

**Michael Jackson: The Trial and Triumph  
of the King of Pop ★1/2**

(2009) 76 min. DVD: \$14.95. Music Video  
Distributors (avail. from most distributors).

Released less than a month after Michael  
Jackson's death in June 2009, this flimsy

film—which promises to offer insight into the circumstances surrounding Jackson's 2005 molestation trial—hardly qualifies as a serious documentary. Director and self-described activist Pearl Jr.—who also serves as the on-camera host—is an unabashed fan, little different from the Jackson acolytes who turned out to support him every day at the Santa Maria, CA courthouse. In their world, prosecutor Thomas Sneddon was a villain out to ruin the innocent star, although Sneddon's vendetta, according to Pearl Jr., was just one of the five (count 'em) possible conspiracies that she has discovered “to destroy the life and legacy of this luminary figure” (others involved Sony, the accuser's mother, and, of course, the media). Those who were against Jackson are dismissed as Bible-thumping crazies, while defense attorney Tom Mesereau, on the other hand, is a saint (Jackson was acquitted of all charges). As a journalist, Pearl Jr. makes Perez Hilton look like Woodward and Bernstein. Not recommended. Aud: P. (S. Graham)

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