

Act Three Scene Three: Rolls 45-A + 68-B

During the switching of the Nagra A-Cam and B-Cam tapes, both **Paul** and **George** dial back on their tense exchanges. Was there a mini off-film meeting that resulted in a deliberate attitude adjustment? We can only speculate. If there was such a meeting, it was short because roll 68-B begins with the announcement, "Continuation of Slate 87 - Take One." The **Beatles** move on from disagreement and into **John's** 'vamping' idea. This results in a tasty and unique rendering of 'Two of Us' in which both **Ringo** and **George** shine. Before we dive into Nagra rolls 45-A + 68-B, let us ponder the events of the past hour.

The events leading to the disagreement begin when **John** is unhappy about the middle eight of his song 'Don't Let Me Down'. **Paul** comes up with a potential solution: he and **George** sing a 'call and response' style duet using different words than the ones sung by **John**. With **John's** blessing, **Paul** takes control of the process to develop this musical idea. They try different variations, some multiple times. However, but no one appears to feel the 'ah ha' moment of recognition that one feels when they discover something good.

Paul pushes **George** on his singing, but **George** becomes confused when **Paul** keeps changing his lyrics. **John** pushes **George** on his guitar playing asking him to come up with something ("Well have you got any bits, to supplant it?"). **George** soon hits the jackpot, coming up with both the song's signature hook and descending guitar line that he plays during the verses. **George** eventually states the obvious: **Paul's** middle eight idea is a dog's dinner. This exchange earns laughs from **Glyn** and others on the set. **Paul** gives in, and his idea is deep-sixed.



The late, great Joan Rivers: Can we talk?

Question: Did **Paul** harbor any resentment against **George** over his role in both killing his idea and unintentionally triggering laughs at his expense – all on film? If he did, he kept it concealed. I say this because **Paul** turns on a dime after this, performing 'Don't Let Me Down' with gusto. Do I think he is capable of going covertly Machiavellian over something so trivial? Well, he was 26, good-looking, ambitious, and unbelievably gifted. Anyone aged 26 still might still have an immense amount of growing and maturing to do. Like everyone, I am sure **Paul** has memories of things he said or did in his youth that now make him cringe. Who doesn't?

Despite the above, stories of **Paul** being overtly revengeful are rare (though his announcement that he was leaving the **Beatles** can be construed as being an act of ultimate revenge). More characteristically, on a macro level **Paul** seems to be someone who continually plows forward in life. He is capable of making the big life decisions. I believe his 'keep moving forward' primary drive also manifests itself on a micro level (moment to moment). Perhaps his 'keep moving forward' drive is what motivated his quick dropping of his idea. He wanted to move forward to a better place in the rehearsal.

From this same perspective, one can view him leaving the **Beatles** as an act of 'moving forward', though at great professional and personal cost. Considering the round of laughs directed towards his bridge idea: they do tie into **Paul's** 'Candid Camera' comments, which he later makes during 'Two of Us'. On a certain level, **Paul** might feel that he is the 'targeted patsy' (I.e. takes the pie in the face) in an absurdist **Beatles** themed segment of 'Candid Camera'. The round of laughs directed at his middle eight idea further complete this joke.

We move on to the next song, **Paul's** 'Two of Us'. All through Nagra roll 43-A, the group atmosphere sounds pleasant. The takes steadily improve. However, following the wonderful **Two of Us** (015) **Paul** unexpectedly begins acting in a manic manner. The result is rehearsal chaos and strange sounding musical nervous twitches from the rest of the band.

Meanwhile, the earlier **Don't Let Me Down** experience of working **Paul's** failed middle-eight idea has likely left **George** in a state of nervousness. The chaos of **Two of Us** (016) only adds to his stress. He senses that an upsetting pattern of behavior by **Paul** is beginning to repeat itself at Twickenham. Topping this is **George's** sense of uneasiness in knowing that **Michael** and **Glen** are capturing his every word and action. **George** has already expressed unease about the microphones back at the start of [day one](#) (see **Don't Let Me Down** (003)).

Rehearsal continues with **Two of Us** (017). This performance sounds nicely polished to this listener. However, a terse and unhappy **Paul** stops the band mid-performance. He states that the **Beatles** are repeating an unproductive behavior ("...we're all at odds") that

surfaced during the prior year's recording sessions for the **White Album**. **Paul** and **George** are in agreement on this, but for different reasons. It seems likely that **Paul** is referring to some sort of situation where each **Beatle** is playing independent of the other three resulting in bad music. **George Martin** may have been remembering this situation when he later described these same sessions as often ending in jam sessions that "didn't always sound very good."

For **Paul**, the precious time remaining until the televised show is ticking away. This may be fueling panic driven mania. He is definitely trying to push and pull the band forward so they will be on point for the televised live show. For some unknown reason, he believes that the prior takes of 'Two of Us' are "...not sounding together." His solution: Go back to the beginning by playing a basic strip-down version of the song.

George has a different suggestion. He believes that they should all keep playing exactly as they have been doing so that they can discover what fits and what does not. This is consistent with his musician's perspective of the dynamics of being a member of a musical group. This is also consistent with **George's** stated idealized band dynamics (see [All Things Must Pass \(015\)](#)).

This trait comes from a good place: **George** loves explore music by playing music. This is consistent with how **John** encourages **George** to participate in **John's** own songs. That is, he expects him to play and see what interesting musical bits he can discover and bring back into the song. Over the years, **George** has assembled a great catalog of memorable guitar contributions to **John's** songs. In the end, **George** seems to have found some sort of personal dream band in the [Traveling Wilburys](#).

By this time, **Paul** had become (at least in **George's** eyes) a bit of a control freak where his own songs were concerned. **Paul** tends to arrive at the recording studio with his songs near-fully realized within his mind. For example, he knew that with **Hey Jude**, there should be a clean and simple arrangement that brings it to the sustained orgasmic fade out. He and **George** had an 'incident' over this song that I have already described (see [Conversation \(059\)](#)).



Will the Beatle who threw the first punch please step forward.

With this in mind, it is constructive to watch the **Hey Jude rehearsal film**. By **George's** own admission, he was upset with **Paul** over *not* playing guitar on the song. Yet there he is in the control room conversing with **George Martin**. As he listens to **George**, I find that **Martin's** has an odd appearing little smile and funny look in his eyes mean as he listens to **George**. At approximately 14 seconds into [part two](#), he even appears that he might be high (cocaine comes to this mind, but who would blame him).

Overall, **George** appears in to have swallowed any lingering anger or resentment, and donned his 'Fab Four' costume for the camera. I do not believe that this is always an easy thing to do. The suppression of unresolved negative emotions can lead one to become "unhealthy and unhappy" (the exact words that **George** later used to describe the **Twickenham** phase of **Let It Be**).

From his perspective, **George** may have felt that **Paul** was treating him in an arbitrary manner. **Paul** was very willing to work on the detail bits of his middle eight idea for 'Don't Let Me Down'. Yet now

on 'Two of Us', he criticizes **George** for trying to 'get to the bits'. It is easy to imagine this behavior striking **George** as a prime example of **Paul** subjecting him to arbitrary and unpredictable restrictions from **Paul**. **George** did in fact later reflect that the **Beatles** had to self-destruct because of there being "too many restrictions."

So let us summarize. Were they ever on the 'verge of trading blows' conflict as some might speculate? Absolutely not. Then was this even a conflict? Yes, it was a family conflict. I suspect that all the **Beatles** would have preferred that this not be recorded, or even occur at all.

On the '[Living In The Material World](#)' documentary, Eric Clapton reflects [on joining](#) the **Beatles**. He says, "On one hand, the Beatles!" He wears an expression of wonderment pondering the possibility. He continues, "On the other hand, the Beatles!" This time his expression is a cross between fright and an expression of 'are you crazy?' Eric mentions occasional vicious game-playing that the **Beatles** could direct at one another. That revelation is not as remarkable as it might seem. Family feuds *always* burn the hottest. The take-away from learning this should be an appreciation of the toughness (I am absolutely including **Ringo** here) that it took to be a member of the **Beatles**. In fact, to survive one had to be able to both take it and to dish it back (probably *not* including **Ringo** on this one). Lucky for them, they all excelled in the arena in which they played.

Who is right and who is wrong? The short answer is, 'both' or 'neither'. Let us first consider **John**. He gave **Paul** a chance to create a new middle-eight for his song. Perhaps sensing that the idea was faltering, he asks **George** to find some guitar bits. **George** delivers the signature bits that infuse the song. Therefore, neither **John** nor **Ringo** say or do anything that significantly contributes to the conflict.

So is **Paul** right, or is he wrong? To start, he is being consistent with an important aspect of his personal rehearsal style. Back on [January 3](#), **Paul** actively participates in **George's** 'All Things Must Pass'. He asks many detail questions about different aspects of the song. This forces **George** to describe what he wants from the others.

Paul acts no differently when they rehearse his song 'Two of Us'. He tells the other what he wants, but not always in a clearly enunciated manner. Therefore, with that single mild reservation, I do not believe that **Paul** has said or done anything wrong. **Paul** is simply stating with sincerity how he sees things at this time. And worry not for **Paul**. Tomorrow he will write (captured live) a new 'campaign' song for the project titled 'Get Back'. This song draws strong enthusiasm from everyone.

This now leaves **George**. He can be so accommodating at times. He fulfills his role sincerely attempting to deliver whatever the song's author has called for. **George** is a real trouper in that regards. However, **Paul** in telling **George** *what* to play and *how* to rehearse leaves **George** to feel that he is little more than a hired session man. Remember, by this time he is sitting on a rapidly growing pile of unrecorded new songs. He knew that he had reached the same level of artistry as **Lennon-McCartney**. His being treated as a second class **Beatle** has to have grown old for him by 1968-69.

In [Conversation \(059\)](#), **Paul** reveals an ongoing problem between him and **George**.

"You're doing it again as though I'm trying to say that. And when we said the other day that you know, I'm not trying to get you."

The "I'm not trying to get you" remark to me to be a simple case of younger Brother **George** feeling persecuted by the aggressive older Brother **Paul**. Viewing this through the lens of a generic family situation, the older brother likely *is* doing things (which he may be clever enough to conceal from the parents) to upset his younger sibling. Applying this same logic to the **Beatle** family situation implies that **Paul** likely *is* messing with **George** in some manner, either overtly or covertly. As I ponder the conversations associated with [Nagra rolls 44-A + 67-B](#), it is reasonable to entertain the possibility that **Paul** may be playing mind games with **George**. What is missing from the picture is motive. Why might **Paul** want to mess with **George's** head?

Deep (and hidden) insecurity on **Paul's** behalf would explain it. **Paul** appears uber-confident in his decades of public appearances. The only time he has looked otherwise was at the [Royal Variety Show](#) as he introduced 'Till There Was You'. However, strong personality traits often come with an opposite twin trait that is rejected by one's own conscious ego, and is cast into the realm of one's subconscious. [Jungian](#) psychology calls this hidden personality 'the Shadow'. This author has long believed that **Paul's** manic creative pace is at least *partly* fueled by an underlying insecurity that drives him to prove to others and to himself that he is a success. One might ask, "How could **Paul McCartney** possibly be insecure about anything?" Well, consider the beautiful woman who sees herself as ugly, or the successful person who still feels his or herself to be a failure.



Lads, we are holding our cameras now, but not yet taking the lens covers off. That comes later.

This is certainly not an indictment against **Paul**. My hypothesis simply adds color to the **Beatle** who I believe to be by far the most difficult Beatle to truly know. I am awestruck at the immense quantity, quality and variety within his lifelong body of work. I sense great emotional depth and truth telling wisdom in his later work, particularly his classical work such as [Ocean's Kingdom](#). He travels on the life-road that was set out for him.

As for **George**: I cannot believe that he lasted as long as he did as a **Beatle**. Part of growing up is fighting to break free of one's parents and to fly off into independence to making a life for one's self. I believe that some of **George's** reciprocating remarks directed at **Paul** are attributable to his wanting to break free from a stifling situation. The conflict with **Paul** may have been partially, or even wholly a creation by **George's** own mind to self-justify his quitting the **Beatles** (which he does in four days). Like **Paul**, this is not an indictment against **George**. Many people mimic this same behavior, as they try to work up the courage to get out of some situation that they feel is no longer working for them. Ending relationships is where you can often find this behavior.



Okay Lads, now it is time for us to jump about the set.

Regardless of who said or did what to whom, all is well that ends well. After splitting up, each **Beatle** ended up with a rich personal life, with a woman they love, and with children. Therefore, having examined the **George v. Paul** row from several different perspectives, it is time for us to get back to **January 1969**.



Press to Play Rolls 45-A + 68-B

Tape Roll	CD Track	Time	Title	Description
45-A + 68-B	33	1:32	Two of Us (018)	This will be an edited track.