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'Family Guy' flies onto DVD

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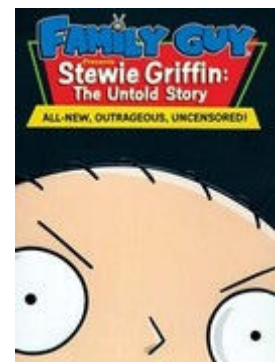
"Family Guy" Presents Stewie Griffin: The Untold Story

Not Rated (Content not suitable for all ages; parental discretion is advised)

Starring the voices of Seth MacFarlane, Alex Borstein, Mila Kunis, Seth Green

Stater rating (out of four):

**



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Whether or not you are a fan of the show, you have probably at least heard of "Family Guy."

This animated TV series that airs both on Fox and reruns on Cartoon Network's Adult Swim programming block has gained a fanbase not unlike "The Simpsons" or "South Park." In a sense, one might say that "Family Guy" is a middle ground of sorts between those two shows. The Griffin family could be compared to the Simpson family, though the language-use is more along the lines of what one hears on "South Park."

The main characters are the Griffin family: Peter (the father), Lois (the mother), Meg (the daughter), Chris (the son), Stewie (the infant) and Brian (the talking family dog).

This DVD release could be seen as a sort of gift to viewers who supported the series above and beyond turning on a TV. The gift is the longest single episode of the series, with uncensored dialogue and plenty of jokes and situations that most likely will not make it into the made-for-TV, three-episode version.

The premise of this movie/episode is simple: Stewie sees someone on the news that looks just like him, only older. He concludes that this man must be his real father, and that Peter is not. Seeking answers, Stewie enlists the aid of Brian to reach San Francisco. The two embark upon an amusing cross-country road trip full of the familiar, irreverent humor found throughout the TV show.

Unfortunately, neither the package itself nor the extras are particularly impressive. The packaging is standard fare, and the extras consist of a commentary track with the show's creators and trailers. Additionally, the price (\$20), hardly seems worth it for nearly 90 minutes of material that will inevitably appear as three "normal" (and edited/censored) episodes of the TV show.

This movie is simply a long "Family Guy" episode, with all the familiar trappings of the typical show, except that the humor and crudeness is taken a bit beyond what would be permitted on TV.

While the story contained here provides about as much characterization as any regular episodes, the insights and secrets offer less payoff than expected. This release, and its "untold story," is for the die-hard fans of the show. Those who occasionally tune in will enjoy the content as well, but would be just as well-served by waiting for this to air as three episodes on regular TV.

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