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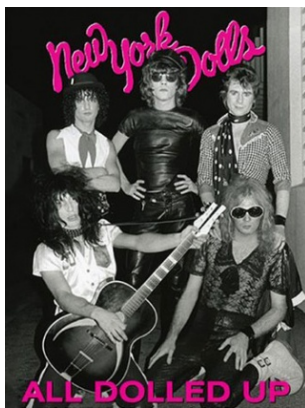
New York Dolls

All Dolled Up

(MVD)

Reviewed by [Noel Murray](#)

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Rock fans have become accustomed to living with whatever audio or video documents their favorite musicians deign to release, sometimes supplemented with the odd bootleg. But just when they've heard and seen it all, someone unearths new, priceless material. Earlier this year, Columbia released a special edition of Bruce Springsteen's *Born To Run* with a bonus DVD containing a 1975 concert, which thrilled Springsteen aficionados and made them wonder why it took 30 years for the footage to see the light of day. Now veteran photographer Bob Gruen and his wife Nadya Beck have cut together more than 40 hours worth of black-and-white videotapes of New York Dolls for the 90-minute documentary *All Dolled Up*, which captures the punk legends at their early-'70s height, cutting up backstage and thundering onstage. Almost as exciting as the tapes is the supporting material, which includes context-setting clips from a Joel Siegel TV news report on the Dolls phenomenon. Would that piece—so essential to explaining how New York City grappled with the burgeoning underground-rock scene—have ever been seen again without this DVD?

All Dolled Up's sound is really too muddy and its image too dim to justify the feature length, but the DVD package is still a must for punk historians. Just skip around to the best performances, and marvel at David Johansen's Mick Jagger strut and Johnny Thunders' wiseass persona and thick riffing. The DVD adds new interviews with Gruen and a commentary track with Johansen and Sylvain Sylvain, as well an option to play the songs straight through without the interruption of offstage shenanigans. But those with the fortitude to make it through the whole documentary will mark the subtle shifts in the Dolls, from teenage rock fans to transvestite icons to wrung-dry burnouts. It's an archetypal rock 'n' roll story, now told in full. Maybe.