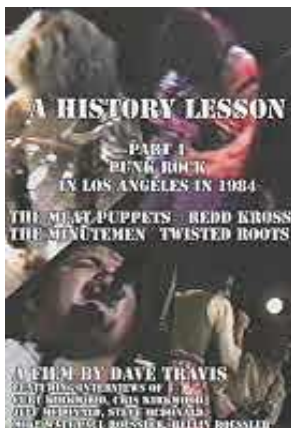


TV PARTY - COMPS

**A History Lesson: Part 1 Punk Rock In Los Angeles In 1984** *[Historical Records](#)*

[\(http://www.ahistorylesson.com/\)](http://www.ahistorylesson.com/) I never really paid much attention to history lessons at school and, as I've grown older, I kinda regret that. There's a lot to be learnt from what went before; as far as music is concerned, that is even more apparent. Given that thought, the entire Punk community should be thankful for people like this film's director, Dave Travis. He was there to film, document and share some captivating performances by bands that have become infamous and influential. This DVD captures MINUTEMEN, MEAT PUPPETS, REDD KROSS and TWISTED ROOTS live in LA during what could be arguably stated as the pinnacle of each band's relative careers.

MEAT PUPPETS kick things off with a live performance pre-dating their Country phase. The footage comes from two individual shows and aurally the band comes on like a mix of Cream and a more HC NIRVANA on acid! If you've heard early MEAT PUPPETS records, you'll get the drift. 'Lake Of Fire' makes an appearance from the 'II' album in a much less refined version. Each band's segment is augmented with additional interview footage; the Kirkwood brothers here confess to a three-day LSD trip while recording the debut record with BLACK FLAG's Chuck Dukowski. I'd never have guessed...

MINUTEMEN get the most songs (five as opposed to three for all others), recorded over two shows. The footage, given the era, is exceptional with great sound, good visuals and a distinctly hypnotic performance from the late D. Boon. 'Jesus And Tequila' is particularly impressive, while the interview (post D.Boon's passing) with Mike Watt sees him somewhat more cohesive and together compared with some of his more recent STOOGES-era interviews.

TWISTED ROOTS are, by far, the least known name here. Odd too, as the band included Paul Roessler who was also in bands such as SCREAMERS, 45 GRAVE and DC3 and Hellin Killer of PLUNGERS infamy. The band's sound was antagonistic post-Punk mixing CRISIS with L7 (that's the Touch and Go band, not the Grunge queens) and a splash of PSYCHEDELIC FURS. Their interviews are also among the better on the film.

Finally, the anachronism (and my favourite of all the bands here) that is REDD KROSS close. It's particularly essential footage as, according to guitarist Jeff McDonald, this was the only show to feature his then girlfriend, Vicky Peterson. Of the songs 'Linda Blair' is awesome, welding the PISTOLS disregard for music with an early CHEAP TRICK accessibility. They certainly come over as the most challenging band, taking glam rock imagery and mixing it with flat-out, noxious, twisted Punk Rock. Even the interviews suggest a slightly different polemic when they state that, although good friends, SST Records was a 'cult'.

This totals 57 minutes with no extras - although it could be suggested the interview footage acts as an extra. As a quartet of bands, they compliment each other well, representing a more experimental, almost psychedelic, brand of Hardcore. As a historical document, Travis has delivered - whether the average 'corporate Punk' of today appreciates such qualities as those apparent here is another matter. Me? I really should take it off repeat. Gimme Gimme Gimme - I need some more... (06.05.11)



Best Of Flipside Vol. I {*Flipside/MVD* (<http://mvd2b.com/>)} Recorded in LA during the height of

USHC, this should hold more appeal to any self-respecting Punk than an entire channel of porn.

For those who came to Punk Rock within the last 10 years, the legend that is *Flipside* may not register. It operated outta LA as, first and foremost, the best zine in the States. It expanded into a record and video label and, somewhere in the late-90s, collapsed. The zine featured some of the most informed writers that you will ever be fortunate enough to read who were involved not only in the LA Punk scene but way beyond. These shows were recorded live usually on two cameras, no overdubs, no post-recording processing and reflect this simplicity, but exude a reality, a raw excitement and a sensation that some over-produced GASLIGHT ANTHEM 48-track digitally recorded, surround-sound, high definition DVD can but merely wish to attain.

Recorded at LA's Olympic Auditorium in January 1984, BAD RELIGION kick things off with a show recorded just after reforming and features Greg Graffin as the band's only original member. The band, as ever, is tight and intelligent even when being pummeled by a seriously slamming stage invasion during both 'Fuck Armageddon' and 'Bad Religion'. Highlights have to include 'Along The Way' and the set-closing 'Slaves'. What amazed me was just how clear Graffin's diction was during singing - especially while getting slammed throughout by stage divers! As a bonus, there is also a brief interview with Graffin where he comments about growing up and more. It's interesting stuff 25 years on!

Next up we're at the Stardust Ballroom in April of the same year for a chaotic CIRCLE JERKS show. Compared with BAD RELIGION, this has rather poor sound - Keith Morris' vocal is almost non-existence - but the performance is blazing and features Chuck Biscuits on drums whose performance alone is simply jaw-dropping. Morris himself is crazed, mixing it with the crowd and flailing around the stage like there's no tomorrow. Highlights? A warp-speed 'Wasted', 'Live Fast Die Young' and 'Coup D'etat' that sees the mic get stolen. The camera work is as chaotic as the show and probably makes for the nearest 'being-there' vibe of the whole DVD.

Staying at the Stardust but warping to February 1986, we have one of LA's most endearing bands, THE WEIRDOS. This show sees four of the original members back together and is a much better recording than the CIRCLE JERKS. Highlights have to be a phenomenally snotty and angry 'We Got The Neutron Bomb', a ragged but focused rip through 'Message From The Underworld' and an animated 'Pagan'. There's no in between song banter and, as a result of just the one guitarist, a lot of these versions have a corrosiveness that their recorded contemporaries kinda lack. And the encore of a never-ending 'Helium Bar' has to be seen to be believed.

Finally it's erstwhile LA Punks, THE DICKIES, recorded in November 1985 at Skateway. Gotta say, this is NOT the best of DICKIES shows. Whether Stan and/or Leonard had a little too much to snort, I don't know, but it was not the standard of performance I have seen several times. That said 'You Drive Me Ape' is turbo-charged (speed laced??) while 'Manny Moe And Jack' proves the highlight. The band's wit is never far away; before 'Cross Eyed Tammy' Leonard states that the song was written to combat claims of sexism directed to the band due to songs laced with penis references. So, this is about a "girl with really big bazookas!" Looks like a sweaty show too.

An amazing two-hours of classic, vintage LA Punk laden with energy and attitude from a period that will never be revisited. This should be mandatory viewing for anyone claiming an affiliation with Punk Rock and clearly displays what the major-label, apolitical, mainstream Punk pretenders of today can but fantasize of being. (13.05.09)

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