

## The Who, The Mods and the Quadrophenia Connection

### The Who

(DVD)

Available from [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com).

A review written for the Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange

by **Mark S. Tucker**

([progdawg@hotmail.com](mailto:progdawg@hotmail.com)).

I credit this film to The Who but it's not authorized by them nor by the film company that produced the vid version of Pete Townshend's marvelous rock opera. Thus, *The Who, The Mods, and the Quadrophenia Connection* is another in a slowly emerging line of quite entertaining and absorbing sociological looks at the history and effects of rock & roll on culture. Enough time has passed, there's no need for justifications in doing this, and so the oeuvre is arising. True, it's also an examination of the LP itself, as well as the group, a private release much in line with a cottage industry of filmic rock criticism that has shown itself to be legitimate and professional, but this peek into a recurring movement in England is intriguing in several ways, especially regarding its contrast against a staid anomie Brits are well-famed for.

The irony, of course, as the crits in the film observe, is that one of the all-time greatest rock guitarists, Pete Townshend, was never really a Mod anyway. That was just a release for his frustrations with the world at large and the closest he'd come to being involved outside the solipsistic cerebral realm artists occupy. More paradoxical still is the fact that the second of his two magnum opuses, the first being *Tommy*, has become the spark for a lifestyle that refuses to die, one that preceded the composer but which he guaranteed would remain in force at least for the foreseeable future. Should any doubt, and the sentiment is understandable given the scant attention the subject receives otherwise, this film proves it beyond doubt. That's the charm of this ilk of auteuring: it makes you re-examine baselines or come round to new notions.

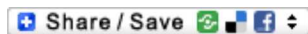
It happened to me when I reviewed the Lennon / McCartney video ([here](#)), whose premise yet works on my thinking and has answered a number of questions (chiefly, why was Lennon's solo output so poor in comparison to McCartney's far more colorful post-Beatles work and especially as against the Beatles' catalogue and dazzling later work?), and that's precisely in the rock idiom: challenge "facts", explore ideas, upset applectarts, all sorts of rebellious activity. It's nothing but healthy to question received "wisdom" and shine a light on little-known phenomena. *The Who, The Mods* does this so methodically that one can't help but come away convinced.

Of course, there are great clips of very early Who and pre-Who concerts (some a trifle marred by odd off-pixilation in the digitizing), tons of crit input (with the usual one or two making you wonder how some of these cats snagged the job in the first place, something I find highly amusing), careful proofs of

thesis, and just a hell of a lot in the way of genre feasting. Too, something always comes up to strike you a bit loop-eyed. For me, it was the liner statement that "the remaining members have not made a standout track since" Keith Moon, their nutter drummer, passed. I'd never thought of that, but it's a cogent observation, one that could itself use a documentary, as Townshend has had just about two decades self-indulgence to the point of musical suicide by now.

Probably the best endorsement of this type of work is the fact that I'm now hungering for more. A buddy passed along his copy of Total Rock Review's coverage of The Sensational Alex Harvey Band, and presently I'm looking at laying out the cash for a bunch more. If videos such as this are the business world's "cynical way" of parting we Boomer dinosaurs with our dollars for the privilege of reliving and reviewing our youths, then I say bring it on! I'm ready, willing, and able...and it sure as hell beats pondering the Bush/Clinton/Bush/Bush years, now don't it?

Edited by: David N. Pyles  
([dnpyles@acousticmusic.com](mailto:dnpyles@acousticmusic.com))



Copyright 2009, [Peterborough Folk Music Society](#).

This review may be reprinted with prior permission and attribution.



[Return to FAME Reviews](#)

[Return to FAME Home Page](#)



Return to [acousticmusic.com](#) Home Page

Website design by David N. Pyles  
[DNPyles@acousticmusic.com](mailto:DNPyles@acousticmusic.com)  
[acousticmusic.com](http://acousticmusic.com)