

Getting Cussed At For Playing Music

On our trips around the globe, we meet many interesting people. Last night we met one who particularly did NOT like our style of music.

"You need to pack up and go back to Nashville," he told me as I was trying to do exactly that. "Your tempo wasn't worth a thing!"

His actual words had more emphasis, and a few choice explicatives.

In our concerts, we often play "Folsom Prison Blues" by Johnny Cash. Growing up, Dad played it all the time, and we play a rendition of the way we learned it from him. Dad is the only reason we play that song, and for the record, he likes the way we do it.

But this gentleman did NOT like the way we did it. He told us to go back and listen to the records again.

"You're in West Virginia now!" he yelled as he walked away.

Apparently West Virginia has its own special way it wants to hear Johnny Cash.

I should mention that many other West Virginians have expressed their intense love for the version we play, so I feel like this gentleman might not be representative of all West Virginians. Considering that West Virginia is the place of my birth, and the state where I first performed Johnny Cash, I feel inclined to defend my right to determine my own appropriate "West Virginia version" of Johnny Cash.

The incident reminded me of the time I stopped at a diner in Ohio, and a man there found out I was in a band from West Virginia. So he asked what style of music we played. Upon hearing that we weren't bluegrass, he proceeded to throw the F word at me and my style of music.

To me, bluegrass fans shouldn't be using extreme language. They should be sitting in their rocking chairs, drinking lemonade on a Summer day, enjoying the nice acoustic sounds of their favorite music.

Not cussing out passing rock bands.