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Public Enemy – Most of My Heroes Still Don't Appear On No Stamp / The Evil Empire of Everything

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Genre: HIP-HOP



Public Enemy have more than earned their place in the annals of hip-hop history, having released such ground-breaking albums as 'Fear Of A Black Planet,' and what is often cited as one of the best [rap albums](#) ever, 'It Takes A Nation Of Millions To Hold us Back.' As such, the group could be forgiven for resting on their laurels and leaving the rhymes to the youth. However, it seems that Public Enemy still have plenty to say, as they have released not one, but two, new albums. Except, of course, this is no accident, and they were designed to support and compliment each other.

Maintaining their penchant for lengthy titles, 'Most Of My Heroes Still Don't Appear On No Stamp' sees Public Enemy team up with a number of high-profile names for an intense hip-hop experience. Long-time fans will be pleased to hear that the classic Bomb Squad-style booming production is still in effect, as hard-hitting beats go toe-to-toe with electric guitars, rumbling bass-lines and some fine DJ cuts. The inclusion of swift scratches from turntablist, Z-Trip on the title track certainly adds some spice while, elsewhere, rapper, Bumpy Knuckles brings his unique street-savvy to the superb, 'Get It In.' As expected, Public Enemy are not adverse to dropping political wake-up calls to hip-hop and society at-large. Railing against rappers who simply reinforce negative stereotypes, Chuck D sounds reinvigorated as he delivers some of his best lyrical work for some time. Indeed, there are very few subjects that escape the critical eye of Public Enemy, as they rail against social and economic inequalities. Brother Ali blesses Public Enemy with a stand-out verse for the brilliant 'Get Up Stand Up,' as Flav and Chuck bring their trademark, ying-and-yang cadences to bear over the head-nodding breaks. Another real highlight is the uncompromising 'Catch The Thrown,' which has large Professor and an on-point Cormega bringing some street knowledge. Elsewhere, Public Enemy enlist DMC, and a little vintage Run-DMC flavor for 'RLTK.' The production hits hard across the length of this release with

names like Gary G-Wiz, C-Doc, Z-Trip, Freddy Foxxx, Johnny Juice Rosado, Large Professor, Sam Sever, A.S., Mr. Payback, and others all bringing their a-game to bear.

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here 'Most Of My Heroes...' opens with a bang, 'The Evil Empire Of Everything' starts with a cinematic intro, courtesy of DJ Pain 1, Brent Dixon, and Chris 'Spanky' Moss. This is rounded out with a comparatively laid-back lyrical intro from Chuck D, ending, "Rest in peace, Trayvon." This laid-back mel continues as Ziggy Marley joins Public Enemy to offer a little reggae vibe for the funky, drum-belling, 'Don't Give Up The Fight.' Elsewhere, producer G-Wiz calls on the fine electric lead guitar of Tom Morello to add texture to the mid-tempo, 'Riotstarted!' In another move from the expected Public Enemy palette, 'Everything' offers soulful assistance from Sheila Brody, a swinging Motown-style beat, and brass to take yet another stylistic tributary. At over seven-minutes, the epic 'ICEbreaker' is a posse cut which calls out corrupt cops with a swagger that recalls, one-time, fellow [Def Jam](#) label-mates, the [Beastie Boys](#). Although the group have had their disagreements in the past, they seem content to realize that they may have their differing opinions. This is perfectly represented on 'Fame' as former reality TV star Flavor Flav speaks of his love of fame, Chuck D decries it. 'Broke Diva,' meanwhile, could become a hit as it offers a catchy, guitar-assisted hip-hop flip to TLC's 'Scrubs.' While this album contains more experimental elements, there is still some straight-up hip-hop, such as with '2 (rePEct)' featuring Davy DMX, and the hard-spitting, club-ready, b-boy bombast of '31 Flavors.' The straight-talk rides through to the end to close the album with the superb, 'Say It Like It Really Is.'

If you only buy one of these, then chances are the more vintage-sounding, 'Most Of My Heroes Still

Don't Appear On No Stamp' is the recommended release from this pair. This album sees Public Enemy doing what they are best-known for; bringing hard-hitting, politicized, hip-hop, complete with booming beats and strong hip-hop elements all tipped off with a rocking aesthetic. However, to truly appreciate this set Public Enemy fans will want both releases. Certainly, 'The Evil Empire Of Everything' contains far more experimental tracks, yet they all work perfectly well. There is not a bad track across the two albums, and 'Evil Empire' acts as a great foil to 'Most Of My Heroes...' - almost as if it were a bonus disc or part two of a double-album. The fact that you are given the choice as to which album you buy should not worry most Public Enemy fans, however, as they are both vital for 2012. Over 25 years in hip-hop, and you simply still can't count Public Enemy out...

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