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SURFING THE WAVES OF POPULAR CULTURE
BY MICHAEL GILTZ & FRIENDS

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DVD Reviews: King Kong and More

Check out my latest [NY Post DVD column](#) to see reviews of DVDs coming out today. Among the titles covered: a crazily complete *Planet of the Apes* boxed set, *The New York Mets 1986 World Series* and a Criterion collection of three Louis Malle gems. And here's the review that was cut: Peter Jackson's *King Kong*.

King Kong Special Edition

** 1/2

(Universal; \$30.98)

Unnecessary. That's the final verdict on director Peter Jackson's elaborate remake. The prologue is drawn out, the thrills on Skull Island are overblown and would any sensible gal wear high heels on the top of the Empire State Building? Still, Naomi Watts and Andy Serkis as Kong have a real rapport, which saves this from disaster. The extra half a star is for voluminous extras, including a video diary and much, much more. ADD: If I'd had more room, I would have also pointed out the irony that the natives on Skull Island are presented in a far more racist manner in the 2005 version than in the 1933 original. Sure, the original has a shot or two of bug-eyed natives, not to mention women wearing coconut bras over their breasts. But the natives are sober and have a certain dignity. When the film crew shows up on their island in the middle of a ceremony, they simply ask them to leave. Their sacrifice to Kong doesn't seem to give them any pleasure. In the Peter Jackson version, the natives are savage and living in feral misery, viciously attacking the camera crew when they show up and taking orgiastic glee in sacrificing the blond girl to their god. I'd say it was a definite step backwards.

POSTED BY MICHAEL IN NEW YORK AT 12:40 PM



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