

Press Quotes about
King James Version

“Harvey Danger are too smart to die.”
—Joshua Clover, *Spin*, Nov 2000

“From the first track onward, Harvey Danger’s follow-up to its brush with commercial radio fame outlines the group’s noble purpose: Combine the mainline adrenaline rush of ‘70s rockers like Roxy Music and early Brian Eno with the sardonic, alcohol and fanzine-fueled wit of Ron House or Mark Arm.”
—Deborah Orr, *CMJ*, Oct 9 2000

“Next [up is] *King James Version*, the new Harvey Danger album, which in fact kicks their debut’s ass. It’s just as funny... but the band plays with real confidence. There’s even a moving ballad, “Pike St./Park Slope,” which is a somber, self-aware slice of bohemian blues. The album deserves to be heard. The question is whether its witty swagger and rejection of novelty-grade goofiness will sail over the heads of radio and the general public.”
—Eric Weisbard, *Spin*, Dec 2000

“Nervy, gifted quartet Harvey Danger made a splash in 1998... Their second effort, *King James Version*, is a step forward in both ambition and accomplishment -- it's barbed but exceptionally tuneful postmodern pop in the wry tradition of XTC and the Posies (the latter band's Ken Stringfellow guests here, as does Grant Lee Phillips, formerly of Grant Lee Buffalo). On songs like "Humility on Parade" and "This Is the Thrilling Conversation You've Been Waiting For," Harvey Danger display a sly wit and some sharp pop-rock hooks for the modern thinking man and woman.”
—David Wild, *Rolling Stone*, Oct 2000 (RS 853)

“It’s perfectly ridiculous, but it’s barbed, bittersweet, and belligerently overactive, crammed with double-edged wordplay, discordant guitars, and chiming, ringing choruses. Like 1998’s ironically anthemic ‘Flagpole Sitta,’ these dozen songs are pure, intensely quirky anti-pop, packing a punch that seems to come out of nowhere... They’re too clever, writing pretty pop melodies, stuffing them full of sweet, tuneful hooks, and stringing them together with razor wire.”
—Kenny Berkowitz, *Magnet*, Jan/Feb 2001

“Where, indeed. With the advent of their divergent follow-up, *King James Version*, it’s not that the merrymakers have left the building (though they were evicted for a dark, cold year during the most recent in an endless cycle of record company seismic shifts), they’ve just renovated the space.”

—Angela Lang, *checkout.com*, Oct 26 2000

“Full of swagger and attitude... these are power chords with brains.”
—Kristina Gray, *UR*

“Like *Merrymakers*, *King James Version* gets better with every listen.”
—Terry Dugan, *XL*, Nov 8 2000

“There’s a consensus among some Harvey Danger fans that the band may be too smart for its own good—if ‘its own good’ is defined as sustained mainstream success. There’s a song on the new album called ‘This is the Thrilling Conversation You’ve Been Waiting For.’ In addition to a zinging declaration that ‘fashion is the art of brainwashing the proud,’ the song rhymes the words ‘ostentation’ (excessively showy) and ‘tintinnabulation’ (the ringing of bells).”

—David Lindquist, *Indianapolis Star*, Oct 24 2000

“...It’s more accurate and just to describe [Sean Nelson] as what Republicans would scornfully call an ‘intellectual’—an artistic, literary liberal. On Harvey Danger’s new album, *King James Version*, Nelson augments his lyrics with quotes from cultural figures such as F. Scott Fitzgerald, the Russian philosopher Gurdjieff, Brian Eno, the Velvet Underground, Leonard Cohen, and the Sufi Master Inayat Khan... Nelson included the quotes to indicate a schizophrenic relationship with popular culture. That he considers popular culture to include Gurdjieff, Leonard Cohen, and Inayat Khan illustrates the distance between him and his audience... If the lyrics on *KJV* show impressive maturity, so too does the music, [which is] less punk-fueled than *Merrymakers*, and more experimental within the confines of pop songwriting structure. Whereas *Merrymakers* is tightly fused, with instruments exploding as one in kinetic barrages, *King James Version* allows the band members to walk more confident original paths, exploring their instruments in ways that create both space and coherence, leaving room for additional tonal touches that would have crowded their debut.”

—Larry Getlen, *City Link* (W. Palm Beach), Nov 1 2000

“Both rocking and smart—a grad-school groupie’s dreamboat.”
—Bob Remstein, *Wall of Sound*

“...a pounding, timeless style of rock’n’roll that owes as much to the New York Dolls as it does to Blur or Weezer...”

—James Sullivan, *San Francisco Examiner*, Sept 17 2000

“A lengthy treatise could be written on the diverse pleasures of *King James Version*.”

—Jon Young, Launch.com, Oct 25 2000

“...overall, the disc manages to be a wonderfully winsome collection of understated, yet highly produced indie pop. The songs themselves are sweetly angular—watery guitars set to jerky rhythms—with just the right amount of dumb pop-rock choruses to stave off Sebadoh comparisons.”

—*Transworld Stance*, Feb 2001

“Taking cues from The Kinks, The Pixies, The Smiths, and Nirvana, Seattle’s own Harvey Danger returns with the brilliant *King James Version*... The witty finished product takes a wider expressive angle, [in which] quick-minded lyrics are set to scrappy pop acoustics and driving beats.”

—Davis Bailey, *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, Oct 12 2000

“This doesn’t suck at all.”

—Chris Uhl, *Aquarian Weekly* (Montclair NJ) Nov 1 2000

“With infusions of rock, blues, and Britpop, as well as Nelson’s complex and satire-laced prose, Harvey Danger attains a high without the use of needles or spoons... ‘Sad Sweetheart of the Rodeo’ would be Elliott Smith-precious if it weren’t so hummable... Opening with a piano solo that could break into John Lennon’s ‘Imagine’ or GunsN’Roses ‘November Rain’ at a moment’s notice, ‘Pike St./Park Slope’ instead turns into a warm message to an unknown lover.”

—*Houston Chronicle*, Sept 17 2000

“After the band’s short hiatus from the public eye, *King James Version* is another fine achievement in sharp, provocative lyricism and driving guitars. The album is inventive and compelling. Four stars.”

—Paige Wolf, *Rockpile*

“Harvey Danger’s love of the Kinks, Sebadoh, and the Smiths shows through on tracks like ‘Why I’m Lonely’ and ‘Underground.’ But ‘The Same As Being in Love’ eclipses everything else... Frontman Sean Nelson employs more two-dollar words in a verse than most kids see on their SATs.”

—Mo McFeely, wiredplanet.com