

Title:

Classic Television DVDs Bring Johnny Carson Back To The Small Screen

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Summary:

Who could forget the smooth sound of Ed McMahon's voice announcing with practiced timbre, "Heeeeeeeeeere's Johnny!" each night to millions of Americans as they sat up in their living rooms ready to watch another round of Johnny Carson giving his low-key monologue with the hard-to-resist deadpan delivery that we all came to know and love. Even today in the new millennium, thanks to classic TV DVDs, we are still able to see the comedic genius at work, albeit it doesn't have to b...

Keywords:

Johnny Carson, classic television on DVD, classic television, classic TV DVD

Article Body:

Who could forget the smooth sound of Ed McMahon's voice announcing with practiced timbre, "Heeeeeeeeeere's Johnny!" each night to millions of Americans as they sat up in their living rooms ready to watch another round of Johnny Carson giving his low-key monologue with the hard-to-resist deadpan delivery that we all came to know and love. Even today in the new millennium, thanks to classic TV DVDs, we are still able to see the comedic genius at work, albeit it doesn't have to be in the wee hours of the morning.

Johnny Carson's primary claim to fame was as America's late night king of comedy. For thirty years he hosted NBC television's Tonight Show, and because of his up-to-the-minute monologues, flippant characters and lighthearted sketches he entered more homes via the television than any other performer had ever done before. His late night set provided the launching pad for many budding stars and starlets, gave widespread publicity for hundreds of books, movies and gadgets and never failed to offer a laugh (or two or three) to the millions of viewers tuned in.

Carson was well known as getting his start in the world of magic at a very young age in his hometown of Norfolk, Nebraska. Performing feats of prestidigitation was his first love, but that was interrupted by World War II and a couple of years in the US Navy. After the war, Carson decided to attend college and chose the field of radio as his major. This proved to be a good choice for a young guy

who had no idea of the impact that entertainment, particularly television, was about to have on the world at large as well as his home soil. After graduation he started a job as a radio deejay, but shortly thereafter the advent of TV began to take the country by storm.

Starting out with television at its inception must have been an exciting time. Johnny Carson got in on the true ground floor and never left until his retirement some 40 years later. What a mark he left on the industry. His first stint on the visual air was hosting an afternoon program broadcast out of Omaha, Nebraska, called The Squirrel's Nest. He pretty much had the run of that show doing local interviews, practicing his vast array of characters by performing skits and sketches and learning how to perfect his inimitable timing in the delivery of jokes and stories. Today some of his earliest works can be seen on classic TV DVD selections where a young Carson displays the same endearing grin he charmed audiences with decades later.

Johnny Carson decided to try television in a big way when he made the decision to move to Hollywood in the 1950s. During his fledgling years in Hollywood, Carson hosted a gamut of television shows ranging from such titles as Carson's Cellar, two different versions of the Johnny Carson Show, and two quiz shows called Earn Your Vacation and Who Do You Trust? During this time he also worked as a writer for the Red Skelton Show. All of this was merely practice for what many say is his greatest achievement - replacing the retiring Jack Paar and hosting the Tonight Show.

It was in the Fall of 1962 that Carson took the seat behind the famous desk that was to be his for the next 30 years. Even though he had a completely opposite style from Paar, Carson did not need long to win over his audience. Before a half year had passed, the Tonight Show ratings were exceeding Paar's by almost 500,000 viewers. It was an unprecedented event when within a decade and a half on the air, the Tonight Show doubled its audience numbers. Johnny Carson had left his mark on the world and became an icon of classic television. Film critic, David Edelstein, put it so well when he wrote Carson was the "naughty genius of late night".

Johnny Carson was an entertainer who drew viewers in night after night with his droll expressions, edgy comedic sketches and compelling, humorous interviews. His comedy was as timeless as his slim, dapper, boyish good looks. Through the emergence of classic television on DVD, Johnny Carson's comedy is being relived by his fans and seen for the first time by a new generation.

~Ben Anton, 2007