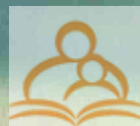


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News + Notes

10 | Hit and Run? NBC chief Jeff Zucker is running out of time to find a replacement for *Friends*. But his failure to create a prime-time scripted hit may not hurt his career...*X-Men 3*?...The Dixie Chicks hit the road, and nobody says boo...The 5-Year Plan: Mary Stuart Masterson...First Look: Jamie Bell in *Undertow*...Hot Sheet...Monitor.

Features

24 | The Neo Wave We hack into *The Matrix Reloaded* for the inside story on summer's next action tsunami. BY DANIEL FIERMAN

32 | 10 Bands on the Brink You call that a record collection? Whether you like pugilistic punk, radical rap, or sweetly harmonizing singer-songwriters, here are the up-and-comers you need to know about.

42 | Talking Dirty Out of the New Mexico desert comes Alisa Valdes-Rodriguez, whose spicy debut novel, *The Dirty Girls Social Club*, is heating up the best-seller list. BY CARINA CHOCANO

44 | Thanks for the Angst One week, two goodbyes: Teen-TV titans *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Dawson's Creek* sign off in emotional finales.

Right: Up with Ewan McGregor and Renée Zellweger in *Down With Love* (page 49)



FAREWELL TO 'BUFFY' & 'DAWSON'S CREEK'

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