

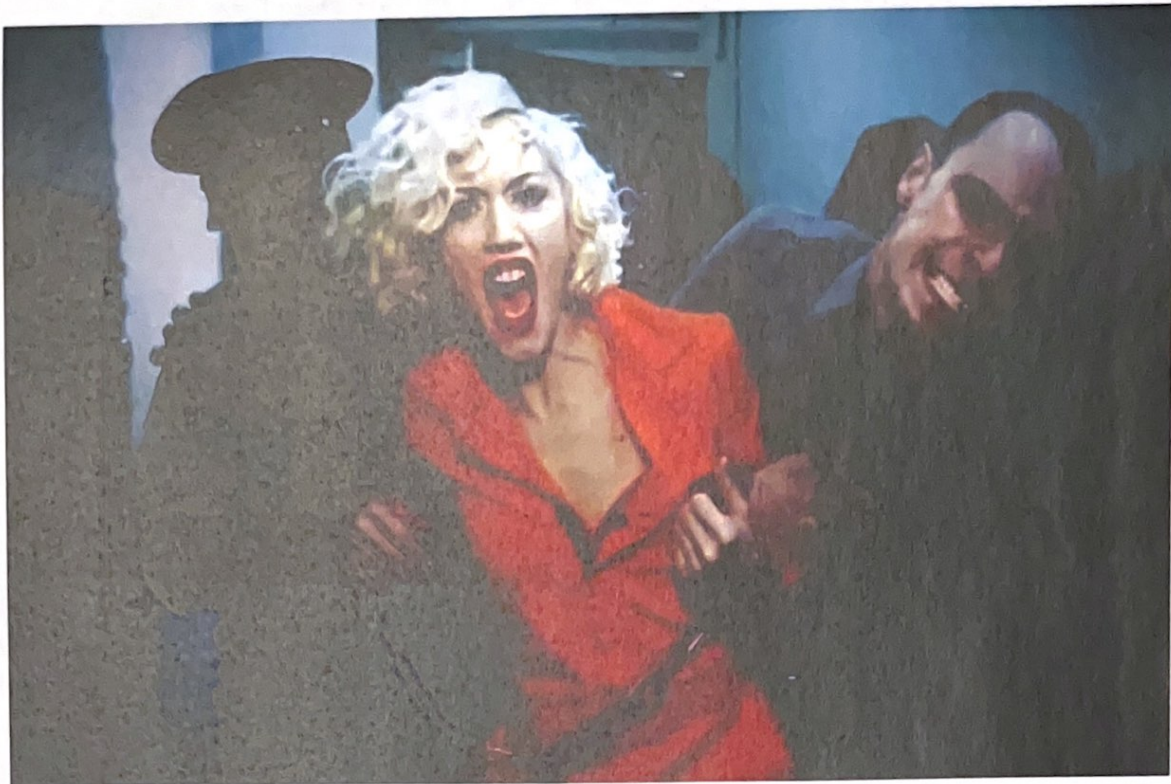
26 Of Your Favorite Songs That You Didn't Realize Were Covers

thewhisp.mommyish.com/entertainment/music/cover-songs-thought-original-no-doubt-jonas-brothers/

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June 19,
2019





Interscope Records

People say imitation is the highest form of flattery, so by that logic, a musician covering a song originally written and performed by someone else is a way to show the utmost respect for that artist and their work. We all know that version of "**Africa**" we've been hearing everywhere lately is **Weezer** covering **Toto**, and both versions deserve credit for what they are. Toto even turned around and covered Weezer's "**Hash Pipe**" to give them that same respect back. But what happens when a cover gets more recognition than the original song?

This happens more often than you'd think. Sometimes it seems like an unintentional slight to the original musician. They aren't receiving the recognition they deserve, while another artist is being given all the credit. Or maybe the new version is offering more exposure for that original song. People might not have ever heard the original had they not been introduced to the more popular cover. Whatever your take on cover songs is, there are a lot of them out in the world and they'll likely always be released. Here are some of those cover songs that were more popular than their originals. You can be the judge of who really did it best.

Cyndi Lauper — "Girls Just Want To Have Fun"



Portrait Records

"**Girls Just Want To Have Fun**" was the lead single from **Cyndi Lauper's** debut album ***She's So Unusual*** in 1983. It was the song that skyrocketed her to stardom, hitting the number-two spot on *Billboard's* Hot 100, and receiving a Grammy nomination for Best Female Pop Vocal Performance. It also received an MTV VMA for Best Female Video in 1984. It's safe to say Cyndi is widely credited with originating the song. Believe it or not, the song was a cover of a **Robert Hazard** song recorded in 1979.

Aaron Carter — "I Want Candy"



Jive Records

"**I Want Candy**" is best known as **Aaron Carter**'s second single off his 2000 album ***Aaron's Party (Come Get It)***, which was certified triple Platinum and is his most successful album to date. We all remember **Lizzie McGuire** shrieking "Aaron Carter's coming here!" before filming a video for the single on the hit Disney Channel show. But Aaron wasn't the original artist to record "I Want Candy." It was originally written and recorded by **the Strangeloves** in 1965.

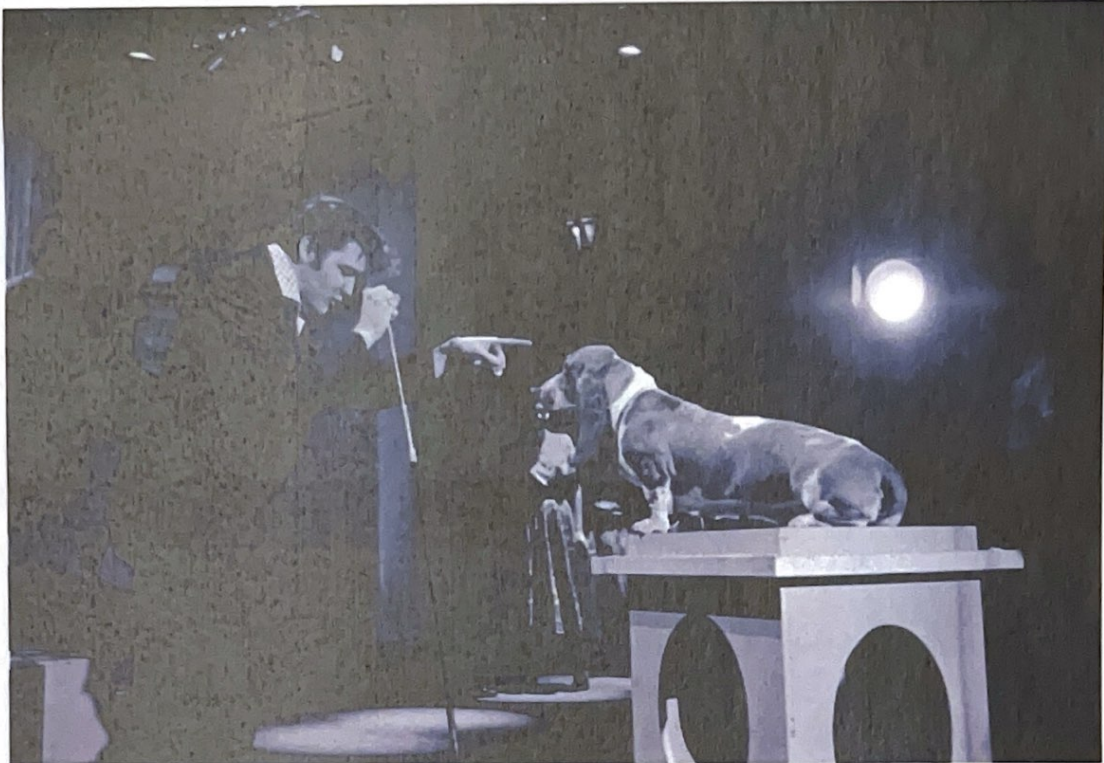
Beyoncé — "If I Were a Boy"



Columbia Records

Beyoncé released "**If I Were a Boy**" as a single in 2008. It charted in the top 10 on 25 different singles charts, reached number three on the *Billboard* Hot 100, and is Queen Bey's best-selling single in the UK. However, it is the only song on her 2008 album *I Am... **Sasha Fierce*** that Beyoncé did not co-write. The song was originally written and recorded by singer-songwriter **BC Jean** not long before, but her record company rejected the song, leading to Beyoncé's better-known version instead.

Elvis Presley — "Hound Dog"



RCA Records

"Hound Dog" is one of **Elvis Presley's** most iconic tunes. Music journalist and Elvis historian **Larry Birnbaum** went so far as to call the song "an emblem of the rock'n'roll revolution." Elvis certainly deserves credit for his contributions to changing the way mainstream audiences viewed rock'n'roll, but one of his most famous hits was in fact a cover. "Hound Dog" was originally recorded by **Big Mama Thornton** in 1952, four years before Elvis released his version.

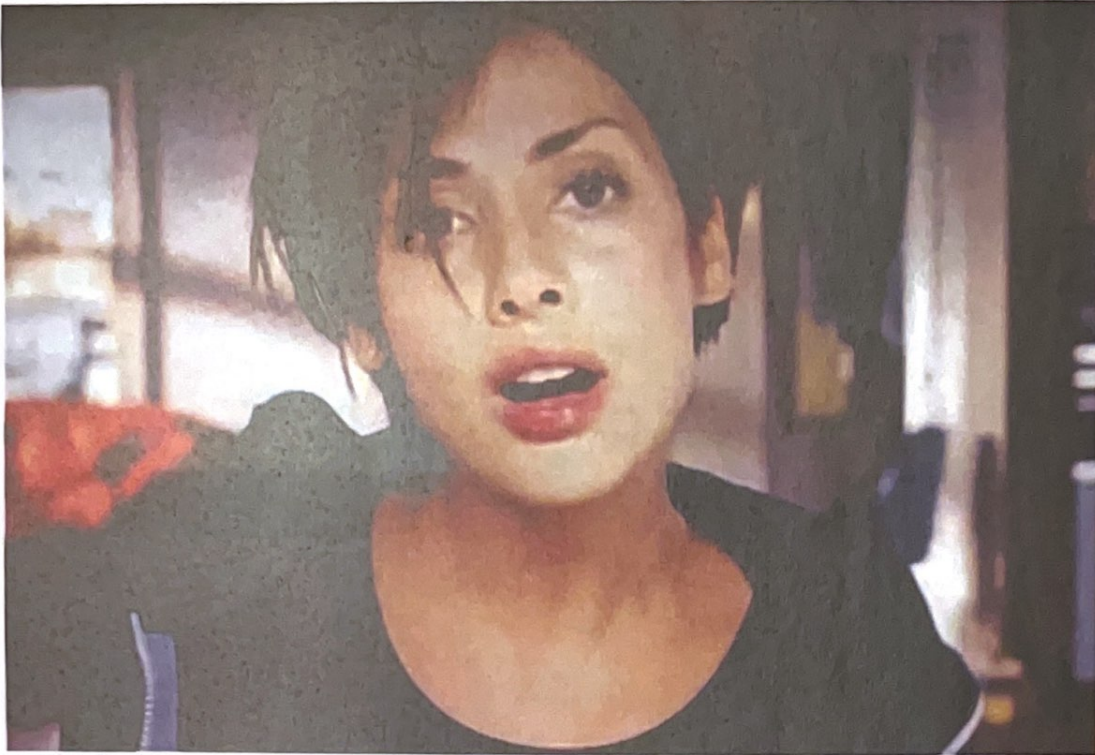
Salt-n-Pepa — "Whatta Man"



Next Plateau Entertainment

Salt-n-Pepa recorded "**Whatta Man**" for their 1993 album *Runaway Love*, and later, *Very Necessary*. The song was certified platinum, hit the number three spot on *Billboard's* Hot 100, and was nominated for both a Grammy and an American Music Award. While Salt-n-Pepa was the reason for the song's commercial success, it was actually a cover of a song originally titled "**What a Man**" and performed by **Linda Lyndell** in 1968. Of course, Salt-n-Pepa's version differs pretty greatly from Linda Lyndell's, as they added in the rap and changed lyrics.

Natalie Imbruglia — "Torn"



RCA Records

"Torn" was **Natalie Imbruglia's** debut single in 1997, charting internationally and making her a household name worldwide rather than just in her home country of Australia. In the US in particular, the single hit number one on *Billboard's* Mainstream Top 40 and Adult Top 40. Surprisingly enough, the song was a cover. In 1993, **Lis Sorenson** performed the song in Danish (titled "**Brændt**"), and two years later, "Torn" was recorded by American alt. rock band **Ednaswap**. It was four years after the original Danish version of the song that Natalie Imbruglia made it famous.

Soft Cell — "Tainted Love"



Sire Records

English synth-pop duo **Soft Cell** made "**Tainted Love**" famous, there is no question about it. They recorded the song in 1981 and it reached number one on the UK Singles Chart, and number eight on the US *Billboard's* Hot 100. Many musicians have covered "Tainted Love" since then, including **Marilyn Manson**, **The Living End**, and **Scorpions**. However, it's little known that Soft Cell's version is actually a cover as well. The song was originally performed by **Gloria Jones** in 1965.

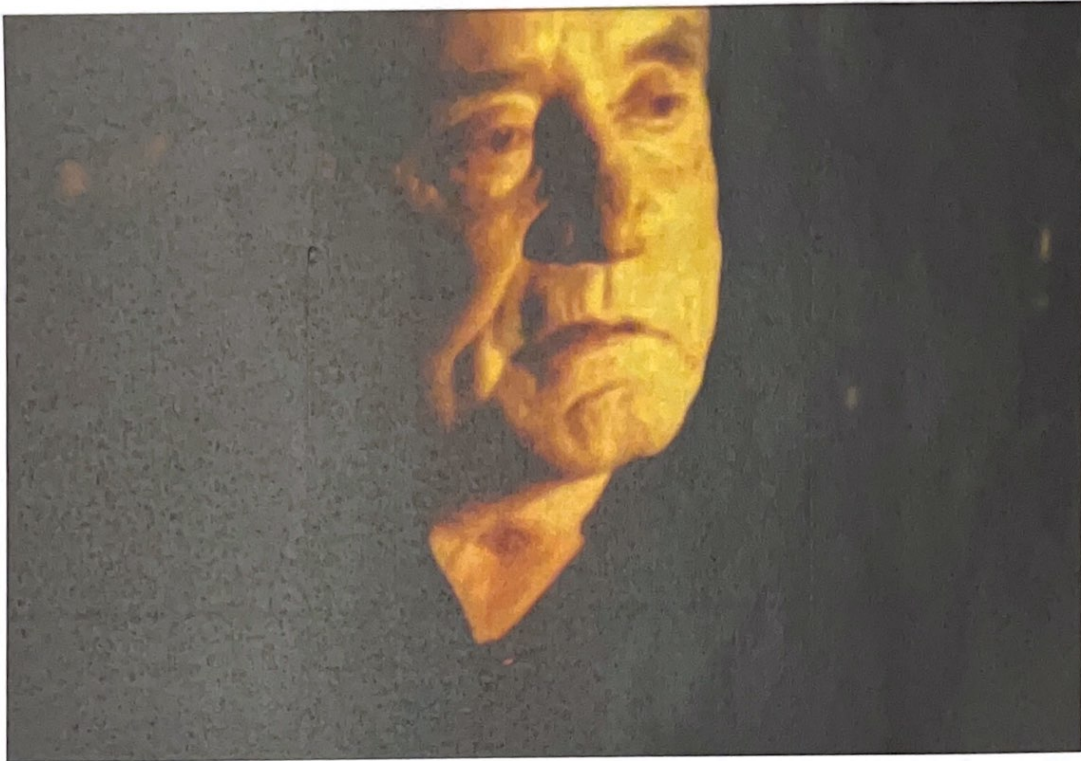
The Clash — "I Fought the Law"



CBS Records

I was mind-blown when I was first corrected after attributing "**I Fought the Law**" to the **Clash**. They released their cover of the song in 1979, around the time they were starting to really gain popularity in the US. The song appeared in movies such as 2014's *RoboCop* and 2016's *War on Everyone*, and many more covers and variations have followed since from bands like the Dead Kennedys, Green Day, and Hank Williams Jr. While I will stand by my belief that no one can top the Clash, the truth of the matter is that "**I Fought the Law**" originally belonged to the Crickets in 1960.

Johnny Cash — "Hurt"



Universal

"Hurt" is one of the most misattributed songs, with credit more often than not being given to **Johnny Cash**, despite it being written and recorded by **Nine Inch Nails** eight years earlier. I'm fairly certain even my guitar teacher — whose job it is to know these things — said "Hurt" is a Johnny Cash song. Technically he's not wrong though, because Nine Inch Nails frontman **Trent Reznor** said in an interview that after watching Johnny Cash's video for the song, he was so moved that "that song isn't mine anymore."

The Beatles — "Twist and Shout"



Parlophone

Bet you didn't know "**Twist and Shout**" wasn't originally done by **the Beatles**. Don't worry, I was shocked too. They released their version on their first album ***Please Please Me*** in 1963, and the only reason it didn't hit the number-one spot on *Billboard's* Hot 100 was because yet another Beatles' (albeit original) song, "**Can't Buy Me Love**," held the coveted position. The original version of "Twist and Shout" was performed by **the Top Notes** in 1961.

Goo Goo Dolls — "Give a Little Bit"



Warner Bros.

The Goo Goo Dolls released "**Give a Little Bit**" as a single in 2004. It reached the number 37 spot on *Billboard's* Hot 100, and gave new life to **Supertramp's** hit from 1977 more than two decades later. The song was originally written for their album ***Even in the Quietest Moments...*** and charted internationally. It's debatable which version is more well-known, but they've both been very successful singles.

Gnarls Barkley — "Gone Daddy Gone"



Warner Bros.

Remember that **Gnarls Barkley** video with the singing bugs? I'm sure you do, it was nominated for Best Music Video at the Grammys in 2008. Did you know that song those bugs were singing was actually a cover? **CeeLo Green**'s band brought newfound popularity and recognition to "**Gone Daddy Gone**," a song originally written and performed by the **Violent Femmes** in 1983. The two versions are entirely different genres of music, but like most covers, both are great in their own right.

The Ataris — "Boys of Summer"



Columbia

The Ataris' "Boys of Summer" from their 2003 album *So Long, Astoria* still plays over the loudspeakers at every Emo Nite. It peaked at number two on *Billboard's* Modern Rock Chart and 20 on the Hot 100, and it is still the band's most successful single ever. But it's a cover! **Don Henley of The Eagles** originally wrote and recorded the song in 1984, almost two decades earlier. The original hit number five on the Hot 100, so it was arguably the more successful of the two, but many former emo kids will swear it's an Ataris song.

Elvis Costello — "Peace, Love, and Understanding"



Columbia

I had no idea "**(What's So Funny 'Bout) Peace, Love, and Understanding**" wasn't an **Elvis Costello** original. He recorded the song in 1978 and it appeared as the final track on his 1979 album ***Armed Forces***. Costello's version quickly became a hit and is still recognized today, while the original didn't get quite the same level of recognition. **Nick Lowe** wrote the song in 1974 for his band **Brinsley Schwarz**.

Cage the Elephant — "Whole Wide World"



RCA Records

Cage the Elephant released "**Whole Wide World**" in 2017 as a single on their album ***Unpeeled***. The song made it to the number 11 spot on *Billboard's* Alternative Songs chart, gaining much more success and recognition than the original, which unfortunately never charted. The song is a cover of a **Wreckless Eric** song written in 1974 and recorded in 1977.

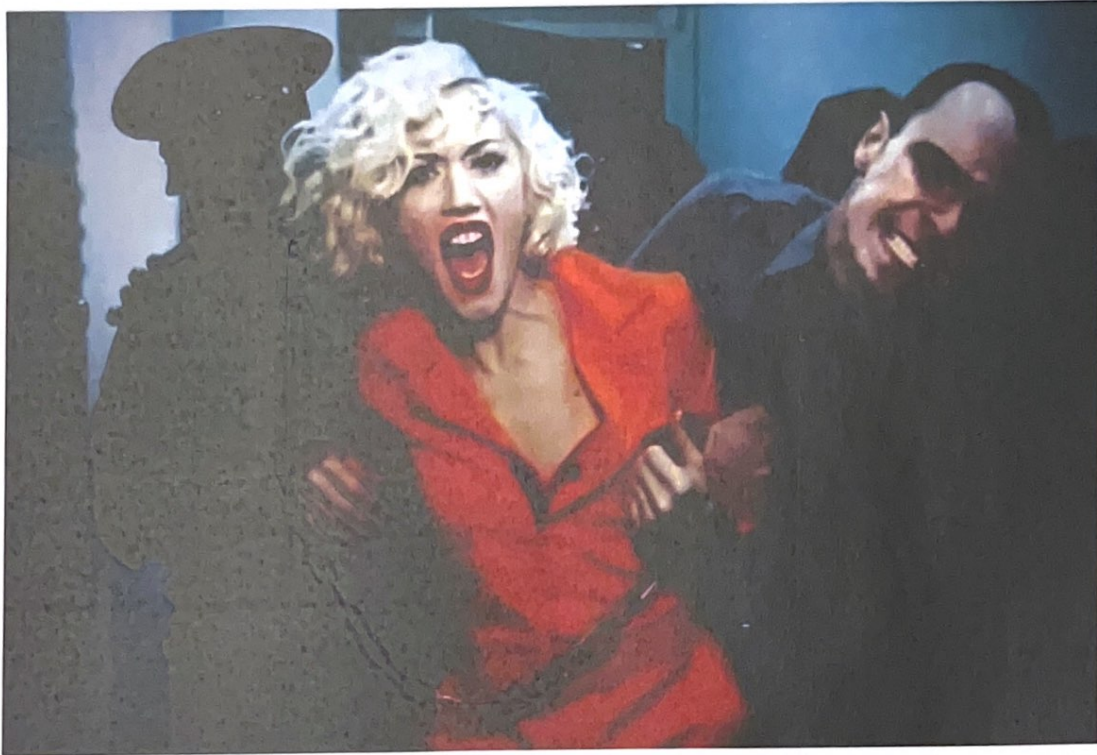
Green Day — "Working Class Hero"



Warner Bros.

Green Day did their best to let you know who originally sang "**Working Class Hero**" when they recorded it in 2007, so it shouldn't be a surprise, but when you search for the song on Spotify, their cover comes up before **John Lennon's original**. Not to mention they were even nominated for the Grammys Best Rock Performance for it, and the song peaked at number 10 on *Billboard's* Modern Rock Tracks chart. The song was recorded for ***Instant Karma: The Amnesty International Campaign to Save Darfur***, a compilation of John Lennon cover songs, and the final line in Green Day's version is taken directly from Lennon's song itself.

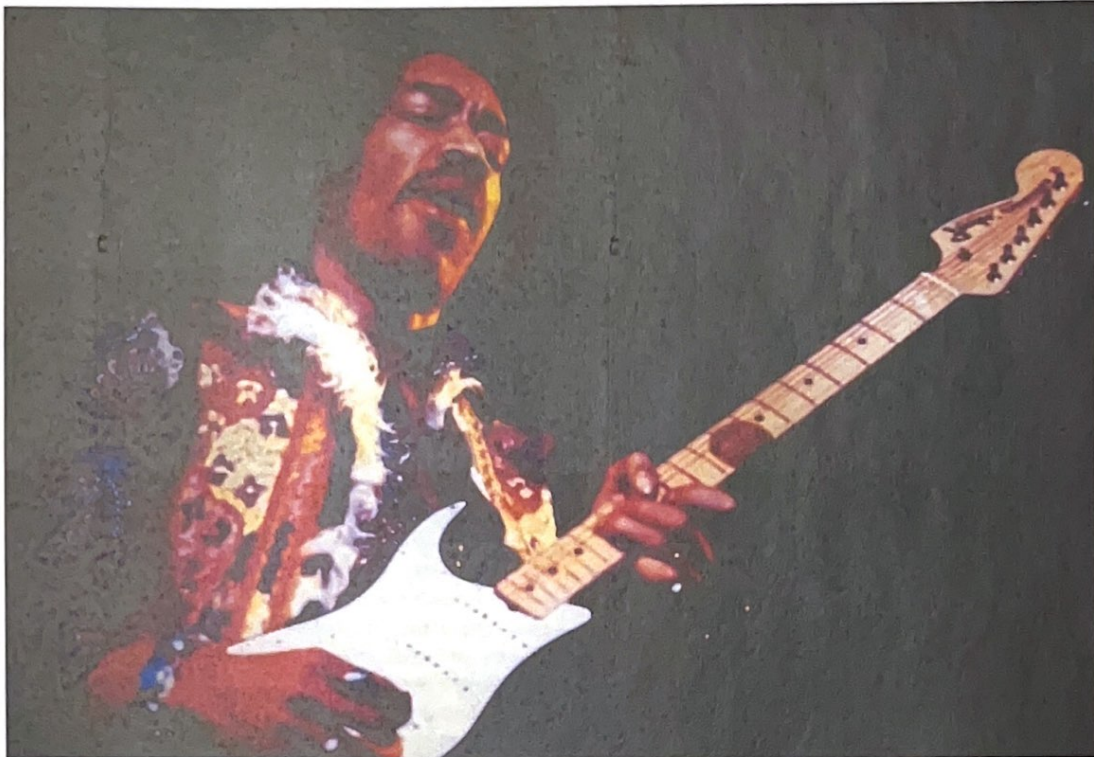
No Doubt — "It's My Life"



Interscope Records

No Doubt recorded a cover of new wave band **Talk Talk**'s 1984 song "**It's My Life**" as a way to promote their greatest hits album while **Gwen Stefani** was busy recording a solo album in 2003. They thought a cover would be easier than having to write new material, so they clearly had no idea just how popular that cover would end up being. No Doubt's version surpassed the success of the original to the point of it being shocking that it was ever even a cover to begin with.

Jimi Hendrix — "All Along the Watchtower"



Reprise Records

Jimi Hendrix may be one of the greats, but he's not above honoring other musicians' songs with covers either. He released his version of "**All Along the Watchtower**" in 1968 for his album *Electric Ladyland*. The song was a Top 20 single that year, and appeared in the top 50 of *Rolling Stone's* 500 Greatest Songs of All Time. However, Hendrix was not the original artist. Not even a full year earlier, **Bob Dylan** wrote and recorded the song for his album *John Wesley Harding*.

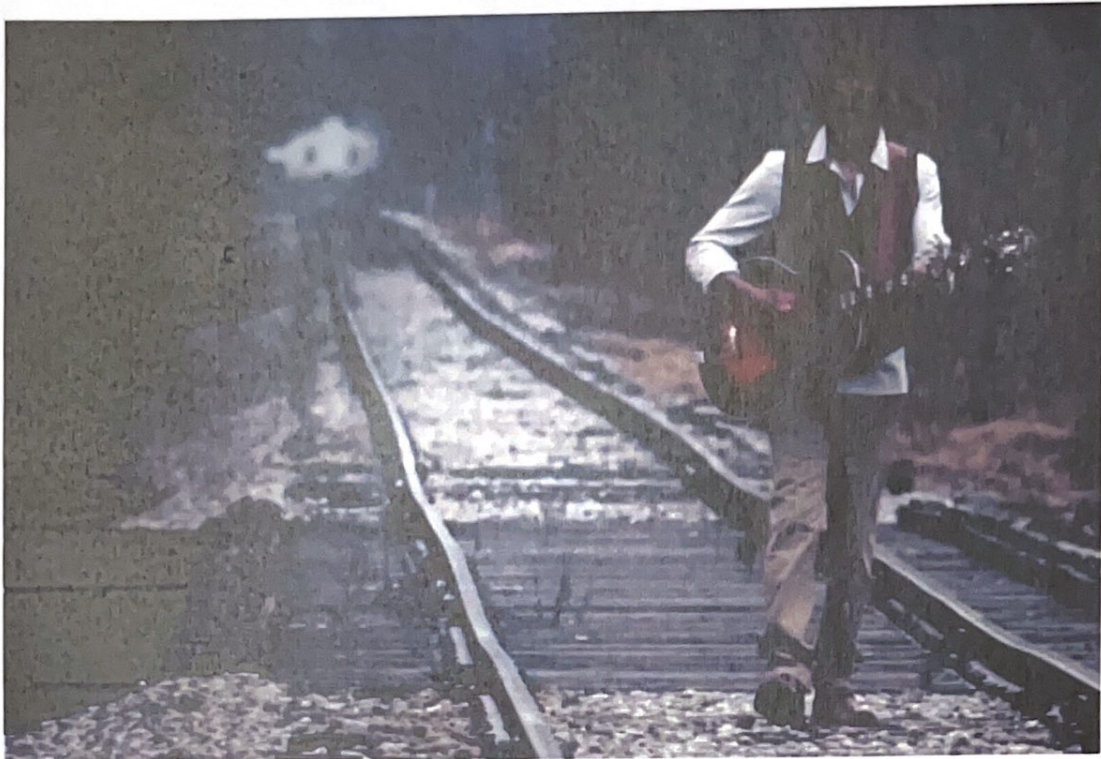
The Ramones — "Chinese Rock"



Sire Records

I once took a video of a cover band performing "**Chinese Rock**" and posted it to YouTube crediting **the Ramones**. If you're ever wrong about something on the internet, someone will be sure to let you know super quick. The song was on the Ramones' 1980 album ***End of the Century***, but it was originally called "Chinese Rocks," and it was recorded by **The Heartbreakers** for their album ***L.A.M.F.*** in 1977.

Darius Rucker — "Wagon Wheel"



Capitol Records

As a former sorority girl from the south, it's my duty to tell you to that country singer and once-frontman of **Hootie and the Blowfish Darius Rucker** was not the first to perform the 2013 hit "**Wagon Wheel**." His cover hit the number one spot on *Billboard's* Hot Country Songs chart and was certified triple Platinum, so it's no wonder it's easily mistaken as an original song. **Old Crow Medicine Show** first released "Wagon Wheel" in 2004, nine years earlier.

Rita Coolidge — "Higher and Higher"



A+M Records

When you think "**Higher and Higher**," I'm sure you hear a woman's soulful voice in your head. **Rita Coolidge's** version of the song was recorded for her 1977 album ***Anytime...Anywhere*** and hit the number two spot on *Billboard's* Hot 100. It's been an earworm ever since. However, she was not the first to record the song. "Higher and Higher" was originally recorded by **Jackie Wilson** a decade earlier for his album ***Higher and Higher***.

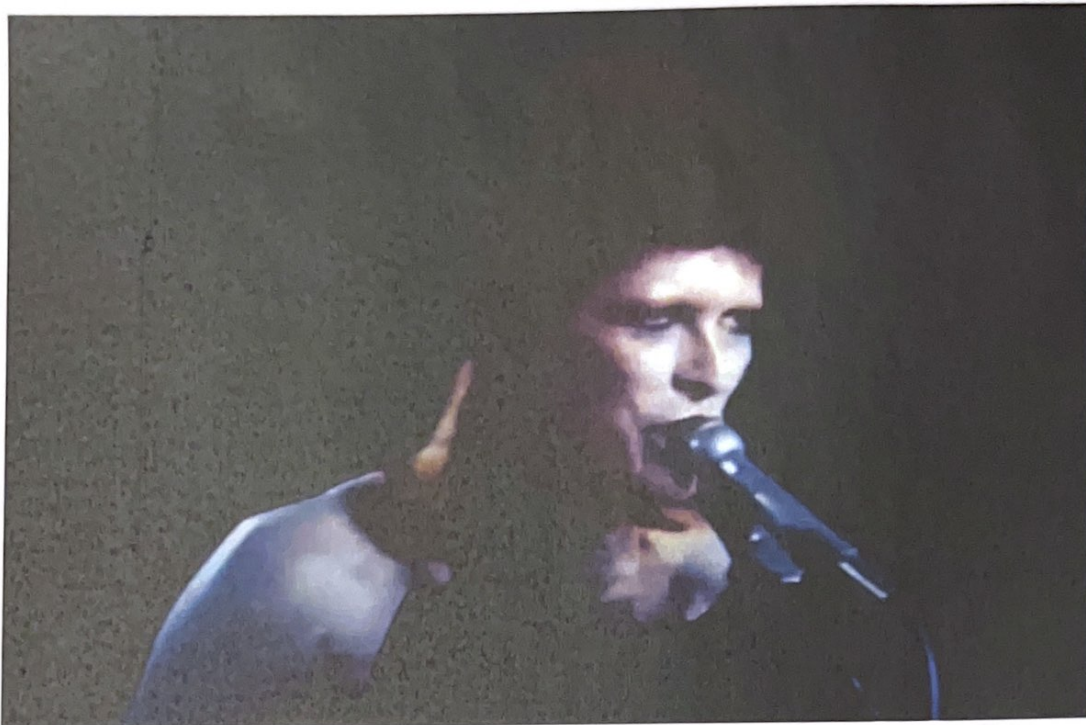
Tiffany — "I Think We're Alone Now"



MCA Records

Tiffany's 1987 single "**I Think We're Alone Now**" charted at number one in a few countries across the globe. It's safe to say it's a pretty well known version of the song, if not the most well known. However, it's not the original. In 1967, **Tommy James and the Shondells** first recorded the song, which was met with similar recognition, hitting the number four spot on *Billboard's* Hot 100.

David Bowie — "I Can't Explain"



RCA Records

David Bowie is one of those artists I just can't believe has ever recorded a cover song. He's just too famous and too creative and probably doesn't even have time to think about the music other musicians are putting out. But alas, even Bowie recorded covers during his career. "**I Can't Explain**," from his 1973 album ***Pin Ups***, is a cover of a song originally written and recorded by **the Who** in 1964.

Anthrax — "Got the Time"



Island Records

"**Got the Time**" was quoted as being a "standout track" on thrash metal band **Anthrax's** 1990 album ***Persistence of Time***. The song is actually a cover of a song by British new wave artist **Joe Jackson** (no relation to **Michael Jackson**) from his 1979 debut album ***Look Sharp!*** Jackson was not a fan of Anthrax's cover, and called it "clumsy" in an interview with Q Magazine.

Jonas Brothers — "Year 3000"



Hollywood Records

In 2007, the **Jonas Brothers** had their first Top 40 hit single with "**Year 3000**." British pop punk band **Busted** never saw quite the same monstrous level of success with their original version of the song when they first released it five years earlier in 2002, despite it charting in the UK. Apparently the original version was a bit raunchier than the one we know and love. The Jonas Brothers changed lines like "triple-breasted women swim around town, totally naked," to cater to their younger fans.

Less Than Jake — "Surrender"



Sire Records

I always kinda thought **Cheap Trick** was a one hit wonder. Everyone knows "I Want You to Want Me," and that's about it. Turns out I was very incorrect. "Surrender" off **Less Than Jake's** most successful album, **Anthem**, from 2003, is a cover of a Cheap Trick song from 1978 off their album **Heaven Tonight**.