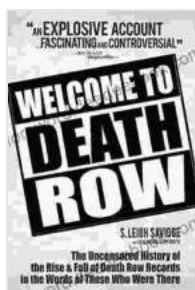


# The Uncensored History of the Rise and Fall of Death Row Records: In the Words of Those Who Were There

Death Row Records, the iconic hip-hop label founded by Dr. Dre and Suge Knight in 1991, was a powerhouse in the music industry for much of the 1990s. The label's roster included some of the biggest names in rap, including Snoop Dogg, Tupac Shakur, and Dr. Dre himself. However, Death Row's success was also marred by violence and controversy, and the label eventually collapsed in 2006.

In this uncensored history of Death Row Records, we will take a look at the label's rise and fall through the eyes of those who were there. We will hear from former employees, artists, and executives, as well as from law enforcement officials and journalists who covered the label's tumultuous history.



## Welcome to Death Row: The Uncensored History of the Rise & Fall of Death Row Records in the Words of Those Who Were There. by S. Leigh Savidge

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 1970 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting: Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 381 pages  
Lending : Enabled



## The Early Years

Death Row Records was founded in 1991 by Dr. Dre and Suge Knight. Dre was a former member of the World Class Wreckin' Cru and N.W.A., and he was one of the most respected producers in hip-hop. Knight was a former bodyguard and promoter, and he had a reputation for being ruthless and ambitious.

The label's first release was Dr. Dre's solo album, *The Chronic*, which was a critical and commercial success. The album's lead single, "Nuthin' but a 'G' Thang," became one of the biggest hits of the year, and it helped to establish Death Row as a major force in hip-hop.

Following the success of *The Chronic*, Death Row signed a number of other high-profile artists, including Snoop Dogg, Tupac Shakur, and Daz Dillinger. The label's roster was quickly becoming one of the most impressive in the music industry.

## The Golden Age

The early 1990s were a golden age for Death Row Records. The label's artists were releasing hit albums and singles, and the label was making a lot of money. Death Row also became known for its lavish lifestyle, and its artists were often seen driving expensive cars and wearing designer clothes.

However, the label's success was also marred by violence. In 1993, Dr. Dre was shot and seriously injured by a rival gang member. In 1995, Tupac

Shakur was shot and killed in Las Vegas. And in 1996, Suge Knight was involved in a car accident that left him seriously injured.

## **The Decline**

The violence and controversy surrounding Death Row Records eventually took its toll. In 1996, Suge Knight was sentenced to nine years in prison for violating his probation. And in 2001, the label was forced to file for bankruptcy.

Death Row Records was eventually sold to WIDEawake Entertainment in 2006. However, the label has never been able to regain its former glory.

## **The Legacy**

Death Row Records was a major force in hip-hop for much of the 1990s. The label's artists released some of the most iconic albums in the genre, and the label helped to popularize the West Coast hip-hop sound.

However, Death Row's success was also marred by violence and controversy. The label's artists were often involved in shootings, assaults, and other crimes. And the label's founder, Suge Knight, was a convicted felon.

Despite its troubled history, Death Row Records remains one of the most important labels in hip-hop history. The label's artists have sold millions of records, and their music has inspired generations of fans.

## **Interviews**

In this section, we will hear from former employees, artists, and executives of Death Row Records. We will also hear from law enforcement officials

and journalists who covered the label's tumultuous history.

### **Dr. Dre**

"Death Row was a crazy time," Dr. Dre said in a 2015 interview. "There was a lot of money, a lot of drugs, a lot of violence. But it was also a time of great creativity. We made some of the best music of our lives during that period."

### **Suge Knight**

"Death Row was a family," Suge Knight said in a 2006 interview. "We took care of our own. But we also had our problems. There was a lot of violence, a lot of drugs. But we always came together at the end of the day."

### **Snoop Dogg**

"Death Row was a dream come true," Snoop Dogg said in a 2013 interview. "I was a young kid from Long Beach, and suddenly I was signed to one of the biggest labels in the world. It was a wild ride, but I wouldn't trade it for anything."

### **Tupac Shakur**

"Death Row was a prison," Tupac Shakur said in a 1995 interview. "I was constantly being watched, and I felt like I was always in danger. But it was also a place where I could express myself and make music that mattered to people."

### **Marion "Suge" Knight Jr.**

"Suge Knight was a ruthless businessman," said a former Death Row employee. "He would do whatever it took to get what he wanted. He was a

brilliant promoter, but he was also a dangerous man."

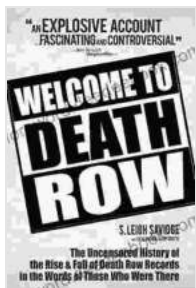
## Russell Poole

"Death Row was a criminal enterprise," said Russell Poole, a former LAPD detective who investigated the label. "Suge Knight was a drug dealer and a murderer. He used his label to launder money and to intimidate his enemies."

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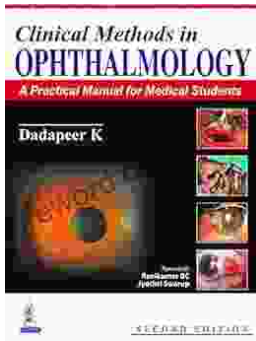
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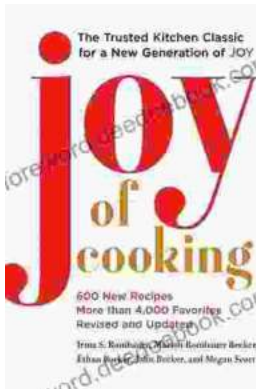
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