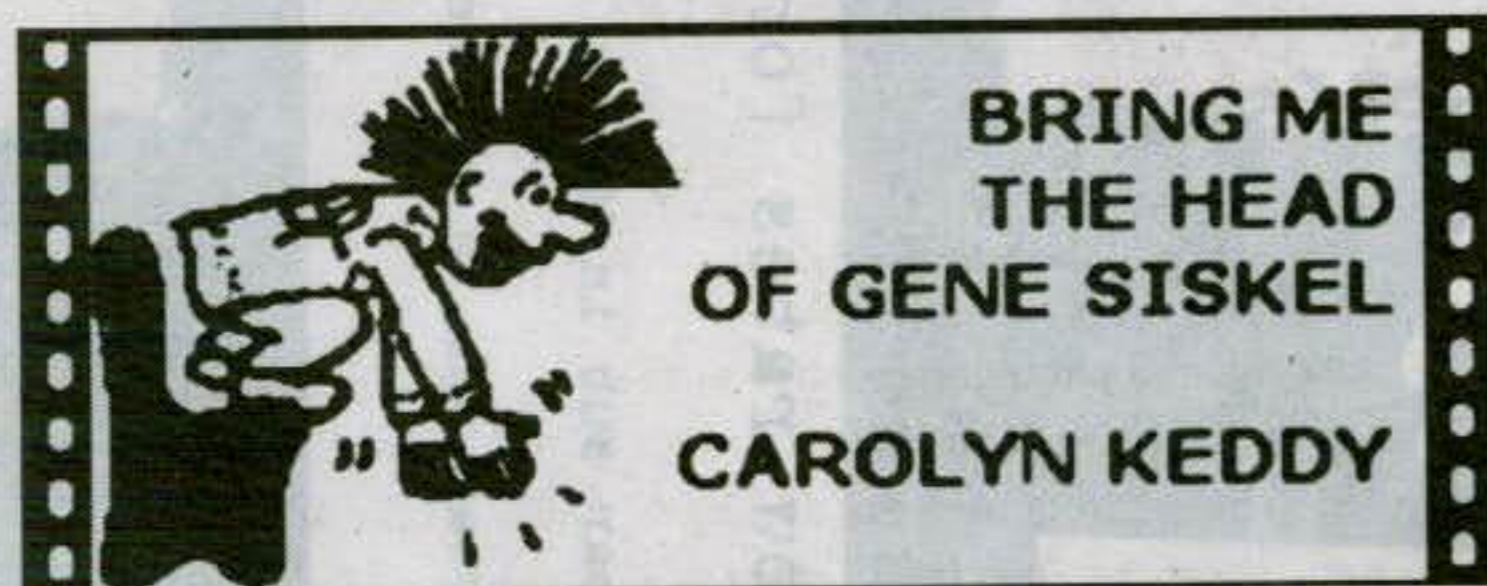


the couple's admission, naïve. What eventually happens is almost miraculous.

Refusenik is a concentrated history lesson with enough happy endings to make for an overall pleasing film experience.



ASK HER IF SHE STILL KEEPS ALL HER KINGS IN THE BACK ROW

Why would anyone make a film about Mark David Chapman? He killed John Lennon, but does that senseless action deserve a film? The people behind **Chapter 27** think it does. The film focuses on Chapman's three days in New York before he murders Lennon.

Chapman arrives in New York with the sole purpose of getting Lennon's autograph then shooting him. The film follows the solitary Chapman as he stands on the street in front of the Dakota where Lennon lived with wife Yoko Ono and son Sean. He talks with other fans as well as doormen. On the street he seems like your average music fan. When he is alone, he is an obsessed killer who poses with his gun in the mirror. He meticulously plans his last days of freedom. He hires a hooker to come to his room. He calls his wife in Hawaii. He displays all of his belongings in his hotel room so the police and presumably the media will know who he is. All these scenes are slow and done in voice over. It drags and only makes you wonder over and over again, who would want to see this movie.

Actor Jared Leto gained 60 over-publicized pounds to play Chapman. As a result he looks eerily similar to the assassin. Since he chose to gain the weight instead of put on a fat suit, the director J.P. Schaefer spends too much time shooting Leto in his underwear. In one scene, Chapman is outside of the Dakota waiting for Lennon complaining how cold it is. He is from Hawaii so winter in New York is, one would assume, much colder. In the next scene he is in his room at the YMCA sleeping in his underwear with no blanket. I am sure the heating system at the Y isn't the best so why would he not be using a blanket? Also Leto seems completely uncomfortable in his new fat body. He has trouble taking off a shirt.

The attention drawn to his weight gain aside, Leto does an amazing job playing Chapman. He is so creepy and demented, yet pathetic. You wonder if things would have gone differently had one of the people he meets in New York actually befriended him. Yet, most people are understandably adverse to desperation. It is hard to tell if this guy is lonely or just crazy. As the time is drawing near to the murder, Chapman debates getting in a cab to leave. It is an emotional scene where you are rooting for Chapman to give up his plan. Even though you already know what happens. That ending makes a bit of difference. You aren't cheering for Chapman to kill; you are cheering for Lennon to live. (www.chapter27themovie.com/ch27v2)

Two different documentaries that take a similar approach to explaining the origins of punk arrived this month. The first, **All Grown Up**, interviews more obscure punk musicians about their beginnings and current position in the punk scene. The most famous person in this film is TV Smith of The Adverts. Henry Rollins, Ian MacKaye, and Keith Morris are nowhere to be seen. Each person is asked for insight on punk,

how it was when she/he became a punk, what her/his parents thought about it, and what each does for a day job. The latter is the most telling of the punk lifestyle. You may be in a band, but you still need to work. Punk usually doesn't pay the bills. Director Andrea Witting also makes a point to note that most punks aren't stupid. There are teachers and scientists in this group.

The idea of **All Grown Up** is that while some kids may get into punk for superficial reasons, those who truly get into it are in it for life. I'd be the first to tell you that is true. Just look at the entire *MRR* crew. While it is nice to be reassured, it does start to get pretty repetitive. Everyone has a similar story. This is a film you wish people outside the scene would watch and understand, but unfortunately you know they wouldn't be interested. (www.psykopunkproductions.com)

The second is **NW Punk Rock: 30 Years of Punk Rock Vancouver To Olympia**. The film focuses on a hodgepodge of bands past and present from the Pacific Northwest. Some you may have heard of: the Subhumans, the Fartz, Solger, Fitz Of Depression, RC5, and some may be unknown: the Slashers, Pot Belly, and the Rebel Spell. There is seemingly no logic to it, no story, and definitely no rock stars, which is fine with me. It is like someone making you a mixed tape of his favorite local bands. You'll like some. You'll hate others.

While I like the anarchic style of **NW Punk Rock: 30 Years of Punk Rock Vancouver To Olympia**, the uneven volume levels throughout the film drive me crazy. I am constantly adjusting the volume. The music over the opening credits is loud, but then the film starts and the volume is really low for the interviews. There is background noise, and the music clips that coincide with what the interviewee is talking about turn up and drown out their voice. Then inexplicably the interview with Kyle Nixon of Solger is really loud. All the sound inconsistencies need to be worked out for this film to be really enjoyed. (www.landofthedave.org)

The tragic story of Nick Drake is unfortunately not as interesting as his music. **Nick Drake Under Review** tells that story through his music and recollections of those who were there and some that weren't. Drake was an upper class English kid proficient at a few different musical instruments, but guitar was his main one. When he went off to college he discovered English folk scene. Ashley Hutchings of the Fairport Convention saw Drake performing at a coffeehouse benefit show. He was so impressed that he introduces Drake to producer Joe Boyd. Drake releases three albums that don't sell well. Poor sales combined with his stage fright and depression lead to his suicide at age twenty-six. Posthumously he receives the attention he should have got while he was alive.

Nick Drake Under Review is one of the first in this series not to heavily rely on music writers to comment on the artist. Instead, it takes the interesting approach of interviewing non-famous musicians who perform Drake's music. Even when it seems awkward to watch someone reproduce Drake's music at least these musicians are very familiar with what they're playing. They know the intricacies. Also interviewed are members of The Fairport Convention and Incredible String Band both of which played shows with Drake. The film also features Drake's friend, Jeremy Mason, about whom he wrote the song "Three Hours" on the *Five Leaves Left* album. (www.chromedreams.co.uk)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com