

= HIStory : Past , Present and Future , Book I =

HIStory : Past , Present and Future , Book I (usually shortened to HIStory) is the ninth and penultimate studio album by American recording artist Michael Jackson . It is his fifth studio album released through Epic Records . It was released on June 18 , 1995 . This is Jackson 's first album on his own label , MJJ Productions , and consists of two discs : the first disc (HIStory Begins) is a compilation of some of his greatest hits from 1979 onward , while the second disc (HIStory Continues) is a studio album composed entirely of new material . The majority of the second disc 's tracks were written and produced by Jackson , often in conjunction with collaborators .

HIStory was Jackson 's return to releasing music following his eighth studio album Dangerous (1991) . Many of the 15 songs pertain to the accusations and Jackson 's mistreatment in the media , specifically the tabloids . The songs ' themes include environmental awareness , isolation , greed , suicide and injustice .

HIStory is Jackson 's most controversial album . Jackson was accused of using anti @-@ Semitic lyrics in " They Don 't Care About Us " . Jackson stated that he did not mean any offense and on multiple occasions denied anti @-@ Semitism . The dispute regarding the lyrics ended with Jackson re @-@ recording them . R. Kelly was accused of plagiarizing one of the album 's songs , " You Are Not Alone " . In 2007 a judge ruled that the song was plagiarized and the song was subsequently banned from radio stations in Belgium .

Six singles and two promotional singles were released from HIStory : " Scream " / " Childhood " , " You Are Not Alone " , " Earth Song " , " This Time Around " , " They Don 't Care About Us " and " Stranger in Moscow " . " This Time Around " was released as a radio @-@ only single , and " Earth Song " , " They Don 't Care About Us " and " Stranger in Moscow " were less successful within the United States , but were successful internationally ; all three peaked within the top ten in multiple countries .

The album was generally well received by music critics and was also commercially successful , debuting and peaking at number one in many countries , including the United States , Canada , Australia , France and the United Kingdom , as well as charting within the top ten in Spain , India and Mexico . The album was certified six times platinum by the end of 1996 in Europe , making it the best selling album of the year in the combined European market . The album was nominated for five Grammy Awards , winning one for Best Music Video ? Short Form for " Scream " . The greatest hits disc of the album was reissued as a single disc on November 13 , 2001 , under the name Greatest Hits : HIStory , Volume I and has reportedly sold four million copies worldwide as of early 2010 . The second half of the album , consisting of 15 new songs , was finally released separately in selected European countries in 2011 and History : Past Present Future Book I is the Best Selling Double Disk Album of All Time with between 20 ? 30 million copies (40 ? 60 million units) sold worldwide .

= = Background and production = =

HIStory is primarily directed at the tabloid press . Starting in the late 1980s , Jackson and the press had a difficult relationship . In 1986 , the tabloids ran a story claiming that Jackson slept in a hyperbaric oxygen chamber , which Jackson stated was not true . It was reported that Jackson had offered to buy the bones of Joseph Merrick (the " elephant man ") . Jackson described the story as " a complete lie " . These stories inspired the pejorative nickname " Wacko Jacko " , which Jackson despised . He stopped leaking untruths to the press , so the media began making up their own stories . In 1989 , Jackson released the song and music video " Leave Me Alone " , a song about his perceived victimization at the hands of the press . The video shows Jackson poking fun not only at the press but also the situation he was in .

In 1993 , the relationship between Jackson and the press crumbled entirely when he was accused of child sexual abuse . Although he was not charged with a crime , Jackson was subject to intense media scrutiny while the criminal investigation took place . Complaints about the coverage and media included : using sensational headlines to draw in readers and viewers when the content itself did not support the headline ; accepting stories of Jackson 's alleged criminal activity in return for

money ; accepting confidential , leaked material from the police investigation in return for money paid ; deliberately using pictures of Jackson 's appearance at its worst ; a lack of objectivity ; and using headlines that strongly implied Jackson 's guilt . In 1994 , Jackson said of the media coverage , " I will say I am particularly upset by the handling of the matter by the incredible , terrible mass media . At every opportunity , the media has dissected and manipulated these allegations to reach their own conclusions . "

Jackson began taking painkillers , Valium , Xanax and Ativan to deal with the stress of the allegations . A few months after the allegations became news , Jackson had stopped eating . Soon after , Jackson 's health had deteriorated to the extent that he cancelled the remainder of his tour and went into rehabilitation . Jackson booked the whole fourth floor of a clinic and was put on Valium IV to wean him from painkillers . When Jackson left the United States to go into rehabilitation , the media showed Jackson little sympathy . In 1993 , The Daily Mirror held a " Spot the Jacko " contest , offering readers a trip to Disney World if they could correctly predict where Jackson would appear next . The same year , a Daily Express headline read , " Drug Treatment Star Faces Life on the Run " , while a News of the World headline accused Jackson of being a fugitive ; these tabloids also falsely alleged that Jackson had travelled to Europe to have cosmetic surgery that would make him unrecognisable on his return . In early November 1993 , Geraldo Rivera set up a mock trial , with a jury made up of audience members , even though Jackson had not been charged with a crime .

The new material on HIStory : Past , Present and Future , Book I was recorded from September 1994 to March 1995 . Jackson co @-@ wrote and co @-@ produced a majority of the songs featured on the album . Aside from Jackson , other writers include Dallas Austin , The Notorious B.I.G. , Bruce Swedien , R. Kelly and René Moore and other producers include David Foster and Bill Bottrell . HIStory was Jackson 's first studio album since his 1991 album Dangerous four years prior , and his first new material to be released since being accused of child sexual abuse in 1994 . HIStory was released as a two @-@ disc album ; disc one (HIStory Begins) contains already released material from Jackson , and the second disc (HIStory Continues) comprises new material . HIStorys first disc had fifteen songs from Jackson 's four previous studio albums , Off the Wall (1979) , Thriller (1982) , Bad (1987) and Dangerous (1991) . Physically , the album was available on double gold CD , double cassette , and , due to the format 's running time limitations , triple vinyl . Musically , HIStory 's themes are credited as , R & B , pop , rock , dance , urban , new jack swing , funk , and hip @-@ hop . HIStory was released on June 16 , 1995 by Sony Music 's Epic Records .

= = Composition = =

HIStory , similar to Jackson 's previous studio albums Thriller and Bad , contains lyrics that deal with paranoia . The majority of the new songs were written by Jackson . Several of the album 's fifteen new songs pertain to the child sexual abuse allegations made against him in 1993 and Jackson 's perceived mistreatment by the media , mainly the tabloids . Because of this , the album has been described as being Jackson 's most " personal " . Two of the album 's new tracks were covers . The genres of the album 's music span R & B , pop , hard rock and ballads . The lyrics pertain to isolation , greed , environmental concerns , injustice . " Scream " is a duet with Jackson 's younger sister Janet ; contemporary critics noted that it was difficult to distinguish their voices apart . It was noted that the " refrain " of the song 's lyrics " Stop pressurin ' me ! " is " compelling , " and that Jackson " spits out the lyrics with drama and purpose " . " Scream " ' s lyrics are about injustice .

The lyrics for the R & B ballad " You Are Not Alone " , written by R. Kelly , pertain to isolation . Two Belgian songwriters , brothers Eddy and Danny Van Passel , claimed to have written the melody in 1993 ; In September 2007 , a Belgian judge ruled the song was plagiarized from the Van Passel brothers , and it was subsequently banned from airwaves in Belgium . " D.S. " is a hard rock song , whose lyrics were interpreted by music critics as an attack on the district attorney of Jackson 's child sexual abuse case , Thomas Sneddon . Multiple critics reviewed the song in connection with Sneddon , Fox News Channel and CNN , noting that the " cold man " in the lyrics is Sneddon ; when

the name " Dom S. Sheldon " from the chorus is sung , it resembles " Thomas Sneddon " .

" Money " was interpreted as being directed at Evan Chandler , the father of the boy who accused Jackson of child sexual abuse . The lyrics of " Childhood " pertain to Jackson 's own childhood . Similar to " Scream " , the lyrics to " They Don 't Care About Us " pertain to injustice , as well as racism . In " This Time Around " , Jackson asserts himself as having been " falsely accused " . The song features The Notorious B.I.G. (aka Biggie Smalls) two years before his death in 1997 . Jackson worked with Biggie again posthumously in 2001 on Jackson 's following album , *Invincible* on the song " Unbreakable " ; this made him the only rapper to appear on multiple Jackson LPs . " Earth Song " was described as a " slow blues @-@ operatic " , and its lyrics pertain to environmental concerns . On *HIStory* , Jackson covered Charlie Chaplin 's " Smile " and The Beatles ' " Come Together " . " Stranger in Moscow " is a pop ballad that is interspersed with sounds of rain . Jackson described the lyrics as being a " swift and sudden fall from grace " . " Tabloid Junkie " is a hard funk song with lyrics instructing listeners to not believe everything they read in the media and tabloids . The album 's title track , " *HIStory* " contained multiple samples , including Martin Luther King Jr . ' s " I Have a Dream " speech . " *HIStory* " was not released as a single from *HIStory* , but its remix was from *Blood on the Dance Floor : HIStory in the Mix* in 1997 .

As an introduction for " Little Susie " , Michael used his own variation of Pie Jesu from Maurice Duruflé 's *Requiem* . The inspiration behind the song more likely came from an artist called Gottfried Helnwein . Michael admired the artist 's work and he had purchased some of his paintings . One of them , " Beautiful Victim " , inspired the song . Helnwein is considered quite provocative as he paints about the human condition depicting wounded children , among others . Helnwein later painted a portrait of Michael . There appears to be a similarity between the " Beautiful Victim " painting and the artwork included for the song in *HIStory* .

= = Controversy and influence = =

= = = Dispute regarding lyrics of " They Don 't Care About Us " = = =

The possibility that the lyrics to " They Don 't Care About Us " contained antisemitism was first raised publicly by The New York Times on June 15 , 1995 , one day before the album 's release . The publication highlighted the lyrics , " Jew me , sue me , everybody do me / Kick me , kike me , don 't you black or white me " and labeled them " slurs " . Jackson responded directly to the publication , stating :

When questioned further about the lyrics , Jackson denied that " They Don 't Care About Us " was antisemitic , commenting " It 's not anti @-@ Semitic because I 'm not a racist person ... I could never be a racist . I love all races . " That same day , Jackson received support from his manager and record label , who described the lyrics as " brilliant " , that they were about opposition to prejudice and taken out of context . The following day , David A. Lehrer and Rabbi Marvin Hier , leaders of two Jewish organizations , stated that Jackson 's attempt to make a song critical of discrimination had backfired . They expressed the opinion that the lyrics used were unsuitable for young audiences because they might not understand the song 's context and that the song was ambiguous for some of the listeners . They acknowledged that Jackson meant well and suggested that he write an explanation in the album booklet .

On June 17 , Jackson issued another public apology to anyone offended by his choice of words and promised that future copies of the album would include an apology , Jackson concluded , " I just want you all to know how strongly I am committed to tolerance , peace and love , and I apologize to anyone who might have been hurt " . The next day , in his review of *HIStory* , Jon Pareles of The New York Times alleged , " In ... ' They Don 't Care About Us ' , he gives the lie to his entire catalogue of brotherhood anthems with a burst of anti @-@ Semitism : ' Jew me , sue me , everybody do me / Kick me , kike me , don 't you black or white me ' " .

On June 23 , Jackson decided , despite the cost incurred , he would return to the studio and alter the offending wording on future copies of the album ; " Jew me " and " Kike me " would be

substituted with " do me " and " strike me " . He reiterated his acceptance that the song was offensive to some . Spike Lee , who would direct the music videos for " They Don 't Care About Us " , stated that he felt there was a double standard in the music industry , commenting that the use of the word nigger , in music , does not cause controversy . Additionally , rapper Notorious B.I.G. , used the word nigga on another song on the HIStory album , " This Time Around " , but it did not attract media attention . The song " They Don 't Care About Us " is covered by Christian Rock Band P.O.D. in 1999 as a special edition of their album " Fundamental Elements of Southtown . "

= = = Music videos = = =

HIStory 's music videos displayed different themes and elements . Certain music videos , such as " They Don 't Care About Us " , helped bring awareness of poverty and had positive effects on the locations . " They Don 't Care About Us " ' s music video was directed by Spike Lee , Jackson said that Lee chose to direct the video because the song " has an edge , and Spike Lee had approached me . It 's a public awareness song and that 's what he is all about . It 's a protest kind of song ... and I think he was perfect for it " . Jackson also collaborated with 200 members of the cultural group Olodum , who played music in the video . The media interest surrounding the music video exposed Olodum to 140 countries around the world . It brought them worldwide fame and increased their credibility in Brazil . Lúcia Nagib , of The New Brazilian Cinema , said of the music video :

In 2009 , Billboard described the area as " now a model for social development " and stated that Jackson 's influence was partially responsible for this improvement . For the first time in Jackson 's career , he made a second music video for a single . This second version was filmed in a prison with cell mates ; the video shows Jackson handcuffed and contains real footage of police attacking African Americans , the Ku Klux Klan , genocide , execution , and other human rights abuses . Jackson 's music video for " Earth Song " received praise for its environmental recognition . In 1995 , the video received a Genesis Award for Doris Day Music Award , given each year for animal sensitivity . In 2008 , a writer for the Nigeria Exchange noted , " ' Earth Song ' drew the world 's attention to the degradation and bastardization of the earth as a fall out of various human activities " .

Two other music videos from HIStory have been influential . Jackson 's " Stranger In Moscow " music video influenced the advertising campaign for International Cricket Council Champions Trophy 2004 , which featured " a series of smart outdoor ads and a classy TV spot " . The television commercial was inspired by " Stranger In Moscow " s video where " the maiden in black splash about in the rain , with kids playing cricket for company " . " Scream " was a creative influence on other music videos such as the 1999 release of the award winning " No Scrubs " by TLC . This influence was also present on the 2008 release of " Shawty Get Loose " by Lil Mama and Chris Brown . Reacting to the comparisons made between the videos , Mama explained , " I feel honored , because that was one of the initial goals , and I feel that it was executed well " , she added that the emulation was intentional and that Brown was the only logical choice to step into Michael Jackson 's role .

= = Promotion = =

Sony Music spent \$ 30 million to promote the album . Prior to the album 's release , the music press were anticipating how well it would sell . One analyst for SoundScan expressed the opinion that the press were out of touch with the public when it came to Jackson ; the public liked him , while the press did not . He believed that " naysayers " in the media would be left surprised with the commercial reception to the HIStory campaign . " Smile " , " This Time Around " and " D.S. " were released as promotional singles in 1995 and December 1997 . Due to lack of radio airplay , " Smile " and " D.S. " did not chart on any music charts worldwide . " This Time Around " , was released as radio @-@ only single in the United States in December 1995 . The song peaked at number twenty @-@ three on the Billboard Hot R & B Singles chart and at number eighteen on the Billboard Hot Dance Music / Club Play chart solely off radio airplay .

To promote the album , Jackson embarked on the commercially successful world concert tour , titled HIStory World Tour . The HIStory World Tour was Jackson 's third , and last , concert tour as a solo artist . The HIStory World Tour , beginning in Prague , Czech Republic on September 7 , 1996 , attracted more than 4 @. @ 5 million fans from 58 cities in 35 countries around the world . The average concert attendance was 54 @, @ 878 and the tour lasted 82 tour dates . Jackson did not perform any concerts in the United States , besides two concerts in January 1997 in Hawaii . VIP seats cost , on average , \$ 200 per person . Each concert lasted an estimated two hours and ten minutes . The HIStory World Tour concluded in Durban , South Africa on October 15 , 1997 .

= = Singles = =

Several singles were released from HIStory . " Scream " / " Childhood " , released as a double A @- @ side , was the first single released from HIStory in May 1995 . " Scream " was sung and performed by Jackson and his sister Janet Jackson . The single had the best ever debut at number five - where it peaked , on the Billboard Hot 100 . The song received a Grammy nomination for " Best Pop Collaboration With Vocals " . The music video for " Scream " is one of Jackson 's most critically acclaimed songs and music videos , receiving numerous awards . With a US \$ 9 million music video production budget , " Scream " is the most expensive music video ever made as of 2015 .

" You Are Not Alone " was the second single released from HIStory . Having debuted at number one on the Billboard Hot 100 on September 2 , 1995 , it would become the first song ever to debut at number one on the chart , succeeding the record previously held from Jackson 's " Scream " single . " You Are Not Alone " was released in August 1995 , and it topped the charts in various international markets , including the United Kingdom , France , and Spain . The song was seen as a major artistic and commercial success .

" Earth Song " was the third single released in November 1995 . " Earth Song " did not chart on Billboard 100 . Internationally , the song topped four countries ' charts , as well as charting within the top @- @ ten in nine other nations . The song topped the UK Singles Chart for six weeks over Christmas in 1995 and sold one million copies there , making it his most successful United Kingdom single , surpassing the success of his single " Billie Jean " .

" They Don 't Care About Us " was the fourth single . " They Don 't Care About Us " peaked at number thirty on the Billboard 100 , and it charted within the top @- @ ten of Billboard 's Hot Dance Music and Hot R & B Singles Charts . The song charted better in other countries , compared to the United States , managing to chart within the top @- @ ten in fourteen countries . " They Don 't Care About Us " topped the German Singles chart for three weeks , while peaking at number two in Spain , number three in Austria , Sweden , and Switzerland , as well as charting at number four in France , the United Kingdom and the Netherlands .

" Stranger in Moscow " was released as the fifth and final single in November 1996 . The song was well received by critics . In the United States , the song peaked at number ninety one on the Billboard Hot 100 . Outside of the United States , the song was a success , topping in Spain and Italy , while peaking within the top @- @ ten in the United Kingdom , Switzerland , and New Zealand , among others .

= = Release and reception = =

HIStory received generally positive reviews . Arguably Jackson 's most angry , raw , emotional album , the new tracks on HIStory revealed a musician worn and torn by years of superstardom , now reportedly reacting against people who tried to bring him down . This reaction is what some people say ultimately stunted his previous skill at creating cutting edge musical trends , with Jon Pareles of The New York Times writing that " It has been a long time since Michael Jackson was simply a performer . He 's the main asset of his own corporation , which is a profitable subsidiary of Sony " . Some reviewers commented on the unusual format of a new studio album being accompanied by a " greatest hits " collection , with Q magazine saying " from the new songs ' point

of view , it 's like taking your dad with you into a fight . " Fred Shuster of the Daily News of Los Angeles described " This Time Around " , " Money " and " D.S. " as " superb slices of organic funk that will fuel many of the summer 's busiest dance floors " .

James Hunter of Rolling Stone gave HIStory four @-@ out @-@ of @-@ five stars and noted that it " unfolds in Jackson 's outraged response to everything he has encountered in the last year or so . It makes for an odd , charmless second chapter to a first that includes miraculous recordings like ' Billie Jean , ' ' The Way You Make Me Feel , ' ' Black or White ' and ' Beat It . ' In relation to " This Time Around " , Hunter described it as a " dynamite jam " that 's " ripe for remixes " and described " Scream " and " Tabloid Junkie , " as being " adventurous " while noting that " Earth Song " as a " noble sentiments " that sounds " primarily like a showpiece " . Jim Farber of the New York Daily News gave the album a generally mixed review and commented that he would give the album 's first disc three stars if it was released on its own . Jon Pareles of The New York Times believed that Jackson " muttered " lyrics such as " They thought they really had control of me " . Chris Willman of the Los Angeles Times said of " This Time Around " , " a tough , rhythm @-@ guitar @-@ driven track co @-@ written and co @-@ produced by hit @-@ maker Dallas Austin that sports one of the album 's better grooves " .

Stephen Thomas Erlewine of Allmusic gave HIStory three @-@ out @-@ of @-@ five stars , but commented that it was a " monumental achievement " of Jackson 's ego . Erlewine remarked that on the HIStory Begins CD , it contains " some of the greatest music in pop history " but that it leaves some hits out , citing " Say Say Say " and " Dirty Diana " ? commenting that " yet it 's filled with enough prime material to be thoroughly intoxicating " . Erlewine noted that HIStory Continues is " easily the most personal album Jackson has recorded " and that its songs ' lyrics referencing the molestation accusations create a " thick atmosphere of paranoia " . He cited " You Are Not Alone " and " Scream " as being " well @-@ crafted pop that ranks with his best material " , but concludes that " nevertheless , HIStory Continues stands as his weakest album since the mid- ' 70s . " David Browne of Entertainment Weekly , gave " HIStory Begins " an " A- " grade but the album 's new material a " C- " , which " winds up a B " for the entire album . Browne commented that the music " rarely seems to transport him (and thereby us) to a higher plane . " The album was nominated for five Grammy Awards at the 1996 and 1997 ceremonies respectively , winning one award . " You Are Not Alone " was nominated for Best Pop Vocal Performance ? Male , " Scream " was nominated for Best Pop Collaboration with Vocals and " Scream " won Best Music Video - Short Form and " Earth Song " was nominated for the same award the following year . The album itself was nominated for Album of the Year . At the 1995 MTV Video Music Awards , " Scream " received ten nominations , winning in three categories .

HIStory debuted at number one on the Billboard 200 and Top R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Albums charts selling over 391 @,@ 000 copies in its first week . The album was certified seven times platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America on October 22 , 1999 in the United States . Because HIStory is double disc album , its CDs are therefore counted separately for certification purposes , meaning the album achieved platinum status in the United States after 500 @,@ 000 copies were shipped , not one million . In Europe , the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry certified HIStory six times platinum , denoting six million shipments within the continent , including 1 @.@ 5 million in Germany and 1 @.@ 2 million shipments in the United Kingdom . As of 2010 , HIStory has sold 20 ? 30 million copies (40 ? 60 million units) worldwide and is the best selling multiple @-@ disc release , making it one of the best @-@ selling albums of all time .

= = Track listing = =

Notes

The earliest French , German , and Dutch pressings of the album contain a hidden track on HIStory Begins , which is a 20 @-@ second message from Michael to his fans in the matching countries .

Some of the earlier versions of the album contain a different intro in the title track , " HIStory " which was sampled from " The Great Gate of Kiev " in Modest Mussorgsky 's Pictures at an Exhibition . Later versions replaced it with a similar orchestra piece .

The earliest pressings of this album contain " They Don 't Care About Us " with the uncensored lyrics .

= = Album credits = =

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications and sales = =