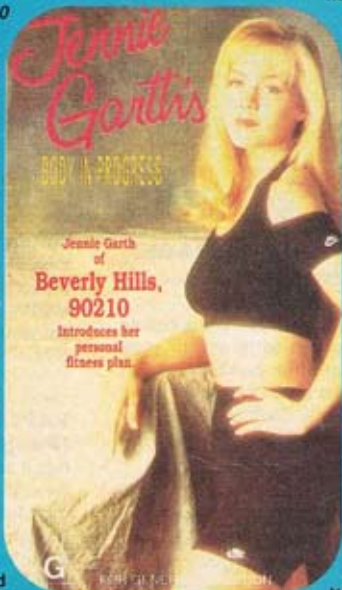


RETAIL VIDS

Frances Chan tries to get fit!

JENNIE GARTH *Body In Progress*

Jennie Garth is such a nice girl, don'tcha think? The Kelly Taylor we've come to know, love and sympathise for in *Beverly Hills 90210* shows us her own personal fitness routine specially designed for teenage bodies. Jennie's legs look oddly short in her hot pant bodysuit, but she looks so sweet and earnest reading from the autocue that you'll really want to join in. She gives good nutritional advice, stresses the dangers of eating junk food and disorders like anorexia and bulimia, but get this – the video is sponsored by Diet 7-up! Oh well, at least the instrumental tunes she uses are not as annoying as other workout vids boyfriend Dan Clark does the music), and David Silver is nowhere in sight! ★★★★★



Jennie: get fit the nice way

EN VOGUE *Funky Divas*

It's the female Boyz II Men! Their videos follow a formula so predictable, it's even boring when you watch it on fast forward! En Vogue are told what to do, wear, say and sing, are laughable when they tell us: "We're on the cutting edge of something!" From the skimpy matching outfits they wear, the only cutting edge they're on is fabric! Fortunately, they can sing to save their cute little asses.

CHER FITNESS *Body Confidence*

If you survived through Cher's first fitness video then you're qualified to tackle this one. If not, just join the rest of us and have a good gawk! Highlight: Cher's sparkly-spiderweb-leopard-thingy she barely wears for her Hot Dance aerobic workout, which is even more gross than the frilly outfit she wore in her last video. Unfortunately, you get to see her bum tattoos as well! Cher's fitness philosophy: "Burn fat and sculpt your muscles!" Music consists of terrible cover versions of classic songs set to a tinny aerobic beat. ★★

ROCK HARD WORKOUT

It's NZ's own Village People! Six strapping not-so-young men with ridiculously large chests sweat like anything during the 15

mini-workouts. If you don't look like them to start with, then I wouldn't bother trying. It's a no-nonsense workout with just a few macho tips like: POWER MOVES and STRONG ARMS! Then there's the real macho music like Midge Marsden, Mi-Sex, Quiet Riot and Craig McLachlan (Craig McLachlan??) and by the end of it they're hurling off their tank-tops and doing sit-ups to Dave Dobbyn's *Slice Of Heaven*. It's hilarious, but the boys' pained expressions tell another story. The only fun they seem to have is giving each other hi-fives and yelling out "awesome" when each workout finishes. ★★

Kiwi hard bodies: physical jerks



RETAIL VIDS

Frances Chan plays safe on the dance floor

RED HOT & DANCE (\$39.95)

This is, uh, "educational"! It's aimed at teenagers and features performances from the Aids Dance-A-Thon and some hard-hitting facts about the Aids epidemic. There's interviews with celebrities and non-celebrities, people who are HIV positive, and the words come loud and clear with graphic video images set against deep bass grooves. Some of the live performances are of dubious quality but the variety is good – EMF, Marky Mark, Lisa Stansfield, C+C Music Factory. If you don't fancy the music, try and see this video anyway – the messages are too important to miss. ★★★★★



EMF: "Take a rubber to bed, kids!"

U2 *Achtung Baby* (\$35.95)

In typical U2 fashion, this hour-long vid is stylish and serious, full of distorted media images, grainy black and white interview footage, and ridiculous shots of Bono in those stupid sunglasses smoking thin cigars. There's a brief history of the band in video snippets, where Bono has a striking resem-

blance to ol' haystack-head Richard Marx, and you get to see Adam Clayton before he found a decent hairdresser! There's nine videos here from *Achtung Baby* but be warned: there are THREE versions of *One* and *Even Better Than The Real Thing*. I guess with the money they earn they can afford it, but who needs it. ★★

PUNK (\$35.95)

Forget that these kids can't play their instruments or sing in tune, it's the spirit that counts, right? Here are 18 live and very raw clips of punk bands that shook the music establishment in the late 1970s – from the Sex Pistols (unfortunately minus

Sid Vicious), to The Buzzcocks and The Jam. The most entertaining, however, must be Iggy Pop, who writhes around the floor like a demon possessed, chest smeared in his own blood from razor cuts. The rest are a bunch of snotty, spotty English youths with a lot of angst and not enough dress sense. Bob Geldof screams like a lunatic in The Boomtown Rats, The Clash's Joe Strummer trips over his mic stand and bangs his head, and suicide victim Ian Curtis from Joy Division has an awesome voice, but dances like Mr Bean!

Perhaps punk chick Siouxsie Sioux explains it best: "We weren't musicians ... in our naivety we started making this noise that was ours." ★★★★★

ROD STEWART *Vagabond Heart Tour* (\$29.95)

Get real, Rod – you're 48-years-old! Jumping around like a chicken on stage singing rougher than sandpaper is really, really embarrassing. Somehow the songs *Forever Young* and *Do Ya Think I'm Sexy?* are not quite appropriate. Not only does he do terrible versions of his own classic songs, he ruins a couple of 50's numbers as well. Oh dear. ★

SHINDIG! Presents *Sixties Superstars* (\$24.95)

Welcome groovers, to the show where the smiles are cheesy, the hair is greasy, and the girls are screamy! Just before the psychedelic explosion, bands like The Byrds, Mamas & Papas, and The Turtles sang really poppy but lovely tunes, which feature on this 1960's special. But the man with the most stars in his eyes is perfectly manicured host Jimmy O'Neill, whose hair has been sprayed solid, eyebrows plucked, teeth buffed, and not a nose hair out of place. Also in the *Shindig!* series – Jerry Lee Lewis, Soul, Groovy Gals, and Motor City Magic (Chicago sounds). ★★★★★



Siouxsie: The original punk goth chick.

RETAIL VIDS

Frances Chan...

MINISTRY In Case You Didn't Feel Like Showing Up (Live)

Full on! After watching this you'll feel like having a little lie down. Ministry play hard, fast, and heavy, and they have a chicken wire fence between them and their psychoactive audience. Two drummers and three guitarists belt out tunes with real menace while we see rather arty silhouettes of stage divers hurling themselves into the moshing throng below. The filming creates a sense of chaos by cutting between colour/black & white/polarised negative/industrial scenes/distorted images. Fire eaters and a flaming wheel of death feature in *Burning Inside*, but the highlights are *Thieves* and *Stigmata* where the pace speeds up at an incredible rate and Alan Jourgensen's unrepeatable, defamatory vocal chants are breathtaking (and funny!) Ex-Dead Kennedy's frontman Jello Biafra recites a warped 'allegiance to the flag' poem where he refers to America as the "United Snakes of Captivity", then the band follow up appropriately with *The Land Of Rape and Honey*. Play this really LOUD and have fun pissing everybody off! ★★★★★



Menacing Ministry

TORI AMOS Little Earthquakes

It was such a treat when Tori toured here last year, playing small venues where you weren't suffocated by cigarette smoke and you could actually sit down and see the stage! The live tracks on this video capture the intimacy of her performance — she's very personal and direct, and compelling to watch. Her videos are also unconventionally simple — white backgrounds, pale make-up, and an array of slightly odd outfits. There are interviews as well, revealing some of Tori's innermost thoughts, including a story she tells of adolescence being "the cruellest place on earth". I'm sure we can all relate to that one. ★★★★★



TORI: Intimate & revealing

GUNS N' ROSES Use Your Illusion II

You'd expect something a little more awesome from the biggest rock band in the world at the moment. GN'R are up to the same old rock'n'roll antics, but everything seems so PLANNED. As Slash starts playing his double-pronged guitar for *Knockin' On Heavens Door* (with finely manicured fingernails), a roadie speeds across the stage just to stuff a fag in his mouth. How ridiculous! They try to make the obligatory 20 minute drum solo (yawn) interesting with flashing strobe lights. It doesn't work. And then there's Axl who

competes with Madonna for the most number of costume changes in one show — nine colour co-ordinated outfits, no less! Let's see...there's a Jesus Christ t-shirt, a brocade shirt, a plaid shirt and kilt, a string top, a cowboy shirt, a grid iron uniform, etc! He always keeps his white cycle pants on though, and there are lots of close-ups of his tight ass, if you're interested in that kind of thing. It's a shame when Axl opens his mouth because his voice is totally shot and ruins every song. He even needs a tv monitor with autocue lyrics on it! As usual, there's a black vamp backing singer, and the horn section comprises of three girls wearing belts and thigh high boots with high, high hair — and the boys ogle at them sleazily when they get to do their solos. Slash refers to GN'R as a "glorified guitar band" and I agree with him. ★★

RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS What Hits?

For everyone who just discovered the Chilis last year, this video will prove that they have always been funky, always had tattoos, and always had the tendency to take their clothes off on stage. This is been seen to the extreme on their version of Jimi Hendrix's *Fire*, performed wearing absolutely nothing except for socks on their willies! The early videos use a lot of the 'blue key' effect with images and shapes swirling away in the background and four boys in baggy shorts pulling funny faces in the foreground. They get to wear silly costumes and use all their friends as extras in *Fight Like A Brave* and *Catholic School Girls Rule*, but all of their videos are manic. Their hair colours may change, but the energy stays the same. The last three tracks are live but have been seen before in another video, *Psychedelic Sextunk Live From Heaven*. ★★★★★

RETAIL VIDS by Frances Chan

I used to think that Bon Jovi had absolutely no redeeming features but I've finally found one — Jon's new haircut! I'm impressed by the way those strands just flop perfectly over Jon's forehead. But the illusion is shattered when you see him backstage before the show — pre-hairspray! Beyond Jon's hair, KEEP THE FAITH — AN EVENING WITH BON JOVI still ain't bad compared to the yawn-o-rama of their stadium show. A typical MTV concert with the band singing along in a cosy



Jon Bon Jovi

circle on high stools, self-consciously shooting each other knowing looks and smirks. It's surprisingly bearable, even when Richie brings out his double-pronged guitar (snigger). They start off with a great version of The Beatles' *With A Little Help From My Friends*, do bluesy covers of *Fever* and *We Gotta Get Out Of This Place*. It's spoilt by the nursery rhymes of *Bad Medicine*, but the rockin' finale, *Keep The Faith*, is cool. ★★★★★ An eighties revival? God help us if looking like Siouxsie & The Banshees becomes the NEXT BIG THING. TWICE UPON A TIME shows the demented Cleopatra of Goth in 15 videos dating from 1982-92 in some of the most hideous outfits ever seen! It's all sparkly black lace, lycra and PVC. Cher must have been taking notes! Wearing the hair and make-up that inspired a decade of gothy, spotty youths, Siouxsie is fascinating to watch. Her singing is nothing special, but she flings herself about, arms waving dramatically, face stuck in a permanent glare, while the Banshees look incredibly bored in the background. Their biggest hits

— *Dear Prudence* and *The Passenger* — are here, as well as some lesser known material including a song they wrote with the guy who penned the theme to *The Simpsons*! A great history lesson. ★★★★★ Mande White looks like she's in agony, but she's having a great time, honest! If the pace of most exercise videos leaves you dead, STRETCH & FLEX is for you. Six 15-minute programmes of basic yoga positions, stretching and relaxation techniques with Mande nattering on all the way. Admittedly, she treats you like a five year old, and she's patronising to her elderly ol' mum who joins in the class with her: "Don't pull your leg off mum, you'll need it!", "Mum! You look like you've just come out of a pretzel packet!" Mande is a Rachel Hunter who never got out of the suburbs — a down-to-earth, perky, Kiwi lass. The yoga focus here will keep you youthful and flexible and give you control over your breathing so you won't collapse on the floor after the session is finished. Buy it for your mum and do the exercises with her — and try not to be mean. ★★★★★ After years of screaming and posing in rock bands, Elvis Costello goes high brow with the Brodsky Quartet to



produce THE JULIET LETTERS. Teamed with a string quartet, he tries to re-discover his classical roots. So why's he still screaming then? The man's singing, devoid of all subtlety, spoils what could otherwise be some nice tunes. The songs are all strung around letters (love letters, Dear John letters). The dullest letter makes for the best song, a note to the lawyers firm, Jacksons Monk And Rowe. It's not written by Elvis and the coolest bit is the "funky" cello. The performances are very english and proper. The end result is very...ZZZ! ★★

TV PREVIEW *by Frances Chan*

BEVERLY HILLS TATTLE TALES

We know you're going to be glued to the tube when the brand-new series of *Beverly Hills 90210* kicks off in January on TV3. Just to make sure you don't miss any

of the sordid surprises, we're going to spill the beans on them! Here's the goss: Brenda goes to college in homely Minnesota but the silly bitch thinks she's too cool for all the hicks there. Being among nerds is so unbearable for Brenda that she just snaps,

packs her bags and heads back to LA in the middle of the night! Kelly and Dylan return from their trip to Paris - apart! They make up again, but not for long. Kelly is wooed by a senior at a tacky disco party. And Dylan? He just puts another wrinkle-line in that corrugated forehead and says he's not into the scene, man. But he does develop a crush on...

guns! Brandon and Steve stay at a beachside condo for the holidays, male-bonding like mad, and Brandon gets real close to a sexy older woman (played by one of Prince's ex-girlpals, Diamond or Pearl - we're not sure which!). Dylan doesn't get accepted into Berkeley and Andrea (looking every hour of her 30-something years) decides to flug going to Yale. Guess what? The whole silly crew end up going to California University. Convenient, huh? Brandon and Steve get into a fraternity whose initials stand for KEG, and Steve spends his days getting blotto. Meanwhile the girls end up in pukay frat wearing pink dresses and singing songs by candlelight. On their non-existent wages, Kelly, Donna and David rent a spacious apartment by the sea. First-time flatters hint: David is a real slob! He also skips classes because he's so worn out from doing the graveyard shift at the Uni radio station. His boss gives him a little white pill to help him stay awake (Do we detect a druggy storyline developing?). Donna does stuff-all but wear the teeniest floral frocks with chokers and big tramping boots. She still won't have sex with David - he's busy nights anyway. But drab Andrea is doing the wild thing with her tall, dark and sorta cute English tutor! Outrageous - almost! They do use condoms. Brenda gets a bit of love action too, with a rich, well connected older guy. But pity poor Brandon! he's left with a fling that wasn't a fling and an incredibly manky now haircut. What a total wuss! Lots of other stuff happens too, but we can't tell you about it. That would ruin everything!



The gang as they were when it all started 6,000 years ago.