

REVIEWERS' NOTE

This song is inadmissible due to references to Dixie, fields of cotton, and plantations in the lyrics. The sheet music cover illustration of a plantation with well-dressed white men in the foreground and Black workers in the background picking cotton, makes clear the nature of the fond memories and expressions of longing. [reference](#)

Dixie: Note that concern about the term “Dixie” is *not* an indictment of the South. The issue is that the term, “Dixie”—not the South—has become inextricably associated with racist ideologies, since the days of minstrelsy to the present. “Dixie” evokes a very specific time in the south—a nostalgic romanticizing of the *antebellum* South with its devastatingly cruel and dehumanizing institution of slavery and the subjugation African Americans endured for over a century afterwards. [Details and additional references may be found here.](#)

Idealized old South: during the decades after the civil war, a genre of songs (along with other arts and discourse) emerged in support of the “**Lost Cause**” mythology, idealizing the antebellum South in order to assuage White Southerners, maintain the antebellum way of life, portray slavery as a benign institution, and roll back the emancipation of those freed. ([reference 1](#) | [reference 2](#))

Song Title: **ARE YOU FROM DIXIE?**

What year was this song written? 1915

Who wrote the lyrics? Jack Yellen

What did your research tell you about the lyricist?

https://www.songhall.org/profile/Jack_Yellen

He wrote for Broadway and the film industry for much of his career.

What other material has been written by this lyricist?

Most notably: "Happy Days Are Here Again" and "Ain't She Sweet". Also "Down By the O-Hi-O", "Are You from Dixie?", "Alabama Jubilee", "How's Every Little Thing in Dixie?", "I'm Waiting for Ships That Never Come In", "A Young Man's Fancy", "Lovin' Sam", "Who Cares", "Mama Goes Where Papa Goes", "I Wonder What's Become of Sally", "Cheatin' On Me", "Big Bad Bill", "Forgive Me", "Crazy Words, Crazy Tune", "Ain't She Sweet?", "Glad Rag Doll", "Happy Days Are Here Again", "A Bench in the Park", "Sweet and Hot", "You Said It", "Oh, You Nasty Man", "It's an Old Southern Custom", "Life Begins at Sweet Sixteen", "The Right Somebody to Love", "Are You Havin' Any Fun?", "Something I Dreamed Last Night", "Happy in Love" and "Love Songs Are Made in the Night."

Who is the composer of this song? George L. Cobb

What did your research tell you about the composer?

George was not as prolific as Jack. There is a good summary of his life and work here:
<http://www.ragtimepiano.ca/rags/cobb.htm>. This site also has a lot of information:
<http://www.perfessorbill.com/comps/gcobb.shtml>. George wrote a lot of music for the Dixie genre and was most famous for his Russian Rag composition.

What other material has been written by this composer?

See below links for complete lists of his works. Some examples: All Aboard for Dixieland; Listen to that Dixie Band; Alabama Jubilee

Please supply the links you used for this part of your research.

<http://www.ragtimepiano.ca/rags/cobb.htm>
<http://www.perfessorbill.com/comps/gcobb.shtml>

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

It's about a person who moved north and longs to return south, below the Mason-Dixon line. They are excited to meet others from their homeland in the South.

"Hello, there, stranger! how do you do?

There's something I'd like to say to you.

Don't be surprised,

You're recognized!

I'm no detective but I've just surmised.

You're from the place where I long to be"

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

[Billy Murray - Are You From Dixie 1916 Cause I'm From Dixie Too](#)

Please supply the links to any additional sources you used for this section of research.

<https://slate.com/human-interest/2013/04/accidental-racist-the-brad-paisley-ll-cool-j-collaboration-and-songs-about-the-south-from-the-post-civil-war-era.html>

It did not use jargon, as the speaker is a white person from a plantation in Birmingham. As this linked article points out, however, the sheet music cover is two white men shaking hands with black workers (presumably the enslaved) tending to fields in the background.

What historical or social events were happening at the time this song was written?

WWI (1914-1918)

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

[Are You From Dixie? \('Cause I'm from Dixie too!\) / Historic American Sheet Music / Duke Digital Repository](#)

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 the reasoning for the answer above.

The song seems innocuous except for the use of the word Dixie, which is a word fraught with baggage, and the sheet music cover which shows the plantation and enslaved workers of the ex-patriot speaker. The plantation is also referred to in the second verse. Please see the Reviewers' Note at the top of this document.

Please supply the links to any additional sources you used for this section of research. There doesn't appear to be a wide variety of lyrics for this song - most recordings seems to leverage the original lyric. It has been recorded by a number of country and bluegrass artists. Here are just a few links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FhOcxYljsAo>

<https://www.bluegrasslyrics.com/song/are-you-from-dixie/>

<https://www.lyrics.com/lyric/17059935/Jerry+Reed/Are+You+from+Dixie+%28%27Cause+I%27m+from+Dixie+Too%29>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3LOH7AvV30>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i_zCp6h5aMA

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.

