

Classic Christmas Song Canceled Over Its 'Questionable Past'

An elementary school in upstate New York removed "Jingle Bells" from its roster of Christmas songs all over the holiday tune's supposedly "questionable past."

The backlash was swift, with critics calling the decision as "liberalism run amok" and "cancel culture at its finest," according to WHAM-TV. An informal Twitter poll by the outlet showed 95% of respondents disagreed with the move.

Matt Tappan, principal of Council Rock Primary School in Brighton, New York, told the *Rochester Beacon* he decided to scrub "Jingle Bells" from the school's repertoire and instead replace it with a song that doesn't have the "potential to be controversial or offensive."

The principal and other school staffers confirmed to the local outlet the decision was inspired in part by a 2017 article written by Boston University Professor Kyna Hamill, whose research purportedly showed the iconic Christmas song was first publicly performed during a minstrel show in Boston in 1857 and allegedly featured performers donning blackface. That potential link was enough for Tappan to deem the song altogether problematic.

Hamill, though, told the Beacon she was "quite shocked" to learn the school nixed "Jingle Bells" over her years-old research, explaining she "in no way recommended that it stopped being sung by children."

"My article tried to tell the story of the first performance of the song; I do not connect this to the popular Christmas tradition of singing the song now," the professor said. "The

very fact of ["Jingle Bells'"] popularity has to do [with] the very catchy melody of the song, and not to be only understood in terms of its origins in the minstrel tradition. ... I would say it should very much be sung and enjoyed, and perhaps discussed."

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