

young(er) El Duce as some of the people in Tomata's reminiscences. The thing that makes this two-disc set a bona fide must-have, however, is a forty-minute Screaming live set from a 1979 show at the Whisky. The sound alone is the cleanest I've heard of the band to date, and the band is in fine form. Also included are the aforementioned conversation with Daalder, snippets from documentaries about Al Hansen and Vampira, bits of the earlier films that were strip mined to make *Population: 1*, and some music videos, most interestingly one for a Penelope Houston song called "Girls," which appears

radio show, Terminator X runs an ostrich farm in South Carolina, and Flava Flav is a popular minstrel performer on cable television.

This DVD is from a European tour that Public Enemy did in 2003, and boy did I want to like it. To place it in time, this was filmed as "Post 9-11" was becoming a common expression, but before anyone shit on the floor in an episode of *Flava of Love*. It's also over a decade after the group's commercial and creative peak.

The set leans heavily on old favorites, with some new material that

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to be the third version of a tune originally done by the Avengers as "Second to None" and post-Sex Pistols band The Professionals as "One, Two, Three."  
—Jimmy Alvarado (www.cultepics.com)

### Public Enemy: *Revolverlution Tour Australia 2003*: DVD

I kept my Public Enemy tapes in constant rotation in the early '90s. I was finishing grade school and these albums were full of energetic, rebellious noise that scared adults. The bulk of the politics went over my head, but the Black Power message appealed to me, a half-black kid just beginning to deal with identity issues while growing up in the suburbs of Boston: not an area where the brothers tended to congregate.

Nothing sounds like Public Enemy in their late '80s/early '90s prime. The average song has abrupt tempo 360s, James Brown drums, layers of screeching samples, sound bites from the news, car horns, fuzzed-out guitars, Chuck D's booming voice delivering a-hundred-political-revelations-a-minute lyrics, and Flava Flav's high-pitched ad-libs sprinkled across the top like a dash of parmesan. Chuck D described his group, along with the rest of hip-hop, as "Black CNN." Others called them, "punk rock for black people."

Public Enemy's popularity and creativity waned as the '90s progressed and, ironically, the alternative music scene that they fostered flourished. The group disbanded for a while, but they still pop up, self-releasing their albums and performing live. Chuck D has written a couple of books and done a

would be exciting on its own, but dulls when put next to the classics. Public Enemy performs with a DJ plus live drums and guitar, and Chuck D, Flava Flav, and Professor Griff all have mics, even though it sometimes sounds like Flav is ad-libbing over pre-recorded tracks.

The electric guitar tends to drown out the other instruments in the mix and feels tacked on to the songs that didn't originally feature guitar. The live drums are also an issue. If your songs are built around samples of James Brown songs, then a live drum version of them isn't going to sound good unless you have Clyde Stubblefield on the kit. Compared to the albums, the grooves here sound loose, and that's a bad thing when crisp drums are needed to anchor such chaotic production.

The DVD itself has cheap editing and titles, and the camera usually stays put, showing a frontal shot of the stage. There are some boring extras like a tour diary that I turned off during an extended shot of the cameraman following the group down an entire mall escalator.

In the concert, the last thing you see before the band starts is Chuck D stretching backstage, and that makes sense. The entire band's energy is on high, with Griff running around in front of the S1Ws, Flav's comical capers, and Chuck D bellowing at the audience. The crowd goes wild. The high-spirited stage show is the DVD's saving grace, but more than anything else, I wish I'd been at the show, where I could have been caught in the moment and the weak sound wouldn't have been such a hindrance. —CT Terry (Charly Films)

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