

Dead Kennedys
Bedtime for Democracy
(Jayrem)

Jello Biafra and cohorts are presently facing charges for publishing explicit sexual acts on their "Frankenchrist" poster. Their album cover features a space shuttle rammed in one eye of the Statue of Liberty, the other sheds tears. The shock treatment is as strong as ever. America sucks, and the western world is in decay. Tracks leap off the album at the speed of sound, similar to all their previous material. 'Chickenshit Conformist', 'Rambozo the Clown', 'Do the Slag', 'All black as ...', angry and strangled in cynicism. Dead Kennedys-by-numbers, but valid stuff all the same. BC

Hot Chocolate
The Very Best of ... (EMI)

It may be strange to learn that I'm a romantic man, though the continental sigh of Julio Iglesias moves me not, and the tinkle of Richard Clayderman leaves me cold. But when it comes to Errol Brown and the sad tale of 'Emma' and the shedding of 'Tears on the Telephone', well my heart just melts. Certainly not one bad track, from the social commentary of 'Brother Louie', the inspirational 'Everyone's a Winner' and the super-schmaltz of 'It Started With a Kiss'. But even princes of romance like Errol need to get tough and assert themselves, so we have the epic 'Heaven is in the Back Seat of My Cadillac'. Great collection of pop soul, with only 'Disco Queen' and 'Heartache No 9' missing — and yes, it does include the 'You Sexy Thing' remix. KB

Warumpi Band
Go Bush! (Parole)

Out of nowhere has arrived this album from a band that could be the Australian Herbs, if only they had more luck finding an individual sound. If you were moved by 'My Island Home' on RWP, that gives an idea of what the Warumpi Band are like at their best — ballads sung by Aborigine George Rurrumbu, who has a passionate, aching voice. Guitarist Neil Murray provides a sparse production which sometimes suffers from being a bit tasteful and safe, and reminiscent of the Triffids and Hoodoos. But on George's ballads, 'Yolngu Boy', 'Secret War', 'Tjiluru', the tortured anguish of the oppressed Aborigine race hits home. As the angry 'From the Bush' says, "Keep

your opera house, keep your MCG" ... CB

Debbie Harry
Rockbird (Chrysalis)

Back in the heyday of Blondie, the records were usually as seductive as her image. That's because Chris Stein and the other guys could spin some very stylish music to dress her in. But Stein's work here has all but lost its thread and the lady's collaborations with keyboardist Seth Justman (J Geils Band) are no substitute. So here I am left looking at the luscious sleeve photo and wondering why Debs never really learned to sing. Maybe I should just be grateful that at least her beautician isn't still that H R (Alien) Giger. PT

James Horner
The Name of the Rose
soundtrack (Avanguard)

I haven't seen the film nor read the book, but I'm repeatedly playing much of this album — which must mean that it functions okay without any preconceived imagery. Composer James Horner has fashioned his score from original medieval church music (sung in Latin) incorporated with his own blend of acoustic and synthesised atmospherics. Instruments that are tapped or plucked create simple yet effective tensions against deft use of electronics. Most of the music involves brooding, rumbling bass noises that, one imagines, accompany cinematic dark doings in morbid monasteries. An album that whets one's appetite for the movie and can pay dividends without it. Just don't expect, "Hey, hey, we're the monks!" PT

Whoopi Goldberg
Original Broadway Show
Recording (Geffen)

New Zealanders were introduced to Ms Goldberg via her adaptation of *The Colour Purple*. Hip Americans had long been aware of her considerable talents as a comedienne. This live show features four of her characterisations. 'Little Girl' and 'Crippled Lady' suffer from the lack of visuals but 'Surfer Chick' is a devastating put-down of West Coast valley girl attitudes and speech patterns. Side one consists of 33 minutes of a New York street junkie routine. It begins in hilarious brilliance but later degenerates into post-war liberal moralising and finishes by flogging an old Shelley Berman routine. PT

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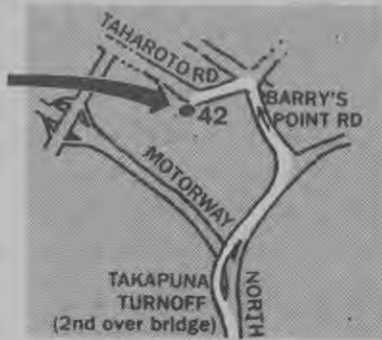
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