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Punk's Not Dead (2007)

Rating: 3 1/2 Stars (out of 4)



Punk as F-ck

By Jeffrey M. Anderson

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After several recent, failed attempts (like [American Hardcore](#)), filmmaker Susan Dynner finally turns in the punk music documentary we all deserve, and one that punks can finally relate to. Rather than dwelling on the history of punk and choosing a list of bands to highlight, Dynner packs in an astonishing amount of material; she covers the movement's history in the film's first 30 minutes (Nirvana comes in at the 20 minute mark). From there, she wrestles with very relevant questions like: why does all this matter? And, does it still matter? A lesser filmmaker would simply answer those questions, but Dynner lets the debate rage.



She goes to corporate-sponsored events like the "Warped" tour and lets the punks explain their rationale for playing punk on a corporate ticket. She also listens as certain bands try to define exactly what punk is and who fits into the category. Green Day gets away clean, but Sum 41, not so much. And, believe it or not, there's still some question about the Buzzcocks (apparently, they're too melodic). While at the same time, Bad Religion gets badass credit for turning in the first "melodic" punk album, *Suffer* (1988). Other, older punks proclaim that today's young-uns don't have the spirit and that the movement is indeed dead. (One fellow lackadaisically overturns a table, then BA's the camera, stating, "that's punk.")

The general consensus is that, in the old days, punks banded together against the rest of the world, defending themselves against physical attacks. Now punks band together against the rest of the world just because they can. Sure, they have it easier, but isn't that what the earlier punks fought for? Indeed, the movie's tone is generally hopeful. Dynner

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finds that small punk movements flourish throughout the world, with friends getting together and playing basement shows, raising enough money only to pay the rent and put on more basement shows. She collects tapes from several different countries, featuring new bands with some of the coolest names you've ever heard.

As for the music, Dynner gives the big guns their due mention, then puts them aside, assuming that audiences have already heard of the Ramones, the Sex Pistols and the Clash, and that Bad Brains and the Minutemen have been extensively covered elsewhere. Only Black Flag gets a bit of a re-hash here, and that's mainly because former frontman Henry Rollins is such a great interview. Otherwise the movie has a soft spot for Bad Religion, The Adicts (the "clown band"), UK Subs, Stiff Little Fingers (whose song "Suspect Device" is still one of the greatest three-minute bursts ever recorded) and the Washington D.C. band Minor Threat, whose entire output is collected on one amazing CD. Happily, *Punk's Not Dead* is edited together with clips, photos and quotes like a ragged, homemade patchwork flag of defiance. If the movie has a drawback it's that songs get cut short for the sake of continuing the argument, but perhaps that's material for yet another movie...

DVD Details: MVD's DVD comes with a whole bunch of snippets of extra footage, which the box claims runs "over 2 hours." Who has time to count?

Starring: Craig Aaronson, Colin Abrahall, Jan Ackerman, Lorraine Ali, Quinn Allman, Animal, Billie Joe Armstrong, Tim Armstrong, Brian Baker, Dave Baksh, Brian Barnes, Jay Bentley, Jello Biafra, Rodney Bingenheimer, Riley Breckenridge, Lisa Browlee, Steve Bruce, Phil Bryant, Wattie Buchan, Willie Buchan, Jake Burns, Peter Bywaters, Alan Campbell, Brendan Canty, Becky Carriage, Carrie, Nick Cash, Rob Chaos, Keith Clark, Pat Collier, Claire Costa, Mitch Cramer, Crazy Danny Culpables, Michael Davenport, Dominic Davi, Pete Davies, Michael Davis, Jane Davison, Guy Days, Kid Dee, Pete Dee, Kevin De Franco, Ashley Dekoster, Steve Diggle, John Doe, Fletcher Dragge, Joe Escalante, Eyeball, Jennifer Finch, Peter Finestone, Warren Fitzgerald, Micky Fitz, Bruce Foxton, Lars Frederiksen, Kimm Gardner, Nicky Garratt, Alvin Gibbs, Cooper Gillespie, Greg Ginn, Ursula Glaviano, Greg Graffin, Steve Grantley, Dan Gratziani, Sab Grey, Jack Grisham, Jim Guerinot, Brett Gurewitz, Charlie Harper, Adam Hecht, Greg Hetson, Dexter Holland, Jeph Howard, Billy Idol, Frank Iero, Jock, Steve Jocz, Inge Johansson, Barry Jones, Joe Keithley, Warren Keith, Jake Kolatis, Wayne Kramer, Pablo LaBritain, Joyce Lacovara Levi, Terri Laird, Joe Lally, Cindy Levitt, Jim Lindberg, Bruce Loose, Dick Lucas, Kyle Lumsden, Kevin Lyman, Dennis Lyxzen, Ian MacKaye, Benji Madden, Agent M., Magoo, Mike Magrann, Skyler Marshall, Glen Matlock, Jay McCaslin, Mike McColgan, Gary McCormack, Bert McCracken, John McGivern, Legs McNeil, Eric Melvin, Fat Mike, Chris Morris, Keith Morris, Brendan Mullen, Jeff Nelson, Mike Ness, Steve E. Nicks, Derek O'Brien, Kelly Osbourne, Alan G. Parker, Kirsten Patches, Paulene, DH Peligro, Jimmy Pursey, Dave Quackenbush, Johnny Ramone, Marky

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Ramone, Tommy Ramone, Monica Richards, Mike Roche, Kris Roe, Henry Rollins, Lance Romance, Kate Ross, Jenny Russell, Scott Russo, Justin Sane, Maria Scarlett, Zander Schloss, Rob Schwartz, Captain Sensible, Stormy Shepherd, Matt Skiba, Paul Slack, Richie Slick, Jennie Smith, T.V. Smith, Kurt Soto, Matthew Southwell, Franz Stahl, Pete Stahl, Branden Steineckert, Adam Stern, Sean Stern, Shawn Stern, Stryker, Torch, Bruce Treasure, Trotsky, Steve Van Doren, David Vanian, Keith 'Monkey' Warren, Kevin 'Noodles' Wasserman, Jon Watson, Gerard Way, Steve Whale, Deryck Whibley, Wade Youman, Annie Zaleski

Written by: n/a

Directed by: Susan Dynner

MPAA Rating: Unrated

Running Time: 93 minutes

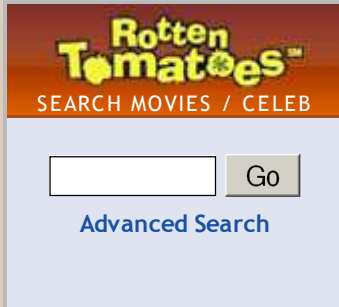
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