

Tom Lehrer "I Wanna Go Back to Dixie"

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Well, what I like to do on formal occasions like this is to take some of the various types of songs that we all know and presumably love, and, as it were, to kick them when they're down. I find if you take the various popular song forms to their logical extremes, you can arrive at almost anything from the ridiculous to the obscene, or -- as they say in New York -- sophisticated. I'd like to illustrate with several hundred examples for you this evening, first of all, the southern type song about the wonders of the American South. But it's always seemed to me that most of these songs don't go far enough. The following song, on the other hand, goes too far. It's called I Wanna Go Back to Dixie.

I wanna go back to Dixie,
Take me back to dear ol' Dixie,
That's the only li'l ol' place for li'l ol' me.
Ol' times there are not forgotten,
Whuppin' slaves and sellin' cotton,
And waitin' for the Robert E. Lee.
(It was never there on time.)
I'll go back to the Swanee,
Where pellagra makes you scrawny,
And the honeysuckle clutters up the vine
I really am a-fixin'
To go home and start a-mixin'
Down below that Mason-Dixon line.

Oh, poll tax, how I love ya, how I love ya,
My dear old poll tax.

Won'tcha come with me to Alabama,
Back to the arms of my dear ol' mammy,
Her cookin's lousy and her hands are clammy,
But what the hell, it's home.
Yes, for paradise the Southland is my nominee.
Jes' give me a ham hock and a grit of hominy.

I wanna go back to Dixie
I wanna be a Dixie pixie

And eat cornpone 'til it's comin' outta my ears
I wanna talk with southern gentlemen
And put my white sheet on again,
I ain't seen one good lynchin' in years.
The land of the boll weevil,
Where the laws are medieval,
Is callin' me to come and nevermore roam.
I wanna go back to the southland,
That "y'all" and "shet-ma-mouth" land,
Be it ever so decadent,
There's no place like home.

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