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**REVIEW****DVD Review: *Led Zeppelin - The Origin of the Species***

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I don't know if this is a companion DVD to a book or the book is companion to the DVD, but there is a book out with the identical title (different subtitle) and cover art, both from the same publisher. According to the blurb on Amazon, the book contains more detailed information such as a listing of every recording and live session future Zep members played on. The gist of it is, I think the two are related. Alan Clayson, who appears on this DVD is the author of the book in question.

Talking gray-haired heads take up much of this disc, though it seems to be balanced with still photographs and audio/video clips. Chris Dreja of the Yardbirds provides much of the information and is an enlightening resource. Other contributors include *Melody Maker's* Chris Welch, Keith Altham of *New Musical Express*, and Clem Cattini, not exactly a household name, but he was the session drummer on the Kinks "You Really Got Me."

Hardcore Led Zeppelin fans will already be familiar with much of the material covered here. Jimmy Page used to be in the Yardbirds, he used to be a session musician, and he appeared on a British TV show with a skiffle group. Robert Plant used to be in a hippy-dippy group. John Paul Jones studied music formally. John Bonham was one of the most powerful drummers in the U.K. All these things are well known.

There are some treats though, like hearing Neil Christian and the Crusaders performance of "Road to Love" featuring Page on guitar. "Dazed and Confused" was first done by folk

singer Jake Holmes. (Yes, we hear a snippet of it.) There are short versions of early Plant efforts, and interviews with musicians who worked with Zeppelin members such as Dave Berry singer on "The Crying Game."

Led Zeppelin I and II are the albums covered here. There are some interesting bits about the song choices on the albums and the backstory on them. The issue of plagiarism is covered. "Bring It on Home" was attributed to Page and Plant when it's a direct lift from Sonny Boy Williamson. "Whole Lotta Love" was really "You Need Love" by the legendary Willie Dixon. Even the ending vocal gymnastics (" . . . Way down inside, woman you need . . . ") on "Whole Lotta Love" were copied from Steve Marriot's vocal treatment. Marriot's performance is shown for comparison. It's great to hear part of folky Jake Holmes's version of "Dazed and Confused."

Extras on the DVD: The Story of the Yardbirds, 25-question "The Hardest Led Zeppelin Quiz in the World Ever," and bios on contributors. It is nicely shot with widescreen 16:9 view.

Bottom line? Not a bad use of discretionary income.

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