

If Only Jason Aldean Were a Rapper

You may remember when the press assured us the 2020 summer riots were “peaceful protests.” Now the same media outlets want us to believe that a country song criticizing such violent behavior is “promoting violence.”

Jason Aldean’s latest single “[Try That in a Small Town](#)” has dominated news headlines.

No shrinking violet when it comes to expressing his political views, the five-time Grammy nominee has made new friends—and enemies—with a [ballad](#) decrying the crime and social disfunction seen in America’s cities. “Try that in a small town,” Aldean suggests in the chorus, adding, “See how far ya make it down the road.”

According to Aldean, among the crimes and chaos not tolerated in Middle America are “sucker punch[ing] somebody on a sidewalk,” “carjack[ing] an old lady at a red light,” “cuss[ing] out a cop, spit[ting] in his face,” and “stomp[ing] on the flag and light[ing] it up.”

The single came out in May but only generated controversy last month with the release of the song’s video, which showed footage of the infamous George Floyd protests in American cities and beyond.

The song’s pro-Second Amendment message and its contrast of idyllic country life versus the corruption of the city is obviously designed to appeal to a specific American subculture. And it’s worth pointing out that its lyrics objectively condemn violence and only invoke the use of force as a means of defending life, limb, and loved ones.

This has not stopped pundits, politicians, and the press from

flipping the script to frame Jason Aldean as the aggressor.

His song was labelled a “violence anthem” in an article on [The Guardian](#). *The Washington Post* sang to its coastal choir with an opinion piece [titled](#) “Jason Aldean? Please spare me the small-town nostalgia” that declares the bigotry of small towns. *Variety* ran an article [calling](#) Aldean’s tune “the most contemptible country song of the decade.”

Meanwhile, progressive podcast host Jim Stewartson has [accused](#) Aldean of “incitement” and of “openly radicalizing his fans into white nationalist vigilante violence.”

Veteran country singer Sheryl Crow likewise [crowed](#), “There’s nothing small-town or American about promoting violence.”

And Tennessee state Rep. Justin Jones [labelled](#) “Try That in a Small Town” a “lynching anthem” and claimed it is a song about “normalizing racist violence.”

CMT (formerly Country Music Television) went one step further by [pulling](#) the song from circulation on its network.

Some among the censorious punditry pointed to the music video’s use of a filming location linked to a lynching almost a century ago. The video’s production company has since [clarified](#) Aldean didn’t choose the set location but that it is a “popular filming location outside of Nashville” and also appeared in the *Hannah Montana* movie.

“There is not a single lyric in the song that references race,” Aldean said in a [statement](#) following the controversy, “and there isn’t a single video clip that isn’t real news footage.”

At the video’s release, before any controversy had erupted, Aldean [explained](#) why he wrote the song:

When u grow up in a small town, it’s that unspoken rule of “we all have each other’s backs and we look out for each

other.” It feels like somewhere along the way, that sense of community and respect has gotten lost. Deep down we are all ready to get back to that. I hope my new...
pic.twitter.com/b5E92j0YQ5

– Jason Aldean (@Jason_Aldean) [July 14, 2023](#)

But perhaps the most insightful commentary came from *Daily Wire* podcaster Matt Walsh. He pointed out the hypocrisy of those who condemned Jason Aldean’s song as “promoting violence” yet remain silent on the entire rap music industry. “Nearly every rap song for the past 30 years has directly and enthusiastically glorified murder, drug dealing, robbery and every other violent crime, and these people say nothing,” Walsh [told](#) his followers.

Walsh exaggerates, but his central point stands.

Visit the *Billboard* chart for [Hot Rap Songs](#) and read the lyrics. Or if you’re unwilling, take my word that, with few exceptions, today’s top rap songs promote a smorgasbord of social filth, including violence against women, drug use, sexually demeaning themes, unbridled criminality, and too many uses of the N-word to number.

If Jason Aldean were a rapper, his song would win lavish praise from the culture’s elite. Instead, he is a villain for daring to name the social disfunction that plagues America.

Nevertheless, in a pattern that is now all too familiar, Middle Americans have voted with their feet.

“Try That in a Small Town” has since peaked at No. 1 on the [Billboard Hot 100](#)—Aldean’s highest ever placement on that chart—and it currently sits at No. 21. His music video has garnered over 27 million views and over a million likes on YouTube since its release.

It's the inverse of "go woke, go broke"—a cancel culture attempt that has failed spectacularly.

The small towns of America have spoken.

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Image credit: [YouTube](#)