

= Body Count ( album ) =

Body Count is the eponymous debut album of American heavy metal band Body Count . Released in 1992 , the album material focuses on various social and political issues ranging from police brutality to drug abuse . The album presents a turning point in the career of Ice @-@ T , who co @-@ wrote the album 's songs with lead guitarist Ernie C and performed as the band 's lead singer . Previously known only as a rapper , Ice @-@ T 's work with the band helped establish a crossover audience with rock music fans . The album produced one single , " There Goes the Neighborhood " .

Body Count is well known for the inclusion of the controversial song " Cop Killer " , which was the subject of much criticism from various political figures , although many defended the song on the basis of the group 's right to freedom of speech . Ice @-@ T eventually chose to remove the song from the album , although it continues to be performed live . It was voted the 31st best album of the year in The Village Voice 's Pazz & Jop critics poll , and is believed to have helped pave the way for the mainstream success of the rap metal genre , although the album itself does not feature rapping in any of its songs .

= = Conception = =

Ice @-@ T formed Body Count out of this interest . The band comprised musicians Ice @-@ T had known from Crenshaw High School . Ice @-@ T states that " I knew we didn 't want to form an R & B group . [ ... ] Where am I gonna get the rage and the anger to attack something with that ? [ ... ] We knew Body Count had to be a rock band . The name alone negates the band from being R & B . "

Ice @-@ T co @-@ wrote the band 's music and lyrics with lead guitarist Ernie C , and took on the duties of lead vocalist . Ice @-@ T states that " I knew I couldn 't sing , but then I thought , ' Who can sing in rock ' n ' roll ? ' " Aside from Ice @-@ T and Ernie C , the original line @-@ up consisted of Mooseman on bass , Beatmaster V on drums and D @-@ Roc on rhythm guitar . According to Ice @-@ T , " We named the group Body Count because every Sunday night in L.A. , I 'd watch the news , and the newscasters would tally up the youths killed in gang homicides that week and then just segue to sports . ' Is that all I am , ' I thought , ' a body count ? ' "

Ice @-@ T introduced the band at Lollapalooza in 1991 , devoting half of his set to his hip hop songs , and half to Body Count songs , increasing his appeal with both alternative rock fans and middle @-@ class teenagers . Many considered the Body Count performances to be the highlight of the tour . The group made its first album appearance on Ice @-@ T 's 1991 solo album O.G. Original Gangster . The song " Body Count " was preceded by a staged interview in which the performer referred to the group as a " black hardcore band , " stating that " as far as I 'm concerned , music is music . I don 't look at it as rock , R & B , or all that kind of stuff . I just look at it as music . [ ... ] I do what I like and I happen to like rock ' n ' roll , and I feel sorry for anybody who only listens to one form of music . "

Recording sessions for the group 's self @-@ titled debut took place from September to December 1991 . The album was released on March 31 , 1992 , on compact disc , vinyl , and audio cassette . Ice @-@ T states that Body Count was intentionally different from his solo hip hop albums in that " An Ice T album has intelligence , and at times it has ignorance . Sometimes it has anger , sometimes it has questions . But Body Count was intended to reflect straight anger . It was supposed to be the voice of the angry brother , without answers . [ ... ] If you took a kid and you put him in jail with a microphone and asked him how he feels , you 'd get Body Count : ' Fuck that . Fuck school . Fuck the police . ' You wouldn 't get intelligence or compassion . You 'd get raw anger . " From the album , " There Goes The Neighborhood " was released as a single , while " Body Count 's in the House " was featured in the film Universal Soldier .

= = Music and lyrics = =

Ernie C and Ice @-@ T conceived the album with the dark , ominous tone and Satanic lyrical themes of Black Sabbath in mind . However , Ice @-@ T felt that basing his lyrics in reality would be scarier than the fantasy basis in Black Sabbath 's lyrics ; the inner artwork depicts a man with a gun pointed at the viewer 's face . Ice @-@ T states , " To us that was the devil [ ... ] what 's more scary than [ ... ] some gangster with a gun pointed at you ? " Ice @-@ T defined the resulting mix of heavy metal and reality @-@ based lyrics as " a rock album with a rap mentality . " The album 's musical style is primarily described as speed metal , thrash metal and heavy metal . Jon Pareles of The New York Times wrote that with Body Count , Ice @-@ T " has recognized a kinship between his gangster raps and post @-@ punk , hard @-@ core rock , both of which break taboos to titillate fans . But where rap 's core audience is presumably in the inner city , hard @-@ core appeals mostly to suburbanites seeking more gritty thrills than they can get from Nintendo or the local mall . "

Despite Ice @-@ T 's attempts to differentiate Body Count from his work in the hip hop genre , the press focused on the group 's rap image . Ice @-@ T felt that politicians had intentionally referred to the song " Cop Killer " as rap to provoke negative criticism . " There is absolutely no way to listen to the song ' Cop Killer ' and call it a rap record . It 's so far from rap . But , politically , they know by saying the word rap they can get a lot of people who think , ' Rap @-@ black @-@ rap @-@ black @-@ ghetto , ' and don 't like it . You say the word rock , people say , ' Oh , but I like Jefferson Airplane , I like Fleetwood Mac ? that 's rock . ' They don 't want to use the word rock & roll to describe this song . " Body Count has since been credited for pioneering the rap metal genre popularized by groups such as Rage Against the Machine and Limp Bizkit , although Ice @-@ T does not rap on any of the album 's tracks . Ernie C stated that " A lot of rappers want to be in a rock band , but it has to be done sincerely . You can 't just get anybody on guitar and expect it to work . [ ... ] [ We ] really loved the music we were doing , and it showed . "

= = Lyrical themes = =

Like Ice @-@ T 's gangsta rap albums , Body Count 's material focused on various social and political issues , with songs focusing on topics ranging from police brutality to drug abuse . According to Ernie C , " Everybody writes about whatever they learned growing up , and we were no exception . Like The Beach Boys sing about the beach , we sing about the way we grew up . " Ice @-@ T states that " Body Count was an angry record . It was meant to be a protest record . I put my anger in it , while lacing it with dark humor . " The spoken introduction , " Smoked Pork " features Ice @-@ T taking on the roles of a gangster pretending to be seemingly stranded motorist and a police officer who refuses to aid . The track begins with Mooseman and Ice @-@ T driving their car towards a police car , and then Ice @-@ T asks for the gun Mooseman has and tells Mooseman to stay in the car , much to Mooseman 's chagrin , as Mooseman wanted to kill the cop in this round . Ice @-@ T then walks up to the policeman , pretending to be a stranded motorist , asking for help , but the policeman refuses , saying : " Nah , that 's not my job ! My job 's not to help your fuckin ' ass out ! " , then telling him that " my job is eatin ' these doughnuts " . When the officer recognizes Ice @-@ T , gunshots are heard . The final voice on the track is Ice @-@ T confirming his identity .

In the lyrics of " KKK Bitch , " Ice @-@ T describes a sexual encounter with a woman who he soon learns is the daughter of the Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan . The lyrics go on to describe a scenario in which members of Body Count " crash " a Klan meeting to " get buck wild with the white freaks " . Ice @-@ T makes humorous reference to " [ falling ] in love with Tipper Gore 's two twelve year old nieces " , and ponders the possibility of the Grand Wizard coming after him " when his grandson 's named little Ice @-@ T . " In The Ice Opinion : Who Gives a Fuck ? , Ice @-@ T wrote that " ' KKK Bitch ' was ironic because the sentiments were true . We 'd play Ku Klux Klan areas in the South and the girls would always come backstage and tell us how their brothers and fathers didn 't like black folks . [ ... ] We knew that ' KKK Bitch ' would totally piss off the Ku Klux Klan . There 's humor in the song , but it fucks with them . It 's on a punk tip . "

" Voodoo " describes a fictional encounter between Ice @-@ T and an old woman with a voodoo doll . " The Winner Loses " describes the downfall of a crack cocaine user . " There Goes the Neighborhood " is a sarcastic response to critics of Body Count , sung from the point of view of a

racist white rocker who wonders " Don 't they know rock 's just for whites ? / Don 't they know the rules ? / Those niggers are too hardcore / This shit ain 't cool . " For the song 's music video , the word " nigger " was replaced with the phrase " black boys " . The music video ends with a black musician implanting an electric guitar into the ground and setting it on fire . The final image is similar to that of a burning cross .

" Evil Dick " focuses on male promiscuity . Its lyrics describe a married man who is led to seek strange women after his " evil dick " tells him " Don 't sleep alone , don 't sleep alone . " " Momma 's Gotta Die Tonight " follows the account of a black teenager who murders and dismembers his racist mother after she reacts negatively when he brings a white girl home . In *The Ice Opinion : Who Gives a Fuck ?* , Ice @-@ T wrote that the song 's lyrics are metaphorical , explaining that " Whoever is still perpetuating racism has got to die , not necessarily physically , but they have to kill off that part of their brain . From now on , consider it dead . The entire attitude is dead . "

Ice @-@ T referred to the album 's final track , " Cop Killer " as a protest song , stating that the song is " [ sung ] in the first person as a character who is fed up with police brutality . " The song was written in 1990 , and had been performed live several times , including at Lollapalooza , before it had been recorded in a studio . The album version mentions then @-@ Los Angeles police chief Daryl Gates and the black motorist Rodney King , whose beating by LAPD officers was recorded on videotape . In *The Ice Opinion : Who Gives a Fuck ?* , Ice @-@ T wrote that the song " [ is ] a warning , not a threat ? to authority that says , ' Yo , police : We 're human beings . Treat us accordingly . ' " In an interview for *Rolling Stone* , Ice @-@ T stated that " We just celebrated the fourth of July , which is really just national Fuck the Police Day [ ... ] I bet that during the Revolutionary War , there were songs similar to mine . "

= = Release and reception = =

Initial copies of the album were shipped out in black body bags , a promotional device that drew minor criticism . The album debuted at No. 32 on *Billboard* 's Top 50 albums , peaking at No. 26 on the *Billboard* 200 . By January 29 , 1993 , the album sold 480 @,@ 000 copies , according to *Variety* . However , according to the Recording Industry Association of America , *Body Count* was certified gold for sale shipments in excess of 500 @,@ 000 copies , with a certification date back to August 4 , 1992 .

In a positive review for *The Village Voice* , music critic Robert Christgau said Ice @-@ T " takes rap 's art @-@ ain 't @-@ life defense over the top " on a heavy metal album which utilizes and parodies " the style 's whiteness privilege " . He wrote that the music is " flat @-@ out hard rock , short on soloistic intricacy and fancy structures " , but that it is set apart from other metal by Ice @-@ T , who " describes racism in language metalheads can understand , kills several policemen , and cuts his mama into little pieces because she tells him to hate white people . This can be a very funny record . " Greg Kot , writing in the *Chicago Tribune* , felt the lyrics on some songs are pathologically flawed and off @-@ putting , but the band 's take on metal styles is impressive and , " on the stereotype @-@ bashing ' *There Goes the Neighborhood* , ' the humor , message and music coalesce brilliantly " . Don Kaye of *Kerrang !* called *Body Count* a " noisy , relentless musical attack " .

In a less enthusiastic review for *Rolling Stone* , J. D. Considine wrote that " messages " are less important here than " the sort of sonic intensity parental groups fear even more than four @-@ letter words , " while *AllMusic* 's Stephen Thomas Erlewine called the album " a surprisingly tepid affair " partly because " all of Ice @-@ T 's half @-@ sung / half @-@ shouted lyrics fall far short of the standard he established on his hip @-@ hop albums . " In the *Pazz & Jop* , an annual poll of prominent critics published by *The Village Voice* , *Body Count* was voted the 31st best album of 1992 . Christgau , the poll 's supervisor , ranked it 22nd on his own year @-@ end list .

= = Controversy = =

The album was originally set to be distributed under the title *Cop Killer* , named for the song of the

same name , which criticizes violent police officers . During the production of the album , Warner Bros. executives were aware of the potential controversy that the album and song could cause , but supported it . At a Time @-@ Warner shareholders ' meeting , actor Charlton Heston stood and read lyrics from the song " KKK Bitch " to an astonished audience and demanded that the company take action . Sire responded by changing the title to Body Count , but did not remove the song . In an article for the Washington Post , Tipper Gore condemned Ice @-@ T for songs like " Cop Killer , " writing that " Cultural economics were a poor excuse for the South 's continuation of slavery . Ice @-@ T 's financial success cannot excuse the vileness of his message [ ... ] Hitler 's anti @-@ Semitism sold in Nazi Germany . That didn 't make it right . " The Dallas Police Association and the Combined Law Enforcement Association of Texas launched a campaign to force Warner Bros. Records to withdraw the album . CLEAT called for a boycott of all products by Time @-@ Warner in order to secure the removal of the song and album from stores . Within a week , they were joined by police organizations across the United States . Ice @-@ T asserted that the song was written from the point of view of a fictional character , and told reporters that " I ain 't never killed no cop . I felt like it a lot of times . But I never did it . If you believe that I 'm a cop killer , you believe David Bowie is an astronaut , " in reference to Bowie 's song " Space Oddity " .

The National Black Police Association opposed the boycott of Time @-@ Warner and the attacks on " Cop Killer , " identifying police brutality as the cause of much anti @-@ police sentiment , and proposed the creation of independent civilian review boards " to scrutinize the actions of our law enforcement officers " as a way of ending the provocations that caused artists such as Body Count " to respond to actions of police brutality and abuse through their music . [ ... ] Many individuals of the law enforcement profession do not want anyone to scrutinize their actions , but want to scrutinize the actions of others . " Critics argued that the song could cause crime and violence . Others defended the album on the basis of the group 's right to freedom of speech , and cited the fact that Ice @-@ T had portrayed a police officer in the film New Jack City . Ice @-@ T is quoted as saying that " I didn 't need people to come in and really back me on the First Amendment . I needed people to come in and say ' Ice @-@ T has grounds to make this record . ' I have the right to make it because the cops are killing my people . So fuck the First Amendment , let 's deal with the fact that I have the right to make it . "

Over the next month , controversy against the band grew . Vice President Dan Quayle branded " Cop Killer " as being " obscene , " and President George H.W. Bush publicly denounced any record company that would release such a product . Body Count was removed from the shelves of a retail store in Greensboro , North Carolina after local police had told the management that they would no longer respond to any emergency calls at the store if they continued to sell the album . In July 1992 , the New Zealand Police Commissioner unsuccessfully attempted to prevent an Ice @-@ T concert in Auckland , arguing that " Anyone who comes to this country preaching in obscene terms the killing of police , should not be welcome here , " before taking Body Count and Warner Bros. Records to the Indecent Publications Tribunal , in an effort to get it banned under New Zealand 's Indecent Publications Act . This was the first time in 20 years that a sound recording had come before the censorship body , and the first ever case involving popular music . After reviewing the various submissions , and listening carefully to the album , the Tribunal found the song " Cop Killer " to be " not exhortatory , " saw the album as displaying " an honest purpose , " and found Body Count not indecent . The controversy escalated to the point where death threats were sent to Time @-@ Warner executives , and stockholders threatened to pull out of the company . Finally , Ice @-@ T decided to remove " Cop Killer " from the album of his own volition , a decision which was met by criticism from other artists who derided Ice @-@ T for " caving in to external pressure . " In an interview , Ice @-@ T stated that " I didn 't want my band to get pigeon @-@ holed as that 's the only reason that record sold . It just got outta hand and I was just tired of hearing it . I said , ' fuck it , ' I mean they 're saying we did it for money , and we didn 't . I 'd gave the record away , ya know , let 's move on , let 's get back to real issues , not a record but the cops that are out there killing people . "

" Cop Killer " was replaced by a new version of " Freedom of Speech , " a song from Ice @-@ T 's 1989 solo album The Iceberg / Freedom of Speech ... Just Watch What You Say . The song was re

@-@ edited and remixed to give it a more rock @-@ oriented sound , using a looped sample from the Jimi Hendrix song " Foxy Lady . " Alongside the album 's reissue , Warner Bros. issued " Cop Killer " as a single . Ice @-@ T left Warner Bros. Records the following year because of disputes over his solo album Home Invasion , taking Body Count with him . The studio version of " Cop Killer " has not been re @-@ released , although a live version of the song appears on Body Count 's 2005 release Live in L.A. According to Ernie C , the controversy over the song " still lingers for us , even now . I 'll try to book clubs and the guy I 'm talking to will mention it and I 'll think to myself ' Man , that was 17 years ago . ' But I meet a lot of bands who ask me about it too and I 'm real respected by other artists for it . But it 's a love / hate thing . Ice gets it too , even though he plays a cop on TV now on Law & Order SVU . "

In Australia , the track listings on copies of the new version of the album sold there ended at track 16 , omitting " Freedom of Speech " ( or " Cop Killer " and its spoken word intro , " Out in the Parking Lot " ) . This was likely because the track " Freedom of Speech " refers to the speech protections of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution , which Australia does not have an equivalent to in its own Constitution , thus the track is not as relevant to Australian audiences .

= = Track listing = =

= = Personnel = =

Ice @-@ T ? lead vocals

Ernie C. ? lead , rhythm and acoustic guitars

Mooseman ? bass

D @-@ Roc ? rhythm guitar

Beatmaster " V " ? drums