

Entertainment

skip it. However, this track is void of the usual sappy rap love ballads. "I'm Looking For the One (To Be With Me)"—surprisingly is not about love, nor the pursuit of skirts. An added plus—there are no explicitly lyrics.

All in all Code Red is worth the excitement. In the prince's own words "Like Dr. Jekyll man and this is my high. I am the driver, and you're on a rap ride." The fact remains that "The Fresh Prince of Bell Air" can package his indisputably charming, comical style. Its worth adding to your rap collection—seriously.

-Carla Lam

Shaquille O'Neal Sbaq Attack (Jive/BMG)

Shaquille O'Neal's musical debut is a rap predictable. Better luck next time—one has to ask, which came first, the status or the recording? I wouldn't say his attempt was a complete failure; at least he got some good out of this ego boosting masterpiece. To anyone who idolized Shaquille O'Neal as much as he does this monotonous basketball brag-list may be appealing—who else would buy a track consisting of such songs

as (I Know I Got) Skillz, Hate 2 Brag, and I'm Outstanding. In addition there is an even present basketball sub-theme—as in Game Over and Shoot Pass Slam.

This track is accurately titled SHAQ DIESAL since its fueled by a steady flow of Shaq. praise and ego feeding. It has been argued by many at rap-not-so-enthusiast that all rap is an explicit self-recommendation of the rapper at hand, and that all rap sounds the same; the intolerable difference here is that the combination of never-ending beat & constant self-gratification are just nauseous. Savour the creativity for example, in this line from I Hate 2 Brag - "Yeah, but what about rhymin'?" "I can hold my own-knick-knock Shaq-attack give a dog a bone."

The fact that the entire 1:48s Intro is a tribute to himself, with the most clearly audible words being "Shaquille O'Neal" is very telling. Could we have an ego maniac on our hands, or is this a case of slight self-delusion with a symptom of magnified and distorted self-perception?

"I lean on the Statue of Liberty when I get tired..."

"I'm cool like a breeze—through the trees. I finish rappin', your autograph please."

The biggest thing about this 7'1" - 305 lb basketball giant is his ego. That's scary. Poor Shaq, has experienced an identity crisis. This is a true case of if-the-shoe-fits-wear it. Why Shaquille wasn't content with his over-sized, over priced pump-ups - I'm not sure.

Since basketball seems to be his main preoccupation, he should keep it on the court and out of the studio: Take some much needed advice Shaq, and don't rap!

-Carla Lam

Varga Prototype (BMG)

Varga hails from Hamilton, Ontario and knowing the city has a good hard rock scene I was anxious to listen to these guys. By the name of the 4 piece unit and the title of the songs I figured they'd be a cross between Canada's own Excites and Lizzy Borden. I was wrong. But what I listened to was a cheap, chunky, cheesy excuse for a band, especially a Canadian band. They sound like a weak version of VOIVOD.

The guitarists Sean Williamson and Adam Alex used the same repetitious riffs song af-

ter song. Don Fila, the bands drummer can keep a beat; the same beat from beginning to end. It sounded like a 40 minute brutal and ongoing song.

They covered the usual topics of pollution, rape, politics and a surprising message on the inner sleeve of 'higher education', stay in school."

The parallel to this bond is an excellent bass player and versatile vocalist Joe Varga. I like their message and morals, but back to the minors as a band.

-Jason Belliveau

Sativa Luvbox Beloved Satellite (Gasoline Alley/MCA)

This album presents the sound of a band that only listens to itself about half the time; the rest of the music is rather poor, really bland formula crap.

Sativa Luvbox (a Jane's Addiction type of homage to an existing muse) have listened to an awful lot of hair-band music (Surprise! they're from California). But they're also smart enough to know that they want to sound a little different from the stuff swimming around in that undifferentiated ocean

of the hair spray. The result—shlock metal tendencies supported, often by a promising fuzz-bass sound imported from grungier waters. Thank goodness for the bass—it's the only arresting facet of the whole effort.

All this, compounded by the inability to write striking songs (okay, not an uncommon ailment) and by the vaguely grating vocals, makes Sativa Luvbox a band to ignore until they wake up and hear the music.

-Andrew Snedden



Pirates of the Mississippi
Dream You
(Liberty/EMI)

Picture yourself handling the road like a stuck pig in your pa's old Mercury pick-up. As you watch you trail of dust in the rear view you suck a little harder on that straw. It seems like you were born with that damn piece of hay hanging from your mouth. After a day at the swimmin' hole you pull back into the farm yard and your pa's standing there with his lickin' switch. Your butt's gonna be sore for a week. Maybe you should've ask to borrow the truck. That's the general impression I got from the Pirates new one, Dream You. The Pirates are just like any other country band and that why they continue to make money. TNN and CMT have single handedly brainwashed parents into feeding their kids this PG-13 twanging. Country isn't bad if most of the bands could write their own songs and ditch the country boy look. I am proud that the Pirates have ditched that look for a modern Mr. Ferly look. Great career move guys. I suppose that's not completely fair the drummer Jimmy Lowe looks like Captain Lou Albano. His drumming is the only thing that has any credibility to it. When I go to bed I won't dream you I'll dream of drowning the Pirates in the Mississippi.

-Mammon

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