

# Case study: creedence clearwater revival

Education



## **Introduction**

Creedence Clearwater Revival (CCR) was an American rock band that gained popularity in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Lyrics Freak, 2010). “ The group consisted of lead vocalist, lead guitarist, and primary lyricist John Fogerty, his brother and rhythm guitarist Tom Fogerty, bassist Stu Cook, and drummer Doug Clifford” (Lyrics freak, 2010). The foursome began early on as young teenagers and grew together. Throughout their time together there were many issues that arose that in the end led the group to disband.

Cause of Demise CCR began their downward spiral that ended in disbanding in 1970; by 1972 the group had come to an end (Lyrics Freak, 2010). The cause of demise for the group entailed a lot of different factors. John Fogerty had taken business control of the group by 1971 and felt that a democratic vote would only cause problems, however, the other band members felt they should have a say in things (Lyrics Freak, 2010). Cook and Clifford were not thrilled with the decisions that Fogerty was making but ended up accepting what Fogerty offered (Lyrics Freak, 2010).

Despite the differences that the members had with how things were going they continued on recording and touring. “ Finally, on October 16, 1972 - less than six months later - Fantasy Records and the band officially announced the disbanding of Creedence Clearwater Revival” (Lyrics Freak, 2010). Legal Issues Each went their separate ways. John began a solocareeras a one-man band but still was under contract with Fantasy to finish eight more records (Lyrics Freak, 2010). John was not thrilled with the way Fantasy was handling the contracts and was upset that they had the copyright to his work.

In order for him to break the contract and be free John signed over his rights to Creedence's songs to Zaentz, the owner of Fantasy (Lyrics Freak, 2010). John fought with Zaentz over this and many other issues. One legal issue that affected the whole group was that much of the money earned by Fogerty and Creedence was "lost in an offshore tax-shelter deal arranged by Fantasy" (DeCurtis, 2005). The group took Fantasy to court and after much trial and tribulations, CCR won a considerable judgment (DeCurtis, 2005).

After John Fogerty left CCR and Fantasy he created an album in 1985 "Centerfield," which had the song "The Old Man Down the Road" on it (DeCurtis, 2005). Zaentz, from Fantasy, felt that he owned the copyright to that song because he felt it "was an illegal remake of Creedence's 'Run Through the Jungle'" (DeCurtis, 2005). Zaentz sued Fogerty for \$140 million "for plagiarizing himself" (DeCurtis, 2005). The battle between Fogerty and Zaentz became childish with lashes back and forth. Fogerty began to create songs about Zaentz that were disrespectful and rude.

After many arguments and legal battles Fogerty won. Cook and Clifford formed Creedence Clearwater Revisited and decided to sing some of the old songs. They had asked for John Fogerty to join them, but he refused (Lyrics Freak, 2010). Lawsuits between the band members began to ensue because John felt the others had no right to use the names of the band and songs (Lyrics Freak, 2010).

**Financial Issues**

Financial Issues were always a problem for the group since the beginning. Although there were a few years where they had financial gain overall the group struggled.

When CCR disbanded Cook made a statement to the press saying, " Over the years John Fogerty has done everything he could to devalue Creedence Clearwater Revival...He owes the rest of us a fiduciary duty to protect, enhance and help [the band] grow on a business level. And we believe that he has violated that" (Rolling Stone, 1997). Fantasy had made a deal with an offshore tax shelter, and according to Lyrics Freak (2010), the other members were not aware that John had signed off on this. This deal led to a downfall of finances for all of the members.

The negativity that occurred between all parties led to distrust and the inability to work together. This negativity affected their work and before they disbanded the albums put out were not received well by the public, which brought in less revenue then desired (Lyrics Freak, 2010). Management Issues In 1964 CCR, formerly known as The Blue Velvets, signed with Fantasy Records (Lyrics Freak, 2010). From 1964 to 1970 the band had a good run of success under Fantasy, however dissension began to settle in the band and Fogerty took the reigns as a business leader for the group (Creedence Online, 2009).

Fantasy was the group's management, but Fogerty began making the main decisions for the group. Eventually, the group decided to run as a democracy, which turned into chaos because everyone had their own ideas

on how to manage the band (Creedence Online, 2009). Band Interpersonal Issues Dissension arose amongst the band members. Success was something they all sought after, but could not handle. Each had their own ideas on what should be done, but it was rare that all were in agreement in how things should play out.

Tom Fogerty became upset at how the band was reacting to situations and in 1971 left the band for good (Creedence Online, 2009). This left John Fogerty, Stu Cook, and Doug Clifford, the trio continued on but could not get along enough to keep the band going. They tried by putting together the album Mardi Gras and had also decided to attempt a U. S. tour (Lyrics Freak, 2010). “ Hecklers reportedly pelted the band with coins at the final stop of the tour on May 22 in Denver.

Finally, on October 16, 1972 - less than six months later - Fantasy Records and the band officially announced the disbanding of Creedence Clearwater Revival. ” (Lyrics Freak, 2010).

### **Conclusion**

The many issues of the demise of CCR should be learning points for other bands and managers. If I were the one who had discovered CCR and became their manager things would have been different. It is important to understand how each band member reacts to situations and as the manager to make sure everyone is on the same page.

It seems that Fantasy did not do this and that John Fogerty had his own agenda as well. Although democracy is needed and good sometimes, a fine

line must be drawn in order to effectively manage a band. First off I would have made it very clear that as the manager I am working for CCR and that everyone does get an equal say, however, what is best for the band should always be taken into consideration above what each person desires for themselves. Secondly, conferences would have been held to ensure that everyone is on the same page.

This is extremely important during long hours of recording and touring. People tend to get tired and do not always think clearly during stressful times, so a re-hashing of the goal the band has is important to keep the peace. Thirdly when it comes to the band's money all should have a clear understanding of how the finances are allocated. Every member should have the right to viewing statements. So decisions like the offshore account would not occur. Contracts to protect the members would have this stated in them to offer fairness to every party.

By being honest, communicative and having legal protection for all parties I feel that CCR may not have disbanded in such a terrible way. It is shameful that the group could not remain working together after the split. However, in 1980 the four did play together for Tom's wedding lawsuits once again created an end of relationships amongst the group (Lyrics Freak, 2010). Even after the death of Tom John could not let bygones be bygones and still refused to play with former members Cook and Clifford (Lyrics Freak, 2010).

**References:**

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