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Michael Jackson: The Trial and Triumph of the King of Pop

Score: **60%**
Rating: **Not Yet Rated**
Publisher: **MVD Entertainment Group**
Region: **1**
Media: **DVD/1**
Running Time: **76 Mins.**
Genre: **Documentary/Reality**
Audio: **English Language, Stereo**

It's hard to know where to begin with **Michael Jackson: The Trial and Triumph of the King of Pop**. Imagine if Michael Moore was a woman, and then that woman was Michael Jackson's mother, and then she decided to make a "documentary" about her son. Well, Michael Moore has higher production value, but you'd be on the right track. See, it's not that this video doesn't say things that aren't true, it's just set up in a way that makes you doubt that you're getting the whole story. And the whole thing is narrated and hosted by a woman, who goes by Pearl Jr., that uses such a patronizing tone that you wonder if the audience is supposed to be a bunch of 4th graders.

What this video is not is a neutral documentary of the events leading up to and surrounding the child molestation trial Michael went through in 2005. What it is, is a collection of footage and interviews from people who were involved with the trial. A lot of what you'll see here is footage that you haven't seen before in the many Michael Jackson TV specials and documentaries that we've all seen. Most people have seen at least parts of the Martin Bashir documentary that prominently showed Michael's eccentricities and portrayed him as weird or creepy. But lesser known is the fact that Michael was to have the ultimate say in the final cut of the documentary, but the documentary aired without his approval. Well, according to this video, it did.

You see, it's hard to pull out those little factual unbiased elements from this video when you've got so many examples of completely biased, ridiculous reporting. At one point, Pearl Jr. takes a trip to Michael's ranch, the place where the molestation was alleged to have taken place. One of the charges in the 2005 trial was that Michael had conspired to hold Gavin Arvizo and his family captive. She stops by a wooden rail fence on the ranch and says with a laugh that it looks like the kid and his family would have no trouble escaping because it is (implied that it is) such a short and open fence. Alright, true, the fence would not hold a person if it were the only source of detainment. However, this is something like saying that you cannot hold a person captive in a car because they could always just open the door and run. You would assume that physical and verbal threats would go along with an attempt to hold a person and their family, but this wasn't addressed in the brief visit to the ranch. However ridiculous the charge of imprisoning the family may have been, it's silly defenses like these that don't help Michael's case.

The production value on this video is also quite low and that puts it in the same group with a lot of "conspiracy theory" videos and other misleading drivel, whether that be a fair comparison or not. Strange color filters are randomly washed over certain parts of the video for no apparent reason. Sometimes a "fact" is randomly shown at the bottom of the screen that has something to do with the interview or the narration you're listening to, but sometimes it's completely random. "Dates of alleged molestation were NEVER determined," flashes on the screen while you listen to a fan outside the courtroom talk about something completely unrelated. There are even stranger and more confusing editing choices in this video. At one point, you're shown a fan that has brought a paper-maché model and a poster of the Jolly Green Giant. The fan explains that he brought it because he saw a video of Michael with his kids where Michael pointed to a Jolly Green Giant statue and told them to eat their vegetables. When he's done explaining his story, the subtitle "See, Michael is innocent!" is quickly flashed across the screen. Are the producers being sarcastic now or is this an actual fact that they believe they could pull from this interview? I am not sure I want to know at this point.

If you can look past Pearl's sing-song voice and the somewhat schizophrenic editing job, there is content here that you probably won't see anywhere else. Mainly, you get to see more of the fans that were there to support Michael during the trial than you usually see, as Pearl and the camera linger with them longer than most documentaries would. People who have written books supporting Michael are given a lot of camera and interview time as well. There are interesting facts to be pulled from this video, but you really do have to pull them out. I'm not sure that even hardcore Michael Jackson fans would enjoy this production, so even for them, I would recommend trying to rent it or find a clip from it somewhere before buying it.

