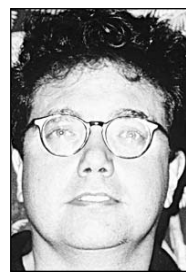


# 'Friends' star cleans up as 'Dirt' devil

Courtney Cox returns to weekly television in "Dirt" (10 p.m., FX, TV-MA), an ambitious and often uneven series that is shocking, riveting and a little silly all at the same time.



Kevin McDonough

The "Friends" actress plays Lucy Spiller, the brains behind two gossip magazines, "Now," a glossy "People"-like weekly, and "Dirt," a more down-market, down-and-dirty sheet that appears to have grown at the expense of its bigger, more respectable sister.

In all of the publicity shots for "Dirt," Cox's character stands on a hill above nighttime Los Angeles, with her red dress flowing endlessly, eclipsing the foreground like a dramatic curtain or a silken river of blood. Take your pick.

Lucy always appears in dark eye shadow to accentuate the slate-gray beauty of her eyes.

Or is it their lifelessness? It says something about a show that its moral center is provided by a madman. Ian Hart plays Don Konkey, ace photographer and old friend of Lucy's from their college-newspaper days.

A self-described high-functioning schizophrenic, Don can get any shot of any celebrity living or dead. All the time he battles hallucinations and inner demons right out of a David Lynch movie.

A lonely man in a grim bachelor pad, he's attached to his cat, particularly since it has cancer. Is it madness or wisdom that tells him the tabby is suffering for his sins and for Lucy's?

"Dirt" wastes no time showcasing the mechanics of gossip and access. Like "L.A. Confidential," it demonstrates how blackmail is used to turn targets into sources and how sources become prey in Lucy's spiderweb.

Lucy's scarlet garb makes all the more sense as the drama unfolds. Call her a vampire, ghoul or Satan herself: She is a collector of souls.

The show's dark color palette only accentuates the presentation of Hollywood as a hellish zombie town straight out of "The Day of the Locust" or Bosch's "Garden of Earthly Delights" or other lurid paintings of the damned.

Like most series on FX, "Dirt" is not for the kids, nor for the tame. Sex of all kinds, suicide, drug use and treachery are featured in nearly every frame.

The scenes of Don's descent into mental illness are the show's most daring and over-the-top. It remains to be seen how fans of "In Touch" and other brainless gossip rags will feel about a show so gloomy. "Dirt" will certainly receive condemnation from the usual suspects.

On the other hand, Cox appears to have one-upped the moral crusaders out to clean up entertainment.

The movie stars and celebrity tormentors in "Dirt" aren't just going to hell. They're already there.

## Tonight's other highlights

- The Orange Bowl (7:30 p.m., Fox).
- Scheduled on "Dateline" (8 p.m., NBC): the death of a housewife.
- Wet work in Paraguay on "The Unit" (9 p.m., CBS, TV-PG, V).
- The death of an immigrant woman may have been an "honor" killing on "Law & Order: Criminal Intent" (9 p.m., NBC, TV-14).
- Murder on embassy row on "Numb3rs" (10 p.m., CBS, TV-PG).

## Cult choice

Christopher Reeve and Genevieve Bujold star in the unintentionally funny 1982 pot-boiler "Monsignor" (10 p.m., Fox Movie Channel).

## Series notes

Loose nukes and a case of kidnapping on "NCIS" (8 p.m., CBS, TV-14, V) ... On two episodes of "Big Day" (ABC, TV-PG), dance lessons (9 p.m.), a change in plans (9:30 p.m.) ... Dad disappears on "Veronica Mars" (9 p.m., CW, TV-14, D, L).

## Late night

Donal Logue appears on "Late Show With David Letterman" (11:35 p.m., CBS) ... Jay Leno hosts George Clooney, Sen. John McCain and Unwritten Law on "The Tonight Show" (11:35 p.m., NBC) ... George Lopez, Giuliana DePandi and My Chemical Romance appear on "Jimmy Kimmel Live" (12:05 a.m., ABC).

LL Cool J and Government Mule are booked on "Late Night With Conan O'Brien" (12:35 a.m., NBC) ... Craig Ferguson hosts James Denton, Dan Gabriel and Julie Gribble on "The Late, Late Show" (12:37 a.m., CBS).

Kevin McDonough is a TV columnist for United Features Syndicate.

## TUESDAY EVENING

JANUARY 2, 2007

	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30
WTTV 4	Friends (CC)	Every-Raymond	Gilmore Girls "The Great Stink"	Veronica Mars "Of Vice and Men"	Friends (CC)	Will & Grace	Sex and the City	Will & Grace		
WRTV 6	The Insider (N)	Extra (N) (CC)	America's Funniest Home Videos	Big Day (N)	Big Day (N)	Boston Legal (CC)	News (CC)	Nightline (11:35)		
WISH 8	Inside Edition	Entertainment	NCIS "Deception" (CC)	The Unit "The Kill Zone" (CC)	NUMB3RS "The Mole" (CC)	News (CC)	Late Show			
WTHR 9	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Dateline NBC "Lady in the Lake"	Law & Order: Criminal Intent (N)	Law & Order: Special Victims Unit	News (CC)	Tonight Show			
WFYI 20	Business Rpt.	Across Indiana	Nova (CC)	Frontline "The O.J. Verdict" (CC)	Good to Great (CC)	Tavis Smiley	Time Goes By			
WNDY 28	That '70s Show	That '70s Show	Wicked Wicked Games (N) (CC)	Watch Over Me "Apologies" (N)	News	Access H'wood	Bernie Mac	South Park		
WTIU 30	The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer	Nova (CC)	Frontline "The Dark Side"	Independent Lens "A Fish Story"	Tavis Smiley	BBC World				
WHMB 40	The 700 Club (CC)	Harvest (CC)	Lester Sumrall	Paid Program	Life Today (CC)	In Spirit-Truth	High School Basketball			
WCLJ 42	Jordan Rubin	Fulton Sheen	Behind Scenes	Joyce Meyer	John Hagee	Bill Gaither				
WXIN 59	The Simpsons	Pregame (CC)	College Football FedEx Orange Bowl -- Louisville vs. Wake Forest. (8:15) From Miami. (CC)							
WIPX 68	Growing Pains	Growing Pains	Mama's Family	Mama's Family	Diagnosis Murder (CC)	Charlie's Angels	Time Life Music	Paid Program		
WDTI 69	Ron Phillips	John Hagee	Rod Parsley	Joni Lamb	Celebration	Joel Osteen (CC)	This Is Your Day	Believer's Voice		
A&E	CSI: Miami "Fade Out" (CC)	CSI: Miami "Skeletons" (CC)	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Dog the Bounty Hunter (N) (CC)	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter			
AMC	Boiling Point (6) (R) (93) ** Action.	The Last Samurai (R) (03) *** Tom Cruise. A Westerner learns the ways of the samurai in the 1870s. (CC)	Narc (11:15) (R) (02) *** (CC)							
AP	The Most Extreme "Oddities"	The Most Extreme Extreme births.	Born Different Animal breeding.	Animal Precinct (CC)	The Most Extreme Extreme births.					
BET	Hot Boyz (6) (R) (99) * Gary Bussey.	Juice (R) (92) ** Omar Epps, Jermaine Hopkins. Crime Drama. (CC)	American Gangster "Smith Bros."	Jamie Foxx	Jamie Foxx					
BRAVO	Selena (5:30) (PG) (97) *** (CC)	Inside the Actors Studio (N) (CC)	Real Housewives	Real Housewives	Top Chef "Holiday Spirit" (CC)					
CNBC	On the Money	Deal or No Deal (CC)	Mad Money	The Big Idea With Donny Deutsch	Deal or No Deal (CC)					
CMT	Dukes of Hazzard	Mama's Family	Mama's Family	Mama's Family	Mama's Family	Comedy Club	Comedy Club	Comedy Club		
CNN	The Situation Room	Paula Zahn Now (CC)	Larry King Live (CC)	Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)						
COM	Scrubs (CC)	Scrubs (CC)	Daily Show	Colbert Report	Mind of Mencia	South Park	Ralphie May: Girth of a Nation	Daily Show	Colbert Report	
DISC	How It's Made	How It's Made	Dirty Jobs "Chimney Sweeper"	Dirty Jobs "Plumber" Plumbing.	Dirty Jobs "Chick Sexer" (CC)	Dirty Jobs (CC)				
EI	EI News (N)	The Daily 10 (N)	50 Most Outrageous TV Moments	Love Ride	Girl Next Door	EI News	The Daily 10			
ESPN	College Gameday (CC)	College Basketball Indiana at Ohio State. (CC)	Boxing	Boxing 1975 Muhammad Ali vs. Chuck Wepner.	Quite Frankly With Smith					
ESPN2	College Basketball Temple at Duke. (CC)	NBA Coast-to-Coast (CC)								
FAM	Smallville "Arrival" (CC)	Dr. Dolittle 3 (PG) (06) John Amos, Chelan Simmons. Comedy. (CC)	Whose Line? Whose Line?	The 700 Club (CC)						
FNC	Fox Report With Shepard Smith	The O'Reilly Factor (CC)	Hannity & Colmes (CC)	On the Record-Van Susteren	The O'Reilly Factor					
FOOD	Good Eats	Unwrapped	Emeril Live Healthy recipes. (N)	\$40-a-Day	Tasty Travels	Road Tasted	Hungry Detect.	Good Eats	\$40-a-Day	
FOXMV	Tattle Tale (6) (PG) (92) * Comedy	Scandal Sheet (85) ** Burt Lancaster, Robert Ulrich. Drama.	Monsignor (R) (82) ** Christopher Reeve, Joe Cortese. Drama.							
FOXSM	Totally Football FSN Live	Helmets Off	Helmets Off	Eye of the Storm	NBA Action (N)	Final Score	In My Words	Final Score		
FX	Spider-Man 2 (PG-13) (04) *** Tobey Maguire. Peter Parker fights a man who has mechanical tentacles.	Dir "Pilot" (N)	Dir "Pilot" (11:02)							
HALL	Walker, Texas Ranger (CC)	Walker, Texas Ranger (CC)	Hearts in Atlantis (PG-13) (01) ** Anthony Hopkins. Drama. (CC)	Perry Mason Mystery						
HGTV	If Walls Could	House Hunters	Designed to Sell	Buy Me	Decorating Cnt	24 Hour Design	House Hunters	Hidden Potential	Hammered	House Worth?
HIST	Modern Marvels (CC)	UFO Files (CC)	Saddam and the Third Reich (CC)	Man, Moment, Machine (N) (CC)	Modern Marvels "Bullets" (CC)					
LIFE	Still Standing	Still Standing	Reba (CC)	Reba (CC)	The Matthew Shepard Story (02) ** Stockard Channing. (CC)	Will & Grace	Will & Grace			
MSNBC	Hardball (CC)	Countdown With Keith Olbermann	Scarborough Country	Murder in Memphis	Blood Secrets	Susan Berman.				
MTV	Boiling Points	Boiling Points	True Life	True Life "I'm Out"	True Life "I'm On Vacation"	True Life "I'm on a Diet" Dieting.				
NICK	OddParents	Jimmy Neutron	SpongeBob	SpongeBob	Movie	Fresh Prince	Fresh Prince			
OXY	Abandon (6) (PG-13) (02) *	The Bad Girls Club	Bad Girls Club	Bad Girls Club	Bad Girls Club	Campus Ladies	Campus Ladies			
SCI FI	Dead Like Me "The Bicycle Thief"	Dead Like Me "Nighthawks" (CC)	Eureka "Purple Haze" (CC)	ECW	Dracula 3000: Infinite Darkness (04)					
SPIKE	CSI: Crime Scene Investigation	CSI: Crime Scene Investigation	CSI: Crime Scene Investigation	CSI: Crime Scene Investigation	CSI: Crime Scene Investigation	CSI: NY "Grand Master" (CC)				
TBS	Every-Raymond/Every-Raymond	Every-Raymond/Every-Raymond	Sex and the City	Sex and the City	My Boys	Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	The Haunting *		
TCM	Man on Fire (6:15) (NR) (57) ****	The Whole Town's Talking (NR) (35) ** Edward G. Robinson. Comedy.	Only Angels Have Wings (NR) (39) *** Cary Grant. Adventure. (CC)							
TLC	City Cops "Vegas Law and Order"	SWAT: Tactical Force	Overhaul'n "Junk in the Trunk"	Miami Ink "Garver's Ultimatum"	Miami Ink "Made in Japan" (CC)					
TNT	Without a Trace "Odds or Evens"	Law & Order "Positive"	Law & Order "Bible Story"	The Closer (CC)	Cold Case "Wishing" (CC)					
TOON	Foster's Home	Foster's Home	Pokemon-Battle	Gym Partner	Camp Lazlo	Squirrel Boy	Xiaolin Show.	Futurama (CC)	Futurama (CC)	Family Guy
TVL	Andy Griffith	Andy Griffith	M*A*S*H (CC)	M*A*S*H (CC)	M*A*S*H (CC)	M*A*S*H (CC)	M*A*S*H: Goodbye, Farewell, Amen (83) *** Alan Alda. Drama. (CC)			
USA	Law & Order: Criminal Intent (CC)	Law & Order: Special Victims Unit	Blow (R) (01) ** Johnny Depp. A small-time pot dealer becomes a major cocaine supplier.	Law & Order						
VH1	America's Next Top Model (CC)	America's Next Top Model (CC)	America's Next Top Model (CC)	America's Next Top Model (CC)	America's Next Top Model (CC)	America's Next Top Model (CC)				
WE	Dharma & Greg	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Secret Lives of Women	The Truth About Cats & Dogs (PG-13) (96) *** Uma Thurman.				
WGN	America's Funniest Home Videos	Funniest Pets	Funniest Pets	Funniest Pets	Funniest Pets	WGN News at Nine (CC)	Sex and the City	Scrubs (CC)		
DISN	Phil of the Future (CC)	That's So Raven "Pin Pals" (CC)	A Goofy Movie (G) (95) ** Voices of Bill Farmer. Animated. Goofy drags son Max along on a fishing trip.	Phil of the Future "Milking It"	Life With Derek "Dating Game"	Phil of the Future (CC)	The Suite Life	That's So Raven "Pin Pals" (CC)		
ENC	A View to a Kill (5:15) (85) **	For Your Eyes Only (7:35) (PG) (81) *** Roger Moore. Topol. Action.	Agent 007 goes to Greece to recover a stolen defense device. (CC)	Licence to Kill (9:45) (PG-13) (89) *** Timothy Dalton, Carey Lowell, Robert Davi.	Action. Agent 007 tracks Stinger-armed Latin American drug king. (CC)					
HBO	The Cowboy Way (6:30) (PG-13) (94) ** Woody Harrelson. (CC)	In Her Shoes (PG-13) (05) *** Cameron Diaz, Shirley MacLaine. Comedy-Drama. A sexy partyer clashes with her serious-minded sister. (CC)	Pan's Labyrinth	Twister (PG-13) (96) *** Helen Hunt. Storm chasers race to test a new tornado-monitoring device. (CC)						
SHOW	Tomorrow Never Dies (6:30) (PG-13) (97) *** Pierce Brosnan, Michelle Yeoh. Action. (CC)	High Tension (R) (03) ** Cécile de France. Horror. A collegian must save a friend from a killer. (CC)	Masters of Horror An author encounters a spirit. (CC)	Masters of Horror A virus makes men kill women. (CC)						
MAX	Ricochet (6:30) (R) (91) ** Denzel Washington, Ice-T. Suspense. (CC)	Tremors (8:15) (PG-13) (90) ** Kevin Bacon, Finn Carter. Horror. Monster sandworms devour denizens of a Nevada desert town. (CC)	Tremors II: Aftershocks (PG-13) (96) ** Fred Ward, Michael Gross, Christopher Gartin. Horror. (CC)	Bikini Chain	Gang (11:40) (05)					
TMC	200 Cigarettes (6) (R) (99) * (CC)	Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events (7:45) (PG) (04) *** Jim Carrey. A count plots to steal an inheritance from three orphans.	The Next Best Thing (9:45) (PG-13) (00) * Rupert Everett, Madonna. A yoga teacher and her gay soul mate have a child together. (CC)	Last Man Standing (11:35) **						
STARZ	XXX: State of the Union (5:35)	Boogeyman (7:20) (PG-13) (05) ** Barry Watson, Emily Deschanel, Skye McCole Bartusiak. Horror. (CC)	The Aviator (PG-13) (04) *** Leonardo DiCaprio, Cate Blanchett, Kate Beckinsale. Biography. Howard Hughes produces movies and flies airplanes. (CC)							

## ACCENT ON PEOPLE

The Associated Press

### Oprah says school lets her connect with girls

Frustrated with just donating money to charities, Oprah Winfrey says she built a school for poor girls in South Africa because she wanted to feel closer to the people she was trying to help.



WINFREY

"I really became frustrated with the fact that all I did was write check after check," she told Newsweek magazine. "At a certain point, you want to feel that connection."

Winfrey spent five years and \$40 million to build the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls outside Johannesburg.

The school for 12- and 13-year-old girls has 28 buildings on 22 lush acres. The school includes huge fireplaces in every building, a yoga studio, indoor and outdoor theaters and a beauty salon.

People criticized her, saying the school is too lavish for such an impoverished country.

"These girls deserve to be surrounded by beauty, and beauty does inspire," she told the magazine. "I wanted this to be a place of honor for them because these girls have never been treated with kindness. They've never been told they are pretty or have wonderful dimples. I wanted to hear those things as a child."

### Tom Petty insists he's not retiring

Looks like Tom Petty won't back down after all.

The veteran rocker says he's not retiring, despite a Rolling Stone article in July that suggest-

ed otherwise. Petty said 2006 was one of the most rewarding years in his career, and he expects the ride to continue in 2007.



PETTY

"You never know how things are going to turn out, and I didn't see this year coming," Petty told the Los Angeles Times for a story published Sunday. "But maybe next year will be even better."

Petty and his band, the Heartbreakers, recently earned two Grammy nominations for their latest album, *Highway Companion*.

Their 30th anniversary tour was a sellout and included a triumphant homecoming to Gainesville, Fla., where the band formed in the 1970s.

AUGUSTA, Ga.

### James Brown's band pays tribute in jam session

Members of James Brown's band, The Soul Generals, honored their late front man during an informal jam session.

The performance at Soul Bar came late Saturday night at a downtown nightclub after a day of "homegoing" ceremonies for Brown, who died of heart failure Christmas morning at age 73.

The show, which went into the early morning hours of Sunday doubled as a healing session for band members, guitarist Keith Jenkins said. "We got a chance to reflect and consider our future options," said Jenkins, a band member for 12 years.

Was it the band's last performance now that Brown has died?

"I hope not," said trumpeter player Hollie Farris, who played with Brown for 26 years. "We are talking about the possibility of continuing as a tribute band."

# 'Night at the Museum' again tops weekend box office

By JEFF WILSON THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## LOS ANGELES

Ben Stiller's playful "Night at the Museum" was the top box office draw during the New Year's weekend with \$37.8 million, a 24 percent jump over its debut the previous week, according to studio estimates.

Uplifting movies dominated the Top 10 for the holiday weekend, a busy period at turnstiles.

Will Smith's "The Pursuit of Happyness" took second place with \$19.3 million, up 30 percent, while the musical "Dreamgirls" finished third with \$15.5 million.

"The Pursuit of Happyness" was expected to cross the \$100 million threshold on New Year's Day.

No. 4 "Charlotte's Web" was up 59 percent with \$12 million in its third week. "Rocky Balboa" was in fifth place with \$11.4 million.

No new movies went into wide release.

"Dreamgirls" saw a major surge in business, averaging a whopping \$18,192 per screen as Paramount rolled it out slowly with word-of-mouth creating a buzz.

It was showing on just 852 screens, compared to 3,768 for "Night at the Museum."

"Dreamgirls," the first musi-



AP PHOTO

A legion of Roman soldiers prepares to wage war on "Night at the Museum." The movie was the weekend's museum security guard Larry Daley (Ben Stiller) in top-grossing film, according to studio estimates.

cal sensation since "Chicago" in 2002, will expand to about 1,800 screens on Jan. 12.

"We knew it was a movie that was a real crowd-pleaser," said Rob Moore, Paramount's president of marketing and distribution. "The amazing word of mouth is bringing it along. It's been a while since a

musical really worked." Movie tickets are from estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Media By Numbers. Final numbers will be released Wednesday.

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**WE ARE MARSHALL (PG)** 12:30 3:45 7:00 9:45  
**ERAGON (PG)** 12:30 2:45 5:00 7:30 9:45  
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