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All In The Family (DVD) Review

By Britt Gillette

The #1 Nielsen rated program from 1971 to 1976, All In The Family is quite simply one of the

greatest television programs in history. Inspired by The Honeymooners and The Flintstones, All In The Family features its own loud-mouthed, opinionated blowhard sporting a hidden soft and sensitive side. Like Ralph Kramden and Fred Flintstone, Archie Bunker fulfills his role to absolute perfection, and the result is TV magic. Well-written and outright hilarious, All In The Family broke ground in the 70's with its willingness to tackle all the social issues and societal taboos of its day. Topics included racism, bigotry, sexism, homosexuality, death, and other namby-pam, socialist and liberal-feminist ideals (or at least that's how Archie would put it!) A titan among television sitcoms, All In The Family spawned a pair of shows which topped the ratings in their own right – Maude and The Jeffersons...

Carroll O'Connor plays the role of Archie Bunker, the titular head of the Bunker household. Loud and crass, Archie freely dispenses his bigoted remarks and ignorant comments from the living room of his Queens, New York home. Joining Archie is his loving and ditsy wife Edith (Jean Stapelton), his beautiful and progressive daughter Gloria (Sally Struthers), and her ultra-liberal husband Mike (Rob Reiner) whom Archie refers to as "Meathead". As Gloria and Mike's modern ideas clash with Archie's old school beliefs, all hell breaks loose in the Bunker household, but the Bunkers don't spend all their time arguing as they're inevitably held together by the immutable bond of love...

The All In The Family DVD features a number of hilarious episodes including the season premiere "Meet the Bunkers" in which it's Edith and Archie's anniversary, and Edith manages to drag a reluctant Archie to church. Meanwhile, Mike and Gloria work overtime to create a celebration the Bunkers will never forget... Other notable episodes from Season 1 include "Archie Gives Blood" in which Archie refuses to participate in the blood drive because he's afraid of having his blood mixed with that of another race, and "Edith Has Jury Duty" in which Edith's conviction to hold steadfast as the lone juror in favor of a defendant's acquittal proves correct when the true culprit comes forward...

Below is a list of episodes included on the All In The Family (Season 1) DVD:

Episode 1 (Meet the Bunkers) Air Date: 01-12-1971 Episode 2 (Writing the President) Air Date: 01-19-1971 Episode 3 (Oh, My Aching Back) Air Date: 01-26-1971 Episode 4 (Archie Gives Blood)

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Air Date: 02-02-1971 Episode 5 (Judging Books By Covers) Air Date: 02-09-1971 Episode 6 (Gloria's Pregnancy) Air Date: 02-16-1971 Episode 7 (Mike's Hippie Friends Come to Visit) Air Date: 02-23-1971 Episode 8 (Lionel Moves Into the Neighborhood) Air Date: 03-02-1971 Episode 9 (Edith Has Jury Duty) Air Date: 03-09-1971 Episode 10 (Archie is Worried About His Job) Air Date: 03-16-1971 Episode 11 (Gloria Discovers Women's Lib) Air Date: 03-23-1971 Episode 12 (Success Story) Air Date: 03-30-1971 Episode 13 (The First and Last Supper) Air Date: 04-06-1971

Britt Gillette is author of The DVD Report (

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more reviews like this one.

Recordable DVD formats explained

By Kenny Hemphill

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Picking your way through the ton of information available on recordable DVD formats can be a nightmare. To help you out, we've done our best to distill it into this summary.

There are five recordable versions of DVD; DVD-R for General, DVD-R for Authoring, DVD-RAM, DVD-RW, and DVD+RW. None of the formats is fully compatible with the other although there are drives which will read, and in some cases write to more than one format.

DVD-R for General and DVD-R for Authoring are essentially DVD versions of CD-R. And DVD-RW is a DVD version of CD-RW. All three formats can be read in standard DVD-ROM drives and in most DVD video players. The difference between DVD-R for General and DVD-R for Authoring is that DVD-R for General is a format intended for widespread consumer use and doesn't support 'professional' features such as piracy protection or duplication in mass duplicators. The Pioneer DVD-RW drive which is the most popular PC device for writing to DVD uses the DVD for General format. And as the case with CD, DVD-RW is essentially the same as DVD-R except that it can be erased and written to again and again.

DVD-RAM is slightly different as it is a sector based disc which mounts on the desktop of a PC when inserted into a drive. Files can then be copied to it in the same way as any other mounted media. Some single-sided DVD-RAM discs can be removed from their caddy and inserted in a DVD-ROM drive which will then be able to read the content of the disc.

There are DVD video recorders which use the DVD-RAM format. This enables them to pull off clever tricks like timeshifting - where you can watch the beginning of a programme you have recorded while you are still recording the end on the same disc.

DVD+RW is the newest format and not supported by the DVD Forum, the body which sets the standards for DVD. However, it is supported by some of the biggest electronics and computer manufacturers, and is therefore likely to stick around.

It is also the format used by Philips in its DVD video recorders. Despite not being authorised by the DVD Forum, DVD+RW is claimed by its supporter to be compatible with more DVD video players than DVD-R and DVD+RW writers are found in PCs from quite a few manufacturers.

Kenny Hemphill is the editor and publisher of

The HDTV Tuner



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