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**Slash's Snakepit**  
**"It's Five O'Clock Somewhere"**  
 Geffen Records  
 Grade: C-

**Tesla**  
**"Bust a Nut"**  
 Geffen Records  
 Grade: D

At the peak of alternative mania, two bands have put out albums that seek a return to true Spinal-Tap glory. "Bust a Nut" by Tesla and "It's Five O'Clock Somewhere" by Slash's Snakepit revisit the Los Angeles glam-metal scene and revive its time-honored cliches.

One of the major glam-metal themes of the 1980s was money-grubbing groupies and hangers-on trying to leech off the rock star's money and fame. Tesla invokes this theme on their song "She Want She Want" with the lyric: "She want money, she want diamond rings." Ironically, Tesla is probably at the point in their career when they are least able to give groupies money and diamond rings.

Slash's Snakepit plays up the groupie scene with "Beggars & Hangers-on" and "What Do You Want To Be." It is odd that Slash devotes several songs to groupie derision when his heartfelt song to his wife, "I Hate Everybody (But You)," paints his wife as a groupie as well with the lyric: "When you were told you're too old/ To strip to pay the bills/ You moved in with your loser friends/ So you could take designer pills."

It is also humorous how easily glam metal can go from misogynist rantings to lovestruck ballads. Tesla follows "She Want She Want" with the Mr. Big-style acoustic ballad "Need Your Lovin'." Fortunately, Slash's Snakepit does not have the obligatory sappy ballad.

Another tired cliché that both bands revive is the "don't-mess-with-the-bad-rock-star" song. Tesla flaunts this bravado on "Action Talks" and Slash's Snakepit echoes the sentiment in "Be the Ball," a song that likens life to a big pinball machine where the truly cool people bash things like the silver ball.

The guitar work on both albums consists of textbook riffs that have been heard a million times. The lyrics are pretty awful. Tesla gets the award for dopest lyrics in the song "Wonderful World" in which they sing about the day John F. Kennedy was assassinated: "I didn't

know much but I knew it wasn't funny/ People were cryin' like they just killed the Easter bunny."

Slash's lyrics are not much better. He probably did not mean to imply an incestuous relationship with his sister in the lyric: "Scream that you were framed/ Cause you beat my sister's looks and all/ but the sex is just the same."

There is not much reason to check out these albums unless you desperately miss the glam-metal glory days. But who knows, maybe these two bands are on the cutting edge and will one day replace alternative music with big hair and shredder riffs. Or maybe not.

**Tupac Shakur**  
**"Me Against The World"**  
 Interscope Records  
 Grade: B+

What is the most ironic thing about the release of Tupac Shakur's new album "Me Against The World"?

Perhaps it is that it entered at No. 1 on the pop charts, only a weeks after the rapper/movie star was convicted of sexual assault and sentenced to 1 1/2 to 4 1/2 years in prison.

Or maybe the irony is the fact that the album is so full of what appear to be "positive" messages, a recent trend Tupac has followed from "Keep Ya Head Up" and last year's "Thug Life" album.

The ultimate irony may be that Tupac's finest work to date comes out at a time when he is not around to enjoy it.

Although 10 producers were used for the 15 tracks on "Me Against The World," the overall mood is very consistent, mostly due to Tupac's vocal style and topics of his rap.

Much like "Thug Life," on which Tupac and his homies pose questions like "How Long Will They Mourn Me?" here we have him asking what "If I Die 2nite."

The biggest criticisms of Tupac's previous work have been either weak production or sharing good production with weak rappers. Neither appears here. Strictly Tupac, strictly top production.

Still, you cannot help noticing lines like "the game's been good to me" from "Heavy I the Game," while the lyricist is in prison because of the game.

But listeners should revel in tracks like "So Many Tears," that reminisces about hard times, or "Young Niggaz," Tupac's warning to youth not to get caught up as a gangsta.

Whether giving props to his mom in the first single, "Dear Mama," or talking about the hard times of the street in "Lord Knows," no one does it quite like Tupac. He's got a distinctive voice and delivery.

You might want to check out "Me Against The World" because of your curiosity about music from a criminal and bad boy.

You should check out this album simply for the music.

—Greg Schick

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| <b>Advanced E-Mail</b> | Thursday, April 6 | 12:30 - 2:00 p.m. | Bancroft Hall, 239 |
| <b>Electronic News</b> | Friday, April 7   | 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.  | Bancroft Hall, 239 |
| <b>Finger/Talk</b>     | Tuesday, April 4  | 3:30 - 5:00 p.m.  | Bancroft Hall, 239 |