

THE WHO, THE MODS, AND THE QUADROPHENIA CONNECTION (Sexy Intellectual)

This DVD makes a noble attempt to present the history of Mod from its embryonic form to its current traces in culture, using the history of the Who, specifically the 1973 *Quadrophenia* album and 1979 movie as its cornerstone.

On hand offering thoughts are such Mod notables as Who biographers Richard Barnes and Alan Clayson, author Terry Rawlins, members of the Chords and the Purple Hearts, and others.

The story begins with the earliest Modernists in jazz clubs realizing they were greater in number than they thought, growing in number, melding with American rhythm & blues and yielding British combos. The difference between The Who and the Small Faces is spelled out here: The Who, one observer claims, were a band who became Mods, while the Small Faces were Mods who became a band (Richard Barnes explains how non-Mod Pete Townshend, art-school student, tapped into Mod to attain social acceptance he didn't otherwise have).

Later in the decade, true Mods knew things had gotten too commercial when "Mod" became internationally associated with "Swinging London," and eventually Mod became a forgotten era. A nostalgic Townshend, however, thought back to those glory days and created the *Quadrophenia* album and story in 1973, which introduced a new generation to Mod, just as the 1979 movie inspired many to go Mod (or at least to simply do whatever protagonist Jimmy Cooper did).

Unfortunately, few opinions offered are particularly insightful, some being overly philosophical, some simply incoherent, with the recollections of Richard Barnes, original Mod and friend of Townshend, the



most interesting. For me, the most interesting part of the DVD was the bonus feature of Barnes talking about the making of the 1973 album.

The liner notes promise "rarely seen performance and interview footage of The Who." Well, there is no Who interview footage at all, and no performance clips you likely haven't already seen. A 1967 Small Faces clip of "Tin Solider" was an odd choice since it comes up during a discussion of the earliest days of the British Mod bands. We do see clips of original Mods riding, rioting and explaining to a news crew their motivation for seaside violence: "Boredom."

While this DVD may not stand as the definitive documentary of Mod, it's something decent to watch while eating dinner. **(Michael Lynch)**