>	<b>1.4/4</b>		<b>4.3</b>	<b>2.2/6</b>		<b>14.5</b>	<b>2.0/6</b>		<b>8.1</b>	<b>1.0/3</b>		<b>2.3</b>	<b>0.9/3</b>		<b>1.9</b>
8:00	2.1/7	Agents of SHIELD	6.3	2.6/8	NCIS	17.0	2.6/9	The Voice	10.6	0.9/3	Glee	2.5	0.9/3	The Originals	1.9
8:30	2.0/6	2.1/6 5.9	5.6	2.5/7	2.5/8 17.3	17.5	2.9/9	2.7/9 11.2	11.7	0.8/2	0.9/3 2.4	2.3	0.8/2	0.8/3 1.8	1.6
9:00	1.7/5	The Goldbergs	4.8	2.1/6	NCIS: Los Angeles	15.0	1.6/5	About a Boy	6.3	1.1/3	New Girl	2.2	1.0/3	Supernatural	2.1
9:30	1.0/3	Trophy Wife	3.2	2.1/6	2.1/6 14.8	14.7	1.4/4	Growing Up Fisher	5.6	1.1/3	The Mindy Project	2.2	0.9/3	1.0/3 2.0	2.0
10:00	0.8/2	Celebrity Wife Swap	2.8	2.0/6	Person of Interest	11.7	1.7/5	Chicago Fire	6.9						
10:30	0.9/3	0.8/2 2.8	2.9	1.8/6	1.9/6 11.3	10.9	1.8/5	1.8/5 7.1	7.2						
<b>WED</b>	<b>1.6/5</b>		<b>5.7</b>	<b>2.1/6</b>		<b>10.0</b>	<b>1.7/5</b>		<b>5.9</b>	<b>1.9/6</b>		<b>8.8</b>	<b>0.7/2</b>		<b>2.1</b>
8:00	1.8/6	The Middle	7.4	2.2/7	Survivor: Cagayan	9.5	1.4/5	Revolution	4.5	1.8/6		8.3	0.8/3	Arrow	2.3
8:30	1.5/5	Suburgatory	5.5	2.4/7	2.3/7 9.7	9.9	1.2/4	1.3/4 4.3	4.1	1.8/6	American Idol	8.7	0.8/3	0.8/3 2.3	2.3
9:00	2.9/8	Modern Family	8.4	2.1/6	Criminal Minds	10.1	1.8/5	Law & Order: SVU	6.0	1.9/6	1.9/6 8.8	8.9	0.6/2	The 100	1.9
9:30	1.3/4	Mixology	3.8	2.3/6	2.2/6 10.3	10.5	1.9/5	1.8/5 6.2	6.3	2.0/6		9.2	0.6/2	0.6/2 1.9	1.8
10:00	1.2/4	Nashville	4.6	1.7/5	CSI: Crime Scene Investigation	10.0	1.9/6	Chicago P.D.	7.4						
10:30	1.2/4	1.2/4 4.6	4.7	1.7/5	1.7/5 10.0	9.9	1.9/6	1.9/6 7.3	7.2						
<b>THU</b>	<b>1.6/5</b>		<b>6.2</b>	<b>2.2/7</b>		<b>9.5</b>	<b>1.7/5</b>		<b>5.5</b>	<b>1.4/5</b>		<b>5.0</b>	<b>0.6/2</b>		<b>1.6</b>
8:00	0.9/3	Grey's Anatomy	4.2	4.5/16	The Big Bang Theory	16.0	1.4/5		5.5	1.5/6	Hell's Kitchen	4.1	0.8/3	The Vampire Diaries	1.9
8:30	1.0/3	1.0/3 4.3 R	4.4	2.0/7	The Millers	9.4	1.8/6		6.1	1.7/6	1.6/6 4.5	4.8	0.8/3	0.8/3 1.8	1.8
9:00	2.6/8	Grey's Anatomy	8.6	2.1/6	Two and a Half Men	9.0	1.7/5	iHeartRadio Music Awards	5.4	1.5/5	American Idol	7.0	0.5/2	Reign	1.4
9:30	2.6/8	2.6/8 8.8	9.0	1.4/4	Bad Teacher	6.4	1.8/5	1.7/5 5.5 S	5.3	1.0/3	Surviving Jack	3.9	0.5/1	0.5/2 1.4	1.4
10:00	1.4/4	Black Box	5.9	1.7/5	Elementary	8.1	1.7/5		5.4						
10:30	1.2/4	1.3/4 5.6	5.3	1.5/5	1.6/5 7.8	7.5	1.6/5		5.2						
<b>FRI</b>	<b>1.8/7</b>		<b>7.2</b>	<b>1.2/4</b>		<b>9.3</b>	<b>1.1/4</b>		<b>4.4</b>	<b>0.9/3</b>		<b>2.5</b>	<b>0.3/1</b>		<b>0.9</b>
8:00	1.4/6	Shark Tank: Swimming w/ Sharks	5.9	1.1/4	Unforgettable	7.5	1.0/4	Dateline	5.7	0.9/4	Kitchen Nightmares	2.4	0.4/2	Whose Line Is It Anyway?	1.2
8:30	1.6/6	1.5/6 6.0 S	6.2	1.0/4	1.0/4 7.6	7.7	1.1/4	1.1/4 6.0	6.2	0.9/3	0.9/3 2.4	2.4	0.3/1	Whose Line Is It Anyway? R	1.0
9:00	2.2/8	Shark Tank	8.2	1.2/4	Hawaii Five-0	8.7	1.3/5	Grimm	5.2	0.9/3	Kitchen Nightmares	2.6	0.2/1	Hart of Dixie	0.7
9:30	2.3/8	2.3/8 8.3	8.4	1.2/4	1.2/4 8.8	8.9	1.2/4	1.3/4 4.9	4.7	0.8/3	0.8/3 2.6	2.5	0.2/1	0.2/1 0.7	0.6
10:00	1.8/6	20/20	7.3	1.4/5	Blue Bloods	11.4	0.9/3	Hannibal	2.4						
10:30	1.7/6	1.7/6 7.1	7.0	1.5/5	1.5/5 11.6	11.7	0.9/3	0.9/3 2.3	2.2						
<b>SAT</b>	<b>0.7/3</b>		<b>2.4</b>	<b>0.5/2</b>		<b>3.1</b>	<b>0.8/3</b>		<b>4.5</b>	<b>0.3/1</b>		<b>0.8</b>			
8:00	0.5/2		2.0	0.4/2	2 Broke Girls R	2.0	0.6/3		4.4	0.4/2	The Simpsons R S	1.1			
8:30	0.5/2		2.0	0.4/2	Friends With Better Lives R	1.8	0.7/3	Dateline Saturday Night Mystery	5.2	0.3/1	24: Live Another Day S	1.0			
9:00	0.7/3	Saturday Movie of the Week: "Transformers" 0.7/3 2.4 R S	2.4	0.3/1	The Mentalist	2.1	0.8/3	0.8/3 5.5	6.0	0.2/1	The Following	0.7			
9:30	0.8/3		2.7	0.4/1	0.3/1 2.3 R	2.5	1.0/3		6.3	0.2/1	0.2/1 0.7 R	0.7			
10:00	0.9/3		2.8	0.7/2	48 Hours	4.7	0.8/3	Saturday Night Live Primetime	2.8						
10:30	0.9/3		2.9	0.8/3	0.8/3 5.1	5.5	0.8/3	0.8/3 2.6 R	2.4						
<b>SUN</b>	<b>1.8/6</b>		<b>6.6</b>	<b>1.3/4</b>		<b>9.0</b>	<b>0.9/3</b>		<b>3.9</b>	<b>1.6/5</b>		<b>3.6</b>			
7:00	1.6/6	America's Funniest Home Videos	6.0	0.9/3	60 Minutes	9.7	0.5/2	American Dream Builders	2.3	1.1/4	Bob's Burgers	2.2			
7:30	1.7/6	1.6/6 6.3	6.6	1.1/4	1.0/4 10.5	11.2	0.5/2	0.5/2 2.2	2.1	1.3/4	American Dad	2.5			
8:00	2.0/7	Once Upon a Time	6.6	1.7/6	The Amazing Race: All-Stars	8.4	1.1/3	Dateline	5.4	2.0/6	The Simpsons	4.4			
8:30	2.1/6	2.1/7 6.9	7.1	1.6/5	1.7/5 8.1	7.8	1.1/3	1.1/3 5.6	5.8	2.3/7	Family Guy	4.4			
9:00	2.1/6	Resurrection	8.2	1.1/3	The Good Wife	9.1	1.0/3	Believe	4.5	1.7/5	Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey	4.2			
9:30	2.0/6	2.1/6 8.2	8.0	1.1/3	1.1/3 9.0	8.9	0.9/3	1.0/3 4.3	4.2	1.6/4	1.6/5 4.1	4.0			
10:00	1.3/4	Revenge	5.2	1.2/3	The Mentalist	8.6	1.0/3	Crisis	3.7						
10:30	1.3/4	1.3/4 5.0	4.8	1.1/4	1.2/3 8.4	8.3	1.0/3	1.0/3 3.6	3.5						
WK. AVG.	1.6/5		6.6	1.6/5		8.8	1.5/5		6.1	1.2/4		3.9	0.6/2		1.5
SSN. TO DATE	2.1/6		7.5	2.4/7		10.8	2.8/8		9.4	2.5/7		7.5	0.8/2		1.9

NO PROGRAMMING

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