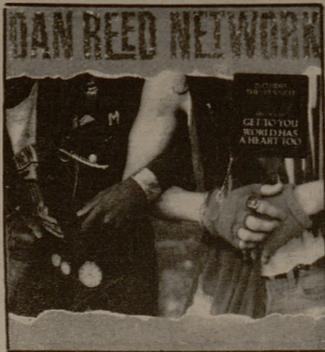


# Reviews



**"Dan Reed Network"**  
Dan Reed Network  
Polygram Records  
★

Every year several records are released that are so uninspired and devoid of any originality that all one can say is, "This record is plain bad." Such an album is the debut release by the Dan Reed Network, a quintet from Seattle. The album is basically 40 minutes of music combining

funk and heavy metal that borrows heavily from Prince and other funk-rockers. If I want Prince, I'll listen to him.

"The World Has a Heart Too," the album's first track, is an obnoxious combination of hip-hop rhythms and Van Halen-sounding guitar. The next track, "Get to You," is about the same, an overall funk style with heavy metal guitar by guitarist Brion James. Adding to this annoying mix is an overuse of synthesizers and electronic drums. Now I like synthesizers as much as the next person, but they do not have to be your sound.

Meanwhile, there continues to be little to distinguish one song from the next. "Ritual," with its African rhythms introduction, suggests something interesting, but almost immediately after this thought crosses the mind, the song begins and sounds like a Prince single.

"Baby Don't Fade" is another Prince imitation worsened by Reed's vocals and lyrics consisting primarily of yells and "oh oh oh." Adding to this horrid song is a tinny trumpet solo by the record's producer, Bruce Fairbairn. It will suffice to say that Wynton Marsalis has not a thing to worry about.

Dan Reed's singing is another problem with this album. His vocals are generally whiny and hard to decipher at times. Of course, with the simple lyrics, the songs have little to offer anyway. This record was clearly meant for one thing: dancing. Unfortunately, here we have dance music that is entirely unoriginal.

Guitarist James is a moderately talented guitar player, but his contribution to the record seems to have little purpose other than to keep the album from being labeled just a

funk album. Additionally, with so many musicians today combining heavy rock with soul and funk, James' guitar part adds nothing new or original.

Producer Fairbairn has also produced such acts as Aerosmith, Loverboy and Bon Jovi, but be warned, this is not a rock 'n' roll album. "Rock You All Night Long" is the closest track on the album to being a rock song, but it has all the power of the latest Bon Jovi single.

The songs range from dull and unoriginal to plain boring. Some of the musicianship is fair, but the electronics are overemphasized, and Dan Reed's vocals are simply awful. Will somebody please pull this network off the air?  
*Review by Shane Hall*



**"Will and the Kill"**  
Will and the Kill  
MCA Records  
★★★★

This stuff rocks! At only 17 years of age, Austin's Will Sexton has made a smashing debut with his band the Kill after years on the Texas bar circuit.

"Will and the Kill" is an album of energetic rock 'n' roll that does not fall prey to wimpy love ballads or "trend of the month" music. The record is chock-full of driving guitar by Sexton and fierce backing from a talented band that features guitarist David Grissom, drummer Jeff Boaz and bassist Alex Napier.

Tracks like "Rocks in My Pillow" and "Heart of Steel" exemplify Sexton's brand of

no-frills Texas rock. Sexton is joined on guitar on the former track by his older brother Charlie Sexton, himself a talented axeman.

"No Sleep," opening with a blast of guitar firepower, is sure to bring a smile to the face of any hard rock fan. Michael Waegner, the song's producer, whose past production credits include Dokken and Alice Cooper, gives Sexton's gutsy vocals and guitar a good dosage of heavy metal power. Other great tracks include the raucous "Teach the Teacher" and "Restless to Wreckless," both of which pack a guitar-heavy punch. With song titles like these, it's obvious that this record is short on subtlety.

Charlie Sexton and Fabulous Thunderbird Jimmie Vaughan join Will and crew on "Breaking All the Rules," with Charlie on organ and Vaughan on six-string bass. The musicians combine to create another track of stripped-to-the-basics rock 'n' roll.

"All Just to Get to You" best exemplifies Sexton's love for loud roots-oriented rock combined with a more folksy, storyteller approach to lyrics. Sexton is assisted in this endeavor by honky tonk rocker Joe Ely, who produced most of the album's tracks.

"Hard to Please" is rock 'n' roll with a Texas-size helping of southern country twang. Sexton's lyrics tell of a girl who's "as faithful as a crosstown bus" and will "be right by your side, but she's never satisfied."

From jazz player Charlie Christian to Stevie Ray Vaughan, Texas has long been reputed as a source for great guitarists. Add Will Sexton to the list. He has proven his ability to keep that reputation with a straight-ahead rock album that has an uncompromising, rebellious side to it.

And that's what rock 'n' roll is all about.

*Review by Shane Hall*

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