

George Clinton Wins Defamation Lawsuit

George Clinton won a defamation lawsuit brought against him by label owner and music publisher Armen Boladian. A two-week trial in Los Angeles determined that 20 statements made in Clinton's autobiography did not defame Boladian. Clinton has maintained for years that Boladian has stolen the copyrights to some of his most famous songs including "Atomic Dog," "Flashlight," "One Nation Under A Groove" and "We Want The Funk (Tear The Roof Off)" through plagiarized documents and not paying artists.Â

In 1994, a United States District Court judge ruled that Clinton did not sign the document used by Boladian's company to record its rights with the Copyright Office. Boladian swore in a 1995 statement that he did alter the language of 1982 written agreement with Clinton and added songs to the agreement pursuant to his power of attorney.Â

Clinton's attorneys Jordan Sussman and Margo Arnold of Nolan and Heiman LLP, shared with the jury the 1994 District Court decision, Boladian's 1995 declaration and affidavits from two of Boladian's former employees corroborated that he altered agreements after they were signed by Clinton and other artists.Â

The jury decided after hours of deliberation that the statements in Clinton's book were not actionable because they were either true, matters of opinion, or not made with institutional malice.Â

Sussman stated afterwards,Â "This verdict is a win for George and the First Amendment. No one should be prohibited from sharing their life story, from their point of view, simply because it may paint someone else in a less than

flattering light. Especially, as the jury held, when George had no reason to seriously doubt the truth of his statements.â€

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The verdict came days after George Clinton's 80th birthday and announced he is coming out of retirement to continue making music and touring with his P-Funk crew.Â

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Clinton said,Â â€œI am grateful and overjoyed that a jury of my peers agreed that there is nothing defamatory in speaking my mind and sharing my life story. I will continue to speak truth to power, and to fight against the forces that have separated so many songwriters from their music. Investigate. Interrogate. Litigate. Unseal. Reveal. If we donâ€™t get this right, then they win.â€

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