

Articles + Publications | April 7, 2025

No Infringement Intended: Can My Band Cover a Famous Song? A Look at Copyright Law in Music

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The thrill of a band putting their own spin on a beloved song is undeniable. But even more thrilling? Telling someone a song they love is actually a cover. Today on No Infringement Intended, we look at the example of Luke Combs’ chart-topping “Fast Car”, which is actually a reimagining of Tracy Chapman’s 1988 classic.

Regardless, behind the respectful nod to re-record an iconic musical number is a complex web of copyright law. Can a band simply cover another famous song, or are there legal hurdles to overcome? The answer lies in understanding the unique rules governing musical copyrights, particularly the concept of compulsory licensing.

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