***“Eve of Destruction”- Barry McGuire, 1965***  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I98KeKV_F9g>

"Eve of Destruction" is a [protest song](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protest_song) written by [P. F. Sloan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P._F._Sloan) in 1965. Several artists have recorded it, but the best-known recording was by [Barry McGuire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barry_McGuire), made in 1965. (This was during the Civil Rights Movement and right before the anti-Vietnam War Movement) The singing (vocal) sound track was rough, and was going to be changed. However, the song leaked to a radio station and was an instant hit. This was McGuire's single hit #1 on the US [Billboard Hot 100](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billboard_Hot_100) and #3 on the [UK Singles Chart](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UK_Singles_Chart) in September 1965.

The American [media](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mass_media) helped popularize the song by using it as an example of everything that was wrong with the youth of that time.[[5]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eve_of_Destruction_(song)#cite_note-sloan-5)The song also drew criticism from [conservatives](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conservatism). A group called [The Spokesmen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Spokesmen) released an [answer record](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Answer_song) entitled "The Dawn of Correction

Due to its controversial lyrics, some American radio stations, "claiming it was an aid to the enemy in Vietnam",[[6]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eve_of_Destruction_(song)#cite_note-pc33-6) and [Radio Scotland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radio_Scotland)[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eve_of_Destruction_(song)#cite_note-7)banned the song.[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eve_of_Destruction_(song)#cite_note-8) It was placed on a "restricted list" by the [BBC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BBC), and could not be played on "general entertainment programmes".[[9]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eve_of_Destruction_(song)#cite_note-9)

Barry McGuire became a [born-again Christian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Born_again_(Christianity)), and as a result renounced the song for many years, refusing to perform it.[[citation needed](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed)] Though he is now known primarily as a singer of [contemporary Christian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contemporary_Christian) songs, McGuire has resumed singing "Eve of Destruction" in recent years, often updating the lyrics to refer to such events as the [Columbine High School massacre](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Columbine_High_School_massacre). On March 12, 2008, McGuire appeared on an Australian music comedy/game show and performed an updated version of "Eve of Destruction", with new lines such as "You're old enough to kill/ you just started voting" and "...can live for ten years in space". The reference to "Red China" was also removed, and in its place were the more generic "Now think of all the hate, still living inside us/ its never too late, to let love guide us". (From Wikipedia)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The eastern world, it is exploding Violence flarin', bullets loadin' You're old enough to kill, but not for votin' You don't believe in war, but what's that gun you're totin' And even the Jordan River has bodies floatin'     **CHORUS** But you tell me Over and over and over again, my friend Ah, you don't believe We're on the eve of destruction.  Don't you understand what I'm tryin' to say Can't you feel the fears I'm feelin' today? If the button is pushed, there's no runnin' away There'll be no one to save, with the world in a grave [Take a look around ya boy, it's bound to scare ya boy]  **CHORUS** And you tell me....  Yeah, my blood's so mad feels like coagulatin' I'm sitting here just contemplatin' I can't twist the truth, it knows no regulation. Handful of senators don't pass legislation And marches alone can't bring integration When human respect is disintegratin' This whole crazy world is just too frustratin'  **CHORUS** And you tell me.....  Think of all the hate there is in Red China Then take a look around to Selma, Alabama You may leave here for 4 days in space But when you return, it's the same old place The poundin' of the drums, the pride and disgrace You can bury your dead, but don't leave a trace Hate your next-door neighbor, but don't forget to say grace  **CHORUS** And, tell me over and over and over and over again, my friend / You don't believe / We're on the eve Of destruction, Mm, no no, you don't believe / We're on the eve of destruction. | eastern world = Asia flarin’ = going up in fire and flame (bombs) In the USA, the drinking and voting age was 21, but   the age young men became soldiers was usually 18 loadin’ = putting bullets into guns – missing ‘g’ totin’ = carrying Jordan River = Biblical reference     eve of destruction = the night before the end of the   world (eve=evening)  the button = reference to the Russian and American  leaders having ‘a button’ to launch nuclear bombs  ya = easy way of saying ‘you’   coagulatin = process when blood stops bleeding and   forms a protective layer on the skin – coagulating.  This does not always happen for deep wounds so  people often bleed to death, especially in wars. contemplatin’ = contemplating, to seriously think   long and deeply about s.t.  disintegratin’ = disintegrating, to fall apart so s.t. no   longer exists  Red China = Communist China, this song was written  during the “Cold War” between Russian and   Chinese communism vs. American, Australian,   and European democracy which led to Vietnam.  Selma, Alabama in Southern USA, where in March   1965, African-Americans and others marched for  the right to vote from Selma to the capitol of  Montgomery, led by Martin Luther King.  to say grace = a short prayer to God thanking for the  food the family is about to eat. Read more: <http://artists.letssingit.com/barry-mcguire-lyrics-eve-of-destruction-s1m88lj#ixzz3NJfLIsXp>  LetsSingIt - Your favorite Music Community |

***“Eve of Destruction” might be too pessimistic to spend much time in class, but I would like students to hear and read along. Students may vote on singing or not singing it, or choose to listen and only sing the chorus. The next two songs are easy to sing.***

***“We Shall Overcome”- Pete Seeger, 1955***

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QhnPVP23rzo>  
Pete Seeger, 1951, “Last Night I Had the Strangest Dream” sung by

Simon & Garfunkel, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3dn_99vvS5U>

"We Shall Overcome" became popular in the 1960s, during the [Civil Rights movement in America](http://americanhistory.about.com/od/civilrights/Civil_Rights_Movement.htm), after [Pete Seeger](http://folkmusic.about.com/od/folkmusicsocialprotes1/ig/Best-Protest-Singers/Pete-Seeger.htm) learned it, changed it, and taught it to his audiences. Many other folk singers sang it such as [Joan Baez](http://americanhistory.about.com/od/civilrights/Civil_Rights_Movement.htm).

The melody originally was written before the US Civil War (1861-1865), from a song called "No More Auction Block For Me." (Reference to how African-American men, women and children were sold, standing mostly naked, on a wooden box (‘block’), surrounded by white people who bought them.) Originally, the lyrics were "I'll overcome someday."

By the late1950s and early 1960s, the song had been discovered by the young activists of the African American civil rights movement. It quickly became the movement’s unofficial anthem. Its verses were sung on protest marches

and in sit-ins, through clouds of tear gas and under rows of police batons. During all this, the song brought courage and comfort to bruised, frightened activists as they waited in jail cells, wondering if they would survive the night. When the long years of struggle ended and President Lyndon Johnson vowed to fight for voting rights for all Americans, he included a final promise: "We shall overcome."

In the decades since, the song has circled the globe and has been sung by civil rights and pro-democracy movements in dozens of nations, from Northern Ireland to Eastern Europe, from Berlin to Beijing, and from South Africa to South America, its message of unity and hope has been sung in dozens of languages, in presidential palaces and in dark prisons, and it continues to lend its strength to all people struggling to be free. (From the website:  
 <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/lyrical/songs/overcome.html>

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| We shall overcome, 2X We shall overcome, some day.  Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe We shall overcome, some day.  We'll walk hand in hand, 2X We'll walk hand in hand, some day.  Oh, deep in my heart,  We shall live in peace, 2X We shall live in peace, some day.  Oh, deep in my heart,  We shall all be free, 2X We shall all be free, some day. | Oh, deep in my heart,  We are not afraid, 2X We are not afraid, TODAY  Oh, deep in my heart,  We shall overcome, 2X We shall overcome, some day.  Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe We shall overcome, some day.  **Songwriters** Zilphia Horton, Guy Carawan, Frank Hamilton, Pete Seeger |

***“Blowin’ in the Wind” Bob Dylan***  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RsjiSfAmEeo>

Bob Dylan began his career as a folk singer with an acoustic guitar. When he changed to an electric guitar – seeming to leave folk music behind and choose rock ‘n’ roll, many of his fans became upset. Dylan’s lyrics are often wordy, and difficult to understand, but this one is not.

"This here ain't no protest song or anything like that, 'cause I don't write no protest songs." That was how Bob Dylan introduced one of the most eloquent protest songs ever written when he first performed it publicly in 1962 in New York City. Later that year he recorded it and the song made him a star. Another folk group, Peter, Paul and Mary sang a version of the song that became a smash hit on the pop charts, but also changed what Dylan would later call "just another song" into the unofficial anthem of the [civil rights movement](http://www.history.com/topics/civil-rights-movement).

A lyric like "How many roads must a man walk down, before you call him a man?" lends itself perfectly to those seeking racial justice, just as "How many seas must a white dove sail, before she sleeps in the sand?" does to those seeking peace, doves being the symbol for peace. The moving, vaguely spiritual, clearly dissatisfied, yet ultimately ambiguous (not good, not bad) nature of "Blowin' In the Wind" made it the protest song of the 1960s.

It was also a significant breakthrough for Dylan as a songwriter. From "Blowin' In The Wind" onward, Dylan's songs would reflect a far more personal and poetic approach to self-expression—an approach that would lead him away from songs like "The Times They Are a-Changin'" and toward songs like "Like A Rolling Stone." Ultimately, Dylan's development as a songwriter would, in turn, have a similar effect on The Beatles, whose own move from "I Wanna Hold Your Hand" to "A Day In The Life" can be traced directly to their exposure to Dylan’s first album The Freewheelin' in the spring of 1964.

(<http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/bob-dylan-records-quotblowin-in-the-windquot>)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| How many roads must a man walk down Before you can call him a man? How many seas must a white dove sail Before she sleeps in the sand? Yes, how many times must the cannon balls fly Before they're forever banned? The answer my friend is blowin' in the wind The answer is blowin' in the wind.  Yes, how many years can a mountain exist Before it's washed to the sea? Yes, how many years can some people exist Before they're allowed to be free? Yes, how many times can a man turn his head Pretending he just doesn't see? The answer my friend is blowin' in the wind The answer is blowin' in the wind.  Yes, how many times must a man look up Before he can really see the sky? Yes, how many ears must one man have Before he can hear people cry? Yes, how many deaths will it take till he knows That too many people have died?  The answer my friend is blowin' in the wind The answer is blowin' in the wind.  [http://www.lyricsfreak.com/b/bob+dylan/ blowin+in+the+wind\_20021159.html](http://www.lyricsfreak.com/b/bob+dylan/blowin+in+the+wind_20021159.html) | African-Americans were often called ‘boy’ no matter what  their age, as a sign of disrespect white dove = peace rather than the violence white people  did to African-Americans  cannon balls = old form of large and powerful gun like  war machine. Below is a cannon.  banned = when a society or culture decides not to allow  a form of behavior, they ‘ban’ it (make it forbidden)  pretending he just doesn’t see = how can white people   ignore the problems and violence done to African-  Americans, who didn’t even have the right to vote until   easily until 1965. |