



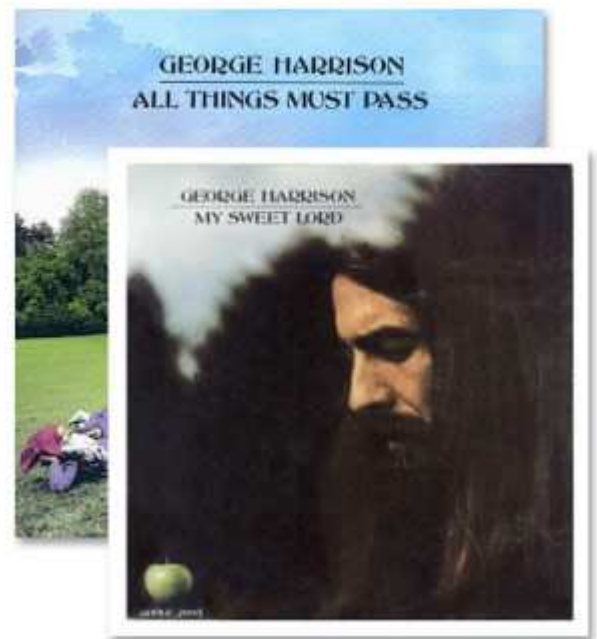
Famous Copyright Infringement Plagiarism cases in Music.

George Harrison vs Bright Tunes Music Corp.

George Harrison's 'My Sweet Lord' was released January 15, 1971 and hit the charts on January 23, 1971 as George Harrison's first solo single. It was released under the Apple label and enjoyed the number one spot originally for five weeks, then in 2002, again for one week. It remained on the charts for a total of twenty-seven weeks. All of this is the good news. The not so good news involves a song called "He's So Fine" recorded by the Chiffons in 1962 and then moved under the Bright Tunes Music Corp label in 1971. The Chiffon's song did well in the United States and received a luke warm reception in the UK.

February 10th, 1971, Bright Tunes filed a suit against George Harrison inclusive of his English and American companies. The suite also included Apple Records, BMI and Hansen Publications. Though an out of court settlement was approached, including an offer of 148,000.00, but it never reached fruition before the court case proceeded, as the attorneys for Bright Tunes Music Corp. wanted seventy-five percent of the royalties and the surrendering of the copyright for My Sweet Lord.

The case waited to be heard for five years, during which time George Harrison's attorneys continued to try to settle out of court. The case was heard in court for the first time, in February of 1976, George Harrison's attorneys tried to prove out the difference between the two songs, but with little success. The judge found that though he didn't believe George Harrison purposefully plagiarized the song, the two songs were essentially the same, only displaying minor differences to note and chord. George Harrison was found guilty of 'subconscious plagiarism' and a judgment was filed against him in the amount of \$587,000.00 of which the full amount was paid and the judgment dismissed in 1981





Michael Bolton vs the Isley Brothers

The Isley Brothers isn't as well known a name as Michael Bolton, but unfortunately for Mr. Bolton, they share a song with the same name and some of the same lyrics. The Isley Brothers song was released in 1966 under the name "Love is a Wonderful Thing, Michael Bolton's song was released in 1991.

A suit was brought against Michael Bolton by the Isley Brothers for allegedly lifting parts from their original song of the same name and in 1991 Despite Michael Bolton and the co-author of the song's argument that there was insufficient evidence supporting the jury's findings, the district court found in favor of the Isley Brothers and left the largest award in history for plagiarism in the music industry intact. The Isley Brothers were awarded 5.4 million dollars, the calculation based on sixty-six percent of past and future royalties. (Also taken into account was twenty-eight percent of the past and future royalties of the album Time, Love and Tenderness as Love is a Wonderful thing is contained within that album).



Johnny Cash vs Gordon Jenkins

This particular case hit the courts, but was settled out of court. The original song in question was recorded on a concept album called Seven Dreams, the song in question was part of the "Second Dream: The Conductor". When the lyrics to the two songs are compared side by side, there is no question that they are kissing cousins. Though Johnny Cash's version is more fine tuned and shows more experienced talent, some of the lines are word for word and some of them have a word or two difference. It took fifteen years, from the release date of Johnny Cash's version, for Gordon Jenkins, the original song, owner to sue. The 1968 out of court settlement approached the hundred thousand mark.



Vanilla Ice vs Queen & Bowie

Vanilla Ice became a household word for a while, not because of his talent, but because of the copyright infringement that occurred in 1990 when it came to light that he had sampled Queen and David Bowie's "Under Pressure" without consent or license. Ice Ice Baby hit number one on the charts in the United States and Vanilla Ice became the one 'under pressure'. Vanilla Ice altered the rhythm of the baseline thinking he would thereby avoid any question of credit, royalties, license or even permission. This case never went to court as it was clear that Vanilla Ice had stolen the sample without permission. He settled out of court with Queen and David Bowie for an undisclosed but very likely very high amount. Ice Ice Baby has been released in many different versions, since then, with all of the legal procedures followed.



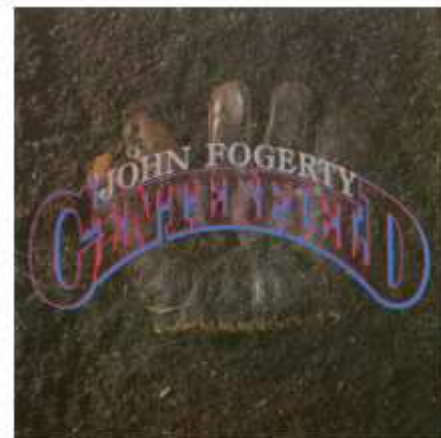
John Fogerty vs Creedence Clearwater Revival

In order to be able to leave Creedence Clearwater Revival, John Fogerty had to sign away all of his royalties in CCR's stable of songs. There was no love lost between Saul Zaentz and John Fogerty which became imminently clear in 1985 when Fogerty recorded and released a song called Zanz Can't Dance from the Centerfield album, which was about a con man and his con pig. Zaentz filed a Defamation of Character suit and then later filed another suit claiming that the lead track to that same album; The Old Man Down the Road, was a replica of a CCR song; Run Through the Jungle. Essentially, John Fogerty was now being accused of plagiarizing himself.

It took a visit to the court with guitar in hand by John Fogerty in order to settle the case. After hearing the song played for them in court, the jury decided that the two songs were not the same, the only thing they shared is the same style and that was not a copyright/plagiarism issue. After the court ruled to dismiss the case, Fogerty filed his own suit against Fantasy Records for attorneys fees and was granted restitution by the U.S. Supreme Court.

John Fogerty considered this a very important case as it would have bearing on whether an artist could continue on in his or her own style once having signed over rights to their creations.

As far as the defamation case, the name of the song was changed from Zanz to Vanz.



[Visit our site](#) | [Sitemap](#)

