

DVD Review: 'Conan O'Brien Can't Stop' Tells Half the Story

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on September 25, 2011 - 9:52pm

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CHICAGO – You may assume from that title that I'm referring to the "other half" of Conan O'Brien's story being that of Jay Leno and his involvement in the debacle surrounding "The Tonight Show" but I could care less what Leno has to say. Or anyone at NBC. No, this hardcore Team Coco member was surprised by how much of the acclaimed new doc about O'Brien, recently released on DVD, was about his tour and how little was about what the man has gone through in the last couple years. It's a good doc about how to come out of a tough situation without really telling us enough about how O'Brien got there in the first place.



DVD Rating: **3.0/5.0**

I honestly don't understand anyone who sides with Jay Leno in the NBC nightmare. The man voluntarily gave over his spot on "The Tonight Show" with years of advance notice and then essentially sabotaged his supposed friend by taking part in the dumbest move in primetime history. Yes, dumber than "Cop Rock." Anyone who thought that "The Jay Leno Show" would work at 10pm should not be allowed to work in TV ever again. And this decision led to ratings drama that NBC still has not recovered from and sunk any chance that O'Brien had to succeed with "The Tonight Show." You can think Jay Leno is funnier (although I don't really get that either), but it is simply denying facts to think that Conan O'Brien had the chance he was promised with the Holy Grail of late night comedy.

After such a nightmare situation, how does a man recover? A workaholic like O'Brien got to work. He wasn't allowed to do so on TV and so he did something that played to his love for vaudeville comedy and took a musical/stand-up act on the road. With a touring schedule that would kill younger men, he traveled the country, successfully keeping his story in the public eye and making his transition back into TV on TBS easier.

We know that story. So what do we learn from "Conan O'Brien Can't Stop"? Not enough. There are a few moments of insight in which O'Brien speaks of his anger at what happened and moments where he misses his family but those are drowned out by quick-cuts of autograph signings and musical numbers. The idea is that O'Brien works incredibly, incredibly hard, but I was reminded how last year's brilliant "Joan Rivers: A Piece of Work" offered personal insight beyond the surface. That's just not here. Perhaps it is because Conan himself doesn't have all the answers yet about what happened; about why he works so hard; about what drives him. But that makes for a documentary that's very entertaining without being nearly as enlightening as fans would hope.



Conan O'Brien Can't Stop was released on Blu-ray and DVD on September 13th, 2011

Photo credit: Magnolia

Synopsis:

After a much-publicized departure from hosting NBC's Tonight Show, Conan O'Brien hit the road with a 32-city music-and-comedy show. The answer to a contractual stipulation that banned his appearance on television, radio and the internet for six months following his last show. Filmmaker Rodman Flender's resulting documentary, Conan O'Brien Can't Stop, is an intimate portrait of an artist trained in improvisation, captured at the most improvisational time of his career.

Special Features:

- o Commentary With Director Rodman Flender, Conan O'Brien, Andy Richter, Mike Sweeney and Sona Movesian
- o Interview With Conan O'Brien
- o Interview With Outtakes
- o Additional Scenes

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