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- 1967: Decriminalisation of Homosexuality
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- 1999: *Queer As Folk* airs
- 1999: Gaydar launched
- 2000: Equal Age of Consent
- 2001: London

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## DVD: All Dolled Up

30 January 2006

★★★★★

The last couple of years have been big for fans of the seminal queer punk band The New York Dolls. After three decades in the wilderness, one of the most influential bands in music history reformed for a couple of shows, thanks to the helping hands of mega-fan [Morrissey](#) and his Meltdown Festival in London.

Tragedy struck the already beleaguered band shortly afterwards, when founding member Arthur Kane died suddenly, but those shows opened up the Dolls to a whole new generation of fans, and Kane lived long enough to see that.

Since then, a steady stream of merchandise has made its way into the shops, and the latest of the bunch is *All Dolled Up*. More than a cash-in, this DVD, featuring original footage and vintage material, is really great and depicts the band at the height of their promise in the 1970s.

*All Dolled Up* is the work of Bob Gruen and Nadya Beck. Music fans will know that Gruen was *the* photographer of the New York punk scene back in the day. He went on to produce definitive images of some of the most famous names in rock 'n' roll, including John Lennon, The Sex Pistols, David Bowie, Bob Dylan and more.

In the early 70s, Gruen and his partner Beck bought a video recorder and set about making films of the people and bands that interested them. Thirty years later they set about editing the 40 hours of footage that they'd recorded of the New York Dolls into *All Dolled Up*. What took them so long?!

Oh, let's not worry about that. This fine DVD includes loads of live footage of the band playing onstage, but also hanging out in rehearsal rooms,



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at the famous Max's Kansas City, Rodney Bingenheimer's English Disco in LA, and trash lingerie emporium Frederick's of Hollywood (where all the finest drag queens used to buy their gear). This footage is a feast of backstage banter, gossip, and revealing interview chat. It's amazing, given that the band was ostensibly straight, how camp they all are - it was the 70s alright! Watch out for the television news footage, which is very funny.

One of the many highlights of *All Dolled Up* is its inclusion of a short gangster film that the band made for a gig called The Valentine's Day Massacre. Shambolic, home made, rough and ready it's a juvenile romp, audacious, funny and everything good rock 'n' roll should be.

Watching *All Dolled Up* is a bittersweet experience. The music is so exciting, the performances are jaw-dropping, and everybody looks so young and alive. Unfortunately the promise of those early days was never really fulfilled in reality; drugs, untimely death and struggle soon put an end to the band's career. Indeed, this DVD is dedicated to the four members of the band who died way too soon.

But let's not wallow in grief, *All Dolled Up* makes you feel glad to be alive, the extras (including a David Johansen commentary track!) are fabulous and the music rules. The high heels and the frocks aren't bad either.

Read our review of the [Return of the New York Dolls](#) DVD.

**All Dolled Up** Films by Bob Gruen and Nadya Beck

**Label:** Wienerworld

**Released:** 30 January 2006

**ASIN:** B000CFX5G4

**Catalogue Number:** WNRD2356

**Price:** £17.99

Gotta love those New York Dolls! Buy the DVD of *All Dolled Up* online and save some money to put towards [Morrissey Presents The Return of The New York Dolls - Live From The Royal Festival Hall](#) on DVD. Get it online and save money.

**By:** Charlotte Cooper

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