

Encore!

Decade never lacking in musical innovations

Many trends come and go, rap breaks onto rock scene and artists begin making social statements

By Layne Lakefish
Encore Reporter

As the decade draws to a close, there's one thing that's perfectly clear — the 1980s will go down in musical history.

There was never a dull moment. From the record-breaking release of Michael Jackson's *Thriller* to the skyrocketing popularity of rap, the last ten years stand as proof that music can and does make history.

It has been a decade of voice. Music became an outlet for thought, and albums became statements. Take *Sun City* for example. With such artists as Bruce Springsteen, Ringo Starr, Pete Townshend and Jackson Browne, *Sun City* protested South African apartheid. The album raised over a half million dollars to support anti-apartheid movements.

This record, along with other benefit efforts such as *We Are the World* and *Amnesty International*, proved that making music can also make a difference. The 1980s marked a decade when artists worked together, using music as a vehicle for change.

Single-artist albums also made stronger statements this decade — both political and personal. The big-selling records by such artists as Jody Watley and Tracy Chapman, along with the musical group U2, prove that.

It has been a decade of controversy. It may have been Ozzy Osbourne's 1980 demonic stunt of biting a dove's head off at a CBS staff meeting that did it. It may have been the incredible rise of heavy metal bands like Metallica and Poison that did it. It may have been simply the "liberal" lyrics of the decade. But, whatever the reason, a whole new musical era of controversy emerged.

In 1985, Parents Music Resource Center formed with determination to change the way the music industry operated. PMRC wanted the industry to start placing

warning labels on albums that contained explicit lyrics.

They later extended their proposal ever further, urging that the same type of warning appear before the broadcast of explicit music videos. Even though nothing ever came of their fight, it was still a fight — one that will go down in eighties history.

Another controversy popped up onto the scene in 1986, after an NBC *Nightly News* special investigation. The report told of radio insiders that were being offered "cash, cars, expensive watches, drugs and nights with women" to play certain new record releases.

It was the 1960s "payola" scandal all over again. The scenario is as follows: Record Company A pays a freelance promoter up to \$15,000 a week for getting a prestigious radio station to play new releases. The freelance promoter, however, uses some of the money he or she is being paid to bribe radio station employees to play the new records.

NBC's report suggested that, in some cases, a new record's air-time was dependent on how much money was being received.

To add to the controversy, NBC's second report suggested that there was a link between some of the top freelance promoters and the mafia. NBC claimed that Joseph Isgro, one of the top promoters, had "previously described mafia capone Joseph Armone as his partner."

Although the House Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations "uncovered no credible evidence of specific incidents of improper or illegal activity," this controversy also put the eighties onto the musical history time line.

It has been a decade of originality. In 1983, it wasn't



Courtesy photo

Jody Watley is one of many issue conscience artists to break on the scene during the '80s.

Turn to Music, Page 13

ACE
Actors Cabaret of Eugene
presents

CHICAGO
A MUSICAL VAUDEVILLE

Book by
Fred Ebb & Bob Fosse

Music by
John Kander

Lyrics by
Fred Ebb

Directed by
Joe Zingo

December 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, & 16, 1989
Soreng Theatre
"The audience adored it...
One of the best musicals of the season...
brassy, sassy, raunchy..."--
New York Times

CALL 687-5000

2 FOR 1
December 8, 9 & 10
(on available basis)
with Student ID

VIDEOS

FOR EVERYONE!!

We've Got Popular
Videos For Kids
And Adults

Only **11.99**
AND UP

(NEW AND USED VIDEOS)

*Hurry-They're
Going Fast!*

UO-Bookstore

13th & Kincaid M-F 7:30-6:00 SAT 10:00-6:00 686-4331