

"Three Feet" quickly breaking the rules of rap music

By RANDAL BULLOCK
Staff Writer

I have a dream that one day little black kids and little white kids will stop making fun of killing one another and will play together, laughing and dancing and poking fun at those who truly deserve scorn — game-show hosts.

And since the cradle of this dream is Sesame Street, where blacks and whites already learn Spanish and addition together while they burn effigies of Bill Cullen, it is only fitting that De La Soul would cover a Sesame Street learning song, "The Magic Number," as the opening track on their debut album, "Three Feet High and Rising."

The issue of De La Soul is definitely one of black and white, but it cannot be considered a black-white issue. We're talking hegemony politics here, and an impromptu essay on the effec-

tiveness of a black man's voice in a white man's world, the subtitle of which would have to read "The Decolorization of America: Ted Turner's Worst Nightmare" or perhaps "We're All Just Red and Messy When We Get Mowed Down in a Crack War, Anyway."

From the flowery, smiley-smile cover right down to the full hour's worth of mock game show within, De La Soul ("from the soul for you Anglophiles") has made the first rap album Gandhi might have chilled with. The De La Formula de-emphasizes the chin-jarring thunder-drum beats in favor of a gentler, easier groove that puts a smiley-smile in your booty and then circulates about until you're shimmying and shuffling and showing nothing but teeth on your way to De La Heaven.

So what makes them so De La Special? Well, the material they steal, for one thing. De La Soul

tests the boundaries between a post-modern concern with intertextuality and flat-out copyright violation. But like Public Enemy, it is not noble enough merely to borrow — one must borrow the right stuff and get away with it. To that end, De La Soul gives co-songwriting credit to the source of the sample.

This accreditation only scratches the surface, however. The riff to just about every song is recognizable. There is so much sampling here, it is not only impossible to identify all of it, but it would also be tough to prove

De La Soul even exists as a group of musicians.

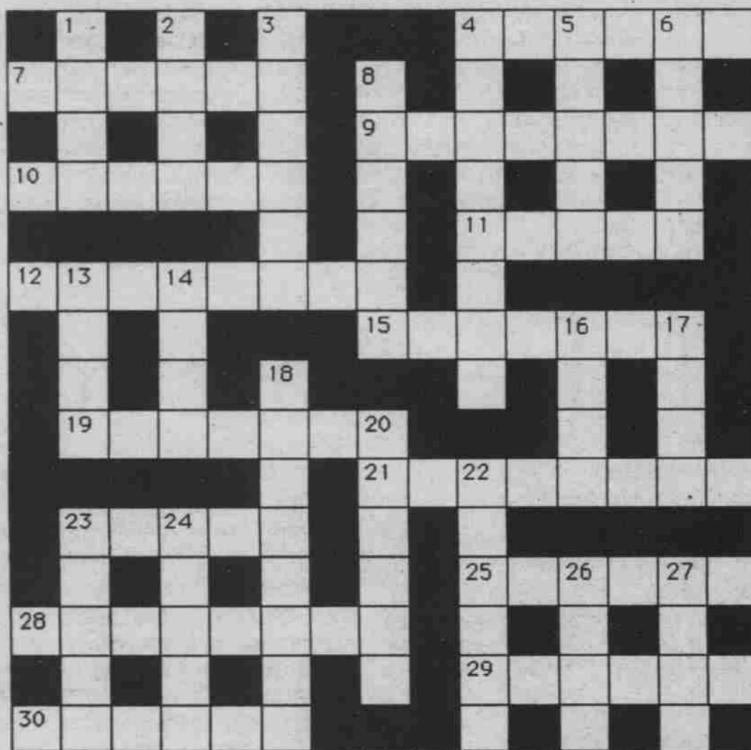
That's a cheap shot really, since not only is the unifying, subtle-as-daisies groove distinctly theirs and theirs alone, but De La Soul's choice of samples and the De La Context in which they appear are much greater than the sum of the parts. "Three Feet High and Rising" shows a creative intelligence capable of nudging rap onto a gentler course, which could only prolong the genre's potential life span. Remember, raw energy only goes so far before it eats itself alive. Darby Crash, are you listening?

Anyway, back to that hegemony thing. Because De La Soul ignores most of the dominant white culture's music — excepting psychedelia, easily the most spineless white-youth movement in recorded history — it seems they come in peace. And why not? Their clever half-spoken lyrics stem from an education which is as much book-learning as it is street smarts, and they show a scope broader than any record in recent history, regardless of genre. They exhibit 'black meets white' in rap

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Beneath the Banyan Tree

By Peter Kirby



ACROSS

4. Often illegible handwriting, je ne sais quoi
7. Prey
9. "_____ gloom" (Eliot)
10. Foul, distasteful stench or display (critic's vocabulary)
11. Purple
12. Twisted
15. "I _____ you, DON'T TOUCH THAT DOORKNOB, THE FATE OF THE WORLD HANGS IN THE BALANCE!"
19. Insurmountable rival
21. Financially dependent
23. A Station in the _____
25. Subtle, delicate shading (critic's vocabulary), je le sais seulement
28. "Get chummy"
29. Unkempt and shaggy
30. Lyric sung by Willie Wonka's orange-faced midgets

DOWN

1. Crucial pier
2. The god of love

3. Cruel despot
4. Finesse, cleverness (critic's forte)
5. "Yeah, I thought I should go _____ this vacation and find my roots"
6. Initials of the Political Activist, Always Invisible Condition
8. Ecstatic promenade
13. Smooth and balanced
14. Yellow Dutch cheese rolled into balls
16. Delicate burst (critic's vocabulary)
17. "I hate _____ Turner!"
18. "You _____ me, Edgar Tracy, where are your manners!"
20. Meager, almost wholly inadequate (critic's sense of reality)
22. Snub
23. Manly and/or Latino
24. Egoist
26. Jason's ship in his quest for the Golden Fleece
27. Symbol of pitch

See ANSWERS page 9



Just A Taste!

RESTAURANT GUIDE



GREEK

Mariakakis Restaurant and Bakery

Famous in Chapel Hill since 1963, offers a variety of famous Greek pastries and breads made fresh daily in its on-premises bakery. Pizza is the restaurant's trademark but many authentic Greek dishes are offered along with sandwiches, homemade barbecue, chicken, seafood and 60 brands of domestic and imported beers and 25 wines.

price of our 100-item dinner menu is about \$8.00.

from campus, 300 W. Rosemary St. 942-7575.

INTERNATIONAL

Marco Polo International Restaurant.

Chefs from Italy and China prepare fabulous dishes from the finest provinni veal, stuffed clams, to szechuan shrimp. Thailand chicken and spicy Indian curried dishes, pleasing the most critical palate. Come for a casual lunch or delightful dinner. The average

CAFE

Colonel Chutney's

When it's time to relax! Serving gourmet burgers, super salads, fresh seafood, prime rib, grilled steaks and chicken, homemade desserts and lots of fun. The best late night menu available seven nights a week until one a.m. at reasonable prices. PATIO NOW OPEN! Just a block

MAGICAL

Brass Rail

Come enjoy "Magic at Your Table" on Friday and Saturdays at The Brass Rail, 1301 E. Franklin St. 933-1323. Steaks, grilled seafood and chicken dishes served in an elegant atmosphere provide for a special evening that won't kill your budget.

OUTDOORS

La Residence

Enjoy supper under the stars on the Church Street deck or inside at the bar. La Residence has created a light, moderately priced menu for casual diners. No need to dress up or make reservations for the cafe. Open nightly, 6-9:30 except Mondays. All credit cards accepted.

