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'Smart People' among new video, DVD releases

By Richard T. Ryan
Newhouse News Service

The following motion pictures will be available on home video Tuesday:

"Smart People," Miramax Films Home Entertainment, 95 minutes, rated R for language, brief teen drug and alcohol use and some sexuality — Professor Lawrence Wetherhold (Dennis Quaid) has never come to terms with the death of his wife. Wetherhold's grief has caused his daughter (Ellen Page) to become an overachiever; it's strained his relationship with his son and cut him off from his students. When an accident places him under the care of Dr. Janet Hartigan (Sarah Jessica Parker), he finally begins to see other possibilities. Extras include outtakes, deleted scenes, interviews and a commentary.

"The Legend of the Shadowless Sword," Warner Home Video, 104 minutes, rated R for violence — Set in 10th century Korea, the film details the struggle between the Killer Blade Army and the warrior Yeon So-ha who has taken

it upon herself to keep the last surviving member of the royal family alive. More than a bit reminiscent of "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon," the film features a great deal of swordplay and some incredible wire work. If you prefer realism, look elsewhere, but for a good saga with plenty of action, this should do. Bonus features include in-depth interviews, a music video and "character introductions."

"The Art of War II: Betrayal," Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 103 minutes, rated R for violence, brief language and sexual images — When his mentor is murdered, Neil Shaw (Wesley Snipes) comes out of retirement to avenge his old friend's death. Soon senators and congressmen are being killed and Shaw discovers a trail of corruption and murder. The film has its moments, but it could use a few more of them. Bonus features include alternate fight scenes and a digital copy.

"Juncture," MTI Home Video, 106 minutes, rated R for violence, language, some sexuality and drug content

— Diagnosed with brain cancer and told she has just months to live, Anna Carter (Kristine Blackport) sets out on a mission. She begins hunting down and executing criminals that have slipped through cracks in the justice system. The film has a terrific plot, but a stronger cast would have helped.

"Bra Boys," Berkeley Films, 90 minutes, rated R for language, some violent content and reckless behavior — Russell Crowe narrates this documentary about the surf community of Maroubra Beach in Australia. At the heart of the film are the four Abberton brothers — one of whom

is accused of murder and another arrested as an accomplice. The film focuses on the subcultures that exist in Australia and the ripple effects they have on all around them. The surfing scenes are incredible.

"Felon," Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 104 minutes, rated R for brutal violence, pervasive language and brief nudity — After he catches a thief in his son's room, Wade Porter (Stephen Dorff) follows him

outside and accidentally kills him with a baseball bat. Sentenced to 18 months in prison, Wade soon finds himself caught between rival factions and a sadistic prison guard. This is a powerful film that deserves a look.