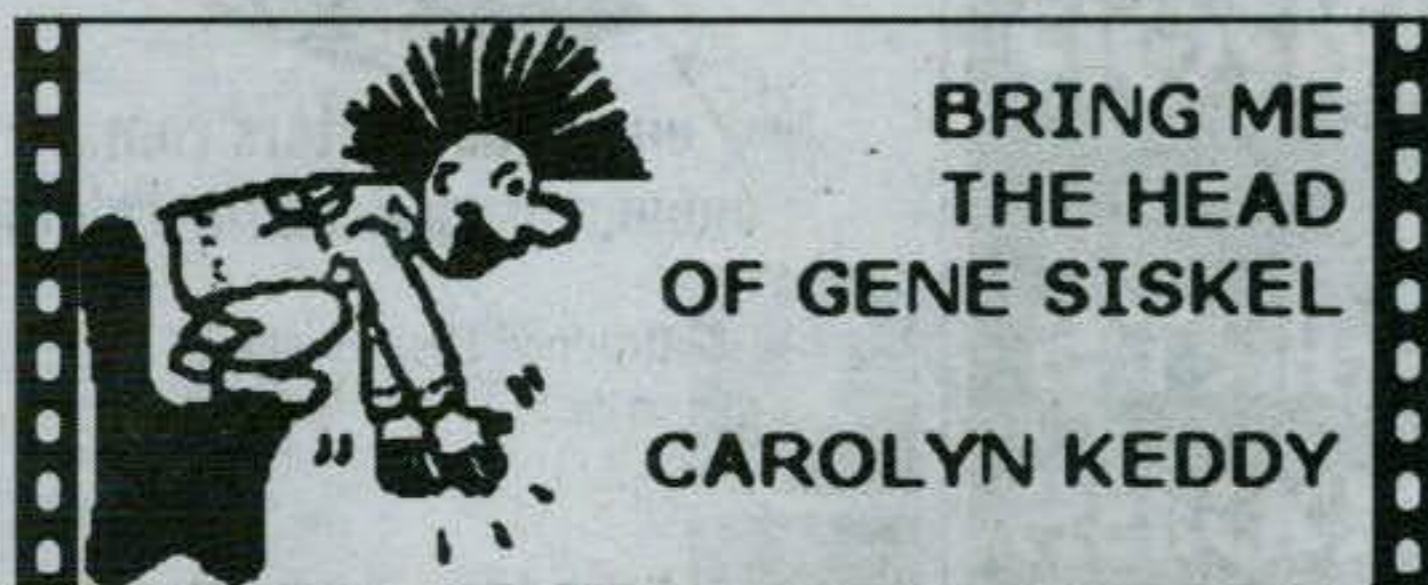


MOVIES



Like most punks, I think everything should be inexpensive. I am not going to buy a hundred-dollar pair of jeans when I can get a similar pair for ten dollars. That is why I am impressed with Plan-It-X selling CDs for five dollars post paid (in the US). How do they do it? The documentary **If It Ain't Cheap, It Ain't Punk** tells the story of the label.

Plan-It-X records started in 1994 as a way to release a record by the label's founders' band Operation: Cliff Clavin. After realizing that it was fairly easy to do, they started releasing records by more bands. Now the label is successful and well known. They still keep their CD prices at five dollars when they probably could be charging more. But that isn't their style.

Chris Johnston recalls when he started the label Plan-It-X people always assumed he was given money from his parents to run it. At the time, he was living in his van and running his label from there. He had no rent to pay so all that money could go back into the label. Once it started, the label began to pay for itself. He then released records by bands he was not in, such as The Bananas, Against Me, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb and Japanther. The label developed into a scene that culminated in a weeklong fest in 2006.

Amusingly, **If It Ain't Cheap, It Ain't Punk** starts off with a young male stating, "There's really not much of a punk scene anyway." I don't know if he is involved with the Plan-It-X punks or what year he said that, but I always get a good laugh out of folks who make lame statements like that. It's just a lazy reaction. Just because he is not involved means it doesn't exist. I'd like to think that was included as a starting off point to prove that guy wrong. They do. (plan-it-x.org, \$10 ppd)

All I remember about Stevie Stiletto was that they were (I thought) a heavy metal band that used to play at the Chatterbox when I first moved to San Francisco. I never saw them, but I also didn't like metal so why would I? I didn't know much else about them. After watching **My Life Is Great: The Stevie Stiletto Story**, I realize that when they lived in SF seemed to be the low point of the band. In fact, after lead singer Ray McKelvey suddenly quits the band in Arizona during one of their tours, then moves back to Florida, the story gets more interesting.

Stevie Stiletto was started as a band, not a person, but it seems to have evolved into the pseudonym for McKelvey. Started in the early '80s as Stevie and the Switchblades then changing their name to a possible nickname of the original drummer, the band has gone through endless line-up changes. McKelvey kept the band going for twenty-five years. They played a final show when McKelvey was diagnosed with days to live. That was about two years ago and as of this writing he is still alive.

My Life Is Great: The Stevie Stiletto Story is the type of documentary all musicians should aim for, completely honest in an almost embarrassing way. These guys will tell you any detail of their lives no matter how bad it makes them look. One guitarist, Tommy Berlin, makes a seemingly out the blue comment about how due to Stevie Stiletto he met the love of his life—heroin. Not that that is so shocking in the musical world, but the frankness with which he says it is. I am used to musicians making excuses or rewriting their history. These guys are not self-conscious at all which makes for an informative and entertaining documentary.

For all my preconceived notions about Stevie Stiletto's punkness or lack of it, the band did live up to all the notions of DIY. They released their own records, booked their own shows and tours, and even ran a club. I will also give them credit for actually acknowledging MRR. I see tons of these documentaries and rarely do any of them mention us. Stevie Stiletto sold their records by advertising them in these pages and even had their name appear on one cover.

The DVD **My Life Is Great: The Stevie Stiletto Story** also includes a twenty-two song CD covering all eras of the band just in case the two-hour documentary wasn't enough for you. (geneva13.com, \$15 ppd.)

Open Your Mouth and Say...Mr. Chi Pig is the story of Ken Chinn aka Chi Pig lead singer of the band SNFU. The film covers Chinn from his adolescent years of seeing the Sex Pistols on TV news (the thing that changed his life) through the formation and subsequent break ups of SNFU to recently finally dealing with his mental illness. Chinn formed SNFU with twin brothers Marc and Brent Belke in 1981. The band toured endlessly and became more popular. Chinn claims an audience member head-butted him during a show and something cracked, leading to the start of his mental illness. Instead of dealing with it, Chinn started using drugs. As a result SNFU breaks up and reforms a few times losing members along the way.

Chinn is interviewed at various stages in life growing more haggard and distraught, as he gets older. Chinn discusses all aspects of his life: the band, his homosexuality, his addiction to crystal meth with candor. Although, at times it seems like maybe he doesn't recall what was going on, or is simply skipping over some of the more coarse facts. Also interviewed are a majority of present and former SNFU members as well as Jello Biafra, Shawn Stern, Chuck Dukowski, Joe "Shithead" Keithly and other musicians. The obvious omission is Marc Belke SNFU's songwriter who declined to be interviewed for the film.

I wish **Open Your Mouth and Say...Mr. Chi Pig** had a bit more unabashed honesty. Not that I really know what the true story of SNFU is, perhaps this is it, but after watching the film it still feels like something is missing. (prairiecoastfilms.com)

Lost Kisses is a DVD collection of ten issues of the comic book of the same name. Basically each page of an issue is shot with a camera. The DVD shows each page for a few seconds so you can read along, as you would be doing with the comic book. It is awkward and I can't help but wonder why anyone would do this. The answer is fortunately included with the press kit. The comic book itself is as small as a matchbook. Making a comic book that small takes a long time, limiting how many you can make. Since the production