

Get diplomatic immunity in every ghetto community
 Had opportunity, went from Hoodshock to 'hood-chic
 But it ain't what you cop, it's about what you keep
 And even if there are leaks, you can't capsize this ship
 'Cause I baptize my lips every time I take sips

[Chorus]

ICE CUBE

Ice Cube was one of the big reasons that the West Coast earned legitimacy for its lyricism in the 1990s. As a founding member of N.W.A., along with Eazy-E, Dr. Dre, and DJ Yella, he honed his commanding lyrical style and helped give birth to gangsta rap.

With his solo debut, *AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted* (1990), Ice Cube took the unconventional step for a West Coast artist of recording with the East Coast production gurus the Bomb Squad, whose signature, post-Phil Spector "wall of noise" sound was made famous in rap by Public Enemy. This fusion of East and West Coast sounds was idiosyncratic and even controversial, but the result helped to launch Ice Cube's fame and further extend rap's reach. "The sound is what attracted me," Cube recalls, "because I knew I would be doin' what I do, but like I said, Public Enemy was a big influence on me, so I was waiting for Chuck D, to see what he brought to the table in terms of my style—the street knowledge and political hip-hop."³¹ The album also occasioned a number of controversies, with Ice Cube being accused of racism and misogyny (the latter charge anticipated, exacerbated, and complicated by "It's a Man's World," a duet with Yo-Yo included below). Over the next three years he released three more hit albums, emerging along with Snoop Dogg as the leading figure in West Coast hip-hop.

Ice Cube's lyrical craft is sometimes overlooked because of his subject matter. "Greatest MC of all time to me?" Snoop Dogg once remarked. "I will say probably Ice Cube."³² Cube has frequently stated in interviews, by

way of explaining gangsta rap and his style in particular, that the violence and mayhem described in his lyrics require a sense of tone and context from the listener. "You take a little bit of Muhammad Ali, a little bit of Richard Pryor, you take a lot of the '80s and what was goin' on, and out comes gangsta rap," he says. "People gotta understand its ingredients, and if you don't have those ingredients of humor and command of the language and of course rhyming, bravado, you gotta bring a little ego wit' you, you know what I mean? The ingredients of bein' a great rapper. That is the key—these are the things you have to have to even be in the game, so that's a lot of people's startin' point."³³

THE NIGGA YA LOVE TO HATE

I heard payback's a motherfucking nigga
 That's why I'm sick of gettin treated like a goddamn stepchild
 Fuck a punk 'cause I ain't him
 You gotta deal with the nine-double-M
 The damn scum that you all hate
 Just think if niggas decide to retaliate
 And try to keep me from runnin up
 I never tell you to get down, it's all about comin up
 So what they do? Go and ban the AK
 My shit wasn't registered any fucking way
 So you better duck away, run and hide out
 When I'm rollin real slow and the light's out
 'Cause I'm about to fuck up the program
 Shootin out the window of a drop-top Brougham
 While I'm shootin let's see who drop
 The police, the media, and suckers that went pop
 And motherfuckers that say they too black
 Put 'em overseas, they be beggin to come back
 They say keep 'em on gangs and drugs
 You wanna sweep a nigga like me up under the rug
 Kickin shit called street knowledge
 Why more niggas in the pen than in college?

It's a
Man's
World

Ice Cube

+

Yo-Yo

Wait, wait, wait, Cube. Trip this: We gonna dedicate this to the pretty young ladies
You know them pretty young ladies that wouldn't give us the play before the
album? This is for you...

Bitch... bitch on this gank move... bitches... no, bitch, I think you shit... ladies
are beautiful... bitch on... bitches, bitch, bitch... a bitch is a... I'm not no
bitch is a... I'm not no... bitch is a... bitch!... I'm not no... bitch... I'm not no...
... bitch... ladies are beautiful... I'm not no... bitch, bitch... bitch... ladies
are... no, bitch... bitch on... bitch, bitches, bitch, bitch, bitch... back up off
my tip for the simple fact you on it like a gnat on a dog's dick... I'm not no
with me tonight I also have Mr. Anthony... what'd you say about my mother
man?

[Ice Cube]

Women, they good for nothing—nah, maybe one thing

To serve needs to my ding-a-ling

I'm a man who loves the one-night stand

'Cause after I do ya, huh, I never knew ya

'Cause to kick it, man, it gives me the fits

They wanna lay with they nose under your armpits

Ice Cube won't wait, so give it up, cow

After we do it, you can go home now

I'm a brother with a big long...

[Yo-Yo]

What the hell you think you talkin about?

First of all, let me tell you my name, it's Yo-Yo

When down on a girl, first the fist and that's a no-no

Yo-Yo thinks the kitchen sink should be thrown in

Niggas be schemin and fiendin to stick the bone in

No, Yo-Yo's not a ho or a whore

And if that's what you're here for, exit through the door

There's more to see of me, but you're blind so

Women like me are fading brothers in the 9-0

[Ice Cube]

Wait! First of all, how you gonna come on my record and talk...

[Yo-Yo]

I'm tryin to say all women are superior over men

[Ice Cube]

Yeah, yeah, yeah

[Yo-Yo]

No, wait. How you gonna rule the world when you broke as a joke?

[Ice Cube]

With your county check, baby

Ay, what up, buttercup or Miss Yo-Yo (That's me)

I know you like to rap and like to flow so (True)

But when it comes to hip-hop, this is a man's world

Stay down and play the playground, you little girl

[Yo-Yo]

What you're sayin, I don't consider is rapping

'Cause you're on rewind and I'm the new what's-happening

It never fails, I always get respect

And you lose, so take a rain check

[Ice Cube]

Hell no, 'cause you know that I'm first and you're second (Never)

If it wasn't for me, you'd probably be pregnant (What?)

And barefoot, complaining that your back is aching

Shaking and faking while I'm bringing home the bacon

[Yo-Yo]

Well, you're mistaken, it's not goin that far

I make brothers like you play the backyard (I doubt it)

You used to flow with the title but I took it

Bring home the bacon but find another ho to cook it

[Ice Cube] Damn it—look it, 'cause you're talking a lot of bull
 [Yo-Yo] Well, I'm not your puppet, so don't even try to pull
 [Ice Cube] This is a man's world, thank you very much
 [Yo-Yo] But it wouldn't be a damn thing without a woman's touch

This is—this is—this is a man's world [4x]

[Ice Cube]
 Ah, Miss Yo-Yo. (What's up?) So what gives?
 I hear females always talkin about women's lib
 Well, get your own crib and stay there
 Instead of having more babies for the welfare (What?)
 'Cause if you don't, I'll label you a gold-digger
 The name is Ice Cube, you know that I ain't the nigga
 For you to look at when your hair get nappy
 So take a piece of the pole and be happy

[Yo-Yo]
 Hell no, because to me you're not a thriller
 You come in the room with your three-inch killer (What?)
 Thinking you can do damage to my backbone (Yeah...)
 Leave your child in the yard until it's full-grown
 I'ma put it like this, my man (What's up?)
 Without us, your hand would be your best friend
 So give us credit like you know you should
 If I don't look good, you don't look good

[Ice Cube] I doubt it, baby, 'cause we still most dominant
 [Yo-Yo] But you don't know how funky that I can get
 [Ice Cube] This is a man's world, thank you very much
 [Yo-Yo] But it wouldn't be a damn thing without a woman's touch

This is—this is—this is a man's world [6x]

[Ice Cube]
 Man, women, I put a lot of fear in 'em
 'Cause I had it up to here with 'em

Drink a beer with 'em? No way
 'Cause I can only deal with 'em about a hour every day
 Yeah, if you know what I mean, baby

[Yo-Yo]
 Well, I guess now that I think about it, I think maybe
 If you was more of a man instead of faking it
 Women deserve the credit when they're making it

[Ice Cube] Yeah, so what's the problem? [Yo-Yo] Well, I think we solved it
 I know they know the best male from who's doggin it

[Ice Cube] Yeah, I admit you can flow. [Yo-Yo] Well, that's true

[Ice Cube] But you see I'm a pro with the bank too

[Yo-Yo] Yeah, I can see you got it good. [Ice Cube] Oh, that I know

[Yo-Yo] But you see you're not better than Yo-Yo

The brand-new intelligent black lady

[Ice Cube] You're kinda dope but you still can't fade me

[Yo-Yo] So what up then? [Ice Cube] Girl, what you tryin to do?

[Yo-Yo] To prove a black woman like me can bring the funk through

[Ice Cube] This is a man's world, thank you very much

[Yo-Yo] But it wouldn't be a damn thing without a woman's touch

[Ice Cube] Or a big butt... [Yo-Yo] See! You know what I mean?

This is—this is—this is a man's world [to fade]

A BIRD IN THE HAND

Say, look at this! I've been cleaning out my nest and I found an old book of my poetry!

Fresh out of school 'cause I was a high-school grad
 Gots to get a job 'cause I was a high-school dad
 Wish I got paid by rappin to the nation
 But that's not likely, so here's my application
 Pass it to the man at AT&T
 'Cause when I was in school I got the AEE
 But there's no S.E. for this youngsta