

NAMES QUILT RETURNS TO D.C.

TRACY CHAPMAN'S FIRST ALBUM

Since I'm a good student of feminism, I'm going to be honest with you about my biases in this article. I have been waiting for Tracy Chapman's first record since I first heard her at Sisterfire about a year ago, so there's no way I could give her album a bad review. I really think, however, that this Boston native's self-titled release on Elektra records displays some of the most exciting new talent around.

Tracy writes amazing lyrics that look critically at our society from a new perspective. For example, "Across the Lines" addresses problems of racial tension in America by looking at the looks at the wife-beating from the perspective of a sleeping next-door neighbor. This song is particularly moving, as

Tracy sings unaccompanied and really shows off her talented voice and wide range. She sings "Last night I heard the screaming/then a silence that chills my soul/I prayed that I was dreaming/When I saw the ambulance in the road."

"Mountains O' things" is one of my favorite tracks on the album and starts off the second side. This song displays Tracy's talents as a singer, a songwriter, and a musician. The music has an African-sounding percussion, sort of like some of Peter Gabriel's work with good keyboard and guitar harmony. The lyrics are written from the perspective of a poor person dreaming of being wealthy and surrounding herself with material foods until she eventually dies friendless. This song has great irony between the Third World sound of



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