

# WAGES for HOUSEWORK

» international «

# conference song book



toronto '75



BEWARE OH TAKE CARE

American Folk Song

We know young men are bold and free  
Beware oh take care  
They tell you they're friends but they're fooling you  
Beware oh take care

Chorus:  
Beware young ladies they're fooling you  
Trust them not they're fooling you  
Beware young ladies they're fooling you  
Beware oh take care

They curse they chew they wear fine shoes  
Beware oh take care  
And in their pocket is a bottle of booze  
Beware oh take care

Chorus repeat

Around their necks they wear a guard  
Beware oh take care  
But in their pocket is a deck of cards  
Beware oh take care

Repeat chorus

They put their hands up to their heads  
They sigh oh they sigh  
They say they love no-one but you  
They lie oh they lie

Repeat chorus

(This song has its roots in the American fundamentalist Christian groups of the mid-1800's.)





THE HOUSEWIFE'S LAMENT

Written by Sara Price, a housewife in the mid 1800's. The song was found in her diary after her death.

One day I was walking I heard a complaining  
and saw an old woman the picture of gloom  
She gazed at the mud on her doorstep - twas raining  
and this was her song as she wielded her broom:

Chorus:

Oh life is a toil and love is a trouble  
Beauty will fade and riches will flee  
Pleasures they dwindle and prices they double  
and nothing is as I would wish it to be

There's too much of worriment goes to a bonnet  
There's too much of ironing goes to a shirt  
There's nothing that pays for the time we waste on it  
There's nothing that lasts us but trouble and dirt  
In March it is mud it is slush in December  
The mid-summer breezes are loaded with dust  
In fall the leaves litter, in muddy September  
The wallpaper rots and the candlesticks rust

Repeat chorus

There are worms on the cherries and slugs on the roses  
And ants in the sugar and mice in the pies  
The rubbish of spiders no mortal supposes  
And ravaging roaches and damaging flies  
Dust sweeping at six and it's dusting at seven  
The victuals at eight and dishes at nine  
The potting and panning from ten to eleven  
The scarce break our fast till we plan how to dine

Repeat chorus

With grease and with grime from corner to centre  
Forever at war forever alert  
No rest for a day lest the enemy enter  
I spend my whole life in struggle with dirt  
Last night in my dreams I was stationed forever  
On a far little rock in the midst of the sea  
My one chance of life was a ceaseless endeavor  
To sweep off the waves as they swept over me  
As there was no dream- ahead I beheld  
I see I am helpless my fate to avert  
She lay down her broom- her apron she folded  
She lay down and died and was buried in dirt

Repeat chorus twice





STRONG

Words and music by Holly Near  
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Mama taught me to be gentle, love the man the way I should  
Pa taught me to be simple, love the world, live where I could  
Sister taught me to be pretty and brother taught me to smile  
But who's gonna teach me to be strong - when the tears come  
Who's gonna teach me to be strong?

Gentle taught me to be a mother, love the kids that I did born  
Simple taught me patience with the man who sang my song  
Pretty was my daughter and smiling was my son  
But who's gonna teach them to be strong - when the tears come  
Who's gobna teach them to be strong?

I think that I am dying my time is at its end  
I want to leave some learnin' to those who aren't yet dead  
I could leave a bit of laughter but with that you are born  
I wish I could leave you something strong - for when the tears come  
And they will come  
I wish I could teach you to be strong

WHO'S GONNA SHOE?

Old ballad

Who's gonna shoe your pretty little foot  
Who's gonna glove your hand?  
Who's gonna kiss your red ruby lips  
Who's gonna be your man?

Papa's gonna shoe my pretty little foot  
Mama's gonna glove my hand  
Sister will kiss my red ruby lips  
I don't need a man

I don't need a man  
I don't need a man  
Sister will kiss my red ruby lips  
I don't need a man.

his song has its origins in the traditional British folksong " The Lass of Loch Royal")



WHAT THEY TOLD ME

Words and music by  
Boo Watson

D A7  
You've got to give in some time  
Bm7 A7  
You've got to learn to say:  
D A7  
"That's OK even though we're enemies  
Bm7 A7  
We'll be friends for today,"

G A  
That's what they told me  
G A  
That's what they said to do  
G A  
That's what they told me  
D Bm7 G A D-G-D  
But nobody's gonna tell me that we're ever going to lose.

D A7  
They said there's people who are older than you  
Bm7 A7  
They're bound to know much more  
D A7  
They said there's men who are wiser than you  
Bm7 A7  
They got the money, they must know the score

G A  
That's what they told me  
G A  
That's what they said was true  
G A  
That's what they told me  
D Bm7 G A D-G-D  
But nobody's gonna tell me that we're ever going to lose

D A7  
They said we'll help you, we'll lead the way  
Bm7 A7  
We'll raise your consciousness high  
D A7  
You've got no power to take what's your own  
Bm7 A7  
But you can help me to get mine

G A  
That's what they told me  
G A  
That's what they said to do  
G A  
That's what they told me  
D Bm7 G A D-G-D  
But nobody's gonna tell me that we're ever going to lose.







GROWING UP AND DOWN

Words and music by  
Boo Watson

**Em**  
If I had known before my birth  
**G A**  
What this here life would be  
**G B7**  
I probably would have picked another time and place and century  
**Em**  
But as it is I'm stuck here  
**A**  
A woman is my fate  
**G B7**  
And I refuse for death to make me happy  
**Em**  
I refuse to wait

Chorus:

**C G**  
Why do they treat us like they do  
**B7 Em**  
You'd think that we'd committed a crime  
**C G**  
Why do they treat us like they do  
**B7 Em**  
I swear one day this life it will be mine

**Em A**  
When I was just a baby they threw me into pink  
**G B7**  
It meant that I was fragile, it meant I couldn't think  
**Em A**  
But when I got too big for those diapers and little socks  
**G B7 Em**  
I had to play with mummy's skirt and not with dirt or trucks or blocks

Repeat chorus

**Em A**  
Growing up it was not easy I had to learn the rules  
**G B7**  
They tried to keep me quiet in their streets and churches, stores and schools  
**Em A**  
And so I waited desperately for the day I'd come of age  
**G B7 Em**  
So I could scream and jump for joy and not be punished for my rage

Repeat chorus

**Em A**  
Now that I am older I see it's not just age  
**G B7**  
I see that women are put down in every way at every stage  
**Em A7**  
We can't get up in the morning without worrying about the night  
**G B7 Em**  
The rent is up, food prices high, and everywhere we fight



GROWING UP AND DOWN cont'd

C G  
Why do they treat us like they do  
B7 Em  
You'd think that we'd committed a crime  
C G  
Why do they treat us like they do  
B7 Em  
I swear my daughter's fate will not be mine  
C G  
Why do they treat us like they do  
B7 Em  
We'll have to get together and fight  
C G  
Why do they treat us like they do  
B7  
One day we're going to win  
Em  
And that day's in sight





WAGES FOR SCHOOLWORK

Words and music by  
Boo Watson

Chorus:

D D7 C G  
Yes ma'am no ma'am, I think I know ma'am  
D D7 G  
What the square root of three  
D D7 C G  
Yes ma'am no ma'am, I didn't kick him ma'am  
D D7 G  
In his little hoo-co-ey

C D7  
Well they said that I coulin't be a doctor  
G C  
I said I never wanted to be  
D D7 C G  
Yes ma'am no ma'am, I think I know ma'am  
D D7 G  
That it's all right to be me

Repeat chorus

C D7  
Well they said that I couldn't play baseball  
G C  
So I struck him out in his head  
D D7 C G  
Yes ma'am no ma'am, I'm really sorry ma'am  
D D7 G  
If the poor boy is dead

Repeat chorus

C D7  
Well I go to school every day of my life  
G C  
And I never ever seem to get through  
C D7  
Now I think there's only one thing left  
C D7 G  
For us schoolkids to do  
C D7  
Yes we go to school all the days of our lives  
G C  
And I think that we ought to get paid  
C D7  
And now it seems there's only one thing left  
C D7 G  
For the dear government to say

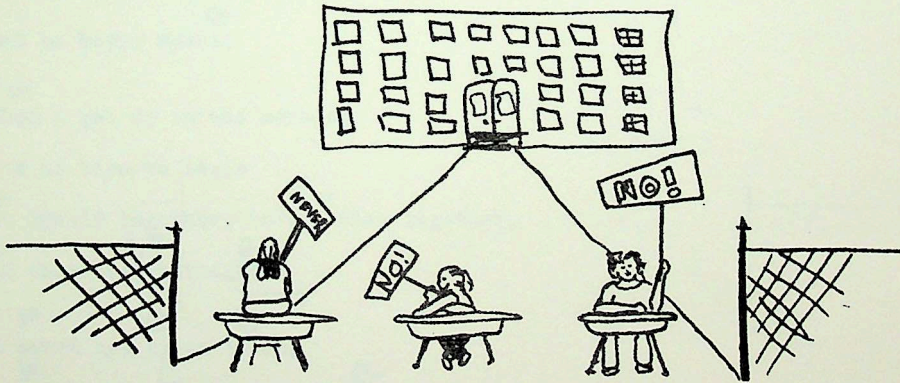
Em C  
Here's your dollar. Here's your dime  
D7 G  
But I'm gonna take it, Cause I know it's mine



WAGES FOR SCHOOLWORK cont'd

But I want a million <sup>Em</sup> And I want much more <sup>C</sup>  
<sup>D7</sup> I want a million to even up the score <sup>G-C-G</sup>

So I can say yes ma'am no ma'am I don't give a damn <sup>D D7 C G</sup>  
<sup>D</sup> Bout the square root of three <sup>D7 G</sup>  
<sup>D</sup> Yes ma'am certainly ma'am, I surely did ma'am <sup>D7 C G</sup>  
<sup>D</sup> Kick him in his hoo-oo-oo. <sup>D7 G-C-G-C-G-</sup>





TOO MANY MORE WOMEN

Words and  
Boo Watson

**G** **Am**  
Landlord is back again  
**C** **G**  
And I got no money to pay  
**G** **Am**  
Spent my last dollar on a bottle of wine  
**C** **G**  
That I needed to get through the day  
**F** **C** **G**  
And I can't get by on loving  
**F** **C** **G**  
And I can't keep doing this for free  
**Em** **A7**  
Oh there's too many more, yes there's too many more  
**C** **D7** **G**  
There's too many more women like me.  
**G** **Am**  
Tried my best, my very best  
**C** **G**  
To keep others happy and well  
**G** **Am**  
Seems like there's never any time  
**C** **G**  
To just be happy myself  
**Em**  
When I get up in the morning  
**A7**  
There's no time to begin  
**G** **Em**  
To get myself together, to get them together,  
**C** **D7** **G**  
To get them together again  
**F** **C** **G**  
And I can't get by on loving  
**F** **C** **G**  
And I can't keep doing this for free  
**Em** **A7**  
Oh there's too many more, yes there's too many more  
**C** **D7** **G**  
There's too many more women like me.  
**G** **Am**  
When the pain eases up I remember  
**C** **G**  
There's a thousand more houses like mine  
**G** **Am**  
And inside every one there's a woman like me  
**C** **G**  
Without any money or time



TOO MANY MORE WOMEN cont'd

Em

But when we get up in the morning

A7

It seems there might be time to begin

To get ourselves together, to get ourselves some money

To get ourselves together to win.

And I can't get by on loving

And I can't keep doing this for free

Oh there's too many more, yes there's too many more,

Oh there's too many more women like me.

And I won't get by on loving

And I will not keep doing this for free

Cause there's too many more, yes too many more,

Too many more women like me.

Oh too many more, yes too many more,

There's too many more, yes there's too many more,

Yes there's too many more women like me.



CHAINS

words + music by  
Bec Watson

<sup>C</sup> Monday <sup>G</sup> Tuesday they're just the same  
<sup>D</sup> Go to work and then home again  
<sup>C</sup> Supporting you, <sup>G</sup> supporting me  
<sup>D</sup> If we can't chuck this shit then we'll <sup>D7</sup> never be free

<sup>Am</sup> Of the chains      <sup>C G</sup> Of the misery  
<sup>Am</sup> Of the pain      <sup>C</sup> Sister can't you see <sup>D7</sup>

<sup>C</sup> You're trapped in your breadloom  
<sup>C</sup> I'm trapped in my slum  
<sup>C</sup> But when push comes to shove, sister <sup>D7</sup>  
We'll both be getting our guns <sup>G-C-G</sup>

<sup>C</sup> The TV movies tell me women just wanna screw  
<sup>C</sup> There's feature length commercials and three-minute news  
<sup>C</sup> Saying the workers have given up, we don't wanna be free  
<sup>Fm</sup> It's not that I'm bitter, I just don't believe <sup>C</sup>

<sup>Am</sup> In the chains      <sup>C G</sup> In the misery  
<sup>Am</sup> In the pain      <sup>C</sup> Sister can't you see <sup>D7</sup>

<sup>C</sup> The kids that I want are too expensive for me  
<sup>D</sup> And if I had them all they would see  
<sup>C</sup> Would be a harried mother with no time on her hands  
<sup>D</sup> A long-time lesbian in need of a man <sup>D7</sup>

<sup>Am</sup> But the chains      <sup>C G</sup> And the misery  
<sup>Am</sup> And the pain      <sup>C</sup> Sister can't you see <sup>D7</sup>



CHAINS cont'd

We're both trapped in their system

No matter where we live

And they're so willing to take

But I'm no longer willing to give

Am  
Into the chains

C G  
Into the misery

Am  
Into the pain

C G  
Sister can't you see

Am  
The chains

C G  
And the misery

Am

The pain

C G  
Sister can't you see

Am  
The chains

C G  
The misery

Am  
The chains...