



**Rock and Roll and Meandering Nonsense...** : This is the home of reviews, articles, interviews and general thoughts about punk, indie, metal, alt country, alternative, no depression, hip-hop, hard rock, soul, etc, etc, etc. Really, it's just a bunch of rambling garbage about rock n roll that spills out of my head...

## WRITERS

[bob\\_vinyl](#)  
[taotechuck](#)



I am actively looking for new music. If you are a band or a label or a publicist and you'd like me to check out what you're doing, review your music or interview you, contact me [HERE](#). I am currently submitting reviews and articles to both [AMP](#) and [Glide](#) magazines.

For the sake of consistency, I use the following guide when rating albums:

- 10 - Classic
- 8 - Best of genre
- 6 - Good
- 4 - Mediocre
- 2 - Poor

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## PREVIOUS POSTS

[Review: Sebastian Bach - Angel Down](#)

[Review: Crashdiet - The Unattractive Revolution](#)

[Review: Tia Carrera - You Are the War 7"](#)

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 05, 2007

## DVD: Rat Skates - Born in the Basement



Label: [Kundrat Productions](#)

Released: December 11, 2007

Born in the Basement is original Overkill drummer Rat Skates' documentary about the early days of thrash metal, from its punk rock and New Wave of British Heavy Metal roots to the days of its major label success. While there is some mention of other thrash bands like Metallica and Slayer, Skates focuses his attention on his own scene in NYC. And that focus is narrowed even further, because the documentary is really just an extended interview with Skates himself interspersed with video and stills. That limits the film's breadth, but also allows it dig deep into its limited subject matter and touch on details and bands that are likely unknown to anyone who wasn't there.

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Kevin DuBrow



Because the film only shows the perspective of one man, albeit one who was as thoroughly involved in the birth of thrash as anyone could probably be, its total truth comes into question. At times, Skates almost seems to imply that his hard work and go-for-it approach were the primary factor in Overkill's and thrash's success. It's difficult to tell if he's trying to overstate his role or if this is simply the result of the same personality that drove his success the first time around. The production is amateur, but it would likely seem disingenuous to make a slick film about the DIY ethic.

Despite a few obvious weaknesses, Born in the Basement has plenty of real value. It provides a view into just how much effort was involved in making the music that many of us felt so close to at the time by making us privy to everything that happened behind the scenes. These guys worked like crazy for something they loved, regardless of whether it would ever pay off. It also shows how things have changed. Gone are the days of the Xerox machine. They've been replaced by the advent of iTunes and Myspace. While there are still bands that put their own album art together and screen print their own shirts, they do so by choice. Skates and his peers did it out of necessity.

Rating: 7/10

[Website](#)

[Myspace](#)

Labels: [2007](#), [7](#), [dvd](#), [metal](#), [punk](#)

POSTED BY BOB\_VINYL AT 11:17 AM

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#### 1 COMMENTS:

[Ray Van Horn, Jr.](#) said...

Too funny; I just reviewed this today as well. I didn't know you had it. I really enjoyed it and while I've been treated with nothing but respect from Blitz the two times I interviewed him (and he's also one of the funniest guys in the biz), when I interviewed Bobby Gustafson a few years back, I got the sense there was an untold story lurking. This was probably it.

I think there's probably a good legitimacy to the story since even Rat admits he was a bit ostracized from the band, hanging more with the road than the band. It's a dicey endeavor, but I don't think he'd really stand to gain much more than he has already by lying since only the real hardcore Overkill fans know he even existed

11:29 AM

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