

TV Party: The Documentary / 2006 MVD / 91 Minutes /  
<http://www.mvdb2b.com> / Reviewed 04 June 2006

TV Party was a television show that took place in New York City in the late seventies and early eighties. This is after the punk scene started to fizzle out in that area, leaving only the art students to mount anything that resembled a revolution. This is a documentary about TV Party and the effect that it had on music, politics, and the city itself.

A heavy amount of first-hand footage is shown, and individuals that actually took part in the creation of the show are featured prominently. As well, individuals that had a guest role on the show (musicians like Deborah Harry from Blondie), make an appearance and give the documentary a more-encompassing role. Glenn O'Brien (the founder of TV Party) recollects how the idea for the show was first created; ey was a guest on a Yippie public access show and the next day, was recognized a number of times on the subway. This documentary is oriented heavily along a chronological line; the hour and a half of the documentary ranges from the beginning to the end of the show. TV Party seemed to be a very democratic type of show; while Glenn O'Brien was the ringleader and keeper of the festivities, all sorts of individuals had major roles on the show. For those individuals that were not alive when the show started (your reviewer included), TV Party shows that the technology available to your average individual working at a cable access station was not quite as comparable to the big stations. TV Party was in black and white, and while this should not decrease the enjoyment individuals draw from the show it should show that the road to creating a show that had such a high viewership was much more treacherous in 1982 than it is in the days of the net, podcasts, and the like.

Individuals that are familiar with TV Party actually get information about the show, a context in which the show existed. The show was based off an old Hugh Hefner show, instead of Johnny Carson and the other prime-time shows; how else are individuals supposed to know that unless they get that bit of information directly from the individuals that worked on the show. The show did not work within the rules and regulations that individuals like David Letterman and Johnny Carson had to work under; the resulting chaos meant that TV Party was much more realistic (some might even say surrealistic) than any other talk/variety show that was on the market. For example, during this documentary, there is footage where they took a homeless drug-addict off of the streets, paid eir, and interviewed eir. The resulting footage shows a grime and grit that is washed away when individuals like Letterman and Carson interview only the next big television starlet or sports star. This documentary should be required viewing for independent media creators, television executives, and historians; TV Party is a bit of American history that just is not mentioned much in the current period. Find this DVD!

Rating: 7.6/10

<http://www.neufutur.com/>