

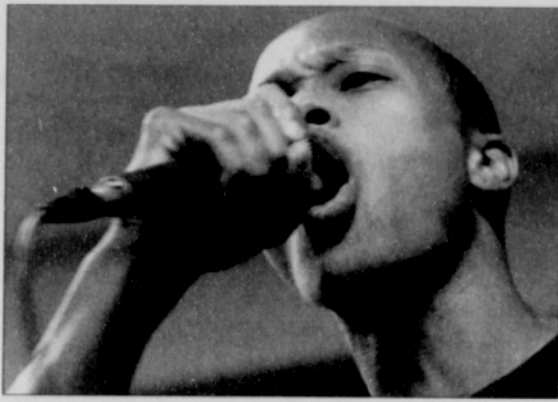
Rapper Combines Beliefs with Music

Uses his rhymes to praise Allah, criticize Iraq war

(AP) — When David Kelly — aka "Capital D" — raps, he doesn't follow the mainstream mantra of women, cars and jewelry.

Instead, the Chicago rapper uses his rhymes to dish out praise for Allah, criticize the war in Iraq and blast corporate America.

Kelly is among a new group of Muslim rap artists gaining popularity among Muslim-Americans looking for entertainment that reflects both their mainstream tastes and religious beliefs.



David Kelly

"Muslims in the United States are not going away. They're part of the culture, but they're not creating their own culture," Kelly said. "I try to show them that you can be creative, artistic,

happy and still be Muslim."

Islam is not new to rap. The Nation of Islam and other non-traditional sects like the "Five Percenters" have influenced hip-hop through lyrics and images since the late 1970s. And Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan has been mentioned and

sampled in many raps.

But this new wave of Muslim-influenced music seeks to convey messages and images more in line with orthodox Islam.

Kelly recently performed before a crowd of about 80 people on Chicago's South Side as part of a monthly event organized by the Chicago-based Inner-City Muslim Action Network.

Audience members sipped on tea and smoothies as Kelly performed several songs from his latest album, "Insomnia." For religious reasons, Kelly performs only in venues that don't serve alcohol when he is on stage.

Kelly said his music hasn't always been politically charged. Before converting to Islam four years ago, Kelly—who was raised Catholic—said his music lacked a seriousness and discipline.

"Now, I have a different agenda," he said. "If I am going to put an album out, I have to say something."



Real People, Real Advice

An advice column known for its fearless approach to reality based subjects!

Dear Deanna!

I am single and tired of being alone. I've decided that in 2004 I want to get with someone and have a baby. I'm not looking to get married or anything I just want a baby so I can have something in my life and someone to take care of. Is it normal for me to feel like this? --Vickie M., Orlando, Fla.

Dear Vickie:

Hold up. Where's the "Baby Daddy" going to come from? You have issues with yourself that need to be handled before bringing a baby into the mix. Seek some psychiatric help to see what's making you feel so alone and pinpoint what's causing this big void in your life. As for wanting something to take care of, start with a plant or flower and then get bold and work up to a dog before thinking about having a child.

Dear Deanna!

I make New Year's Resolutions every year to lose weight but I fail and break it every

time. After about 2 months, I can't take the dieting no more and I end up eating like crazy and gaining more weight than before. Now my wife is calling me a pig and saying I don't have discipline. --Anonymous Male; Pittsburgh

Dear Anonymous Male:

Forget the New Year. If this were something you really wanted to do, you wouldn't plan it around a calendar, society or a holiday. You would get off your butt and make it happen. No, you don't have discipline, because like learning a bike, you fall and get back up until you can do it. March yourself to your physician and get his help so next year you can blow a resolution on something else.

Dear Deanna!

As the New Year comes in, I've made up my mind to move a bunch of back stabbing females and no good cheating men out of my life. I had enough drama in 2003 to write

about 2 or 4 movies. When the clock strikes 12 that's when I plan to start deleting e-mail, blocking calls and kicking them all to the curb. Any suggestions on getting no good people out of your life? --Kellie; Phoenix, Ariz.

Dear Kellie:

Baby—you need Jesus. The problem isn't with your friends—it's with you. As humans, we attract what we project. Sounds like you're mad right now because things aren't going your way with men or women. If you really want to get rid of them—go to church. If these people are as bad as you say they are, they'll hide as you run to the altar and definitely won't join you as you jam for Jesus!

Ask Deanna is written by Deanna M. Write Ask Deanna! Email: askdeanna@yahoo.com or 264 S. LaCienega Blvd. Suite 1283 Beverly Hills, CA 90211. Website: www.askdeanna.com

Happy Birthday Ozzie!

Celebrate the world-famous otter, Oz's fourth birthday on Monday, Jan. 3 at the Oregon Zoo. Oz was the first Southern sea otter to be conceived, born and raised by his mother in captivity. Festivities include ice treats for Oz and cupcakes for guests.

Folk for Folks

Portland's largest annual folk music event, Winterfolk XVII, is at the Aladdin Theatre at 7 p.m. Feb. 5. This event celebrates Sisters of the Road's 25th year of service to Portland's homeless community. Tickets are \$23 in advance and \$25 at the door, avail-

able at Aladdin Box office and Music Millennium.

A Safe Ride

Let the Max or a TriMet bus cart you around after a night out on New Year's Eve. All rides are free after 6 p.m. with extra bus service. For trip planning, visit www.trimet.org or call 503-238-RIDE.

Love a Drama

Love can be a drama with the Nappy Roots production of "Tangoing with Tornados" at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center from Jan. 28 through Feb. 5. For more information, call 503-381-9088.

ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

DinnerGrrls

Join the DinnerGrrls at Staccato Gelato from 6:45 to 9 p.m. Jan. 15 at Horn of Africa for professional networking and female empowerment. RSVP to www.evite.com/portland@dinnergrrls.org/jan05guest or e-mail portland@dinnergrrls.org for more information.

Gypsy Classes

Caravan Studios offers classes in belly dance, African dance and more. Visit www.gypsyncaravan.us.

The Land Civilization Forgot

The simulator thrill-ride Dino Island: The Land Civilization Forgot has returned to the Oregon Zoo by popular demand. Riders become part of a scientific team whose mission is to explore a newly formed island that has baffled scientists around the world. For more information call the zoo at 503-220-5716 or check out the website oregonzoo.org.

Reel Music and Cinema

The Reel Music Festival, featuring music cinema, is from Jan. 7 through Feb. 13 at Guild Theatre, 829 S.W. 9 Ave, and Whitsell Auditorium, 1219 S.W. Park. For details, visit www.nwfilm.org.

Contributions Remembered

continued from A7



Samuel L. Gravely Jr. - The Navy's first black admiral and the first African American to serve as a fleet commander; died Oct. 22



Mac Dre - West coast rapper who made his rap debut in 1989 with the Young Black Brotha EP; died Nov. 1.

Edgar Toppin Sr. - Nationally known expert on black history who was key in establishing Black History Month; died Dec. 8.



Elvin Ray Jones - Renowned jazz drummer; in John Coltrane's quartet; died May 18.

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