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AP / March 10, 2015, 5:54 PM

# Jury: Pharrell, Robin Thicke copied Marvin Gaye for "Blurred Lines"

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**LOS ANGELES** -- A jury says singers Pharrell Williams and Robin Thicke copied a Marvin Gaye song to create "Blurred Lines" and awarded \$7.4 million to Gaye's family.

The eight-person panel reached the decision Tuesday **after hearing nearly a week of testimony** about similarities between "Blurred Lines" -- the biggest hit of 2013 -- and Gaye's 1977 hit "Got to Give It Up."

Gaye's children -- Nona, Frankie and Marvin Gaye III -- **sued the singers in 2013** and were present when the verdict was read. Nona Gaye wept as the verdict was being read and was hugged by her attorney, Richard Busch.



"Right now, I feel free," Nona Gaye said after the verdict. "Free from... Pharrell Williams and Robin Thicke's chains and what they tried to keep on us and the lies that were told."

**Thicke told jurors** he didn't write "Blurred Lines"

...tten, despite pair recorded rapper T.I.

song in about

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Her mus

...rt of the  
soundtrack of his youth, he didn't use any of it for "Blurred Lines."

The Gayes' lawyer branded Williams and Thicke liars who went beyond trying to emulate the sound of Gaye's late-1970s music and copied "Got to Give It Up" outright.

"They fought this fight despite every odd being against them," Busch said of the Gaye family outside court.



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The case was a struggle between two of music's biggest names: Williams has sold more than 100 million records worldwide during his career as a singer-producer, and Gaye performed hits such as "Sexual Healing" and "How Sweet It Is (To be Loved by You)" remain popular.

During closing arguments, Busch accused Thicke and Williams of lying about how the song was created. He told jurors they could award Gaye's children millions of dollars if they determined the copyright to "Got to Give It Up" was infringed.

Howard King, lead attorney for Williams and Thicke, told the panel that a verdict in favor of the Gaye family would have a chilling effect on musicians who were trying to recreate a genre or homage to another artist's sound.



Play VIDEO

### Pharrell Williams on success: "I've been hoisted up" by others

Jurors repeatedly heard the upbeat song "Blurred Lines" and saw snippets of its music video, but Gaye's music was represented during the trial in a less polished form. Jurors did not hear "Got to Give It Up" as Gaye recorded it, but rather a version created based solely on sheet music submitted to gain copyright protection.

That version lacked many of the elements -- including Gaye's voice -- that helped make the song a hit in 1977. Busch derisively called the version used in court a "Frankenstein-like monster" that didn't accurately represent Gaye's work.

An expert for the Gaye family said there were eight distinct elements from "Got to Give It Up" that were used in "Blurred Lines," but an expert for Williams and Thicke denied those similarities existed.

Gaye died in April 1984, leaving his children the copyrights to his music.

The verdict may face years of appeals and could tarnish the legacy of Williams, a reliable hit-maker who has won seven Grammy Awards. He has become a household name -- known simply as Pharrell -- thanks to his hit song "Happy" and his work as a judge on the "The Voice."

"Blurred Lines" has sold more than 7.3 million copies in the U.S. alone, according to Nielsen SoundScan figures. It earned a Grammy Awards nomination and netted Williams and Thicke more than \$5 million each.

King denied there were any substantial similarities between "Blurred Lines" and the sheet music Gaye submitted to obtain copyright protection.

Williams, 41, also signed a document stating he didn't use any other artists' work in the music and would be responsible if a successful copyright claim was raised.

The trial focused on detailed analyses of chords and notes in both "Blurred Lines" and "Got to Give It Up."

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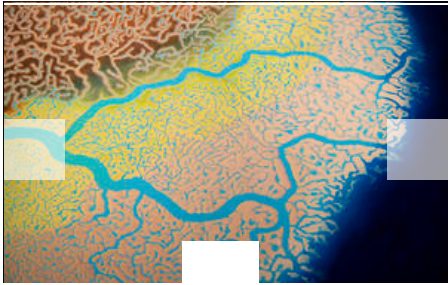
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**RIPNREAD** 20 hours ago

When someone doesn't have any talent they plagiarize from those individuals who actually do.

Marvin Gaye was a musical genius. These two individuals couldn't carry Marvin's sheet music let alone surpass him as a performer and songwriter.

LIKE / REPLY

**THE-TRUTH-SEEKER** March 12, 2015 1:1PM

This happens in science and academics as well. Check out the results of the "prestigious" 2004 Siemens science 'competition' and you will see that the top prize winning entry was NOT a "new technology" as was being claimed and still appears in news stories of the time that can be found on the internet. These stories were never retracted or even corrected. In fact, after being informed of the serious error, the news media decided to collude with Siemens and just cover-up what had happened (i.e. incompetent vetting and judging). To this day the 1200 other students (and their parents) never learned the truth, not to mention the 60-80 million other Americans who were told a flat out lie, by the news media that should have investigated the lie, but who decided instead to help cover it up! Why did ABC, NBC and the LA Times refuse to look into the scandal and its cover-up after being told of it by a number of people and experts? Who were they trying to protect and why? Still a relevant question today, especially after the Lance Armstrong scandal and cover-up and the more recent Brian Williams scandal.

CBS, CNN, FOX and some others did not participate in this lie (but they also didn't investigate it).

LIKE / REPLY

**NOTPICTUREPERFECT** March 11, 2015 10:10AM

If anyone knows anything about music they know darn well that they are two different songs beats, but, I can't stand either one of the dudes, so if they lose on appeal, well, too bad. They have sold enough to pay the settlement and then some. Too bad the jury was not made up of people who understand music, as that is a very tricky avenue to go down when writing and singing. By NOT using M. G. original music how could a jury make any real comparison. I would like to see it go to appeals not for them but for other artists.

LIKE / REPLY

**GHOSTFIGHTER** March 11, 2015 9:09AM

Won't stand on appeal. Play each hook with single notes on a keyboard. Too different. You're left with a drum pattern and you can't sue for that.

LIKE / REPLY

**JOURNALISM101** March 11, 2015 9:09AM

Marvin Gaye was such a great artist. It is very sad that his estate has been so mishandled that his heirs need to steal money this way. Seems very demeaning to the legacy that was Marvin.

1 LIKE / REPLY

**FILMGUY870** March 11, 2015 10:10AM

**@journalism101** Word. This is a real travesty. Hopefully their will be a successful appeal.

LIKE / REPLY



**FURYEXIT** *March 11, 2015 6:6AM*

There are so many millions of lyrics and musical scores since time began. And yet when I hear brilliant sounds from bands like Alabama, The Everley Brothers and The Beatles; People who write their own hit songs, I wonder about duplication. The music is so fresh and new to a new audience, it just seems odd that anyone could make a big deal out of a similar recording. I think there is nothing to be gained but animosity!

LIKE / REPLY

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**BULLWINKLE69** *March 11, 2015 1:1AM*

We are all products of what we hear, what we see and what we read. We take those things and move forward with our lives the best we can. We are not some kind of original, spiritual beings but products of our environment that is either thrust upon us or that which we seek out purely based on our inquisitive nature. That being said, Williams and Thicke are thieves and have been treated accordingly. They can fight this as long as they want but eventually they will settle for an undisclosed sum without any actual admission of wrongdoing. Just like all the other wealthy thieves in the World.

LIKE / REPLY

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**ABBY.ADAMS** *March 11, 2015 0:12AM*

lots of money hungry people out there...on both sides of the fence - 7,4 million is a bit of overkill for a judgment. But unfortunately, this country thrives on frivolous lawsuits.

LIKE / REPLY

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**CHERRISS** *March 10, 2015 10:10PM*

The first time I heard blurred lines, I said, wt, that sounds something not marvin's gayes classic, not exactly but in a lot of ways.

LIKE / REPLY

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**SUBTEXT9** *March 10, 2015 9:9PM*

Just gave "Got To Give It Up" a listen for the first time in a long while. It sounds remarkably fresh. "Blurred Lines" on the other hand sounds like two years ago -- almost exactly two years ago. Arrangement, vocal choices and melody are similar, but not a direct copy. Even if Pharrell Williams began with the Marvin Gaye recording as a "starter track" in Pro Tools to create the "new" song, I would still not agree with the jury on this one. These are clearly two different songs.

"My Sweet Lord" and "He's So Fine" are remarkably similar and both are classic songs. Yes, "Stairway To Heaven" lifts a small chunk of the melody from the Spirit instrumental "Taurus". "Stairway" is a classic. "Taurus" not so much. Steve Miller Band's "Winter Time" uses a slight variation of the opening melody and lyrics of "California Dreamin'" for the majority of the song. Steely Dan? Listen to some deep R&B tracks and you will discover that they are "Stealy" Dan. What are some of your favorite "lifts"?

LIKE / REPLY

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**BUM4EVR** *March 10, 2015 9:9PM*

Someones gettin a new Esclade and a new hair weave they don't deserve... but aint that the way greed works...

LIKE / REPLY

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**FILMGUY870** *March 10, 2015 10:10PM*

**@bum4evr** not so fast.....there should be an appeal...this "verdict" won't survive....prior common source...these types of rhythmic pattern preceded anything Marvin Gaye did...all the lawyers need to do is find something similar....and "POOF" ...all gone.....no new weave...no new Escalade.....no nuthin' ....boo hoo.....

LIKE / REPLY

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**TOMMMYALLEN** March 10, 2015 8:8PM

Sorry, I didn't hear any music here. All of this stuff sounds alike, so there should be tons of lawsuits.

1 LIKE / REPLY

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**GOZER\_THE\_DESTROYER** March 10, 2015 8:8PM

Sounds just like Huey Lewis suing Ray Parker Jr. over Ghostbusters back in the 80's which Ray said he wrote in one night as well.

LIKE / REPLY

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**TLMODALIVE** March 10, 2015 8:8PM

Terrible verdict.

LIKE / REPLY

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**JOHN92021** March 10, 2015 7:7PM

and when I get that feeling,  
I want financial healing.

3 LIKE / REPLY

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**SAVANTWILLIS** March 10, 2015 7:7PM

Now Robin Thief got to give it up..lol

LIKE / REPLY

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**SFTOMMY** March 10, 2015 7:7PM

I used the word "the" in a 1966 baby crib jingle of my own infant creation.

Stand notice all, any song using a word similar to "the" will now have to pay me copyright fees or face me and lawyer in court!

1 LIKE / REPLY

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**MESHINE** March 10, 2015 7:7PM

They would have been so much better off if they had just simply reached a deal with the Gay family rather than putting this in the hands of a jury.

1 LIKE / REPLY

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**FILMGUY870** March 10, 2015 8:8PM

**@meshine** it's greed...pure and simple.

LIKE / REPLY

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**JOHN GOHDE** March 10, 2015 7:7PM

I am disappointed, but the decision was not unexpected. The typical juror is practically brain dead, now a days. Of course, one could always blame Thicke's big mouth. Expect the courts to be flooded with similar lawsuits. However, there is always hope that the correct decision will be finally obtained upon appeal.

1 LIKE / REPLY

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**WHALEMAN123** March 10, 2015 6:6PM

make sure they pay, it better not be another phony story....Music business is pathetic nowadays,,,They're all related down their in Phonywood, they hire family before talent

now..They dont want to share that big money with no outsiders...they know people will keep on spending, even if the music is terrible

LIKE / REPLY

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**FILMGUY870** March 10, 2015 6:6PM

I am going to go out and copyright a bunch of beats and then start suing people. This verdict is ridiculous!

3 LIKE / REPLY

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**1776USA2016** March 10, 2015 6:6PM

**@Filmguy870** Except that's not what happened here.

LIKE / REPLY

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**FILMGUY870** March 10, 2015 7:7PM

**@1776USA2016 @Filmguy870** the "beat" which was part of the scene in the 70's is just that. I recommend that Pharrel and Thicke appeal, and cite Prior Common Source. There are MANY MANY of these type of tunes that utilized that "feel."

I doubt that the money will reach the Gaye's kids and their lawyer....

2 LIKE / REPLY

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**LODMUJSIC** March 10, 2015 6:6PM

Any verdict that takes money from the hands of no-talent poseurs like Thicke and "Happy"-boy and awards it to the great Marvin Gaye, even posthumously, is okay by me.

4 LIKE / REPLY

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**FILMGUY870** March 10, 2015 6:6PM

**@lodmujisic** get out much???

1 LIKE / REPLY

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**LOLA764532** March 10, 2015 7:7PM

**@lodmujisic** So you don't care whether the suit has merit or not just as long as someone you don't care for pays. Unfortunately i think that is the way a lot of lawsuit are decided these days.

LIKE / REPLY

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**FILMGUY870** March 10, 2015 10:10PM

**@Lola764532 @lodmujisic** except this is a very bad precedent....rhythmic patterns are not copyrightable.

LIKE / REPLY

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**LOLA764532** March 10, 2015 10:10PM

**@Filmguy870** I agree, I know nothing about music and did not know who Thicke was. I watched a couple youtube videos and think it is a stretch. My response was to the OP who voiced no opinion on the merit of the suit but only expressed a dislike for the defendant.

LIKE / REPLY

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**SURFIN\_SANDIEGO** March 10, 2015 6:6PM

"Blurred lines". Good title for this without merit lawsuit.

2 LIKE / REPLY

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**MASTERSBJONES** March 10, 2015 6:6PM

Great video

LIKE / REPLY

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**SUSAN STO HELIT** March 10, 2015 6:6PM

The jury is so wrong.

The two songs are not similar at all. A beat - which most music shares - and a choice of instruments - does not make a copyright. Nor should it ever. This one will be appealed.

4 LIKE / REPLY

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**FILMGUY870** March 10, 2015 6:6PM

@**Susan Sto Helit** total word!

LIKE / REPLY

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**FILMGUY870** March 10, 2015 6:6PM

all about money. Marvin Gaye's kids must not be good at financial management..and thei ar lawyer must need the money... They got something for nothing...I guess it's the new American Dream.

Pharrel and Thicke should appeal.....

2 LIKE / REPLY

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**CARLTESTS** March 10, 2015 5:5PM

I don't see or hear it.

3 LIKE / REPLY



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