

Drake Loses Court Case Over Kendrick Lamar's Song

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A judge has dismissed Drake's case against Universal Music Group (UMG) over Kendrick Lamar's song "Not Like Us." In the song, Lamar called Drake a pedophile, a word that means an adult who is attracted to children. Drake said this line was false and damaged his reputation. But the judge decided the lyrics were opinions, not facts, and were part of a rap battle, not real accusations.



Drake is a famous Canadian rapper and singer known for emotional songs and big pop hits. Kendrick Lamar is an American rapper known for his powerful lyrics and messages about life and society. The two rappers have been rivals for years, and in 2024 they traded several "diss tracks"--songs made to insult or challenge each other. This became one of the biggest rap battles in history.

Lamar's song "Not Like Us" was the biggest hit of that battle. It won five Grammy Awards and was a highlight of his Super Bowl halftime show. Drake said that UMG, which works with both him and Lamar, spread lies about him by releasing and promoting the song. Judge Jeannette Vargas did not agree. She said that in rap battles--where strong language, exaggeration, and insults are normal--listeners know not to take every line seriously. She also pointed out that Drake had made his own harsh claims about Lamar in his songs. Because both rappers used this kind of language, the judge said Lamar's lyrics were creative expression, not real statements of fact.

UMG said it was glad about the decision and added that the case never should have happened because artists need freedom to express themselves. Drake was unhappy with the court's decision and plans to appeal.

Comprehension Questions:

1. What is the main idea of the article?
 - a) A judge determined that Drake is guilty of being a pedophile.
 - b) Kendrick Lamar won five Grammy Awards for his song "Not Like Us."
 - c) Universal Music Group was found guilty of spreading lies about Drake.
 - d) A judge decided that the insults in a rap song are a form of creative expression, not factual claims.
2. Drake claims that the song hurt his reputation. What does "reputation" mean in this context?
 - a) His health condition.
 - b) The way people think about him.
 - c) His musical skill.
 - d) The amount of money he has.
3. The judge dismissed Drake's case. What does "dismissed" mean?
 - a) The judge listened to the case very carefully.
 - b) The judge agreed with all of Drake's arguments.
 - c) The judge punished both rappers equally.
 - d) The judge decided the case was not valid.

4. Why did the judge dismiss the case against Kendrick Lamar?
- a) Because the judge likes Kendrick Lamar's music more than Drake's music.
 - b) Because Drake is from Canada and the case was in the USA.
 - c) Because in a rap battle, insults are not meant to be understood as facts.
 - d) Because Kendrick Lamar's song won many awards, which proved his words were true.
5. What do we know about the relationship between Drake and Kendrick Lamar?
- a) They are close friends who make music together.
 - b) They have a long and serious rivalry.
 - c) They work together at UMG.
 - d) They are both leaders of criminal gangs.
6. Why did the judge say Kendrick's lyrics should not be taken as real accusations?
- a) Because rap battles often include exaggeration and insults.
 - b) Because Kendrick apologized for the song.
 - c) Because Drake admitted the words were true.
 - d) Because the lyrics were deleted from the internet.
7. Why might this decision be important for other artists?
- a) It shows that artists can use insults without fear of any consequences.
 - b) It reminds artists that creative expression is protected in some ways.
 - c) It encourages rappers to only sing positive songs.
 - d) It warns artists not to work with UMG.
8. Which of these statements is false?
- a) The judge ruled in favor of Drake.
 - b) "Not Like Us" won several Grammy Awards.
 - c) Drake has also used strong language to insult Kendrick Lamar in his own songs.
 - d) Universal Music Group was happy with the court's final decision.
9. Which is the correct order of events?
- a) Lamar's song "Not Like Us" became very popular, Drake sued, the judge dismissed the case.
 - b) Drake appealed the decision, then the judge dismissed the case, then Lamar made his song.
 - c) The judge made a decision, then Drake and Lamar had a rap battle, then the song won awards.
 - d) Drake damaged Lamar's reputation, then Lamar made a song, then they became friends.
10. What will probably happen next?
- a) Drake will probably stop making music entirely.
 - b) Kendrick Lamar will be forced to take his song off the internet.
 - c) The legal process will continue as Drake challenges the decision.
 - d) The two rappers will immediately release a new song together.

Speaking and Writing Activities:

- Discuss these questions with a partner or a small group.
 - Choose one topic and write a response to it. Show your writing to a classmate or teacher.
1. Should music artists be allowed to insult each other in songs? Why or why not?
 2. Can you name other famous people who don't like each other? Why do they not get along?
 3. If you wanted to make a funny song about a friend, what would you write?