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MY CAREER AS A JERK





 Year Released: 2012
 MPAA Rating: Unrated
 Running Time: 96 minutes
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My Career As A Jerk, the newest documentary by filmmaker David Markey, arguably best known for his documentary *1991: The Year Punk Broke*, tells the story of hardcore punk legends the Circle Jerks. But don't go into this expecting a bunch of talking heads to tell you how important a band the Circle Jerks are or were, for while elements like that do exist in small doses, this is the story of the Circle Jerks direct from the band members' mouths.

And the film doesn't dick around either, getting right to it. It opens immediately into an interview with singer Keith Morris as he introduces himself and the band, before continuing to the next band member. There's little setup or pause in this film beyond the concert performances from the band (which aren't necessarily known for their pauses either), and the film seamlessly edits together the different band members' stories and opinions into a non-stop historical narrative. The result reminded me of reading Steve Blush's *American Hardcore*, as in that book the stories are told by lining up different quotes and interview segments from different people to make a cohesive narrative.

And the story of the Circle Jerks is one of revolving band members (save Morris and Greg Hetson), almost mainstream success amid relative obscurity, accusations of unoriginality from other bands (the Circle Jerks were a type of hardcore supergroup, most notably with Morris from Black Flag and Hetson from

Red Cross), the occasional drug and alcohol overindulgence (or as Morris refers to his own issues with alcoholism, "the beer-bonic plague") and jealousies within the band itself (Hetsou's success with Bad Religion being a consistent bone of contention with Morris), to name just a bit of the experience. The various band members interviewed hold nothing back, honestly expressing their thoughts on every stage of the band's existence, for better or worse.

If you're a fan of the band, you have to own this film. You could argue that the editing paints a certain picture about the band's strengths and weaknesses, but if it does, the paint it uses was supplied by the band itself. And beyond that value of hearing stories and opinions unfiltered, you get quite a bit of performance footage of the Circle Jerks in action. For someone like me, who is a fan of the band but also came to them years after their hardcore hey-day, being able to see them live in their earliest concerts and incarnations is something that is reliant upon footage like what is found here, so I'm happy to have it.

Posted on November 26, 2012 in [Reviews](#) by [Mark Bell](#)

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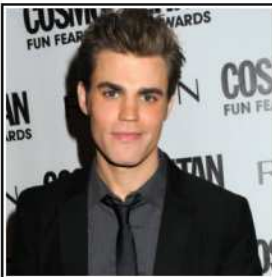
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