

Stephen Martin and Ricky Gervais' documentary-style comedy is easily one of the best British imports this year. Crafted brilliantly as the absolute antithesis of the usual sitcom, *The Office* guts the laugh tracks, zinger punchlines and airbrushed actors in favor of a cast of ghoulish, pasty Brits and a bevy of uncomfortable silences. Co-creator Gervais stars as Regional Manager David Brent, king of his own freedom of a fictional U.K. paper manufacturer in Slough, England. The DVD contains six episodes and a pretty superfluous bonus disc with cast and creator interviews, deleted scenes and an obsessed fan and I didn't love any of it, in fact. The only trouble is not picturing characters from the show in place of low staff members at heated budget meetings here at the magazine.

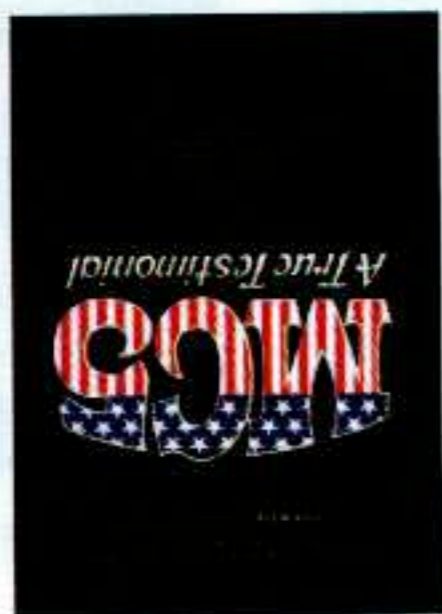
THE OFFICE
THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON DVD



—Allan Martin Kemler

Few bands are name checked as often as Detroit's princes of proto punk, but how many among us really know much of anything about the Motor City Five. Sure, everybody knows the shorthand version. When we think of the MC5, we hear Rob Tyner shouting, "Kick out the jams, motherfucker!" Maybe some of us think of John Sinclair's bogus White Panther party and their 12-point-plan for revolution, including "Dope, guns and fucking in the streets." Or maybe we think of Fred "Sonic" Smith marrying New York's boho-punk queen, Patti Smith. But that's where our knowledge of the band gets hazy. This new documentary fills in all the blanks, from their start together in high school playing "Battle of the Bands" slots at VFWs around Lincoln Park to their time in Ann Arbor with the Stooges to the dissolution on stage at the Grande Ballroom on New Year's Eve 1972.

MC5
A TRUE TESTIMONIAL



FutureNowFilms.com

—Joe Paone

You've no doubt heard this one before: "Remember when MTV ran *120 Minutes* on Sunday nights, and the music was pretty good?" Well, this no-frills compilation of 28 "alternative" music videos from those hoary days of the late-'80s and early '90s plays like a random, commercial-free episode of everyone's favorite romanticized show. Featured are some great, good and mediocre offerings from bands familiar long-forgotten (Crime & The City Solution, Live Skull, Tall Dwarfs, Babes in Toyland, Afghan Whigs) and (Pussy Galore, Dinosaur Jr., Flaming Lips, Mudhoney, Fall, Hi-Creativity approach to videomaking that reflects how much higher the art-to-commerce ratio was in the left-of-the-dial music world before Nirvana changed the rules, for good and for bad.

12 O'CLOCK HIGH
VOLUMES 1 & 2



MusicVideoDistributors.com

—Joe Paone

Lots of folks slag the late '80s/early '90s label Amphetamine Reptile for inspiring and providing a blueprint for the scourge of nu metal. To be fair, there was a lot of stuff put out by AmRep that doesn't really stand up, but the label served a valuable purpose in its time, faithfully providing seriously heavy music to punk, indie and goth kids who thought Metallica and hair metal bands were lame. It was kind of an alter-ego to early Sub Pop in a way, but while bands like Nirvana or Soundgarden were loud but centered around poppy hooks, bands like Helmet and Tar were all about the sludge. Though some of the material is dated, this is clearly a valuable document of an underground phenomenon that came and went. Your reaction to videos from the likes of Boss Hog, Cows, Halo Of Flies, Hammerhead, Helios Creed, Helmet, Melvins, Tar and Unsane will likely depend on who you are and what you were doing at the time.

DOPE GUN'S AND FUCKING UP YOUR VIDEO DECK
AMPHETAMINE REPTILE VOL. 1-3



MusicVideoDistributors.com

—Peter Kaplan

It's not every movie that begins with 54 schoolgirls jumping in front of a train in a bizarre suicide pact. So, now that the film's got your attention, what the fuck does it do with the next hour and a half? Well, naturally, it follows the circuitous route of the detective charged with finding out the girls' motive, as similar mass suicides flare up across Tokyo, all documented by a mysterious website. In line to inherit the cult following currently attending to *Bat de Royale*, *Suicide Club* capitalizes on American fascination with Japanese schoolchildren acting badly. Moonlighting as social critic, this unnerving whodunit is surely a victim of its own hype. Still, *Jisatsu Sakuru*, as its known in its native tongue, is sure to sate the curious appetites of those tickled by *The Ring*, *The Eye* and *Ichii The Killer*.

SUICIDE CLUB
SUBTITLED



TLReleasing.com

—Allan Martin Kemler

After Bowie, T. Rex and Slade, Sweet are the kings (or queens, as it were) of glam rock. In fact, they had several Top Five and Top 10s over the course of the early '70s, and their song "Blockbuster" appeared on the charts within weeks of Bowie's "Jean Genie," both of which nicked the same Yard-birds riff. Of course, Gary Glitter may be more famous (or infamous) considering the ubiquity of his song "Rock 'n Roll Pt. 2" at American sporting events and the pedophilia thing, and the Dolls may have been a lot cooler, but pound for pound, Sweet delivered some of the best glam anthems of the day. Perhaps best known for their song "Ballroom Blitz," Sweet also authored such high-heel sneaker rave-ups as "Fox on the Run," "Teenage Rampage" and "Action." Filled to the brim with vintage performance footage from their numerous British television appearances and commentary from the band members, as well as songwriters Nicky Chinn and Mike Chapman, *Glitz, Blitz & Hitz* is an interesting look back at a little-written-about rock era.

SWEET
GLITZ, BLITZ & HITZ



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