**LAW CLASS**

**COURT CASES**

**Pharrell Williams et al v Frankie Christian Gaye (2016)**

**Background of the case**



In April 2014, the family of late soul singer Marvin Gaye filed a suit alleging that Robin Thicke's 2013 pop hit "Blurred Lines" infringed on Gaye's 1977 funk-fueled "Got to Give It Up."

Producer and cowriter Pharrell Williams, guest rapper T.I. and Universal Records were named in the suit.

Thicke admitted in court that he didn’t really help write the 2013 smash “Blurred Lines” because he was high on the painkiller Vicodin when the song was being written.

Thicke testified, it was producer Pharrell Williams who really wrote the song.

Williams said he was “in the driver’s seat” for this song. When asked whose words were used in the lyrics, Williams answered: “Mine.”

Williams also said that it’s “Robin Thicke’s voice” that makes the song great: “Because it’s the white man singing soulfully and we, unfortunately, in this country don’t get enough — we don’t get to hear that as often, so we get excited by it when the mainstream gives that a shot.”

Thicke admitted he lied to media outlets about the origin of the song:

*“Pharrell and I were in the studio and I told him that one of my favorite songs of all time was Marvin Gaye’s ‘Got to Give It Up.’ I was like, ‘Damn, we should make something like that, something with that groove.’ Then he started playing a little something and we literally wrote the song in about a half hour and recorded it.”*

How would you rule on this?