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Punk Rock Karaoke

[Music Video Distributors](#) // Unrated // October 28, 2008 // Region 0

List Price: \$19.95 [Buy now and save at [Amazon](#)]

Review by [Adam Tyner](#) | posted November 26, 2008 | [E-mail the Author](#) | [Start a Discussion](#)

Never got into karaoke so much myself. I mean, screeching into a mic while some tinny, Muzak version of "Don't Stop Believin'" buzzes around in the background...? What's the fun in that? Punk Rock Karaoke isn't some goofy little TV and a thick booklet rattling off a bunch of keyboard instrumentals, though. The line-up's shuffled around since the whole thing was first thrown together back in '96, but the current group includes Eric Melvin (NOFX), Greg Hetson (Bad Religion), Steve Soto (The Adolescents), and Derek O'Brien (Social Distortion). Fans who hit the show dig through a list of sixty or so songs from '76 to '83, grab a mic, and scream the lyrics while the band tears through 'em.

So...yeah. This DVD/CD set is kind of the home game version. The CD features ten studio recordings with the Punk Rock Karaoke house band and a revolving door of punk singers, including the frontmen from Pennywise, Lagwagon, Flogging Molly, and New Found Glory. The DVD version cycles through those same songs with and without vocals...y'know, if you wanna do the whole karaoke thing yourself.

The ten song set includes...



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(vox by Alkaline Trio's Matt Skiba)
4. **What Do I Get?** by The Buzzcocks
(vox by The Vandals' Warren Fitzgerald)
5. **Fuck Armageddon...This Is Hell** by Bad Religion
(vox by Flogging Molly's Dave King)
6. **Suspect Device** by Stiff Little Fingers
(vox by The Mighty Mighty Bosstones' Dicky Barrett)
7. **Minor Threat** by Minor Threat
(vox by New Found Glory's Jordan Pundik)
8. **Bikeage** by The Descendents
(vox by Lagwagon's Joey Cape)
9. **Amoeba** by The Adolescents
(vox by Me First and the Gimme Gimmes' Spike Slawson)
10. **California Uber Alles** by The Dead Kennedys
(vox by Throw Rag's Sean Wheeler)

The covers are all pretty damn great across the board, especially the ferocity of the drumming in "Fuck Armageddon...". The production's not glossy or overly polished...no obnoxious knob-twiddling in the studio or hundreds of overdubs or anything, and that's exactly what it oughtta be. These covers stick pretty closely to the originals, and it's kind of funny to hear just how immersed the guest singers get into the music. So many of them have really distinctive voices, but I wouldn't have guessed that's Joey Cape or (especially) Jordan Pundik picking up the mic here. Sean Wheeler does a hell of a Jello Biafra impression by the way.

I mean, "Punk Rock Karaoke" really isn't the sort of thing that needs a review: a quick look at the setlist and singers are pretty much all you need. I had a hell of a lot of fun with it, and even though this just showed up in the mail today, I've already torn through the CD a couple of times. If you're into any of these songs or any of these bands, it's worth picking up. **Recommended.**

Video

The visual's aren't really the selling point, so don't expect much. Each song has its own video, and it's a mix of vintage newsreels, Super 8 footage, homebrew music videos,

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washed-out footage from some twenty year old punk show...y'know, all over the map. Some pretty nasty combing artifacts creep in, the compression's not that hot, and it's pretty much VHS quality across the board, but again...not really the point.



Audio

"Punk Rock Karaoke" can play either as an instrumental karaoke version or with the guest vocalists onboard, and each of 'em is served up in Dolby Digital 5.1 (448Kbps) and stereo (192Kbps). The fidelity of the studio recordings is exactly what it ought to be, and the kick drum and bass in the 5.1 remix are tight and punchy. My only gripe is that the mix recycles too much of the vocals and instrumentation in the surrounds and center channel. Instead of spreading each element in the mix around, guitars, bass, drums, and vocals all attack from five different directions. It sounds fine, though.

The lyrics to each song are burned onto the screen and use color cues like a standard issue karaoke machine.

Extras

The DVD piles on a few extras. There's a quick, kinda choppy introduction to the whole Punk Rock Karaoke thing along with intros of each member of the band. There are also four songs from the live show, although they're each cut together from a big stack of different performances, and the audio quality's pretty rough. Three of the songs are also tackled on the DVD-slash-CD -- "Gimmie Gimmie Gimmie", "California Uber Alles", and "Suspect Device" -- and Black Flag gets another nod with "Nervous Breakdown".

Oh, and the ten songs in the main part of this set can be played individually or all at once. The flipside of the DVD case is kind of misleading since the ten songs clock in at 25 minutes in total, and the only way to tally up an hour and a half runtime is to add up the extras and listen to each song in the set three times.

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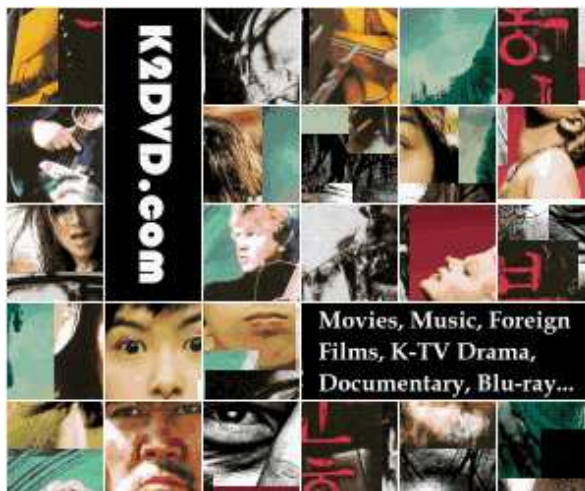
The Final Word








Even though the whole thing comes packaged in a standard size keepcase, I think I'd look at *Punk Rock Karaoke* more as a CD with a bonus DVD than the other way around. This is a set of great covers of some really incredible music, and actually seeing the lyrics crawl across the screen shows me just how far off what I've been screaming all these years really is. **Recommended.**

Oh, And...

As I write this, at least, three of the songs from this CD/DVD set are featured on the band's [MySpace](#): "Suspect Device", "Fuck Armageddon...This Is Hell", and "Gimmie Gimmie Gimmie". Probably better to just listen to 'em instead of suffering through my awful review.

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