

Song Title: **DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE - ADAPTATION**

Rating: **NO**

REVIEWERS' NOTE

Because the original song is a Negro Spiritual -- the central medium by which the enslaved expressed the suffering of an inhuman existence* ([reference 1](#), [reference 2](#)) -- it is HIGHLY disrespectful to adapt this song with altered or parody lyrics. Therefore, this adaptation and any other such adaptations or parodies of any Negro Spiritual/Work Song are inadmissible.

* Please see the [research document](#) for the original song.

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What year was this song written?

Prior to the American Civil War; spiritual first published in 1918; "bright-eyed doll" adaptation, arranged in 1953, renewed in 1967 and 1997

Who wrote the lyrics? Bernie Toorish (Original: the American enslaved)

What did your research tell you about the lyricist?

Bernie Toorish, aka Dazz Jordan, was the tenor of the quartet, The Four Lads. [Dazz Jordan | Discography | Discogs](#) |

What other material has been written by this lyricist?

The Mockingbird, My Little Angel [Songs written by Bernie Toorish | SecondHandSongs](#)

Who is the composer of this song?

The American Enslaved; [original](#) is an African American spiritual/work song.

What did your research tell you about the composer?

"Down By the Riverside" is a spiritual that was sung by the enslaved in the South as a work song. It dates back to before the American Civil War but remained unpublished until 1918, when it was included in Plantation Melodies: A Collection of Modern, Popular and Old-time Negro-Songs.

Please see the [published research doc](#).

What other material has been written by this composer?

Many other spirituals and work songs.

Please provide a link to the original song lyrics.

Original lyrics: [Down by the Riverside | Hymnary.org](#)

Bernie Toorish lyrics: [The Four Lads – Down by the Riverside Lyrics](#)

Who and what is this song about, as originally intended by the composer and earlier performers?

This version is about someone finding their true love (bright-eyed doll), down by the riverside.

What did you learn about the history OF THE SONG?

Can't find info on this version of the song. Please see the [research doc](#) for info on the spiritual..

Share a link to the earliest performance of this song that you can find.

[Down by the Riverside \(Remastered\)](#)

Does any illustration or other characteristic of the original sheet music reflect an inappropriate theme?

No illustrations.

Did this song, originally or subsequently, demean a marginalized racial/ethnic group (a group considered at a social disadvantage) through idiomatic expressions, metaphors, jargon, or message? And/or does the song present a sanitized/idyllic or false narrative regarding the American South and the life of the enslaved or newly freed OR of other marginalized racial/ethnic groups and their history? **Yes**

Please explain your reasoning for the answer above and indicate if your group feels the song should not be performed by Sweet Adelines

This version of the song is demeaning in that it is highly disrespectful of the original African American spiritual that expresses the pain and suffering of the American enslaved. Please see the [research doc](#) for the original song.

Additional Questions to Consider (do not pertain to Admissibility)

The remaining questions pertain to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion issues other than those of race. As such, THESE QUESTIONS DO NOT AFFECT A SONG'S ADMISSIBILITY. They are provided to encourage your group to consider factors that may affect members of your audience and/or your performers with regard to religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, and more. Please refer to the MUSIC CHOICES section of "Chapter Choices to Address Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" in the Chorus Toolkit for details and strategies related to these factors.

Could the message/lyrics of the song, original or subsequent, limit any singer or audience member's ability to engage, related to the following? A YES answer does not imply that the song is demeaning or exclusionary. [Please see instructions here.](#)

Age: N/A

Disability: N/A

Gender: N/A

Religion: N/A

Sexual Orientation: N/A

Visible Physical Differences: N/A

Other? N/A

Please explain your reasoning for YES/UNSURE answers and any NO answers you wish to explain.

The answers to these categories are irrelevant because the song is inadmissible.