

Northern Women's Liberation Manifesto Rock Band

WHY ARE THERE HARDLY ANY WOMEN'S ROCK BANDS?

Women are held back in the sphere of music as they are in any other sphere of life. They aren't the people who think, create and contribute to society - their place is in the home, looking after their husbands and bringing up kids. Rock music is specially male dominated and prejudiced against women. Women are mostly put down as too birdbrained to get a band together, and besides, only men can handle the complex electronic equipment - women would only electrocute themselves.

IS POP MUSIC INSULTING TO WOMEN?

Pop Lyrics present women as sex objects for men. Nowadays no-one would dare to insult blacks by singing songs about golliwogs, but men think nothing of singing about women as "baby", "doll", "my girl", in other words as their playthings, their possessions. Women are not encouraged to be strong and independent beings in their own right. Instead, commercial pop songs present for them a world in which true love is their only goal and men are the only source of sadness, joy, or meaning in their lives. These songs help to keep women in their accustomed role of wives and mothers, dependent on men, because they hide the real conflicts in women's lives and relationships with men and so prevent them understanding their oppression.

IS MUSIC IMPORTANT ?

It may seem puzzling to have such strong opinions about pop music - you may think : why get so worked up about it, after all they're only songs. But all music says something; it is an expression of feelings, a powerful means of communication, and it contains a certain view of life, supports a certain order of things. Unless we use music to express women's fight against oppression, to encourage other women to stand up with us, it will always support the established order of men as the stronger and women as the weaker, passive sex.

IS MUSIC MADE BY SUPERSTARS ?

Pop music comes from ordinary people, mainly young people. Anyone who could strum three chords on a guitar could play rock 'n roll, could be part of the skiffle craze. Groups like the Beatles created a simple, popular, unprofessional sound. But music is controlled by a gang of male, profit-hungry parasites, who take only what is marketable from the music and sell it back to the people. They take away the power of people to express themselves through music and turn music into a power over them. They create the superstar who is a sex-idol for his audience. His performance is based on ego-tripping, his music is aggressive, competitive, egotistic, his instruments are weapons of his sexual power over the audience. This music matches the social set-up where people use it, dances parties, etc. - where people go to pick up someone.

HOW CAN WE AS WOMEN CHANGE THINGS ?

Few women sing about their oppression, or if they do it is without wanting to change it. Our band comes from the women's liberation movement, and we are trying to create music that expresses the new values and relationships the movement is creating, of women standing up for themselves against male domination. Our songs are about women's hardships in the home, at work and in their social life, about women fighting back, having a good time together without men, about how we want to be. We want also to

We hope this manifesto will be a basis for what we are trying to build, and what we are trying to put into practice each time we play.

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c/o The Women's Centre, 218, Upper Brook St.
Manchester, 13. (061-273-2287.)

WOMEN'S MUSIC FOR WOMEN'S LIBERATION.

EQUAL PAY BLUES (The Band)

Patsy Brown was a factory girl.
She worked for a wage in a Lancashire mill
Turned a wheel from right to left
For half the wage of her brother Jeff.

(Chorus) Keep that wheel a turning, keep that wheel a turning, keep that wheel a turning, If you want to test your equal part.

The boss one day to Patsy came
He said, "Look here, young what's your name,
We're far from pleased with what you do
There's not a chance of equal pay for you!"

So Patsy turned, the wheel flew,
Three times round in the place of two.
She turned so hard, she was quickly made
The champion turner of her trade.

(Equal Pay Blues, - continued.)

Patsy's speed was a national tale
The news appeared in the Mirror and Mail,
British Rail ran excursions down
And all to see sweet Patsy Brown.

Patsy turned with a saintly smile
The goods she made grew such a pile
They filled the room and the room next door,
And overflowed to the basement floor.

But sad the sequel to the tale.
She turned out more than her boss could sell.
The market fell and the price came down,
Seven days more and they sacked sweet Patsy Brown.

Patsy didn't get her equal pay,
She was trying to do it in the bosses' way.
She's joined her union and a women's group too -
Now she's in the struggle, 'gainst the equal pay blues.
Keep that trouble stirring, keep that trouble stirring,
Keep that trouble stirring
If you want to get your equal pay.

(from an old folk song.).

I AIN'T GONNA MARRY. (Chicago Women's Liberation Rock Band.)

I ain't gonna marry, I ain't gonna settle down.
I'm gonna stay right here and celebrate my freedom that I found.

Ain't gonna be easy, it ain't gonna be a life of ease,
But I am a woman, and I'll be damned if I can't do as I please.

Ain't gonna marry, I ain't gonna be in chains,
Don't want no man's lying, saturating my brains.

Big strong woman, with a man hanging round,
Every evening that loving man starts looking around.

Just when you think that your loving man is true
You can bet your life somebody's been fooling you.

(from an old blues.)

INVISIBLE. (words, Ros Smythe, music, the band.)

Well, you took my mother's labour,
And you bought my father's soul.
Well, now my father's got his gold,
And my mother's getting old.

(Chorus) Announce yourself, who are you?
We want to see your face.
Announce yourself, who are you?
We want to end your race.

You'd even take our children
To feed the big machine.
You'd even take your children
And give them gold for dreams.

Well, you took our sisters' hopes
And let them run down sinks.
You took our brothers' desires -
They turned to leers and winks.
You'd even teach our daughters
Their place beneath some heel.
You'd even teach little boys
Feelings should change to steel.

Well, you've taken all you're making.
Won't let you take no more.
Well, you've taken all you're taking.
Won't let you lie no more.

MATRIARCHY. (The band.)

Maybe it took place ten thousand years ago -
Insignificant space as ages go,
But it's almost all our yesterdays -
Too many yesterdays.
Can we reach back to times long past,
Recapture the beginning at last.
An effort like that means a lot of pain,
A whole lot of tension, work and strain.
Makes your muscles ache -
But it's worth it for her sake.

(Matriarchy - continued).

Ponder the long time in between
Down underground, quite rarely seen,
Maintaining a guerrilla in the heart,
A secret angry heart.
We took care to choose our ground,
Left few records, smothered sounds.
Witches only came out at night,
Pain in every fire flame bright.
Coming out a new way,
Beginning to taste the day.

Maybe things will work out now.
Getting together, we're learning how.
Regaining our frustrated time -
There isn't very much time.
If you feel on shifting sand,
Grab a sister's helping hand.
Disorder ~~what they have arranged~~,
Imagine the world when it's changed.
You'll see sun through the trees,
If you get up off your knees.

BLUE BLOOD BLUES. (The band.)

I've got the blue blood blues, I'm from the bourgeoisie.
And if you ain't an Earl's daughter, honey, don't mess with
me.

I didn't want to marry - I'm one of the Gateways kind,
But Mummy said I ought to, just to perpetuate the family
line.

I've got a log of money, but I make do with a dozen large
rooms -
That's two for servants, seven for me, and three spare for
when Mummy comes.

I saw a demonstration when I was hiding down in Rotten Row.
Perhaps I'll get off my horse and see what's happening
down there below.

(Blue Blood Blues. Continued.)

Mummy, oh Mummy, where is your daughter going?
The servants have struck, and the squatters are moving in.
Now it's winter in a slum in Hackney, my rich friends
are over the sea.
My horse has a new rider, and my family have disinherited me.

The women's movement has got me, I've got symbols all
over my back.
Police took my fingerprints and I dance at the Crown
and Woolpack.

I've got the Blue Blood Blues - I hate the bourgeoisie.
Just hand me that machine gun, and I'll show you what
they mean to me.

PAPA (KEEP ON TRUCKING.). (Chicago Women's Liberation
Rock Band.)

Keep on trucking mama, trucking all the livelong day.
Keep on trucking mama, trucking all your cares away.
Wake up in the morning, wake up late.
Down to the corner, get yourself a date.
If you can't stop doing what you're doing to me, you're
just gonna run me wild.

Papa don't lay that shit on me, it just don't compensate,
Papa don't lay that shit on me, I can't accomodate.
You bring me down, it makes you cool-
You think I like it, you're a goddam feel.
Papa don't lay that shit on me, it just don't compensate.

Papa, don't lay those sounds on me, I ain't your groovy
chick.

Papa don't lay those sounds on me, don't you know they
make me sick.

Rolling Stones, Blood Sweat and Tears,
I've taken that shit for too many years,
Papa don't lay those sounds on me, I ain't your groovy
chick.

(Papa. Continued.)

Papa, I ain't your friend no more, ain't gonna make your bed
 Papa, I ain't your friend no more, better get a dog instead.
 Back street girl, under my thumb,
 Start looking out where you're coming from
 Papa, I ain't your friend no more, ain't gonna make your bed.

Papa, don't lay that shit on me, you just don't turn me on
Papa, don't lay that shit on me, the fun and games are gone.
 It wasn't my game, it wasn't my fun,
 All that trashing is over and done,
 Papa, don't lay that shit on me, you just don't turn me on.

THE MALE CHAUVINIST OINK (The band.)

I'm just an ordinary boy, I tell my mother what to do
 She does all of my washing and my cooking too.

When I go out into the world and leave my little mama behind
 I'll just go right on searching, another mama I must find.

I'll mosey on down to the disco and watch all the girlies
 passing by

And when I spot my little mama I'll just walk up and say Hi.

Hey, little girlie, be my mama I'll be really good to you
 You can do all of my washing and my cooking too.

I couldn't believe my ears, I thought she was some sort of
 pig

She said, "Go and get stuffed, you male chauvinistic pig."

We women want our freedom and we're taking it now.

So shift Mr. Piggy pretty fast or there's gonna be a hell of
 a row.

We've taken enough of your bullshit, we've taken it for
 too many years.

You've turned us into slaves, we've cried some bitter tears.

I ain't your old work mama, whom you ordered what to do
 The poor old woman must be shattered, her slavery she must
 rue.

(Etcetera.....)

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