

# Conan's foul-mouthed dog embodies male stereotypes

Triumph has catapulted from late-night television to the recording industry with 'Come Poop with Me'

By Aaron Shakra  
Pulse Editor

Triumph the Insult Comic Dog is a stereotype of the male libido with an unquenchable sexual thirst and seemingly unlimited cache of comebacks, come-ons and put-downs to set gender equality back 50 years.

## CD REVIEW

Lately, the dog — don't call him a puppet — who coined the phrase "...for me to poop on" has been getting pooped on himself. Triumph, spawned from the talk show "Late Night with Conan O'Brien," hit Toronto two weeks ago along with O'Brien to film the show there.

During one segment, which was filmed in Quebec City, Triumph asked a passer-by, "So you're French and Canadian, yes?" following with the insult "You're obnoxious and dull." This is but one mild example of

the dog's hijinks. A more extreme one might be Triumph telling the Québécois they ought to learn English since they live in North America.

Feb. 16, The New York Times reported: "Alexa McDonough, a member of Parliament from the social democratic New Democratic Party, demanded that the show return an estimated \$750,000 it received in Canadian taxpayer's promotional money for coming to Toronto."

For those who remain unfazed by the remarks of that cigar-smoking dog, you might want to try sampling his album "Come Poop with Me." It is nothing less than a singing, dancing, comedy glimpse into the dog's soul. Part of the fun of this release is how far the production team (including executive producer Adam Sandler) went into exploring the character of Triumph. This is evident in the extensive liner notes written by MTV's Kurt Loder.

Those who have seen Triumph on "Late Night" will consider such segments in a new light after spinning "Come Poop with Me" on your CD and movie players. Comparatively, those appearances on O'Brien's show are tame.

The album is a two-disc set, containing one CD and one DVD. The DVD

portion contains 12 different sketches, featuring guests such as Jared "Subway" Fogle, Janeane Garofalo and "Blackwolf the Dragonmaster." The album contains many of the same songs and sketches on the DVD, but adds different tracks, including the brilliant "You Have To Work Blue." This track begins with Triumph whimsically explaining, "I don't apologize for my comedy. I don't apologize for it. It harks back to a time of innocence." However, following the French Canadian debacle, O'Brien apologized for Triumph's words Feb. 17.

In tracks such as "Benji's Queer," Triumph's latent liberalism is not well-hidden. Commenting on the breath of a man in the audience during a DVD segment called "Sense of Smell," he says, "Don't worry about it my friend — we all poop on both sides of the street these days."

The highlight of the album is clearly the all-star sing-along "Together in Pooping," which features Maya Rudolph, Conan O'Brien, Adam Sandler, Jack Black, Horatio Sanz and of course Triumph. The performers begin singing verses, such as O'Brien's "Pooping saves the world/Pooping helps the

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## SONICS

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and that \$15 ends up in the coffers of some giant record company, fueling the next Britney Spears pain parade. No wonder illegal downloading was so popular, but so much for that. The Man wins again.

This aversion to mainstream music is why people listen to the Sonics. Loud and nasty without being aggressive, they played punk before anybody thought to call it that. Inspired by the likes of Little Richard and local stompers such as the Wailers, the Sonics dominated the Northwest music scene for a scant few years in the mid-1960s. The band released a trove of singles, three full-length albums, yet was hardly known outside of Washington and Oregon during its lifetime. Today the band is known mostly just by circles of garage-rock aficionados.

Among its recorded works, the first two albums stand as the best. Released on the Etiquette label, "Here Are the Sonics!!!" from 1965 and "The Sonics Boom," from 1966, are essentially two halves of the same album. In form and style, they are indistinguishable. The only difference is one has a different set of great songs than the other. Together, they represent some of the best garage

rock of the 1960s.

The first album opens with "The Witch," the band's signature tune and the one they are most known for today (when they are known at all). Originally conceived as a dance tune akin to "The Twist," the Sonics instead decided to go for something with a little more substance. With propelling rhythms and over-amped guitars, "The Witch" sums up just about everything the band would do from then on.

Another noteworthy original on the album is "Psycho," one of many songs the band wrote about how evil women can drive a person insane. This song also best demonstrates lead singer Gerry Roslie's over-the-top wailing. He screams every verse with wild-eyed desperation, hollering just like his rhythm and blues heroes might have, had they all been completely demented.

"Strychnine" could be the best track on the album, in terms of originality. For one, it doesn't deal with relationship problems or cheating women. Instead it deals with the singer's love of the title poison with simple eloquence: "Some folks like water / some folks like wine / but I like the taste / of straight strychnine." It's hard to beat lyrics like that. The song is also one of the tightest performances on the album, while at the same time seeming to border on chaos with every note.

"Boom" features equally deranged performances. Opening with the menacing "Cinderella," the album traverses the landscape of mid-1960s pop music, all rendered under the Sonics' distorted crunch-n'-grind guitars. Here, the covers hold the most interest, with the band pumping out its own versions of standards like "Let the Good Times Roll" and "Jenny Jenny." The garage-rock classic "Louie Louie" is also covered on the record. With the Sonics adding their own edge to it, it's about the scariest version of the song recorded to date.

One of the standout originals is "He's Waitin'," another song about evil women. Containing a simple powerhouse riff, the tune is one of the most vicious things the band has ever recorded, coming closer to sounding like heavy metal than any other band was at that time.

After "Boom," the Sonics recorded one more album on a different label. But higher production values didn't sit well with the band's sound, and it broke up without recording much else. But the first two albums remain as artifacts from a time when you could actually hear music you liked played on the radio.

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