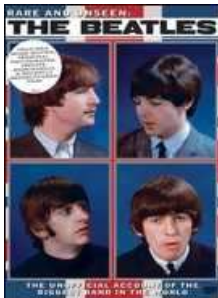



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**Case Number 17329: Small Claims Court**


## The Beatles: Rare And Unseen

**MVD Visual** // 2007 // 90 Minutes // Not Rated

Reviewed by Appellate Judge James A. Stewart // September 24th, 2009

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Appellate Judge James A. Stewart was the Eighth Beatle.

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### Scales of Justice

**Judgment:** 80

### Perp Profile

**Studio:** [MVD Visual](#)

**Video Formats:**

- 1.78:1 Anamorphic

**Audio Formats:**

- Dolby Digital 2.0 Stereo (English)

**Subtitles:**

- None

**Running Time:** 90 Minutes

**Release Year:** 2007

**MPAA Rating:** Not Rated

**Genres:**

- [Concerts and Musicals](#)
- [Documentary](#)
- [Television](#)

### Distinguishing Marks

- Bonus Interviews
- Booklet

### Accomplices

- [IMDb](#)
- [TheBeatles.com](#)

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### The Charge

"This is the unofficial account of the biggest band in the world..."

### The Case

I recall a *Doctor Who* episode I saw years ago in which the Doctor's granddaughter sees a Beatles concert on TV and calls it classical music. That one-off joke was actually a prophetic statement. Generations have grown up with the Beatles' music, even though the band only stayed together for a few years, and there's no reason to doubt John Lennon when he says in an interview clip, giving an example of his band's impact, that "Eleanor Rigby" will endure for centuries. Since none of us have a TARDIS, we can't go back and see those concerts live or see the Beatles hanging out, but there's always the possibility that some rare footage will turn up.

Actually, it's a certainty. **The Beatles: Rare and Unseen** found six such pieces of rare footage. Here's what you'll find, as described on the DVD cover:

- Earliest known footage of the Beatles on stage, Liverpool, February 1962
- Only existing film on tour in Scotland, Cairo Hall Dundee, October 1964
- Filming of [Help!](#), Bahamas, February 1965
- Filming of Magical Mystery Tour, Newquay, September 1967
- Home Movie Footage, Paris Olympia Theatre, January 1964
- Highlights of interview with John Lennon, Recorded in New York for French TV

The footage that hooks you is in there, but it's more of a springboard for interviews and reminiscences. There'll always be someone talking, and the footage is often used in the background behind the interviewees. The comments from the likes of Phil Collins, Steve Harley, Gerry Marsden, and Sylvie Vartan (that's her son on *Alias*, by the way) are interesting enough, but there's nothing surprising, and they take away from the footage. If you just want to sit and listen to the music from a rare Beatles performance, forget it.

Stories that weren't included in the special are featured in the extras, which last more than half an hour. There's no "play all" feature, so you'll have to restart things every few minutes. I was really disappointed not to see more of the rare film in the extras. There's a nice booklet with an essay by Tony Barrow, who was a press manager for the band.

Although I don't see any air dates on IMDb, **The Beatles: Rare and Unseen** appears to be a television documentary, with breaks which would suggest "put commercials here." It was hard to judge because each segment had its own runtime on my DVD player, but I think the 90-minute runtime listed on the box included the extras.

When things got too familiar, I found myself wondering about the concert times on a vintage poster used as a background. At 6:35 and 8:50? Is that tied to the train schedules or something?

**The Beatles: Rare and Unseen** dovetailed in places with [The Unseen Beatles](#), a documentary I screened earlier for DVD Verdict. However, while **Rare and Unseen** deals with music and nostalgia, **Unseen** delved more into what it was like to be a Beatle. While **Rare and Unseen** isn't terrible, I'd definitely lean toward **The Unseen Beatles** when seeking out documentaries with rare footage of the Fab Four.

#### The Verdict

It's guilty of a flawed presentation of interesting material, but may still be of interest to hardcore Beatles fans.

#### Similar Decisions

- [Meerkat Manor: Season Two](#)
- [Bob Dylan: No Direction Home](#)
- [Stagedoor \(2006\)](#)
- [Jack Pierce: The Man Behind The Monsters](#)

#### Give us your feedback!

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