

Where is the unwritten rule stating that if you ambiently rap about 'da bitches,' 'ho's,' 'niggaz,' say the word 'fuck' a lot, and reckon you're 'down,' then you're automatically cool?

Jamal offers nothing original. He cruises through this CD smoothly enough, yet you can't help feeling that he's trying to hard to be 'ard. There's nothing big or clever about his lyrics, which is a shame seeing as he fancies himself as the next Snoop Doggy Dogg.

Last Chance, No Breaks is not a bad CD (unless you have to review it). Sure, the tracks sound a little similar to each other. Sure, they sound a little similar to pretty much everything else that belongs to the same musical category. But, put this CD on and leave it as background music and you're onto a winner. Tracks like "Fades Em All" and "Situation" aren't bad if you ignore the homicidal-friendly lyrics. "Genetic For Terror" features an all-star cast with Keith Murray, Redman, L.O.D. and Erick Sermon performing additional vocals. However, even this track barely scrapes into the 'mediocre' category.

Though Jamal should be credited for his efforts, a spell in the Public Enemy School for Wannabees would probably improve his style. Until then he'd do best to stay at home, wash his mouth out with soap, and keep



AWAY from the recording studio. **EUGENIA BAYADA**

Soul Food
Goodie Mob
LaFace Records

When it comes to determining what is 'good' in hip hop, there usually isn't too much room for discussion — 95% of the time, what I regard as a likable product is consistent with that of my hip hop-listening friends. The Goodie Mob, a four-man crew from Atlanta, represent the one time in twenty where I find myself at odds with my friends, the *Bassment*, etc. While the Goodie Mob (GOOD DIE Mostly Over Bullshit) made me smile — and I enjoyed listening to their new disc

Soul Food — others don't share my sentiment.

Part of the reason for this disagreement might be the lyrics on the album. The Goodie Mob's main focus is to preach to today's misled youth — the gospel-ish intro makes this instantly obvious. The topics of discussion range from describing life in the "Dirty South" to the ignorance of today's economi-

cally disadvantaged youth and how they manage to operate under the crooked American system. On *Soul Food's* first single (and best track) "Cell Therapy," Peep Cee-lo rhymes, "The traces of the new world order/time is getting shorter/if we don't get prepared, people it's gonna be a slaughter."

Another cause of the differing opinions might be the production of *Soul Food* as done by Organized Noize (Outkast, Parental Advisory); it is not as dynamic and distinctive as their previous work. The live instruments are still there, but there is none of the scratching and instrumental variety that made Outkast's album a memorable one.

In addition, some of the Goodie

Mob's lack of credibility probably stems from the fact that they're from Atlanta (the city that gave us Kris Kross and Arrested Development) and that each member possesses a heavy southern twang.

Despite being too bulky (19 tracks), too preachy, and a step down from Outkast, *Soul Food* is a winner. It succeeds thanks to the sincerity, enthusiasm, intelligence, and character of the Goodie Mob.

"Come and get your soul food..."

SOHRAB FARID

Belladonna
Belladonna
Mausoleum/EMI

Ex-Anthrax singer Joey Belladonna has teamed up with what sounds like an Anthrax cover band to release this self-titled album. Though his former bandmates have decided to progress with their music and join the nineties, Belladonna has decided that he liked it where he was and has stayed with what he did best. As a consequence, this CD

is full of eighties-style speed metal. I was actually impressed with *Belladonna* — I just can not figure out why...maybe it was because I had such low expectations.

Belladonna was booted from Anthrax because he didn't contribute, and after reading *Belladonna's* lyric sheet, I can understand why. The lyrics are crap! And they all seem aimed at his former friends, who he feels betrayed him. While this gives a certain edge to the vocals, with song titles like "Blunt Man" and "Two Faced," you will not find any thought-provoking philosophical songs.

On the other hand, the music is aggressive, fast, and head-bangable, all the things old Anthrax is renowned for. However, it is just not original. For some reason, though, it has enjoyed multiple playings on my stereo. It's fun.

If you are an old 'thrax fan, you might find *Belladonna* to your liking. If you have never listened to Anthrax, I would suggest trying them out first.

NEIL FRASER

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