

= Long Way to Go (Gwen Stefani and André 3000 song) =

" Long Way to Go " is a song by American singer @-@ songwriter Gwen Stefani with American rapper André 3000 . The song appears as the closing track on Stefani 's debut studio album , Love . Angel . Music . Baby . (2004) . It was released on November 23 , 2004 , along with the rest of Love . Angel . Music . Baby. by Interscope Records . The track was written by both Stefani and 3000 , while 3000 was the sole producer of the track .

Although the song was scrapped from 3000 's critically acclaimed OutKast studio album , The Love Below (2003) , Stefani and 3000 finalized a reworked version of the song to be included on Stefani 's album . The song prominently features a sample from Martin Luther King , Jr . ' s " I Have a Dream " speech in its closing outro . King is not credited for contributed lyrics to the song . Musically , " Long Way to Go " is influenced by electronic music and alternative hip hop , with partial influence from both dance music and soul music .

After its release , " Long Way to Go " received scrutiny for its sample of " I Have a Dream " . The song also was received negatively for its outdated metaphors on interracial relationships . However , the track did receive positive attention for being a " standout " on Love . Angel . Music . Baby. and also for its electronic production , particularly the closing of the track . Stefani performed the track during her 2005 Harajuku Lovers Tour , accompanied by the Harajuku Girls .

= = Background = =

Production for " Long Way to Go " initially started in 2003 during recording sessions for both of Stefani and 3000 's then upcoming studio albums . The original collaboration had Stefani as a featured artist , although 3000 intended for a different version of the song to make it on his album , The Love Below . The pair worked together on a slightly different version of the track , where it was then finalized and placed on Love . Angel . Music . Baby .. The original demo of the song has never been officially released to the public .

Lyrically , the song discusses prejudices against interracial dating and the beauty of love . This meaning is made clear in the lyric , " Beauty is beauty / Whether it 's black or white " . The line , " When snow hits the asphalt / Cold looks and bad talk come " is used as a metaphor for the backlash that may occur when dating someone of the opposite race . The song also jokes that this problematic situation is " beyond Martin Luther " . Throughout the closing of the track , prominent samples of Martin Luther King , Jr . ' s " I Have a Dream " speech can be heard , set to " unsynchronized M.I.A. like beats " created by a CutMaster Swiff synthesizer . Vibe described MLK 's speech as having " made its mark on music artists " , with some artists like Stefani having " lifted his word for their own tracks " .

= = Critical reception = =

Upon release , " Long Way to Go " received polarized reviews from critics . Some music critics heavily criticized the track for its sampling of the " I Have a Dream " speech , while others found it to be an interesting song . Jason Damas of PopMatters unfavorably compared the song to OutKast 's " Spread " and claimed that Stefani " awkwardly comment [ed] on race relations and as such it 's a bit of a buzzkill " . Krissi Murison of the British magazine , NME , also was negative with her review , claiming that the track is a " bar the knuckle @-@ bitingly bad duet " , further adding that every song on Love . Angel . Music . Baby. sounds like a future hit , minus " Long Way to Go " . Nick Sylvester of Pitchfork Media remained indifferent of the song as he thought that the song 's lyrics " feel out of place on an otherwise carefree album " and preferred Stefani and 3000 's other collaboration , " Bubble Pop Electric " .

However , Ryan Book of Music Times , was less critical with his review : " [Stefani] took a break from colorful music videos to make a statement of racial relations ... the song uses a less clear sample than the other tracks , but interpolates his words into the electronic breakdown at the end of the song " . Marc Robisch of Thought Catalog felt that " Long Way to Go " is " one of the most

interesting out of any on Love . Angel . Music . Baby . " , further adding that the outro of the song resembles the work of M.I.A .. Stephen Thomas Erlewine of AllMusic was mixed with his review , stating that the song " is a jarring buzz kill ? and that 's what 's appealing about L.A.M.B. , even if it such a shallow celebration of fleeting style and outdated bling @-@ bling culture , it can grate " . A review from Traxionary described " Long Way to Go " as " a plea for interracial love ? or the tolerant embrace of it ? the central contention that " beauty " can be " black or white / yellow or green " " . In an extremely positive review of the track , Mike Usinger writing for The Georgia Straight , claimed that " [with] a surprisingly soulful duet with Andre 3000 , Stefani has come up with the kind of solo album that gets singers thinking that maybe they don 't need a backing band at all , " referencing Stefani 's time spent with No Doubt .

= = Live performance = =

Stefani included the song on the setlist for her 2005 concert tour entitled Harajuku Lovers Tour . " Long Way to Go " was performed alongside the Harajuku Girls , a Japanese dance troupe ; the Girls performed minimal dance moves due to the intentional intimacy of the song . During the performance , the lyrics of " Long Way to Go " occasionally flashed on the screens above Stefani ; due to the topic of interracial dating prevalent in the song , Stefani was surrounded by individuals of different races throughout the performance .

= = Track listings and formats = =

US Digital download

" Long Way to Go " (with André 3000) ? 4 : 34

Interscope Records Sampler

A1 " Rich Girl " (featuring Eve) ? 3 : 56

A2 " Hollaback Girl " ? 3 : 19

A3 " Bubble Pop Electric " (featuring Johnny Vulture) ? 3 : 42

B1 " Long Way to Go " (with André 3000) ? 4 : 34

B2 " Harajuku Girls " ? 4 : 51

B3 " Cool " ? 3 : 09

= = Credits and personnel = =

Management

Recorded at Stankonia Recording , Atlanta ; Larabee Sound Studio East , Los Angeles ; and Soundcastle Studios , Los Angeles .

Personnel

Credits adapted from the liner notes of Love . Angel . Music . Baby .