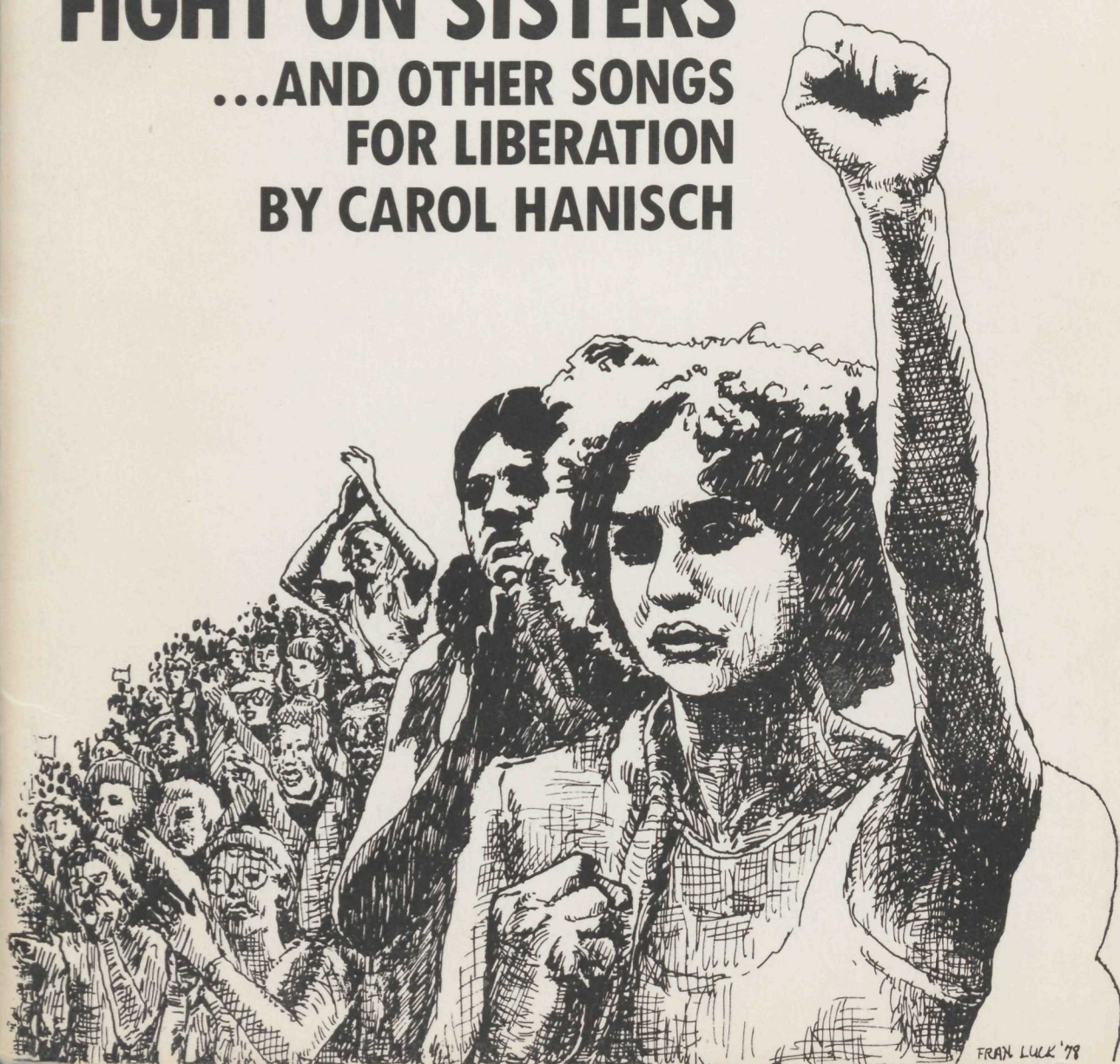


FIGHT ON SISTERS

**...AND OTHER SONGS
FOR LIBERATION
BY CAROL HANISCH**



E Pam
#4832

Dedicated to the brave and determined
women of the Women's Liberation Movement
who give expression and life to the
deepest feelings, desires and hopes
of women everywhere.

And to the radical songwriters and
singers who have inspired and taught
the world—especially the women,
who have had to fight for the
right to do it.



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This songbook came about with help and/or encouragement from Frances Carroll, Ruth Leoff, Dedi Margaret, Margaret McVoy, Nelson Meyer, Eleanor Perry, John Perry, Irene Peslikis, Tom Siblo, Bob Weil.

And especially Sis Cunningham, Anne Forer and Barbara Leon.

With special appreciation for The Almanacs, the Black Civil Rights Movement, Sis Cunningham, Woody Guthrie, Peter LaFarge, Mary McCaslin, Don McLean, Phil Ochs, Tom Paxton, Malvina Reynolds, Peggy Seeger, Pete Seeger, The Weavers and countless others whose music helped me find my song.

Front cover design and artwork by Fran Luck

Photos on pages 13 and 28 by Eve Leoff

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Introduction

You have just opened one of the most thought provoking little songbooks to come out in a long time. Radical? You bet! And right on target. These songs were unmistakably written by one who lives by the principle of the commitment of the artist—in this case, commitment to the Women's Liberation Movement.

Songs are, and have been for several centuries, right out there in front. Go back through history (socio-economic) and you will find that the singing movements were the ones which brought about notable social changes: reforms, revolutions—at any rate, some sort of improvement in the human condition.

Here is a songbook put together by a woman, all songs written by a woman, mostly about the situation women face in a world dominated by men. We *need* a songbook like this one; we need a whole crop of them springing up everywhere. But sadly there aren't many; *I* haven't seen many.

There's nothing obscure about the lyrics of these songs. Carol Hanisch writes—and sings—very plainly what she means, and there's no fuzzing up of the issues, the main one being that women have got to get together and throw off the deep fears of doing something (or leaving something undone), saying something, (or leaving something unsaid) which might offend or upset the man who's been kind of running her life. Or the men: husband or boy friend, boss, foreman, head of the union, the fellow who manages the corner supermarket, crew leader, director, or whatever. These relationships are what Carol deals with in nearly all of these songs: the basic, often subtle, always complex, day-to-day gut level relationships which dam up a woman's creative outlets.

And yet in *none* of these songs do we find the suggestion that women's oppression is a hopeless condition or the escape into fantasies of women separating from men in a permanent way. The fight is to change men's attitudes and actions—to remove their unjust power over women—so that a genuine unity of the sexes is possible. The writer of these songs recognizes the need for this unity, not only in the man-woman relationship—as beautifully expressed in "Match My Thunder" and humorously dramatized in the very catchy "Bedroom Backlash"—but also in the broader aspect of class struggle. The capitalist class, to maintain itself in power, must of necessity keep us *all* in subjection—men, women, all races, all colors; hence all must work together to exterminate once and for all that numerically small anti-human ruling clique. In this sense the songs "What We Owe the World", "We'll Find the Way" and "Song of the Oppressed" are right in there and much to the point.

When you listen to Carol sing her songs, she makes you say to yourself, "Hey, that's the way it is; I never could put my finger on it before, but there it is!" And you'll want to *sing* that song which has pointed out something to you—pass it on to others. These are songs to be *learned and sung*, not left on the pages of a book. And don't sing them just to groups of women; try them on the guys. You might hear some man say (he'll probably whisper it), "Hey, I never thought of it quite that way before."

Sis Cunningham

(Sis Cunningham is founding editor of the national topical song quarterly BROADSIDE. A contemporary of Woody Guthrie, she was a member of the Almanac Singers and Oklahoma's Red Dust Players as well as a radical activist and organizer of such groups as the Unemployed Council and the Southern Tenant Farmers Union. She recently released a BROADSIDE album entitled SUNDOWN.)

FIGHT ON SISTERS

There has been a definite lack of women's liberation songs from the WLM. Most "women's songs" are either lesbian-feminist (women loving women) or socialist-feminist (women fighting for socialism). It was this lack more than anything else that prompted me to start writing songs. I needed them in my life and I suspected other women did too. This was the first. I put it to a favorite folk tune because I wanted women to be able to sing it easily and because I was convinced I couldn't write a melody.

Words: By Carol Hanisch. © Copyright 1978 by Carol Hanisch
Tune: Based on "Roll On Columbia" by Woody Guthrie which was based on "Goodnight, Irene" by Huddie Ledbetter & John Lomax

With Spirit D A⁷

When we started this movement 'bout ten years a-go, men laughed and

D D⁷ G

said that it never would grow, but we raised up our voices and we let 'em know.

A⁷ D D Chorus A⁷

Fight on sisters, fight on Fight on sisters, fight

D D⁷ G

on. Fight on sisters, fight on. Our power will grow and our dreams will be

A⁷ D

won if we fight on sisters, fight on.

When we started this movement 'bout ten years ago
 Men laughed and said that it never would grow
 But we raised up our voices and we let'em know
 Fight on sisters, fight on.

CHORUS: Fight on sisters, fight on
 Fight on sisters, fight on
 Our power will grow and our dreams will be won
 If we fight on sisters, fight on.

Our foremothers visions would not let them rest
 They fought for their freedom from the east to the west
 They won some hard battles; we must win the rest
 So fight on sisters, fight on.

Telling the truth about sex, love and men
 We examined our lives and again and again
 It was male supremacy we found we must end
 So fight on sisters, fight on.

The bosses claim women just aren't qualified
 To work at the good jobs for which we applied
 But we talked to each other and found out they lied
 Fight on sisters, fight on.

The Miss America Pageant we did protest
 The curlers, the girdles, high heels and the rest
 That torture a woman — our real self is best
 Fight on sisters, fight on.

We disrupted a hearing on abortion reform
 Telling the panel — 14 men and a nun
 That WE are the experts; our bodies our own
 We fight on sisters, fight on.

We know as we knew we must do it alone
 The war for our freedom can never be won
 Unless we grasp hold and make it our own
 Fight on sisters, fight on.

We've made some mistakes now and don't get it wrong
 The forces against us are wily and strong
 But we're gettin' smarter as we go along
 And fight on sisters, fight on.

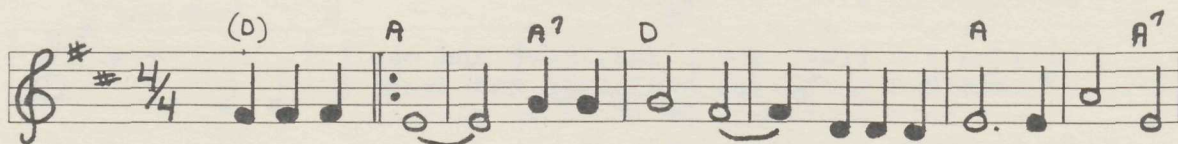
Now some say the problem is all in our head
 While others proclaim that our movement is dead
 But we'll rise up again, our anger still red
 And we'll fight on sisters, fight on.

MATCH MY THUNDER

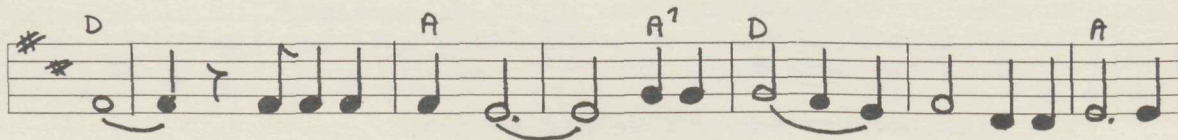
(THE RADICAL WOMAN'S LAMENT)

When I first read that women in China said they choose their husbands on the basis of their politics, I thought, "How unromantic! What about love?" But then I got to realizing that we, too, often TRY to choose men on that basis—that a man's good politics (to the extent that he has any) is often why we fall in love with him in the first place. The familiar pattern, though, is that we continue to grow politically and he stops and before long he feels threatened by our political thunder and lightning and he leaves. Or, as Sherry Lipsky wrote recently, "As soon as they find out I am a radical woman, they can't run fast enough."

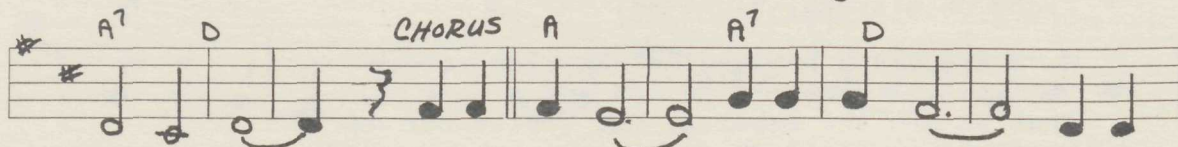
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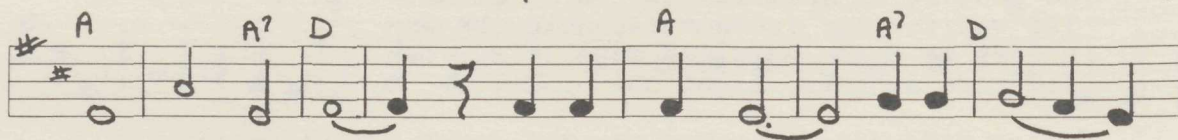
How many times have men woke us only to fall a-sleep them-



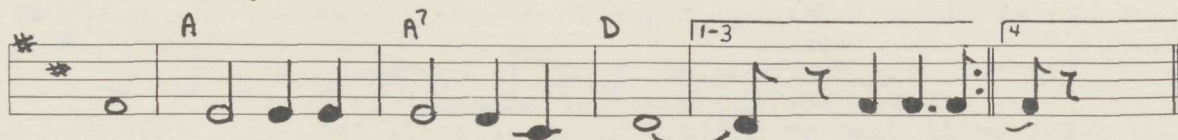
Selves a little fur-ther— down that long— road and we must go



on our-selves. Match my thunder— with your thunder— match my



dreams with your own. Match my light-ning with your own—



light. Don't make me go on a— lone. I tried to

How many times
have men woke us
only to fall asleep themselves
a little further
down that long road
and we must go on ourselves.

CHORUS: Match my thunder
with your thunder.
Match my dreams
with your own.
Match my lightning
with your own light.
Don't make me go on alone.

I tried to follow
follow the fellow
who follows the dream
but before long
I am leading
and he won't come with me.

When a woman
gets independent
a man holds back on love.
Though she wants him
more than ever
he hides in a world of his own.

Oh together
we could move mountains
tear emperors from their thrones
but my thunder
and lightning scare you
and I end up fighting alone.

Radical feminism believes that the popularized version of love has thus been used politically to cloud and justify an oppressive relationship between men and women, and that in reality, there can be no genuine love until the need to CONTROL the growth of another is substituted by the love FOR the growth of the other.

- MANIFESTO OF THE NEW YORK RADICAL FEMINISTS

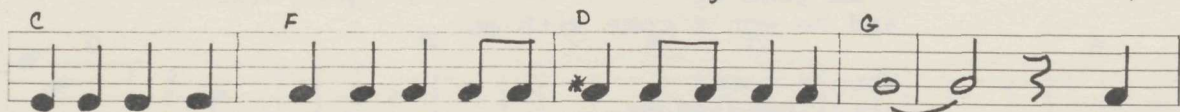
BEDROOM BACKLASH

This started out to be a sort of country-style song called, "Now He's the One Who's Got a Headache Every Night," but somehow it ended up like this. The "Yes, No" idea came from a very male supremacist song by Josh White ("Where Were You Babe") sung frequently by Don McLean, which goes "And so we'll turn the lights down low to keep the bulbs from getting hot, and we'll play a little game called 'Yes'---'No'---'Why not!'" My version seems to be more what is happening these days. Every step forward brings a backlash or new problems to be tackled.

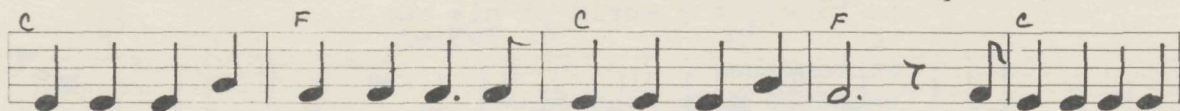
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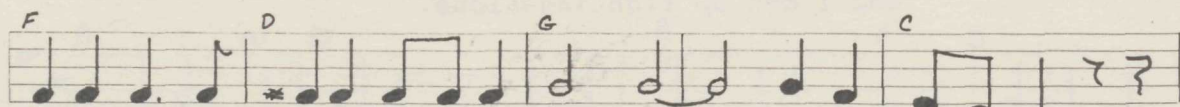
It was not so long a-go men had all the say
Women's liberation came along, said men can't have all the say of



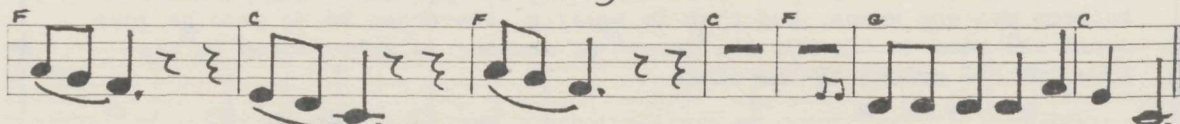
when it came to making love at the end of a weary day—. He'd
if and how and where and when at the end of a weary day—. For



make his moves with no regard for feelings she might have 'Til in resistance
woman wants her fair share too in pleasure as in pay, But he still wants to



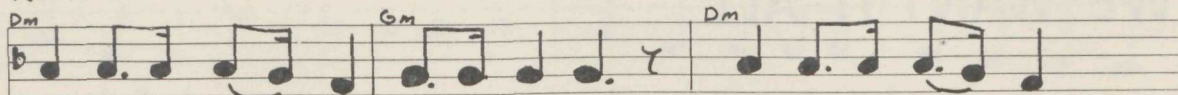
she would claim the headache everyone laughs at—. And its "yes—!"
be the boss—. So he turns a—way—. With "No—!"



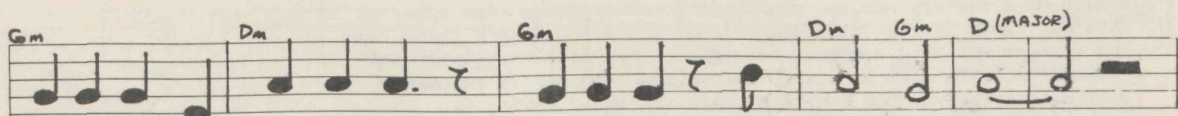
"No—!" "yes—!" "No—!"
"yes—!" "No—!" "yes—!"

Sorry I've got a headache.
Damn it woman I've got a headache.

REFRAIN



Oh, for the day when women get free Oh, for the day when



men accept it. No more shames. No more games. Just yes, yes, YES!

It was not so long ago
men had all the say
when it came to making love
at the end of a weary day.

He'd make his moves with no regard
for feelings she might have
'til in resistance she would claim
the headache everyone laughs at.

And it's
Yes. No.
Yes. No.
Sorry I got a headache.

Oh for the day when women get free.
Oh for the day when men accept it.
No more shames
No more games
Just yes, yes, yes!

All feminists agree that love and sexuality must be redefined. But some of them deny that men have any part to play in a woman's life, particularly in her sexual life, whereas others wish to keep a place for them in their lives and in their beds. I side with them. I utterly revolt at the idea of shutting women up in a feminine ghetto.

— SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR

Because we have lived so intimately with our oppressors, in isolation from each other, we have been kept from seeing our personal suffering as a political condition. This creates the illusion that a woman's relationship with her man is a matter of interplay between two unique personalities, and can be worked out individually. In reality, each such relationship is a CLASS relationship, and the conflicts between individual men and women are POLITICAL conflicts that can only be solved collectively.

— THE REDSTOCKINGS MANIFESTO

Women's liberation came along
said men can't have all the say
of if and how and where and when
at the end of a weary day.

For woman wants her fair share too
in pleasure as in pay
but he still wants to be the boss
so he turns away

With
No. Yes.
No. Yes.
Damn it, woman, I've got a headache.

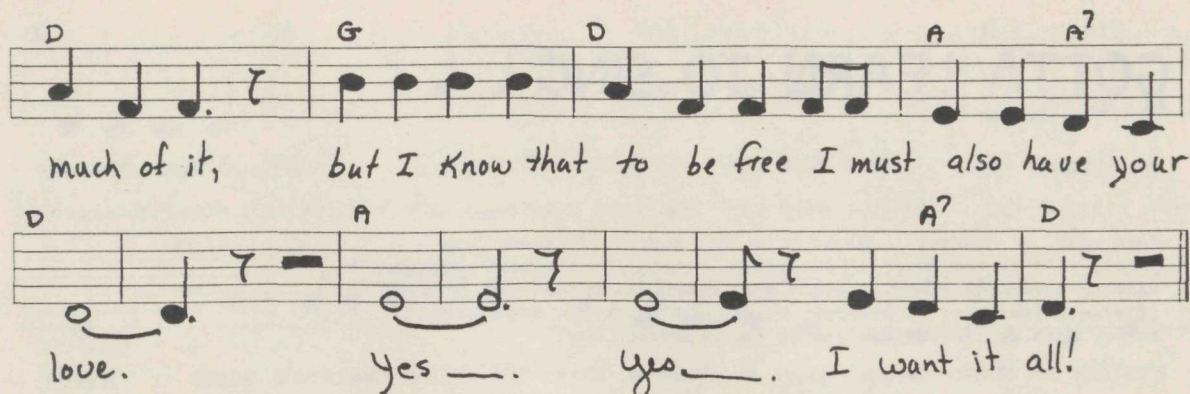
Oh for the day when women get free.
Oh for the day when men accept it.
No more shames
No more games
Just yes, yes, yes!

WE WANT IT ALL

One way the oppressor—acting in the interests of male supremacy or capitalism or both—tries to stop the oppressed from making just demands is by threatening us with false choices: we can have a family OR a career, nuclear plants OR no electricity, low wages OR layoffs, clean air OR jobs, and on and on and on. You'd think love and respect would go together naturally. The fact that women don't often seem to be able to get both from the same man at the same time just further proves how unnatural male supremacy really is. When my long-time relationship with a man broke up recently, this was one of the major reasons. Thus this song.

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1. I walked into his domain, A music man was he. I
 started writing folk songs; they came pouring out of me. I
 proudly said "look what I done; I can write songs too." He said "oh yes and they're
 good ones, but how can I love you?" His eyes said you can have my love but then
 you'll not have my respect or you can have my respect but then you'll not have my
 love. Oh, yes I sure do want respect. Women don't get



2. We were at a meeting
trying to decide
how to break the yoke on working folk
how to organize.
I spoke right up, put forth my plan
the best that I could
but when I looked into his face
I knew I'd lost his love.

3. One day he was cutting wood
gettin' tired as could be.
Work goes better if you share it
or so it seemed to me.
So I grabbed the chain saw
finished off that tree
feeling good until I saw him
glarin' at me.

4. One night I reached out for him
he turned his back on me
I knew that I had lost again
in my desire to be free.
A man won't love a woman
who tries to be all she can
'stead of building up his ego
'til he feels the towering man.

5. I said there's something wrong here
Why must you make me choose
I want respect, I want your love
I've more than paid my dues.
They must go together
Love and Respect
if a man and a woman
are really to connect.

6. Oh sisters, this dilemma
seems more than I can stand.
We've got to get together
make the boy into a man.
Sisters, oh sisters
it's very plain to see
we've got to make them love us
by any means necessary!

CHORUS: verses 1 - 4

His eyes said you can have my love
but then you'll not have my respect
OR you can have my respect
but then you'll not have my love.

Oh yes I sure do want respect
Women don't get much of it.
But I know that to be free
I must also have your love.
Yes, yes, I want it all.

(verse 5)

Oh yes we sure do want respect.
Women don't get much of it.
But we know that to be free
we must also be loved.
Yes, yes, we want it all.

(verse 6)

Then he'll say you can have my love
right along with my respect
and you can have my respect
right along with my love.

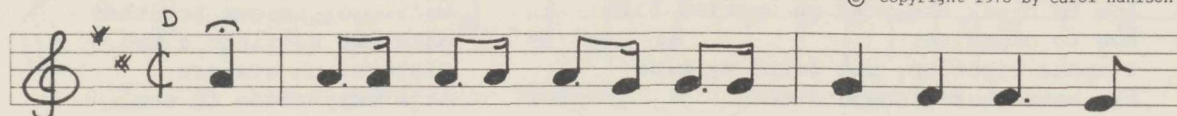
Oh yes we sure do want respect.
Women don't get much of it.
But we know that to be free
We must also be loved.

Yes, yes, we'll have it all.

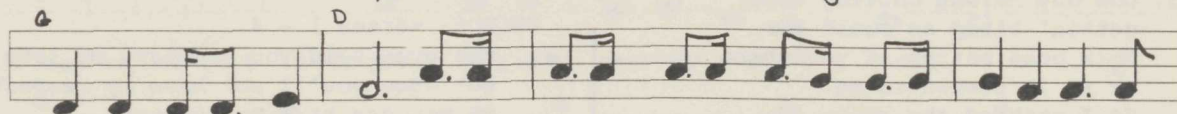
I GOTTA LEARN TO SING

This song, of course, is about more than music. If women have a place, it's at the heart of everything. Men, for the most part, don't want to move over since it means more competition for them, whether it's as folksingers or miners. It's up to us to put ourselves in there, both as individuals and as the oppressed sex.

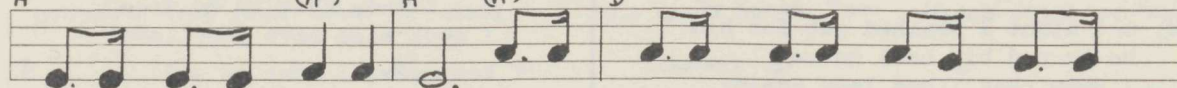
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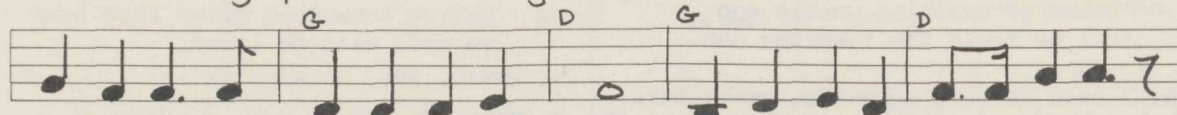
I've always had a weakness for a guitar man es-
Now I'll always have a weakness for a guitar man es-



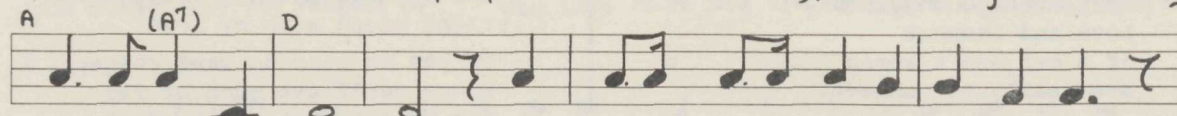
pec' ly if he could sing. And I've always had a weakness for a banjo man if
pec' ly if he can sing. And I'll alway have a weakness for a banjo man if



he could really pluck those strings. And I've always had a weakness for a
he can really pluck those strings. And I'll always have a weakness for a



fiddle man if he could play with soul - country, western, rhythm and blues,
fiddle man if he can play with soul - country, western, rhythm and blues



folk or rock and roll.
folk or rock and roll.

But now I've gotta pluck my own banjo,
But now I'm gonna pluck my own banjo,

G D A (A^b)

strum my own guitar. I've gotta play on my own fiddle, put myself in
 strum my own guitar. I'm gonna play on my own fiddle, put myself in

A (A⁷) D G

there. 'Cause somehow lookin' on ain't enough if you gotta make the rafters
 there. 'Cause somehow lookin' on ain't enough - I wanna make the rafters

D G D A (A⁷) D

ring. A woman can go lookin' on for e — ver and never learn to sing.
 ring. I can't go lookin' on for e — ver. I'm gonna learn to sing.

I've always had a weakness for a guitar man
 'specially if he could sing.
 And I've always had a weakness for a banjo man
 if he could really pluck those strings.
 And I've always had a weakness for a fiddle man
 if he could play with soul
 country, western, rhythm & blues
 folk or rock and roll.

But now I gotta pluck my own banjo
 strum my own guitar.
 I gotta play on my own fiddle
 put myself in there.
 Cause somehow lookin' on ain't enough
 if you gotta make the rafters ring.
 A woman can go lookin' on forever
 and never learn to sing.

If it is not a fit place
 for women, it is unfit
 for men to be there.

— SOJOURNER TRUTH

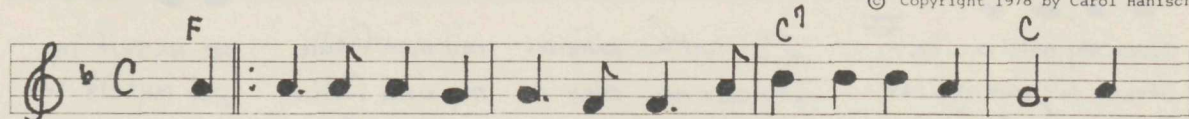


Now I'll always have a weakness for a
 guitar man
 'specially if he can sing.
 And I'll always have a weakness for a
 banjo man
 if he can really pluck those strings.
 And I'll always have a weakness for a
 fiddle man
 if he can play with soul
 country, western, rhythm & blues
 folk or rock and roll.

But I'm gonna pluck my own banjo
 strum my own guitar.
 I'm gonna play on my own fiddle
 put myself in there.
 Cause somehow lookin' on ain't enough
 I wanna make the rafters ring.
 I can't go lookin' on forever
 I'm gonna learn to sing.

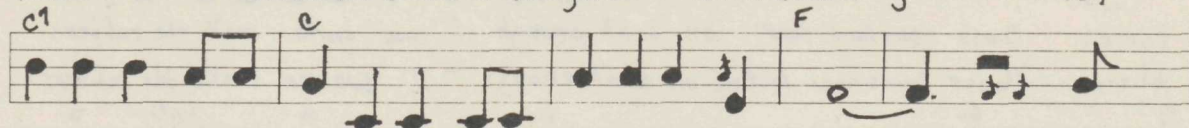
YOU BETTER STOP BLAMING WOMEN

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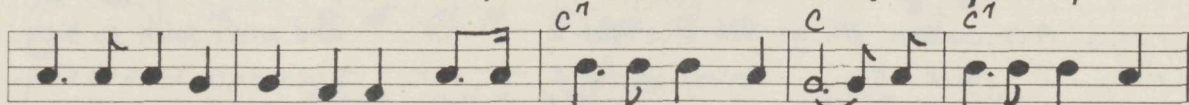
INTRO: Too many times I've heard the tune that women are to blame, for

VERSE 1: screw the banker's daughter — while the banker goes scot free,

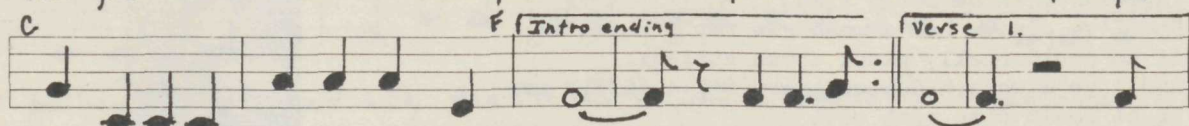


what goes wrong in a good man's life for his hard luck and his pain. I'm

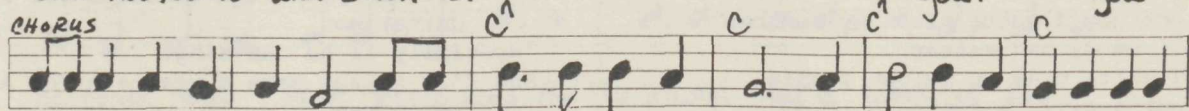
and when life's a hassle you take it out on me. you only



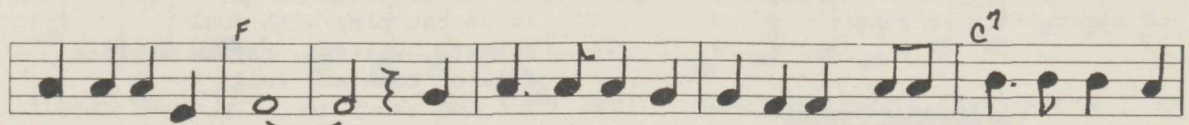
telling you that it's not true, though you sing it loud and strong. It's time to set the
tell your boss to shove it when your woman's left you blue. stand up on your



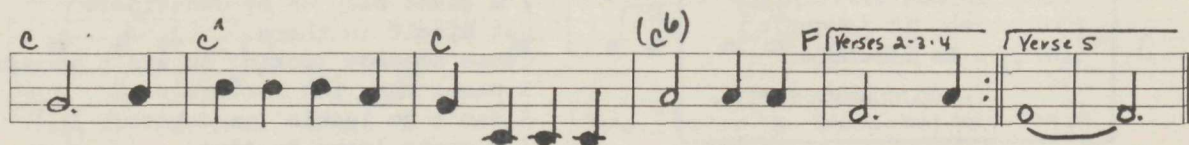
record straight and right this one big wrong. You wanna
own two feet is what I ask of



better stop blaming women in your life and in your song. Why can't you accept it and ad-



mit when you are wrong. In-stead you get your dander up and you try to save your



face, you're holding up the progress of the whole human race. race.

INTRO

Too many times I've heard the tune
that women are to blame
for what goes wrong in a good man's life
for his hard luck and his pain.
I'm telling you that it's not true
though you sing it loud and strong.
It's time to set the record straight
and right this one big wrong.

1. You want to screw the banker's daughter
while the banker goes scot free
and when life's a hassle
you take it out on me.
You only tell your boss to shove it
When your woman's left you blue.
Stand up on your own two feet
is what I ask of you.
2. You say that we're too sexy
causing crimes of assault.
Since men just can't control themselves
rape is our own fault.
Yet you say that modern women
just aren't quite the same
and lovin' isn't fun no more
cause we won't play your game.
3. I know the unemployment line
grows longer every day
and you say you're standing in it
cause I took your job away.
Well, I want as much, I eat as much
as Sojourner Truth once said
and I ain't gonna pay for it
by making your bed.
4. You say that you are leaving
cause I asked you to stay
when it's really that you got
to have it all your own way.
You even blame me for your standing still
when it's you who will not move
and I must go running on alone
'cause it's all I can do.
5. If you'd dare be honest
you'd very quickly see
the one who's standing on your heels
surely isn't me.
It's someone far above you
not someone here below
and sometimes it's your own damn self
as if you didn't know.

CHORUS

You better stop blaming women
in your life and in your song.
Why can't you accept it
and admit when you are wrong?
Instead you get your dander up
and you try to save your face.
You're holding up the progress
of the whole human race.

*But tonight I think I'm gonna
take some good advice,
I'm gonna look around and find
me somebody who's real nice.
Well, perhaps a banker's daughter
And if her papa's a cuss
I hope to do to her
What her papa does to us.*

— from "WHERE WERE YOU BABE"
by Josh White
as sung by DON McLEAN

*Take this job and shove it
I ain't workin' here no more
My woman done gone
And took all the reason
I was workin' for.*

— from "TAKE THIS JOB AND SHOVE IT"
by DAVID ALLAN COE
as sung by JOHNNY PAYCHECK

*Women's activists groups concerned
about rape should follow the old
saying an ounce of prevention is
worth a pound of cure. I'm trying
to say to women, stop teasing. ...
Whether you like it or not, a woman's
a sex object and they're the ones
who turn the man on generally. ...
This community is known to be per-
missive. Should we punish a 15- or
16-year-old boy who reacts normally
to it?*

— EX-JUDGE ARCHIE SIMONSON
Madison, Wisconsin

SISTERS OF THE SUN

All the matriarchist/goddess worshiping/moon women mumbo jumbo of the cultural feminists prompted this song. I heard the phrase "sister of the sun" on a Brewer and Shipley album in reference to something entirely different, but the idea clicked.

Words and music by Carol Hanisch
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Better to be sisters of the Sun than sisters
of the moon. Better to be lighting up a new
day than reflecting the old. Better to be sisters of the
Sun. Rising up. Taking hold. Being all that
Rising up. Taking hold Doing all that
we can be. Use our minds. Use our strengths We shall make us free.
we can do. With our hands. Without heads. And our hearts to see us through.

Better to be sisters of the sun than sisters of the moon
Better to be lighting up a new day than reflecting the old.
Better to be sisters of the sun.

Rising up. Taking hold. Being all that we can be.
Use our minds. Use our strengths. We shall make us free.

Rising up. Taking hold. Doing all that we can do.
With our hands. With our heads. And our hearts to see us through.

NOT WITH MY LIFE YOU DON'T

This was the first and only song I ever wrote...until recently. It was back in 1966 and not many people heard it then, partly because, although I thought the melody was "original", I was so unsure of myself and understood so little about songwriting, I was scared that somebody would recognize it and proclaim that I had stolen it. That seems pretty silly to me now, but all kinds of fears creep in when you do something you've never done before. I've updated a few of the verses and included it here because I always liked the spirit of that old SDS phrase. At least that's where I think it came from. If anybody knows just who it was coined the phrase, I'd like to hear.

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Handwritten musical score for the song "NOT WITH MY LIFE YOU DON'T". The score is written on three staves in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The melody is simple, using mostly quarter and eighth notes. Chords are indicated by letters above the notes: C, G, G⁷, C, F. The lyrics are written in a cursive, handwritten style below the notes.

Line 1: You want me to stay here in my place. You

Line 2: want me to stay here in my place. You want me to

Line 3: stay here in my pla-a-ace. Not with my life you don't!

1. You want me to stay here in my place...
2. You want me to shut up and go along...
3. You want me to let you think for me...
4. You want me not to question why...
5. You want me to fear to take a stand...
6. You want me to always play it safe...
7. You want me to cool my passions out...
8. You want me to scorn those I come from...
9. You want me to claim that I am free...
10. You want me to hate all I don't know...
11. You want me to chase money like it's God...
12. You want me to get cynical and give up...

. . . ETC . . .



SONG OF THE OPPRESSED

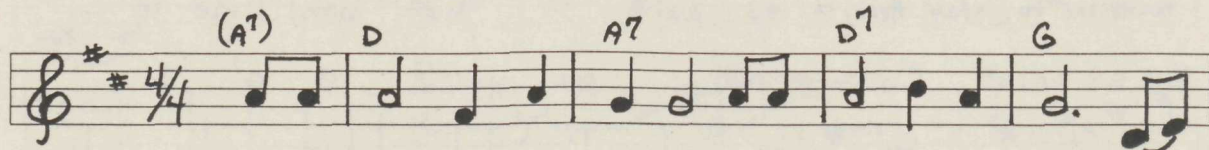
The dedication in the Redstockings book, *FEMINIST REVOLUTION*, inspired this one:

...

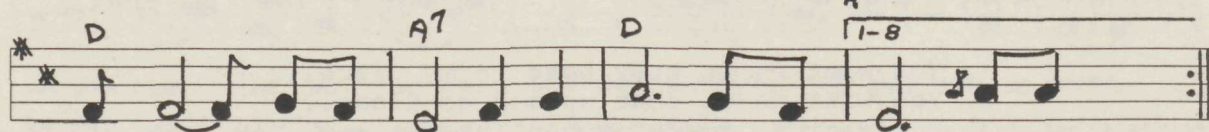
- to all the oppressed of this earth
whose dynamism and strength is stolen
for exploitation by others
and who fly when they break their chains.

August 26, 1970

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From our hands comes the labor that brings fruit from the earth. And



when we break our chains how we fly, how we fly! And from our



fly! And when we break our chains how we fly!

From our hands comes the labor
 that brings fruit from the earth
 and when we break our chains
 how we fly
 how we fly

And from our minds come creations
 that make life better for us all
 and when we break our chains
 how we fly
 how we fly

We know the strife
 and the dark of the night
 and when we break our chains
 how we fly
 how we fly

From our lives comes the knowledge
 to know where we must go
 and when we break our chains
 how we fly
 how we fly

From our necessity comes the courage
 to fan the winds of change
 and when we break our chains
 how we fly
 how we fly

From our anger comes the power
 to push our way on through
 and when we break our chains
 how we fly
 how we fly

They cannot keep us
 forever locked up and on our knees
 and when we break our chains
 how we fly
 how we fly

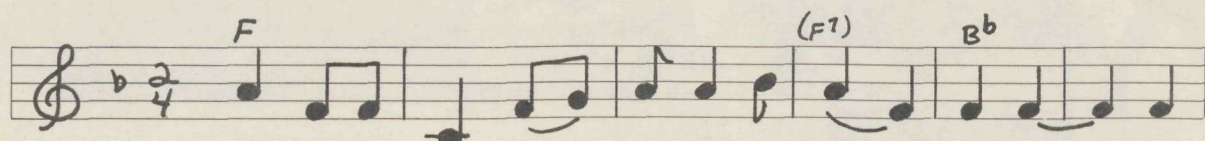
In our history is the promise
 that we will get free
 and when we break our chains
 how we fly
 how we fly

As we grasp the future
 with our hands and with our minds
 and as we break our chains
 how we fly
 how we fly

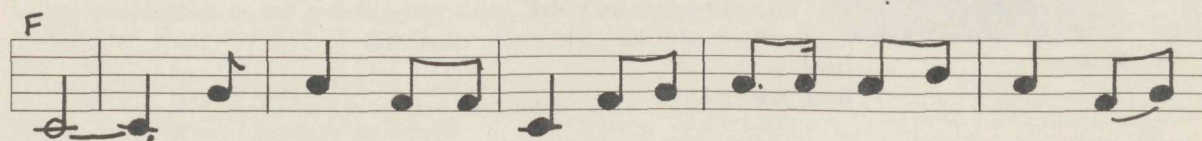
WE'LL FIND THE WAY

This tune has long been a favorite of mine but the words were "pie in the sky" religious, so I wrote some new ones when I found myself singing it while driving along in the car alone one night. The old version starts out, "One fine morning, when this life is over, I'll fly away." (The old version is quite a comment on the state of things: people having to look to death as better than life in this world.)

Words: by Carol Hanisch
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Tune: Based on "I'll Fly Away"



We are the people this land is ours we'll find the

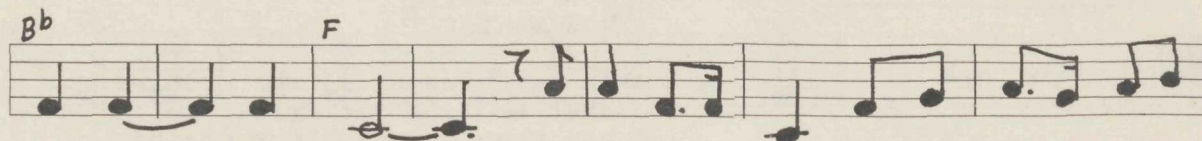


way. To take it a-way from those who would destroy it,

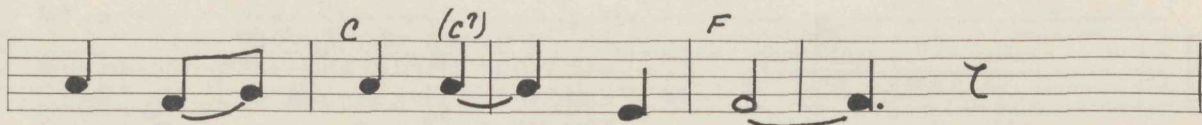


We'll find the way.

We'll find the way.



We'll find the way. To Take it a way from those who would des-



tray it. We'll find the way.

VERSE

We are the people
 This land is ours
 We'll find the way
 To take it away from
 Those who would destroy it
 We'll find the way.

We are the people
 We are the builders
 We'll find the way
 When we wake up
 And know that we must build it
 We'll find the way.

We are the people
 We are the thinkers
 We'll find the way
 When we wake up
 And know we must create it
 We'll find the way.

We are the people
 We are the soldiers
 We'll find the way
 When we wake up
 And know we must do battle
 We'll find the way.

We are the common
 Yet we are uncommon
 And we'll find the way
 When we know
 And build upon our greatness
 We'll find the way.

We are the people
 This land is ours
 We'll find the way
 When we know
 Our power as the people
 We'll find the way.

CHORUS

We'll find the way
 We'll find the way
 To take it away from
 Those who would destroy it
 We'll find the way.

We'll find the way
 We'll find the way
 When we wake up
 And know that we must build it
 We'll find the way.

We'll find the way
 We'll find the way
 When we wake up
 And know we must create it
 We'll find the way.

We'll find the way
 We'll find the way
 When we wake up
 And know we must do battle
 We'll find the way.

We'll find the way
 We'll find the way
 When we know
 And build upon our greatness
 We'll find the way.

We'll find the way
 We'll find the way
 When we know
 Our power as the people
 We'll find the way.

You made me want
 You made me reach
 You took the pain
 That made me weak
 You cleared my eyes
 You made me able
 You reached me
 Somehow you reached me
 Through the haze.

The haze is lies
 The haze is greed
 It hides our feelings
 Hides our needs
 Until a touch
 Felt in the haze
 Is a treasure
 A gift for life
 A truth ablaze.

To make us want
 To make us reach
 To stop the fear (pain)
 That makes us weak
 To clear our eyes
 To make us able
 To reach out
 Somehow to reach out
 Through the haze

(Instrumental verse)

So make me want
 And make me reach
 Take the pain
 That makes me weak
 Clear my eyes
 And make me able
 To reach out
 Somehow to reach out
 Through the haze.

The haze of lies
 The haze of greed
 That hides my feelings
 Hides my needs
 Until a touch
 Felt in the haze
 Is a treasure
 A gift for life
 A truth ablaze.

I'll make you want
 I'll make you reach
 I'll stop the fear (pain)
 That makes you weak
 I'll clear your eyes
 I'll make you able
 To reach out
 Somehow to reach out
 Through the haze.

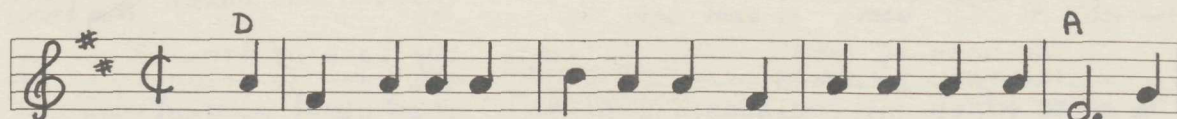
(Instrumental verse)

And when we want
 And when we reach
 We'll stop the fear
 That makes us weak
 We'll see so clear
 We will be able
 To reach out
 And to walk out
 Of the haze.

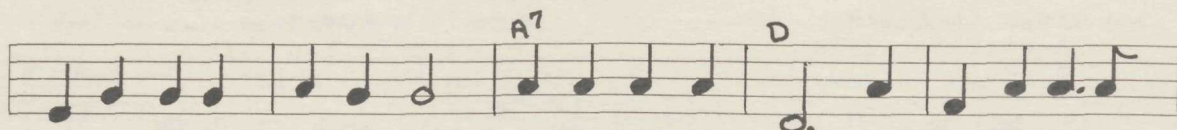
WHAT WE OWE THE WORLD

The beginnings of this song came to me while sitting at a Joan Baez concert in 1977 with my ears plugged against the blathering rock music she's into these days. Somehow the contrast between what I was hearing from her and what she was singing a decade ago was provoking. But the song is really about all of us as we learn from the fight of people to change their lives and use that knowledge to change our own, and in the process move the human race forward.

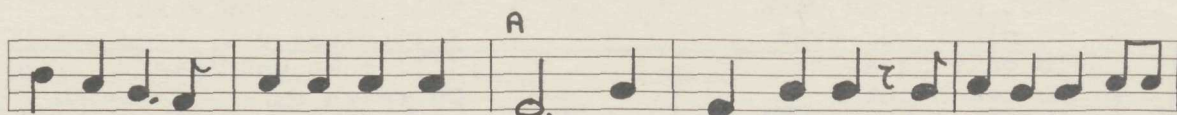
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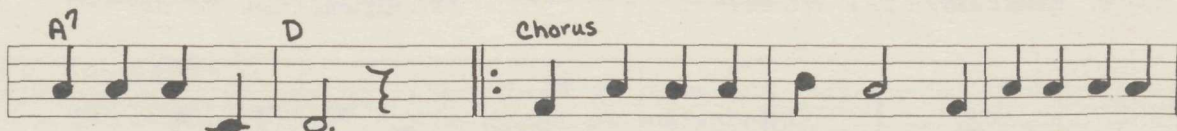
I read some books the other day 'bout what's gone on before, of



people fighting to be free and a whole lot more. The books said why-the

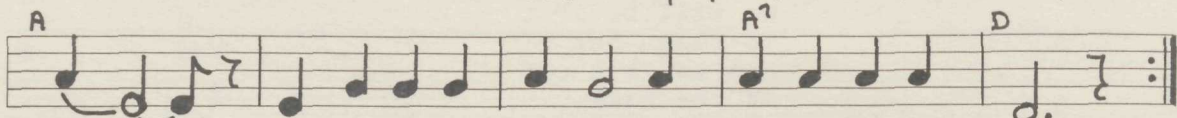


books said how-in oh so many lands, the people lost, the people won and the



light came crashing in

Use it brother, use it, it's what you owe the
Use it people, use it, it's what you owe the



world.
world.

Use it sister, use it, it's what we owe our - selves.
Use it people, use it, it's what we owe our - selves.

I read some books the other day 'bout what's gone on before
 Of people fighting to be free and a whole lot more
 The books said why--the books said how--in oh so many lands
 The people lost, the people won, and the light came crashing in

CHORUS: Use it brother, use it
 It's what you owe the world
 Use it sister, use it
 It's what we owe ourselves
 Use it people, use it
 It's what you owe the world
 Use it people use it
 It's what we owe ourselves

Folks who lived here years ago had things a whole lot worse
 They had to work 14 hour days and six long days a week
 They organized against the boss who stole their lives away
 The union fights were bitter ones, we have a debt to pay.

In Mississippi and all over the land we got a good look see
 At brave black people marching and fighting to be free
 And what we heard and what we saw is with us to this day
 We who learned those lessons, we have a debt to pay.

There was a war in Vietnam not many years ago
 The rich man sought to plunder, the working folks said "no"
 The Vietnamese people held their ground 'til Uncle Sam got out
 Courage and intelligence is what it's all about.

Women now have risen up against male supremacy
 Staked their claim for freedom and for equality
 Rebuked and scorned, they firmly push ahead with all their might
 Building on the knowledge their fight has brought to light.

Now it is not an easy job to turn the world around
 But in us all there is the strength if it can but be found
 We're not alone, we're not the first to seek a better day
 The lessons from the past came hard, we have a debt to pay.

The struggle still goes on today in every single land
 Anyone with sense can see this world is changing hands
 The human race moves forward, learning all the while
 We gain an inch, we lose a foot, and then we take a mile.

Afterword

Except for politics, I have never encountered an area of life so rigidly male supremacist as music—radical folk music included. And when you try to put the two—music and politics—together, you really come up against it.

I used to figure that if you were superbly talented it wouldn't be so bad, but then I read that Joan Baez said that she didn't write songs for a long time because Bob Dylan told her she was no good at it. And I hear Pete Seeger on stage talking about the old days with the Almanac Singers and not once mentioning the women members, as if Sis Cunningham and Bess Hawes never existed as part of that important group.

I know from my own short few months of experience of playing in public that for common musicians, at least, the male supremacy toward women musicians is terrible.

Musicians learn, in good part, by playing with other musicians who can say, "Why don't you try it this way." Men, despite the heavy competition among them, share their musical knowledge with each other all the time. When a woman comes on the scene, if she's even allowed near it, it's like walking into the local segregated bar or the political or corporate boardroom. Icicles wouldn't melt. Learning out of a book is hard; learning by yourself through trial and error is like having to go back and reinvent the wheel. Women, particularly those just starting out, are frozen out of this means of learning, which is one way that music is kept very much a male domain.

Men often intimidate women into musical silence. I was at a livingroom "hootenanny" recently where the women, for the most part, sat clutching



Almanac Singers (from left to right) Woody Guthrie, Millard Lampell, Bess Hawes, Pete Seeger, Arthur Stern and Sis Cunningham.

their instruments instead of playing them. I didn't play much either. It's really hard to just "put yourself in there." One reason is that a lot of men play music so competitively that you don't want to play with them anyway. They're more interested in posturing than sharing good music, in being vain, loud, and/or supercool. (And I'm talking about "folk" musicians, not just rock musicians.)

Another crucial means of learning is public performance. As far as I can see, that's where you learn to control your music and communicate it to people. It's one thing to make music in your own living room and quite another to play in public, even for small groups. At a few open mike events I've participated in, I was made to feel I didn't belong on stage, *before* I even opened my mouth or plucked a string. Of course, there are some men who know, because of the consciousness brought about by the Women's Liberation Movement, that they shouldn't do this, so they patronize you instead. Sometimes this takes the form of getting you on and off the stage fast so they can get on with the *real* music with a clear conscience.

Neither criticism or applause is any good if it isn't honest. Because of this it's often difficult to know how to evaluate your own work. For women this is doubly bad because it's often hard to tell what is honest and what is because you are a woman.

Some women have sought to resolve these problems of male supremacy by playing with and for women only. Some of us, however, see this as a retreat from the problem of male supremacy and very limiting in both the audience we reach and our need to improve our work.

Criticism from other women is not always reliable either. On the one hand are the women who believe everything a woman does should be "supported" and are therefore afraid to offer constructive criticism. On the other hand are women who resent you for doing something they themselves can't or won't do or who are embarrassed to see a woman in the process of learning rather than appearing all polished and perfect. Of course this latter is a general problem in this society where appearance and professionalism are so much more important than content and communication of feeling.

I have written this because I hope there will be women who will be inspired by this songbook to write and sing songs about us, about our daily lives and about our struggles to break our chains. I have been appalled at the resistance my music has met, the male supremacy that I have found even among radical musicians. I'm telling you what's happened to me so you'll know what to expect if you decide to take instrument in hand and go to it. I've had many moments of doubt. It isn't easy. I say all this not to discourage but to strengthen.

As Woody Guthrie used to say, "Take it easy, but take it." We must!

Fight on sisters!

Carol Hanisch



Carol Hanisch was a founding member of New York Radical Women and had the original idea for the Miss America Protest in 1968 where she was one of four women who hung the women's liberation banner inside Convention Hall. Her articles have appeared in *NOTES FROM THE FIRST YEAR*, *NOTES FROM THE SECOND YEAR*, *VOICES FROM WOMEN'S LIBERATION*, *WOMAN'S WORLD* and various other women's liberation books and publications. She was an editor of the Redstockings book *FEMINIST REVOLUTION* (1975) and currently is founding editor of *MEETING GROUND*. Originally from rural Iowa, she worked in the Mississippi civil rights movement and was a women's liberation activist and organizer in New York City and Gainesville, Florida. She now lives in New Paltz, New York.



Comments, criticisms and suggestions regarding the contents of this book are welcome and can be sent to the address below.

ADDITIONAL COPIES of this book are available from: FIGHT ON SISTERS

P.O. BOX 7

Make checks payable to "Fight On Sisters Songbook."

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
(Proceeds from FIGHT ON SISTERS will go to support MEETING GROUND, a publication dedicated to the liberation of women and working people. Sample issue available from the above address.)


 I know there are lots of songs that women aren't sharing 'cause we've been told by no-good people that our songs are no good. — JUDY BUSCH


 Our best words--sincere, love, hope, happy--have been so misused, that they are only good enough for a joke. Or an emetic. They are used to sell hair spray, real estate, political platforms, wars; they are worn out, and can't be used to talk with anymore. ... I have worked and lived with language all my life. I try to make singing poetry that means. I try to rescue talk from hairspray.
— MALVINA REYNOLDS


 This song came out of my head, not from the point of a pen. — AUNT MOLLY JACKSON


 Songs can be memorized when printing is difficult. Songs can go places and do things and cross borders which people cannot.
...
We don't need any more wistful songs--we need songs that teach us how to fight.
— PETE SEEGER


 There's no middle ground. It's a difference between a record that tells you to fight, to move forward, to be proud, to keep on pushing and one that tells you to shake your booty. — STOKELY CARMICHAEL


 To say that songs of social discontent and social content are part of the Sixties is to say that social justice is part of the Sixties and not a part of the Seventies. — GIL SCOTT-HERRON


 Propaganda or proper goose; the truth is what matters. — AUNT MOLLY JACKSON

 Reach out and grab a song, it'll lift you up. Stop wearing your own death mask before you qualify for it. — PETER LA FARGE

 Civilization is spread more by singing than anything else because whole big bunches can sing a particular song where not every man can join in on the same conversation. A song ain't nothing but a conversation fixed up to where you can talk it over and over without getting tired of it. — WOODY GUTHRIE

 One good song with a message can bring a point more deeply to more people than a thousand rallies. ... To hear a thousand people singing "We Shall Overcome" without the benefit of Hollywood's bouncing ball is to hear a power and beauty in music that has no limits in its effect. — PHIL OCHS

 Within an imprisoned society, a free literature can only exist as denunciation and hope. ... By saying "I am like this" and offering himself, the writer can help many to become conscious of what they are. As a means of revealing collective identity, art should be considered a primary necessity and not a luxury. — EDUARDO GALEANO

 Emptiness of the stomach, though fatal if endured up to a point, is not the most acute hunger suffered by human beings. That other hunger, the one reaching out for human togetherness, is satisfied when folks meet in a common cause. And they sing. — SIS CUNNINGHAM