

DVD REVIEWS

DVD Review – ‘Appetite for Deconstruction’

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Posted by [Collider](#)

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THE MOVIE:

There are few groups more self righteous and ivory tower than the hardcore punk scene. Being accepted means nonconforming to the exacting standards of the faithful, who are as worried about “selling out” as the puritans were about backsliding. Sid Vicious and Darby Crash are saints, and even they are not immune from being called poseurs.

Punk rock hierarchy is a complex system where ‘street cred’ is as important as the music if not more so. And the genre is very fickle as to what it will accept. Avril Levine is reviled as a poseur and a faker while the Dresden Dolls are admired and allowed the title of “Punk Cabaret” even though they don’t even play electric instruments, much less feature 3 chord guitar progression.

I like punk rock. The first band I ever saw live was T.S.O.L. I own a pair of steel toe boots so worn in that the foam rubber in the front has worn through and you can see the metal beneath it. It’s a good Friday night if I come home aching and bleeding just a little bit. But I was never too into the scene. Too much work trying to look different. You end up all looking the same.

And, even though it seems so very anti-social to most outsiders, there is a specific set of rules and etiquette attached to a punk show. And there are even more rules attached to the mosh pit. Sure, it might seem like it’s just a bunch of sweaty guys beating the living hell out of one another for no reason, but it is fairly refined and no where near as mean spirited as it can seem.

Here is a crash course in mosh pit ethics and etiquette:

In a mosh pit, you don’t aim for the face, you don’t aim to do harm. You keep beating on the smallest guy in the crowd and someone bigger than you will notice, and you will be punished. Stay on your feet as much as possible. But, if you fall, don’t worry, in a good pit, you will be grabbed by others and lifted back up before you even hit the ground. If you see someone else fall, no rubbernecking. Help them up, or get out of the way. If you end up in a human pileup, get on your feet as soon as possible. If you see a fight, if you’re big enough, pull the people

apart. If you're smaller, get back and don't exacerbate things. If someone looks injured or is just trying to get out of the pit, let them. If you see someone show you their hands in a stop motion, don't push them—let them through. If you are on the edge of the pit, expect to have people run into you. It's okay to push them back. In fact, it can be helpful to the movement and momentum of the moshing.

However, it isn't okay to stand on the edge and slap people as they go by, or kick them in the back. If you do, someone will grab your arm or leg and throw you in, and it won't be pretty. Don't hold a beer near the pit. A wet floor is dangerous. Also, don't be the jerk who tosses the ice from his drink into the pit. Wet floors suck. It is okay to move the opposite direction of the rotation, but not to cloths-line someone while doing so. Don't cop a feel on any girl running around. It's creepy and you'll get your ass kicked, probably by her. If you think you've hit someone too hard or done any damage, find that person at the end of the song and give them a high five or a hug. Make sure no one feels slighted. Everyone is there to have a good time, remember that.

Also, stage diving is okay. But make sure you get some momentum because you'll look stupid if you get pushed back up onto the stage when you don't jump out far enough. You are responsible for making sure you don't land on your head after crowd surfing. If you are going to stage dive/crowd surf, give the band space to keep playing, and make sure you keep your boots away from people's heads. And finally, if you weigh 300 pounds, you can't stage dive.

I go out for concerts regularly. Last year I saw 25 or more shows. I've never seen a concert film that does a show justice. There is just no way to recreate the feeling of a mind-blowing spontaneous guitar solo from Nick Oliveri on tape. (that said, "Over the River and Through the Years" is a damn solid album).

I listen to punk rock, and hung out with the punk kids in high school. But I was never a hardcore "Oi!" kind of guy. I've seen many of the bands on "Appetite for Deconstruction's" bill. But I've also seen Roger Waters, Donovan, Rooney and even Fall out Boy (the tickets were a gift) live. My musical taste is too wide to really be a punk exclusively. I may only be with one girl at a time, but I constantly court as many musical genres as I can.

The highlight of the film, and the band with the most songs on the DVD, is Pennywise. While the DVD cannot recreate the head rush of bellowing "Bro Hymn" I certainly felt the urge to get up and dance like an idiot. In fact, all the acts showcased seem to be pretty good. There wasn't a total dud in the entire 160 minute running time.

The people behind the scenes are also interesting. The concert series apparently didn't do too well at first and the guy in charge seems to be very much on the edge of a nervous break down, running around drunk, punching the bands and breaking stuff. But hey, that's punk rock.

Other portions of the film showed various extreme sports on display. Most of these scenes are fun, and scored to above average music for this type of video. But, if you aren't already a fan of "extreme sports" this isn't going to convert you.

Also, the film has an annoying habit of cutting away from the band. Sure, the interviews might be funny, but I don't wanna see a drunken idiot screaming Pennywise lyrics unless that drunken idiot is Jim Lindberg or Fletcher Dragge. The constant cut-aways destroy the momentum. What's worse, they aren't very insightful.

There is much to like in "Appetite for Deconstruction" and if you're looking for a sampler of new bands, this could be worth a rental or purchase. But if you aren't already a big punk listener, you'll probably just be annoyed.

THE DISC

The DVD is packed with 160 minutes of punk rock inspired tomfoolery. There is also a plethora of extra footage, all in the same vein. If you like the flick, or attended the concert. You'll dig the extras too. While none of this is www.wolfgangsvault.com level of awesome, there are many well shot and performed sequences. It's not great, or terribly refined, but it's fun and could make for a good background for a frat party or, you know...anarchist group meeting.

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