

EVERY PIXEL TELLS A STORY

S&S delivers the real DVDeal

I Need That Record!

[MVDvision]

Available for indie record store day, or some such nonsense, it would've been great if this documentary had concentrated on the consumerism that led to old records being available in stores rather than tossed

out in the morning trash - because capitalists thought there might be some money to be made off them! But once I saw grown men wearing hammer-and-sickle t-shirts mumbling about how corporate greed was killing off mom-and-pop stores, I perceived this

damned thing as a comedy about immature people who can't figure things out. We don't need racial profiling, what we need is political profiling!

Back before there was such a thing as an "indie" record much less a store that specialized in records unavailable at Woolworth's (hey, I bought both my *Psychedelic Sounds of the 13th Floor Elevators* and *Music to Eat LPs* at Woolworth's!), I remember shopping at the Record Room at the Moreland Shopping Center. It was the first time I realized there were records that other places did not carry. Nobody was a collector back then, but it was a thrill to find an import Kinks LP and obscure local bands like the Soujers or the Bushmen 45s. And Brendan Toller does acknowledge that by interviewing Lenny Kaye, Glenn Branca and Thurston Moore, who talk about finding records that influenced their lives. It's great seeing indie record stores in various cities and hearing those that operate them tell their tales, but over half the time this movie splinters into a diatribe about



big box chain stores and the '96 Telecommunications Act. It morphs into a complaint session against profit, allowing absurd observations to exonerate participants like Warner Bros. Chris Frantz from Talking Heads says they were lucky enough to be on a label (Sire) "run by people

who allowed artists to develop." Stiv Bators might disagree since word went out from Seymour Stein for bands to clean up their act, and Dead Boys didn't and got dropped. Furthermore, Sire was part of Warner Bros.! It always amazed me whenever R.E.M. would rant against "multi-

national corporations" while signed to one of the largest conglomerates in existence! Noam Chomsky is brought onscreen to muddy the waters, so: Are you starting to get the picture? Yeah, stories about the stores and the people who frequent these businesses would make for a great movie. Leftists whining about unfair competition gets old.

So capitalism is bad for rock 'n' roll, right? And that's why Lawrence, Kansas and Burlington, Vermont and Austin have music scenes instead of Vladivostok?

As the lynchpin for the longevity of rock 'n' roll, the small, out-of-the-way, cluttered record shop has supplied music fans with the opportunity to locate and purchase "lost" music they might otherwise have no access to. And without the motivation to turn a profit, the collecting game would be one of egos and favoritism. Money is an equalizer.

I imagine when 3,000 cobbler shops closed their doors, a panic ensued, but more affordable footwear arrived. The true danger isn't that we are losing

the stores but that we are losing the interactive experience of being around like-minded people who passionately explore historical touchstones enough to recall band family trees, or debate Mike Bloomfield or Jeff Beck, who attended a performance or remember an alternate take. iPods offer the music. The record store provides so much more. —David T. Lindsay

Defendor

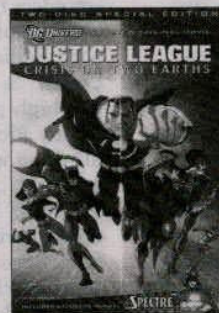
[Sony]

A challenged DOT worker dons a crash helmet and, armed with slingshots and angry wasps, hunts down nogoodniks. It covers much the same turf as *Kick-As*, but is better realized because it answers the question: What makes someone heroic?

Woody Harrelson rescues a prostitute (Kat Dennings) from a corrupt cop, and in what is an amalgamation of *Taxi Driver* realism and *Unbreakable* posturing, this movie captures the underpinnings of 1940s "golden age" comics. It's Ma Hunkel dressed in long johns with a cooking pot on her head.

Arthur Poppington (a classic "golden age" name!) sees the world in basic black & white terms: good people are nice, bad people are mean. He knows right from wrong. And, most importantly, he gets involved while the rest of society observes and reports.

His determination, dedication and unwavering values provide his "powers," unlike most superheroes. Alongside *The Incredibles* and *Unbreakable*, it's the best of its kind: a superhero movie



not based on an existing comic-book character.

Justice League: Crisis on Two Earths

[Warner Premiere]

As a comic book kid in the 1960s, my gateway to science fiction was provided by Justice League of America. In Superman #141, the story "Superman's Return to Krypton" (November 1960) was full of levi-cars and crystal mountains that sparked the imagination that other worlds might exist! Then, thanks to Justice League #21, "Crisis on Earth One" introduced the idea of parallel worlds to a generation by having superheroes of the '40s team up with familiar DC superheroes we knew. It was a pivotal moment that led me to read *October the First is Too Late* by Fred Hoyle, a favorite to this day about the Earth split by time so that the 1960s vanished, leaving Western Europe in World War I and America thousands of years in the future!

This direct-to-DVD animated feature brings the idea of infinite Earths back to the DC universe

when a parallel world's Lex Luthor appeals to the Justice League circa the 1970s (judging from their newly finished orbital headquarters) to return with him to a world run by the Crime Syndicate - rogue super-powered reflections of themselves. On that Earth, Owlman has discovered that one Earth with a single history but billions of people making decisions has led to those decisions creating duplicate worlds: one where we made the decision, and one where we didn't. So he's decided that the source of all cataclysm is humanity

and if he can erase Earth Prime, all other Earths will be affected.

It's a worthy 1960s scenario. Also included on this DVD is a short Showcase Presents episode featuring The Spectre from his brutal Aparo phase done as a '70s grindhouse cold sweat.

—David T. Lindsay