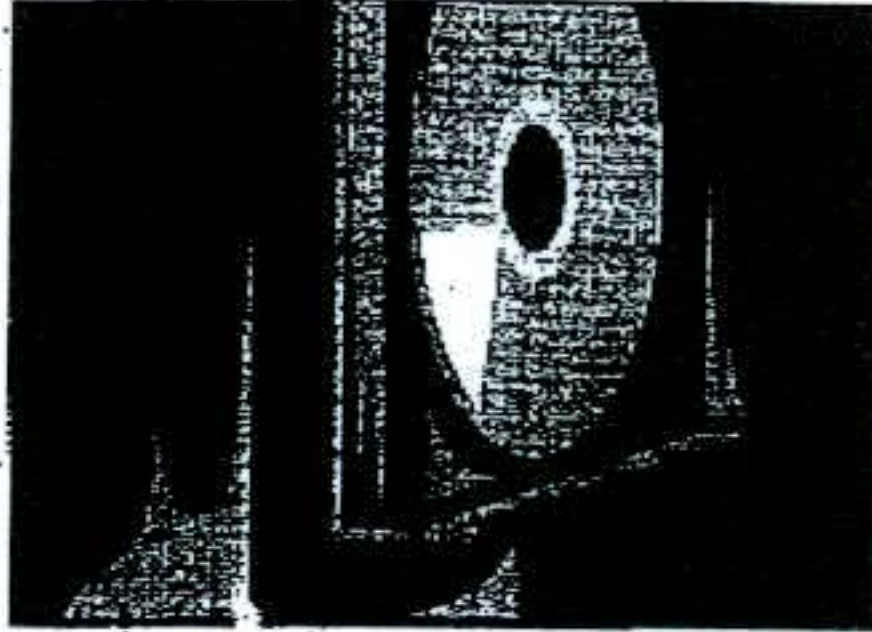


videos!



musician and guitarist of still-un-equalled reach and talent. He saw the world in colors and expressed his thoughts in ways that others couldn't comprehend. Even his flamboyant sense of style was, during his lifetime, all his own — and given that Hendrix was at the forefront of the psychedelic '60s, that is saying much.

When he died on Sept. 18, 1970 — the official explanation was that he choked on vomit in his sleep, a reaction to a combination of wine and sleeping pills — it was almost incomprehensible. He seemed beyond death, although he wrote of it often. That he died at 27 — he looked far older — was unthinkable. The surface of his talent seemed to have been just scratched.

The circumstances of his death were so foggy and odd that sinister rumors surrounding the events of his death have long existed. Suicide has been floated about as an option — but dismissed by all who were close to him.

Then there was the idea that Hendrix was murdered, which is the premise behind *Jimi Hendrix: The Last 24 Hours*, a new DVD that offers 60 minutes of sometimes compelling theories and outright bunk. Do not dignify it by calling it a documentary.

The problems are many. The film

Film takes shallow look at the death of Hendrix

Jimi Hendrix: The Last 24 Hours

GMVSDirect Video

★½ (out of four)

(Not rated. Recurring references to sex and drugs.)

Jimi Hendrix was an unusual human being. He was a visionary



It is well documented that Michael Jeffrey, Hendrix's late manager, was a thief and that Hendrix had recently fired him. It is equally well-established that there are numerous gaping inconsistencies in the testimony of Monika Dannemann, a groupie who was staying with Hendrix the night and morning of his death. (Dannemann later committed suicide.)

The most compelling argument is the new testimony of the ambulance attendants and attending physicians, who maintain that Hendrix did not suffocate on vomit, as the coroner claimed, but drowned on an enormous quantity of red wine, leading to the notion that someone had forced the wine down his throat. Interesting, but the claims are never backed up by the actual people who made them. Instead we get narrative by a "theorist."

The reasons to kill Hendrix — his association with the Black Panthers (it is well documented that he was not at ease around the Panthers), his appearance in FBI files, and the fact that Jeffrey, who stood to lose a fortune without Hendrix, was a violent man with Mafia ties.

One side of this conspiracy was offered. There was no one brought in to refute it.

Conspiracy theories make for intriguing conjecture. This mess raises questions, but largely rings false.

The Dead Boys: Live at CBGB 1977

Music Video Distributors

★★★

(Not rated)

The New York punk scene of the late 1970s, when compared to its British counterpart, seemed to have art-minded rock bands rather than the rebellious primitives common to England. An often forgotten, but ferocious, exception was The Dead Boys, a band out of Cleveland led by Selv Barons, the band's late singer, and guitarist Chertah Chrome.

The band's raucous shows and snotty attitude made it one of the first — and the best — of the New York bands to escalate the required levels of violence, nihilism and ugliness to fresh extremes. Thus punk fans will delight in *The Dead Boys: Live at CBGB 1977*, a short (45 minutes) ferocious set captured at

CBGB, the famed American temple of punk. The film is amateurish, in a perfect, punk-friendly way, and the remixed sound thunders. Bonus interviews with the band from the time, and a modern interview with Chrome, provide context and are enjoyable and enlightening.

It all adds up to a must-own disc for punk fans — or any fans of primal rock.

— Ed Burngardner
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