

= Killing Is My Business ... and Business Is Good ! =

Killing Is My Business ... and Business Is Good ! is the debut studio album by American thrash metal band Megadeth . It was released on June 12 , 1985 , through Combat Records . At the beginning of 1985 , the band was given \$ 8 @, @ 000 by Combat to record and produce its debut album . After spending half of the album 's budget on drugs , alcohol and food , the band was forced to fire their original producer and produce the album themselves . Despite the resulting poor production , the album was a well @-@ received effort that obtained strong reviews in various music publications . Killing Is My Business ... and Business Is Good ! played an essential role in establishing thrash metal as an authentic subgenre of heavy metal music . It explores themes of death , violence , and occultism .

The album features a controversial cover of " These Boots Are Made for Walkin ' " and the track " Mechanix " , a song frontman Dave Mustaine originally wrote for Metallica . A deluxe edition , completely remixed and remastered with several bonus tracks , was released through Loud Records in 2002 . It features vastly different artwork , with its cover based on the version originally designed by Mustaine in 1985 . All songs from the album were performed frequently during Megadeth 's initial tour but have been steadily dropped from the setlist since .

= = Background = =

Dave Mustaine served as the lead guitarist for Metallica during their early days . However , due to drinking , substance abuse , violent behavior , and personality conflicts with band mates James Hetfield and Lars Ulrich , Mustaine was soon fired from Metallica . Two months after being dismissed , he and bassist David Ellefson formed Megadeth in Los Angeles . Mustaine later recalled : " After getting fired from Metallica , all I remember is that I wanted blood . Theirs . I wanted to be faster and heavier than them . " Fueled by the desire for revenge , Mustaine elevated the intensity of Megadeth 's music in order to challenge his former band . He sped up existing songs such as " Mechanix " , which Metallica 's new line @-@ up adapted into the slower paced " The Four Horsemen " . Mustaine included his original version of the song on the album to " straighten Metallica up " , as Metallica referred to Mustaine as a drunk and said he could not play guitar .

After unsuccessfully searching for a vocalist for nearly six months , Mustaine decided to handle the vocal duties himself , while also serving as the band 's primary lyricist , main songwriter and co @-@ lead and rhythm guitarist . Early in 1984 , Megadeth recorded a three song demo engineered by Karat Faye , and on the strength of that demo , the band was asked to sign with the New York @-@ based independent label Combat Records . Early in 1985 , Megadeth was given \$ 8 @, @ 000 by Combat to record and produce its debut album . However , this proved not to be enough and the band was given a further \$ 4 @, @ 000 . Instead , a majority of the budget was spent on drugs , alcohol , and food , forcing the group to fire the original producer and produce the record themselves . The album was successfully recorded at the Indigo Ranch Studios , in Malibu , California .

= = Release and promotion = =

The album 's artwork , featuring a plastic skull with tinfoil , was not intended to be the original artwork . Both Mustaine and Ellefson had many phone conversations with Combat Records to get the cover artwork properly reproduced from a sketch given to them by Mustaine of a picture of Megadeth mascot Vic Rattlehead on the cover . However the studio lost the artwork , and instead made their own improvised and low @-@ budget replacement , with which Mustaine and the whole band were mortified .

Megadeth began with live performances before the record was released . Although not a member of the band , Kerry King of Slayer played lead guitar for a short period because Mustaine had not recruited a full @-@ time guitarist yet . In mid @-@ 1985 , the group toured the United States and Canada for the first time , supporting Killing Is My Business ... with Exciter . During the tour , guitarist Chris Poland abruptly left the band , and was replaced by touring guitarist Mike Albert . However ,

Poland rejoined Megadeth in October 1985 , and stayed with the band up to the recording of the next album .

The album was released on June 12 , 1985 . To date it remains the only Megadeth album that did not chart on the Billboard 200 , primarily because it was released through an independent label with little promotion . Nevertheless , the album still went on to become one of Combat Records ' highest selling releases . Later that year , Capitol Records signed Megadeth as they began working on their second album , *Peace Sells ... but Who 's Buying ?* , released the following year . A limited edition of *Killing Is My Business ... and Business Is Good !* was released in 2009 . The CD itself is pressed on black plastic with grooves on the top to imitate an LP . This version 's cover is redesigned to match Mustaine 's original sketch , and the song " These Boots " was removed . Over 254 @, @ 000 copies of the album were sold in the United States since the beginning of the Nielsen SoundScan era .

= = Music and lyrics = =

According to writer Peter Buckley , the record presented a faster , " thrashier kind of heavy metal " . Steve Huey of AllMusic opined that the music on *Killing Is My Business ... and Business Is Good !* is predominantly " chaotic " , accompanied by " lightning @-@ fast " solo sections . Sputnikmusic 's Mike Stagno said that the original pressing greatly suffered from the poor production , which made the record difficult to listen to . However , he noted that the music is performed at rapid speed , with precise riffing by both Poland and Mustaine . In his book *Mean Deviation : Four Decades of Progressive Heavy Metal* , editor Jeff Wagner wrote the album displayed unusual rhythms and unorthodox guitar riffs , which carried " like a runaway train " . Speaking about the intensity of the record , Ellefson said that " extreme speed was deemed the cool factor in thrash metal back in those days " . Although Ellefson considers the album as a solid debut release , he wanted some of the songs to be recorded in slower tempo .

The album explores gloomy lyrical subjects such as death , violence , and occultism . Speaking about the themes on the album , author Bob Larson asserted that Megadeth " cranks out songs about spilling blood and stomping guts with venomous anger " . The album 's title , as well as its lyrics , led to accusations whether the band was promoting Satanism . These allegations were rigidly denied by Mustaine , who said that the band consciously kept away from the Satanic image . " I mean , it 's great to thrash and pound , cut yourself up , scream and have fun , but you don 't have to take out a Pagan attitude . Why support the Devil ? He 's already there . I 'd rather just fucking thrash and be a metalist and listen to whatever I want to than be forced to listen to one style of music . "

= = Songs = =

The album 's opening track , " Last Rites / Loved to Deth " , consists of two parts . The first part , " Last Rites " , is an instrumental segue featuring a piano intro , a reinterpretation of J.S. Bach 's Toccata and Fugue in D Minor . Mustaine explained that " Loved to Deth " was his " version of a love song " to his girlfriend at the time . The title track was inspired by The Punisher comic book , and tells of a paid serial assassin . The song caused minor media controversy when a man posted an online request to a radio station to play the tune , saying it was " good music to go postal and kill a bunch of people to " . The man was later arrested under suspicion of commencing a potential shooting spree . " The Skull Beneath the Skin " was developed under the working title " Self Destruct " . The song graphically describes a horrendous human torture , while also probing into the occult and black magic . Mustaine pointed that the creation of Vic Rattlehead was explained throughout that track . " Rattlehead " , according to Dave Mustaine , was dedicated to the band 's mascot and their fans .

" Looking Down the Cross " was penned by Mustaine in 1983 under the working title " Speak No Evil " . The song tells about the temptation of Jesus Christ , using religious metaphors and imagery . " Chosen Ones " was partially inspired by Tim the Enchanter from the movie *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* . " Mechanix " was originally written by Mustaine during his tenure in Metallica ; lyrically , it

talks about having sex at a gas station . The album features the first of many covers performed by Megadeth : a speed metal version of Nancy Sinatra 's classic " These Boots Are Made for Walkin ' " , with lyrics altered by Mustaine . The song sparked controversy in later years when the song 's original author , Lee Hazlewood , deemed Mustaine 's changes to be " vile and offensive " and demanded that the song be removed from the album . Under threat of legal action , the song was removed from all pressings released after 1995 . In 2002 , the album was re @-@ released with a modified version of the song ; the altered lyrics were censored because Hazlewood has not given permission to the band to release the cover in its original version . In the liner notes of the album 's reissue , Mustaine was strongly critical of Hazlewood , noting that he received royalties for almost 10 years before objecting to the altered version .

= = Critical reception = =

Killing Is My Business ... and Business Is Good ! received mostly positive reviews , not just from metal @-@ oriented magazines , but from the mainstream press too . Colin Larkin , writing in the Encyclopedia of Popular Music , called the album a " ferocious blast of high @-@ energy thrash metal " , weakened by a thin production . Similarly , Steve Huey from AllMusic observed that the album is " as raw as Megadeth gets " . However , Huey noted that the riffs and compositions weren 't completely developed , and called Mustaine 's vocals " amateurish at best " . Chad Bowar from About.com said that Megadeth were still " finding their way " on their debut album , but remarked that the band showed great potential through angry and passionate musicianship .

Adrien Begrand of PopMatters dismissed the original recording , but praised the re @-@ release , writing that the album " blazes on at a furious pace " . According to him , the record greatly influenced the heavy metal genre in the upcoming two decades . Sputnikmusic staff member Mike Stagno agreed with the praise for the remaster , saying that the " fuzzy " sound of the original release was replaced with a clearer production . Even so , he opined that the album still retained the " thrashy " sound characteristic for the band during this period . Mike Marsh of Drowned in Sound recommended the music " for people who want it loud , fast and brutal " . In a retrospective review for KNAC , Frank Meyer said that the album put Megadeth at the forefront of heavy metal scene in the early 1980s and credited it for paving the way for thrash metal 's arrival . CMJ New Music Report praised Mustaine 's " masterful " wordplay and called the record a representative of " the golden age of speed metal " .

= = Track listing = =

All songs written and composed by Dave Mustaine , except " These Boots " by Lee Hazlewood .

= = Personnel = =

Production and performance credits are adapted from the album liner notes .