

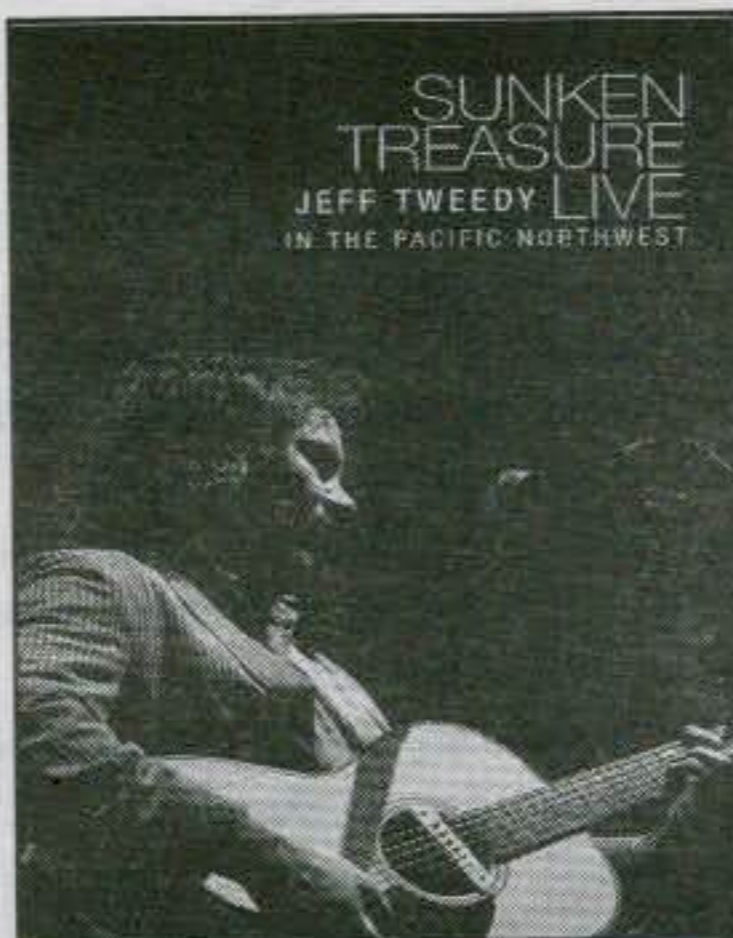
Joy Division
Under Review
Sexy Intellectual

For anyone new to the dark world of Joy Division or simply unaware of the seminal band's back-story (outside of the obviously iconic element of Ian Curtis' suicide), this 70-minute film should serve as a more than suitable introduction. For fans, it'll also make do as an interesting overview full of cool footage.

Billing itself as an "independent critical analysis," *Under Review* contains commentary and criticism from the expected panel of moldy oldie music experts, as well as the young and snotty former Mojo editor Pat Gilbert. Lindsay Reade (ex-wife of Tony Wilson, of 24 Hour Party People fame) is also on board, offering many impressive insights. Imagine, for example, that Curtis danced the way he did to "drum up" his epileptic seizures, adding excitement to the band's live sets. True or not, it's a terribly compelling concept.

The film starts with Joy Division's 1978 EP *An Ideal For Living*, and the controversy surrounding their name at the time. The Manchester four-piece had no leanings towards fascism (although Curtis was apparently obsessed with it), yet thanks to their shadowy sound, nom de plume and Eastern European appearance, they did develop a small right wing following. That being said, as the chubby, cheery commentator David Stubbs states, "it was too good for Nazis."

From here, the Joy Div doc describes the making of their debut album *Unknown Pleasures*, and how producer Martin Hammett experimented with the distinctive sounds that the band initially despised. Pushing Peter Hook's bass lines to the top of the mix and replacing their early unexceptional punk drums with oddly clipped disco beats, there was clearly something special being laid down here. Fortunately, as they may have gone nowhere otherwise, critics, listeners and even



Tony Wilson began to quickly catch on. All in all, the featured journalists, authors and friends of the band offer succinct, stylish observations. This is highlighted by the narration, including the film's best line: "On May 18, 1980, Curtis watched Werner Herzog's *Stroszek*, listened to Iggy Pop's *The Idiot*, then went to the kitchen and hung himself."

This DVD doesn't quite touch enough on the band's earliest incarnation as the punk act Warsaw, or offer adequate info about the post-Curtis after-effects and introduction of New Order (only five weeks after his death). However, it does summarize their three-year lifespan with a meticulous attention to the most important details, and more importantly, will make you want to listen to their music.

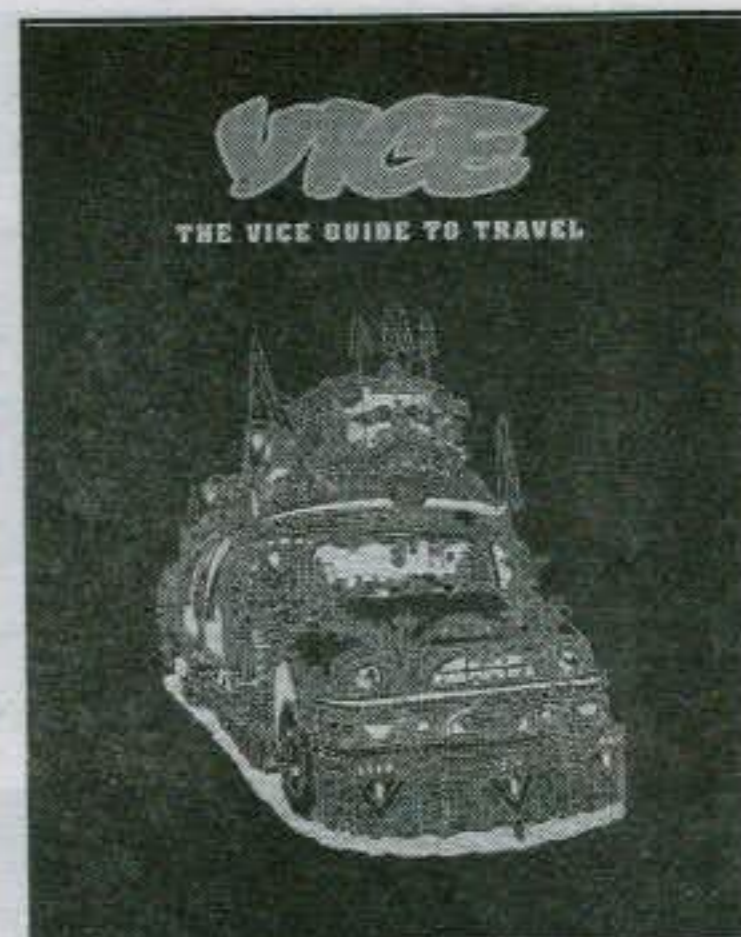
• Jesse Locke

Jeff Tweedy
Sunken Treasure: Live in the Pacific Northwest
Nonesuch

Sunken Treasure follows a man, his guitar, and a beard patchier than your granny's quilt through the really rather rainy Pacific Northwest.

It should be obvious to most that Jeff Tweedy has the musical chops/tunes to hold together a solo show. Highlights include Summerteeth's "In A Future Age" which works brilliantly when stripped down to Jeff's soft vocal and eastern-influenced guitar. "War On War", a personal favourite, is aided ably by Nels Cline on lap steel and Glen Kotche on drums. Finally an unamplified version of "Acuff-Rose" rings a perfect closing note to the San Fran show as well as the DVD.

To a casual Wilco fan like myself, one of Mr. Tweedy's lesser-known qualities was his personal charisma. Whether cracking jokes at his own expense with an extremely boisterous Seattle crowd or struggling earnestly to win



over indifferent scenesters at the Portland show, Jeff Tweedy is as funny and sincere as he is talented.

• Gareth Williams

The Vice Guide to Travel
Vice Films Inc.

Love it or hate it, Vice magazine is the quintessential must have free monthly rag of pretentious design school devolutionary journalism. The minute you get your hands on a new issue, you frantically open it to the dos and don'ts to get a quick fix before you can find a quiet corner to read it cover to cover (don't even front, I know y'all do it). It's short and bittersweet, obscene and honest (unless it's the bullshit issue, then the joke's on you), much like the latest DVD release from Vice films. Tucked into a hardcover book expanding on the featured shorts, the Vice guide to travel is designed to take you on a journey to discover things perhaps better left in the world of blissful ignorance. You will explore such beautiful vacation destinations as Pakistan's underground arms market where the Darra people's philosophy is, "A lot of sons, and a lot of guns." Travel into Beirut and meet the PLO Boy Scouts organization, training the next generation of (10-year-old) Hezbollah martyrs to ensure Palestinian liberation. Interested in purchasing a nuclear warhead on the black market? No problem. The Soviets dumped enough for all to share! It's a heavy dose of reality that easily bursts our insular Western bubble with a fast and furious bitch slap. If we had for a moment assumed we knew anything about the current state of international goings-on, it's time to get on the Vice train and go for a ride. As Shane Smith so eloquently points out while touring the radioactive ghost town of Chernobyl: "if this is the future, we're fucked." Indeed.

• J. Burke