

THE WHO

The College of Marin

Week Seven

Essential Listening:

1. *Quadrophenia* (Universal, 1973). Although this was not as popular as *Tommy* and never will be, it was, along with *Tommy*, the Who's major concept album/rock opera. The double LP followed the story of Jimmy, a mid-'60s mod whose world comes crashing down as he struggles to fit in with his friends, family, and employers. His saving grace is his identification as a mod – though even that starts to fail him as he becomes disillusioned with his mod friends and role models, eventually drifting alone in a boat as he contemplates suicide. All of the songs were written by Pete Townshend (the only Who album of the 1960s and 1970s on which this is the case), and the history of the Who themselves is woven into the narrative, both via a cameo appearance at a concert attended by Jimmy, and in how Jimmy reflects the turbulent lives of many of the mods that comprised their original fan base.

The music was not a recreation of the mid-'60s early Who mod sound, however. Instead it leaned toward grandiose hard rock/progressive rock, Townshend using plenty of synthesizer, and John Entwistle contributing some horn arrangements. The packaging of the album was as ambitious as the music, the double LP accompanied by a 44-page booklet of photographs illustrating the story, and the inner gatefold including an actual short story by Pete Townshend laying out the opera's basic plot. On top of all this, Townshend also attempted to integrate "quadrophenia" – a four-way split personality in which each of the four guys in the Who would reflect an aspect of Jimmy's personality – into the story. There was also thought that *Quadrophenia* would utilize quadrophonic sound, though this idea was abandoned due to technical difficulties. Ultimately, *Quadrophenia*'s strength lies with Jimmy's actual story, with the role of the four-way split personality rather irrelevant and distracting, and indeed not apt to be noticed if it hadn't been pointed out in the notes and lyric sheet.

As with some other Who albums, *Quadrophenia* has been issued in a super-deluxe edition guaranteed to relieve you of your paycheck faster than Whole Foods shopping cart. This five-CD extravaganza includes the original album; 25 Townshend solo demos which illustrate how meticulously he sketched out the material, also including a few songs that didn't make the album, though these are weaker and more ill-fitting into the opera than the ones that were selected; a disc of 5.1 SurroundSound mixes of eight (and just eight) of the album's seventeen tracks; a seven-inch vinyl single of "5:15" and the non-LP B-side "Water"; a 100-page hardback book with an essay by Pete Townshend, illustrated with rare photos and documents; and assorted other memorabilia. Though the book promises an on-line area of yet additional bonus content via "Q-Cloud," the link provided to access it simply brings you to a "not found" page – an unconscionable rip-off

that, if nothing else, is in keeping with Townshend's failure to finish off his most ambitious '70s projects.

Recommended additional recordings by the Who, 1973-74:

1. Refreshingly, there is little non-*Quadrophenia* material to clutter up the Who's discography from this time, other than the rather unmemorable 1973 B-side "Water." That's included on the super-deluxe version of *Quadrophenia* (on a bonus seven-inch vinyl single), and also on a couple rarities compilations. January 1973 TV performances of "Relay" and "Long Live Rock" are the latest tracks on *BBC Sessions*. Non-Townshend solo albums by Entwistle (1973's *Rigor Mortis Sets In*) and Roger Daltrey (1973's *Daltrey*) also appeared during this period, and to be brutal aren't of much interest, though Daltrey's "Giving It All Away" was a Top Five hit in the UK.

2. *Odds & Sods* (Universal, 1974). Though this odds and ends collection has been referred to throughout these handouts, it actually first came out in 1974, and was one of the first rarities anthologies of a major band compiled with the artist's active participation. With recordings spanning 1964 to the early 1970s (all previously unreleased except the 1964 High Numbers single "I'm the Face"), and track-by-track annotation by Pete Townshend, it was indicative of how the Who were more conscious of archiving their own history than any group of comparable stature. If the songs were rather secondary relative to their standard albums and singles, they were pretty good, including some *Lifefhouse* remnants (particularly "Pure and Easy") and goofy outtakes ("Now I'm a Farmer," John Entwistle's "Postcard," the anti-smoking commercial "Little Billy"), as well as "Glow Girl" (whose riffs anticipated some of *Tommy*'s "It's a Boy") and the anthemic "Long Live Rock." The 1998 CD reissue adds considerable value by expanding the size with a dozen additional tracks from the same era, most of them previously unreleased.

Notable unreleased Who material, 1973-74:

1. Though the Who blamed lukewarm audience reception and technical problems on their decision not to play concerts based around *Quadrophenia* material after their US tour in late 1973, actually some of the final shows that survive on tape are pretty good. And you can hear two of them – from December 4 in Philadelphia, and December 6 near Washington, DC – on the Wolfgang's Vault site in good quality.

2. Although Pete Townshend did not release solo records during this period or start a solo career, he did perform a benefit concert on April 14, 1974 at the Roundhouse in London. It was truly solo in that he wasn't accompanied by other musicians, though his vocals and electric/acoustic guitar playing were backed by a rhythm box and prerecorded tapes. The bootleg of this is a little boxy soundwise, but pretty listenable, and interesting for his solo performances of numerous Who songs, going back as far as "My Generation" and up to the early-'70s numbers "Behind Blue Eyes" and "Let's See Action." It also has odd cover versions of songs by Bob Dylan, Tim Hardin, Bo Diddley, and Jimmy Reed, among others. It's ultimately more an interesting novelty than a look at where he was at as a

singer-songwriter, not including any *Quadrophenia* songs or material he was developing outside of the Who.

Recommended books:

Won't Get Fooled Again: The Who from Lifehouse to Quadrophenia, by Richie Unterberger (Jawbone Press, 2011). As this book's by the instructor of this course, this can't pretend to be an objective recommendation. It charts the genesis and collapse of the Who's most ambitious concept album, *Lifehouse* (which mutated into 1971's *Who's Next*), as well as their successfully completed 1973 rock opera *Quadrophenia*. I know this was listed a couple weeks ago, but the second half of the book is very much focused on the *Quadrophenia* era.

Recommended DVD/videos:

The Who, Quadrophenia: Can You See the Real Me? (2012). Frustratingly, this 70-minute documentary, broadcast on the BBC in 2012, is only commercially available as a pay-per-view on iTunes. It features first-hand interviews about *Quadrophenia* with Pete Townshend, Roger Daltrey, and several close associates like manager Bill Curbishley, friend/Who biographer Richard Barnes, Who fan Irish Jack Lyons (part of the model for the Jimmy character), photographer Ethan Russell, and even a couple of the women who played part of the mod gang in the *Quadrophenia* booklet. There's also some archive footage of interviews with Keith Moon and John Entwistle, as well as some (though not a ton) of footage of the band performing *Quadrophenia* material in 1973 and 1974.

Bronco Bullfrog (British Film Institute, 1970). Quirky low-budget film about British mods in the late 1960s, a good five years or so after the mod movement from which the Who sprang peaked. This captures the disillusionment of the young British mod in an effectively low-key way, minus the great mid-'60s British Invasion music that made life much more bearable for their slightly earlier counterparts. It's of interest as a possible influence on the Who's *Quadrophenia*, since the visual style and some of the actual shots/scenes are very similar to the tone used for the photographs in the *Quadrophenia* booklet.

Quadrophenia (Image Entertainment, 1979). This was previously cited in another handout as the film version of the Who's 1973 album *Quadrophenia*. It's both surprisingly excellent and faithful to the spirit of the original album, using many songs from the LP on the soundtrack. But it's also a good fictional movie evocation of the mod movement through which the Who first rose to stardom. The extras on the 2012 edition include some exciting previously unissued live footage of the band from 1965.

That'll Be the Day (1973). Unfortunately not available on DVD in a US-friendly format, this British film starred actual rock star David Essex, playing a teenager/young adult growing up in pre-Beatles late-'50s/early-'60s Britain. Keith Moon has a rather small and underwhelming role as a musician in a rock band, the Stray Cats (the inspiration for the

name of the '80s rockabilly stars), and Ringo Starr has a bigger supporting role as a friend of the male lead.

Stardust (1974). The sequel to *That'll Be the Day* is also unavailable on US-friendly DVD. In this picture, the character played by David Essex becomes a not-too-believable big '60s British rock star. Moon again plays a drummer, in a role that doesn't utilize his legendarily zany comedic persona as much as you might expect.

Notable People:

Michael Apted: Director of *Stardust*. Most famous for his documentary films following British children of different backgrounds from the age of seven in 1962 (*7Up* through *56up*), updating their lives every seven years.

Maggie Bell: Singer with British band Stone the Crows, and had a role in the orchestral version of *Tommy*. Was offered the chance to record "Love Reign O'er Me" before the Who decided to use it on *Quadrophenia*.

Eric Clapton: Pete Townshend helped organize a comeback concert of sorts for the famous fellow British guitarist at the Rainbow Theatre in London on January 13, 1973. Clapton was addicted to heroin, and Townshend and other friends got the show together to try to get Eric's career going again. Pete also played in the band at the two performances, some of which were issued as *Eric Clapton's Rainbow Concert*.

Bill Curbishley: Who employee who started to assume role in their management around the time of *Quadrophenia*, becoming their actual manager by the mid-1970s.

John Curle: BBC radio announcer who has a cameo reporting on mod vs. rockers as one of *Quadrophenia's* sound effects.

David Essex: 1970s British rock star (whose only big US hit was "Rock On") who starred in *That'll Be the Day* and *Stardust*.

Adam Faith: 1960s British teen idol pop star who co-produced (with David Courtney) Roger Daltrey's 1973 solo debut LP, and also starred alongside David Essex in *Stardust*.

Scott Halpin: 19-year-old fan in the audience at the November 20, 1973 concert at the San Francisco Cow Palace where Keith Moon passed out near the end of the show. After the Who asked if anyone in the crowd could play drums, Halpin offered his services and played on the last few songs.

Rod Houson: Built the home studio in Goring-on-Thames in which Townshend would record demos for *Quadrophenia*, and helped gather sound effects for the *Quadrophenia* album.

Terry “Chad” Kennett: Played the role of “Jimmy” in the photographs in the *Quadrophenia* booklet.

Donald K. Donald: Montreal promoter who somehow bailed the Who out of jail in the middle of the night after they were arrested for damaging a hotel suite in early December 1973.

Ian McLagan: After Keith Moon’s marriage broke up in 1973, his wife Kim hooked up with Small Faces/Faces keyboardist Ian McLagan, with whom she lived until her death in a car accident in 2006.

Peter Neal: Filmmaker who briefly shot images that were intended to be used as a backdrop when the Who performed material from *Quadrophenia* in concert, though the plan was abandoned. Later directed the 1975 Yes concert movie *Yessongs*.

Ron Nevison: Engineer for *Quadrophenia*.

Bobby Pridden: Who soundman who was the target of Townshend’s wrath at the November 5, 1973 Who concert in Newcastle where equipment malfunctioned and Townshend smashed his guitar, walking off stage in frustration.

Barry Prior: Seventeen-year-old trainee accountant mod who mysteriously fell to his death off a cliff in Saltdean, five miles east of Brighton, on May 18, 1964. He has been suggested as a possible role model, or part of one, for the Jimmy character in *Quadrophenia*.

Chris Stainton: Pianist in Joe Cocker’s band, who plays piano on three tracks on *Quadrophenia*. The song “Drowned” uses a riff that Stainton had played on Cocker’s “Hitchcock Railway.”

Claude Watham: Director of *That’ll Be the Day*.

Notable Landmarks:

Bonaventure Hotel: Montreal hotel where the Who and some of their touring entourage were arrested and thrown in jail after trashing a hotel suite on December 2, 1973. Roger Daltrey was one of those imprisoned, although he was asleep and not at the suite at the time.

Charlton Athletic Football Club: The Who played this South London athletic stadium in front of 50,000 fans on May 18, 1974, some of the show getting broadcast on BBC television a few months later.

Cornwall: Seaside town in southwest England where many of the ocean sound effects for *Quadrophenia* were recorded.

London Roundhouse: Long-lived London venue where Pete Townshend did a solo benefit show on April 14, 1974.

Cow Palace: San Francisco venue where Keith Moon collapsed near the end of the first concert of their 1973 US tour on November 20, having taken a dose of elephant tranquilizer.

Hammersmith Odeon: Famous London concert venue where the Who were photographed for a picture in the *Quadrophenia* booklet – the only photo in which they appear in the *Quadrophenia* packaging.

Madison Square Gardens: The Who did several shows at this famous New York facility in June 1974, marking their final concerts until October 1975.

Odeon Cinema, Newcastle: Site of the infamous concert where an equipment breakdown precipitated an onstage breakdown by Pete Townshend on December 5, 1973.

Rainbow Theatre: Famous London venue where Pete helped to organize an Eric Clapton concert on January 13, 1973. Townshend played in the band, and recordings from the two performances were issued in September 1973 as *Eric Clapton's Rainbow Concert*. The purpose of the show was to get a heroin-addicted Clapton out of seclusion and making music again.

Rampart Studio: After building this studio in the Battersea district of London, the Who recorded most of *Quadrophenia* here.

Regent's Park: The brass band heard to link “The Dirty Jobs” with “Helpless Dancer” on *Quadrophenia* was recorded in one of London's most esteemed parks.

Top of the Pops: Keith Moon's rowdy behavior at the taping of a performance of “5:15” on the set of *Top of the Pops*, the BBC's most popular music show, actually got the Who banned from the BBC Club until they issued a letter of apology. The performance itself featured some guitar smashing, drum trashing, and assorted equipment throwing.

Waterloo Station: The famous London train station where an actual train whistle was recorded for the beginning of “5:15” after an engineer was bribed five pounds to sound it.

Albums by Artists Who Were Influential on and/or influenced by the Who in 1973-74:

David Bowie, *Pin Ups* (Parlophone, 1973). The same month *Quadrophenia* was released, David Bowie – about the hottest new superstar in the UK, and well on his way to similar stature in the US – unexpectedly released an album of oldies covers. It was about the first project of its sort by a big rock star, even if the oldies were from the mid-'60s and a little less than ten years old. It wasn't nearly as good as either the originals or Bowie's own other albums of the time. But the original versions of songs he covered by

Them, the Yardbirds, the Pretty Things, the Merseybeats, the Easybeats, the Mojos, the Kinks, and, with “I Can’t Explain” and “Anyway, Anyhow, Anywhere,” the Who, give a fair indication of what the mid-‘60s mods depicted in *Quadrophenia* (and Bowie himself) were listening to back then.

Eric Clapton, *Eric Clapton’s Rainbow Concert* (Polydor, 1973). The audio document of the concert Pete Townshend helped organize isn’t Clapton at his best, though it includes some of the most famous songs with which he’s identified. With a band including Townshend, Ronnie Wood, bassist Ric Grech (once of Family and Blind Faith), Stevie Winwood, and Traffic drummer Jim Capaldi, Clapton ran through favorites from his days with Cream, Derek & the Dominos, and Blind Faith, and his early solo career. The 1993 CD reissue greatly expanded the length from six songs to fourteen tracks, including such numbers as “Layla,” “Badge,” “Presence of the Lord,” “Crossroads,” “Let It Rain,” “Bell Bottom Blues,” and his version of Jimi Hendrix’s “Little Wing.”

Joe Cocker, *Joe Cocker!* (A&M, 1969). The soulful British rock star’s second album was the one to feature “Hitchcock Railway,” Chris Stainton playing a piano riff he reprised on *Quadrophenia*’s “Drowned.” Interestingly, Stainton said he took the riff from a previous version of the song by Jose Feliciano. Townshend first heard Stainton play them at a Chicago concert in May 1969 where Cocker supported the Who. Otherwise, Cocker and this album – also featuring versions of the Beatles’ “She Came in Through the Bathroom Window” and “Something,” as well as covers of songs by Leonard Cohen, Leon Russell, John Sebastian, and Bob Dylan – did not seem to exert much of a direct influence on the Who.

The Kinks, *Preservation Act 1* (Universal, 1973). The Kinks had not given up on concept albums by the time of *Quadrophenia*, though they’d fallen far behind the Who in popularity. This is their 1973 effort in that department, based around eccentric British character types, and is daintier, more theatrical, and less effective than their more noted LPs in the style. They’d do a sequel, too, with 1974’s double LP *Preservation Act 2*. Both parts of *Preservation* were combined onto one CD release by Rhino in 1991.

Ronnie Lane, *Anymore for Anymore* (GM, 1974) and ***Ronnie Lane’s Slim Chance*** (Island, 1974). One of Pete Townshend’s closest musician friends was Ronnie Lane, an important bassist, songwriter, and sometime singer in the Small Faces and Faces. When he left the Faces, his first two solo albums had a much more rustic and folkie feel than what he’d done in his bands, rather like Pete Townshend’s early solo work had a more rustic, folkier feel than the Who. Townshend and Lane would team up for a project a couple years or so after the release of these records.

Pink Floyd, *Dark Side of the Moon* (Capitol, 1973). One of the most popular albums of all time – having sold far more copies than even *Tommy*, let alone *Quadrophenia* – Pink Floyd’s *Dark Side of the Moon* was their most conceptual work besides 1979’s *The Wall*, though there was not a specific storyline or concept in the manner of the Who’s rock operas. There wasn’t much sonic resemblance between *Dark Side of the Moon* and

Quadrophenia, except one: both are perhaps the most famous rock records to make frequent creative use of sound effects.