Written by Jeff Ignatius Wednesday, 20 August 2008 02:47



It's not a surprise that *Tropic Thunder* unseated *The Dark Knight* last weekend after four-week reigns atop the box-office charts and the

### **Box Office Power Rankings**

. Good reviews, some protests, Ben Stiller, and a white-hot Robert Downey Jr. will do that, although its \$40-million six-day take has to be considered something of a disappointment in light of its \$92-million production budget.

What isn't a disappointment is Woody Allen, who sneaked into the box-off top 10 and landed in third place in our rankings. With *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* showing in just 692 locations — earning the second-best per-theater average of the weekend — Woody rode good reviews to a great showing. A weekend gross of \$3.8 million isn't much, but that's the beauty of the Box Office Power Rankings: Three out of four ain't bad at all.

Just ask George Lucas and Keifer Sutherland, whose new movies scored within three points of each other (and *low*) on both critical measures and were less than 50 bucks apart on per-theater average.

The Clone Wars' higher theater count gave it the overall-box-office edge on

Mirrors, but neither will be bragging: They finished fifth and sixth in the rankings.

#### **About Box Office Power Rankings**

Box Office Power Rankings balance box office and critical reception to create a better measure of a movie's overall performance against its peers than gross receipts alone.

#### Box Office Power Rankings: When 10th Place Is Pretty Darn Good

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The weekly rankings cover the 10 top-grossing movies in the United States for the previous weekend. We assign equal weight to box office and critical opinion, with each having two components. The measures are: box-office gross, per-theater average, <a href="Rotten Tomatoes">Rotten Tomatoes</a> score, and

Metacritic score.

Why those four? Box-office gross basically measures the number of people who saw a movie in a given weekend. Per-theater average corrects for blockbuster-wannabes that flood the market with prints, and gives limited-release movies a fighting chance. Rotten Tomatoes measures critical opinion in a binary way. And Metacritic gives a better sense of critics' enthusiasm (or bile) for a movie.

For each of the four measures, the movies are ranked and assigned points (10 for the best performer, one for the worst). Finally, those points are added up, with a maximum score of 40 and a minimum score of four.

For more Box Office Power Rankings, visit (  $\underline{\text{http://www.culturesnob.com/bopr}}$  ).  $\underline{\text{Culture Snob}}$  is the Web site of

Reader

Managing Editor Jeff Ignatius.

ox Office Power Rankings: August 15-17

Box Office Ranks	Critics' Ranks			
Rank	Movie	Last Week	Gross	Per T

#### **Rotten Tomatoes**

#### Metacritic

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2	The Dark Knight	1	9 (\$16.4M)
3	Vicky Cristina Barcelo	na -	1 (\$3.8M)
4	Pineapple Express	2	6 (\$9.8M)
			0 (011.014)
5	Star Wars: The Clone	Wars -	8 (\$14.6M)
6	Mirrors	-	7 (\$11.2M)
7	The Sisterhood of the	Traveling Pânts 2	3 (\$5.8M)
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7	Mamma Mia!	5	4 (\$6.1)
9	The Mummy: Tomb	o of the Dragon Emperor	5 (\$8.2M)
9	Step Brothers	5	2 (\$4.8)