

The origin and types of thrash metal music essay



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We all know punk and classic metal were the two places thrash was taken from. Black Sabbath, Judas Priest, Venom, Accept, Iron Maiden, Diamond Head and Thin Lizzy had a big influence on thrash. So did punk bands like Discharge, The Ramones, Sex Pistols and The Dead Boys. Another genre that thrash took influence from was hair metal, from the early hair metal of KISS to the satanic hair metal of Venom. Songs like "Symptom of the Universe" - Black Sabbath, "Stone Cold Crazy" - Queen, "Ace of Spades" and "Overkill" - Motorhead and dozens of Judas Priest songs like "Exciter" were the first hints of thrash, with a very different riff-structure and high tempos never reached before by rock/metal.

Thrash metal is directly responsible for the offshoot of popular underground metal genres, such as death metal and black metal

BLACK METAL: During the 1980s, certain thrash metal bands formed a prototype for black metal. This so-called "first wave" included bands such as Venom, Bathory, Hellhammer AND Celtic Frost

DEATH METAL : Building from the musical structure of thrash metal and early black metal, death metal emerged during the mid 1980s Metal acts such as Slayer, Kreator, Celtic Frost and Venom were very important influences to the crafting of the genre. Along with the band Death and its frontman Chuck Schuldiner, who is often referred to as "the father of death metal" bands such as Possessed, Obituary and Morbid Angel are often considered pioneers of the genre

[b]Early Thrash:[/b] Many people see the genre getting it's beginnings in California and the West Coast. But it was happening all over the world. Metal

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Church is the band that started off the West Coast thrash scene with their infamous "Red Skies" demo. About the same time as Metal Church was releasing some of the heaviest metal in existence at the time, the same was going on in New Jersey with a cover band, Overkill, who recently started writing their own music. By 1981, Overkill had written, copyrighted and been performing their new song, "Unleash The Beast Within", everywhere. Kreator, of Germany, at the time known as Tormentor, was also releasing live demos of some of their new heavy thrash style by the very early 80s. Another band who helped innovate thrash, but is given little credit for it is Znowwhite, a thrash band from Chicago, IL. Znowwhite had their first demos out by 1981, but a Chicago thrash scene never really developed from it. And last but not least is the Canadian thrash giant, Exciter, who released their first demos as early as 1980!

Soon after, still in the very early 80s, a new band was beginning to pick up the lighter thrash/classic metal sound Metal Church had innovated, and they brought it to a new level of speed and heaviness. This band was Leather Charm, a not so well known name, run by a nearly household name, James Hetfield. He developed the style of Metal Church into a new milestone in thrash, which went by the name "Hit The Lights". The song started as a cover song, but moved very far away from that and into one of the first true thrash songs ever written. Soon after they finished this song, the band disbanded, and James Hetfield then formed a new band by the name of Metallica in late 1981. Soon many other bands that had connections with some of the first pioneers of thrash, like Overkill, Metallica, Tormentor (Kreator) and Metal Church, started to develop a thrash sound as well.

Exodus, Trauma and Warning SF were examples on the east coast. Those three bands, and a few others, being the founders of what would become the biggest thrash scene in existence. And Anthrax would soon follow in Overkill's footsteps on the east coast. Sodom, Destruction and Angel Dust followed after Tormentor/Kreator's style in Germany.

During Metallica's early career, the band was having trouble with their Lead guitarist, who was constantly out partying, drinking and doing drugs. This man was Dave Mustaine, and after Exodus and Kirk Hammet (at the time guitarist of Exodus) were brought to Metallica's attention, they kicked Mustaine out of the band and recruited Kirk Hammet. Not long before this, a new bassist, Cliff Burton, was found by Metallica during a Trauma (Burton's band at the time) concert and recruited as their new bassist. Megadeth was soon formed by the enraged Dave Mustaine to get vengeance against Metallica.

[b]The Bay Area/San Francisco:[/b] This thrash scene was founded in the very early 80's, around 1982, by thrash band Exodus as well as Death Angel, Dark Angel, Blind Illusion and Slayer in 1983. Bands like Trauma (who was more so a speed metal band than thrash), Hiram, Testament, Forbidden, Possessed and dozens of others developed and helped the scene as well. Slayer is probably the best known of all the pioneering bands of the Bay Area, although during their early career, it was not thrash they were playing at the start of their career, it was classic metal, hugely influenced by NWOBHM. Blind Illusion is one of the least known, but has two of the most recognized metal musicians of all time, Les Claypool, of Primus, and Larry LaLonde, of Possessed and Primus. Band's like Blind Illusion and Forbidden

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would become pioneers of a soon to come sub-genre of thrash, Tech. thrash. Possessed and Slayer would become godfathers of the genre that developed from thrash, death metal, as well as brutal thrash.

[b]East Coast Thrash:[/b] This scene was largely based in New York. The first thrash band of this scene, Overkill, might have started in New Jersey, but they soon relocated to New York. The next band to come was Hades, a straight-forward thrash band with a huge-octive'd vocalist came onto the thrash scene in '82 with the demo, " Deliver Us From Evil". Even though Hades formed in 1978, they didn't record material until '82. Band's like Anthrax came onto the scene soon after in 1982, which were probably the second most important pioneer of the East Coast thrash scene (Even though they came after Hades, they largely popularized the scene, making it easier for thrash bands to make it in New York in particular). Band's like Blessed Death (in 83/84), Nuclear Assault (in 84), Hallows Eve (in 84), Nasty Savage (in 84), Whiplash (in 84), Ludichrist (in 85), Deceased (in 85). A later band who didn't really contribute to the creation of the scene was Blood Feast, and I just thought I'd mention them as they're considered the Slayer of the East Coast.

[b]Teutonic Thrash: [/b]Better known as German Thrash, was started by thrash band Kreator in 81/82, but at the time, the band was known as Tormentor. For some reason, the German Thrash scene was much heavier in general than any American thrash scene. The two other big pioneers of German thrash were Sodom, in 1983, and Destruction, in 1984.. Vendetta was also a big contributor to the scene, but never got the credit they deserved. They wrote great music and released their first material in 82, <https://assignbuster.com/the-origin-and-types-of-thrash-metal-music-essay/>

before Sodom or Destruction. Bands like Tankard (in 84), Living Death (in 83), Holy Moses (First album in 87, don't know when their first demos were), Iron Angel (in 84) and Angel Dust (in 85), both had huge influences on the scene, too. These bands would go on to help aid the creation of extreme metal (black/death metal), especially Kreator. Some of the other big bands of the scene were Assassin (in 85), Exumer (in 85), Accuser (in 86), Deathrow (in 86) and Paradox (in 87). The oddest of the well known thrash bands is probably Mekong Delta, a prog/thrash band, whose guitarists were unknown for the beginning of their career and are hugely influenced by classical composers. The German thrash scene is still alive with bands like Grinder and Desaster, but it's nearing death and is nowhere near as popular as it once was.

[b]Canadian Thrash[/b]: Canada is known for producing several top quality tech. thrash, but for some reason, people usually don't go farther beyond the tech. giants like Annihilator and Voivod. The pioneers of the Canadian thrash scene were Exciter (in 1980), Eudoxis (Not very popular, but they have influence almost every Canadian thrash band. They released "Metal Fix" in 1985), Voivod (in 83), Annihilator (in 85), Razor (in 84) and Slaughter (in 84.. Not the Shitty Las Vegas hair metal band). Voivod debuted in 1984, but it wasn't until their 1987 album, "Killing Technology" did they add prog. to their song-structures. Annihilator was the band that started the tech. thrash scene in Canada, while Voivod brought it to new levels. Annihilator didn't debut until 1989, but had tech. thrash demos out as early as 1985. Band's like Razor and Slaughter were some of the earliest thrashers, but it was Eudoxis who set the standards with their near-perfect EP, "Metal Fix".

Exciter was the first band to bring thrash/speed metal to Canada, and one of the first three speed/thrash metal bands in existence. Some of the other big Canadian thrashers were Ghoulunatics, Infernal Majesty, Dyoxen, Sacrifice, DBC and Obliveon. On a random note, Eudoxis' drummer's double bass drums were six feet in diameter each!

[b]Brazilian Thrash:[/b] The latest big thrash scene to develop. The scene was started by Ratos de PorALo, they were a hardcore punk band, bordering thrash, and were fairly popular. The actual thrash scene was pioneered by Vulcano (in 83), Sepultura (in 85), Korzus (in 84/85) and Overdose (in 85). Other big Brazilian thrash bands are Chakal (in 86), Dorsal AtlAcntica (in 85.. Known as Ultimatum at the time), Opprobrium (in 87.. Then known as Incubus, no relation to the rap-metal band Incubus, though), Mutilator (in 85), Torture Squad (in 93) and Holocausto (in 85.. It was a very controversial band, and I'll explain why soon). Sepultura was a brutal thrash band that released their first material in 1985, AKA " Bestial Devastation". They were influenced by Brazilian death/thrash band, Vulcano, the first big thrash band onto the scene. Now about Holocausto, you can probably guess why they were controversial from the name. Holocausto was a thrash of neo-nazis whose lyrics were based on neo-nazism. The Brazilian thrash scene is still healthy and probably the only of the big thrash scenes still far from death.

[b]Thrash from Everywhere Else[/b]: There were a couple other smaller thrash scenes that I decided to just throw together in an " Everywhere Else" section. There was Sabbath (in 85), Onslaught (in 83) and Xentrix (in 89), being the three premier British thrash bands. Prog. Thrash band Stone (in 87) of Finland, Artillery (in 83) of Denmark and uber-technical thrash band <https://assignbuster.com/the-origin-and-types-of-thrash-metal-music-essay/>

Coroner (in 86) of Switzerland. Finally, there is Mortal Sin (in 87), Hobbs Angel of Death (in 88) and Sadistik Exekution (in 91) of Australia. Those are all the big thrash metal bands I haven't covered yet. Now onto sub-genres.

Crossover: This is a sub-genre of bands whose punk influence is so strong that they crossover into both hardcore and thrash. The sub-genre was first introduced by DRI (AKA Dirty Rotten Imbeciles) with their 1982 EP, "Dirty Rotten EP". The next most important pioneer was Suicidal Tendencies who released their first material in 1983. They usually influenced thrash and started the Crossover sub-genre. Bands to follow in their footsteps would be Nuclear Assault (in 84), Hiram (in 85), Anthrax (In 85, as after their debut, they began focusing on their hardcore influences), Stormtroopers of Death (in 85), MOD (in 86), Ludichrist (in 85) and Cryptic Slaughter (in 86).

Groove Metal : Groove Metal was a genre of groove-based melodies and usually slower tempo'd riffs, solos, etc, than normal thrash. This genre was pioneered by Exhorder in the mid/late eighties (Starting in '86), but popularized by Pantera (First Groove Metal albums in 1990). The genre became very popular before of Pantera and was also played by Sepultura on the album, " Arise". some other great groove metal bands are Machine Head (in 94), Ghoulunatics (in 95), Prong (Later albums) and Overkill (From " The Killing Kind" to " BloodLetting".. AKA their 1996-1999 albums).

Technical Thrash: This genre is pretty much a combination of progressive metal and thrash metal. The pioneers of this genre were Watchtower, of Austin Texas, who released their first material in 1984, on the Demo " Meltdown". They were the first big metal band to fuse prog. and

thrash, along with Blind Illusion at least, who released less popular demos in very late 1983/1984. Annihilator followed in a thrashier form of technical thrash with their first demos being released in 1985. Some other great pioneering tech. thrash bands are Voivod (in 87), Forbidden (in 88), Coroner (in 86) and Megadeth (on "Rust In Peace").

[b]END OF THRASH METAL[/b]

In the 1990s, many veteran thrash metal bands began changing to more accessible, radio-friendly styles. Metallica were a notable example of this shift, particularly with their mid to late 90's albums Load (1996), and ReLoad (1997), which both displayed minor blues and southern rock influences, and were seen as a major departure from the band's earlier sound. Megadeth took a more accessible hard rock route starting with their 1992 album Countdown to Extinction, and Testament released the melodic The Ritual in 1992

[b]THRASH IS BACK (2000s)[/b]

Thrash metal has recently seen a certain degree of resurgence of popularity. Bands including Municipal Waste, Evile, SSS, Sanctity and Gama Bomb have been cited as key in the "resurgence" of thrash metal. The genre's sense of recklessness and energy has been cited as a potential reason for its resurgence.

Also many bands that ended around the 90s gathered again around 2000s, bands like Exumer, Evildead, Dark Angel (band), Death Angel, Nuclear Assault, Defiance (band), Whiplash (band), Hiram, and Possessed (band).

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Older thrash bands have continued to put out material such as Megadeth's *Endgame* (2009), Slayer's *World Painted Blood* (2009), Metallica's *Death Magnetic* (2008), Destruction's *D. E. V. O. L. U. T. I. O. N.* (2008), Sodom's *The Final Sign of Evil* (2007), Death Angel's *Relentless Retribution* (2010), Kreator's *Hordes of Chaos* (2009), Exodus' *Exhibit B: The Human Condition* (2010), Overkill's *Ironbound* (2010), Onslaught's *Killing Peace* (2007), Testament's *The Formation of Damnation* (2008), Metal Church *This Present Wasteland* (2008), Artillery's *When Death Comes* (2009), and Voivod's *Infini* (2009).

In September 2009, it was reported that Metallica's Lars Ulrich was attempting to assemble a tour with thrash metal's "Big Four" ? Metallica, Megadeth, Slayer, and Anthrax ? together on one bill. The "Big Four" took the stage together for seven shows in the Sonisphere Festival concert series.