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## A History Lesson Part 1 DVD



**A History Lesson Part 1: Punk rock in Los Angeles in 1984 – DVD**  
Historical Records/MVD Visual

When it comes to punk rock in the United States in the 1970s and 1980s, Southern California (specifically the area around Los Angeles) had arguably the most and the best bands in the country. I for one, was a huge fan of all flavors of SoCal punk rock and that stuff is still my favorite music nearly 30 years later. Look through your old punk records and I will bet money that a good portion of them came from the Los Angeles area. I don't know if it was the nice climate, the easy access to surfing and skateboarding, Disneyland, or just something in the water made by all the smog but that region was magical.

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Back in 1984 a teenager by the name of Dave Travis was lucky enough to have a father who worked for NBC and brought him home a video camera. Dave started bringing it to punk rock shows and filming them. This was right around the time that punk rock was getting more experimental and bands like Redd Kross and Twisted Roots started changing their sound and branching out into new uncharted musical territories. After sitting on this

[3DB004GYKNK8](#) An interesting little trip back through time covering four great old CA punk bands whose sole flaw is the sound quality of the live footage.



footage for decades, Dave digitized it and edited together a documentary that focused on a few of the bands active at the time. The bands he chose weren't your typical bands either that would have been the main focus of many a punk documentary which was really a neat change of pace.

A History Lesson Part 1 features live footage and interviews of The Minutemen, Redd Kross, Meat Puppets, and Twisted Roots. Each of the bands had their own unique sound but shared similar interests, friends, and even record labels, not to mention sharing stages with each other. The footage of each band was shot back in 1984 but the interview footage was a lot more recent so the interviews are interesting in the way the subjects were looking back in time at themselves and talking about what it was like at that time being in the band and the punk rock scene in general. The film starts off with footage of The Minutemen and adds interview footage of Mike Watt discussing various aspects of the band and their songwriting process.

Paul Roessler represents Twisted Roots and a lot of time was devoted to him. This was the first time I have ever seen any footage of Twisted Roots and it was really neat that such footage even existed as the band didn't last very long. Jeff McDonald shares some Redd Kross stories and history in their segment and the Kirkwood brothers do the same for the Meat Puppets.

The interview footage is totally fascinating for a punk rock historian like myself and I could watch stuff like this for days on end without ever losing interest. The live footage was equally fascinating too for the fact that it has never been seen before and captured these bands at a very interesting time in their careers. The Meat Puppets stuff was especially cool because this was a time right before their second album would be released and the band had changed their sound drastically and live footage of them in their early noisy years like this I have never witnessed until now.

The video is full frame and the sound is plain stereo. The interview footage features very clear sound quality and very good video quality. The live footage features good to very good video quality (very good if you take the available technology available back in 1984) and somewhat poor sound quality. The problem with the sound in the live footage is that it is very distorted and muddy which was likely due to the quality of the camera's microphone and the fact that it was likely way too close to the PA system in these clubs. I found myself turning the sound way down during the live footage and simply watching it with hardly any sound waiting for the next interview segment to come on. It isn't inaudible, but it isn't very easy to decipher one song from another due to the blown out audio. I'm still glad they used it though as footage like this is extremely rare so beggars can't really be choosers.

Despite the flaws in sound, A History Lesson Part 1 is still well worth checking out for anyone who was or is a fan of these bands and this era of punk rock. I really liked and appreciated the fact that Dave didn't take the easy path of putting out a documentary on Black Flag or Social Distortion or other bands that were bigger household names and instead opted to go with something a lot more unique and special. This wise choice in subject matter more than makes up for the live sound deficiencies and this disc is a wise way to spend an hour of your time sitting through.

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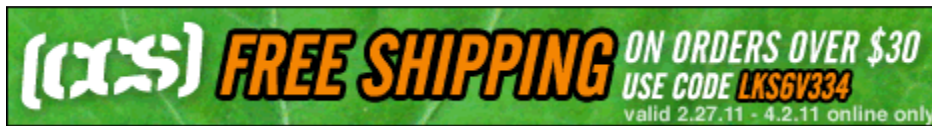
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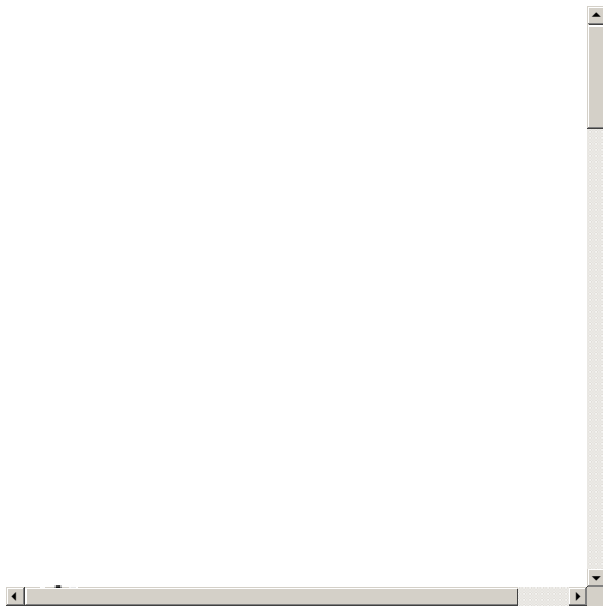
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The Punk Vault evolved out of Spontaneous Combustion magazine which ran from 1985 - 1998. It is a music webzine that focuses on rock, metal, and other forms of music. Features include music reviews, record collecting features, concert reviews/photography, and music news.

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