

Lecture 14: "That's Not the Way It's Got to Be"

Small Business Blues

Howard Bursen

I had lunch at Zip's diner the other day
I got a dollar bill in my change.
And the words written underneath old George's picture,
well they made me feel sad and strange.
They said, "Good luck, Joe" and down below
it said "we wish you all of the best."
Seems like Joe is out of luck
and his very first buck's
gone down the drain with the rest.
 First dollar on the wall
 makes you feel like standing tall
 you've got the future in your hand
 proud to be a citizen of this land
 then they put you in a mall selling all kinds of junk
 like stamped out plastic shoes
 and the hard-working folks
 watch their business go broke
 we've got the small business blues.
 Don't say America's gone lazy
 it's the economy's gone crazy
 and if we don't make a change, we're gonna lose,
 we got the small business blues.

Now I was down in the textile printing plant
making lots of money back in 68
by 75 we doubled production
but the bank said, "You're too late."
300 families thrown out of work
shut down by a plant overseas,
I don't know who owns that foreign sweatshop
but the locks have American keys.
 First dollar on the wall
 makes you feel like standing tall
 you've got the future in your hand
 proud to be a citizen of this land.
 They're squeezing the small people right out of business
 in the name of free enterprise.
 There's 10 million folks out of work today
 while the corporate skyscrapers rise.
 Don't say America's gone lazy
 it's the economy's gone crazy
 and if we don't make a change, we're gonna lose,
 we got the small business blues.

First dollar on the wall
 makes you feel like standing tall
 you've got the future in your hand
 proud to be a citizen of this land.
 We used to be farmers mechanics and builders,
 making houses out of local white pine.
 Now were all sweeping floors in the shopping malls
 standing in food stamp lines.
 Don't say America's gone lazy
 it's the economy's gone crazy
 and if we don't make a change we're gonna lose,
 we got the small business blues.

On Morecambe Bay

(words and music Kevin Littlewood)

Out beyond the street lamp's empire
 And the calliope's roar,
 Beyond the thrift, the wrack, the samphire,
 Where the sea betrays the shore,
 I have seen them in the tide's wake,
 As the rain cuts through the spray,
 Figures on the edge of daybreak
 Walking out on Morecambe Bay

Here's the very life to die for,
 Here's a life not as it seems,
 Sleeping on a foreign floor
 Five to a room no space for dreams.
 Tempted by the urge to travel,
 Strangers in a stranger land,
 Now they dig in sand and gravel,
 Plastic bags gripped in their hands.

For the tide's the very devil,
 It can run you out of breath,
 It can race you on the level,
 It can chase you to your death,
 Yes the tide's the very devil
 And the devil has his day
 On the weary cockle grounds of
 Morecambe Bay

Letters home with money orders
 See how much we earned today;
 Tales of crossing Europe's borders,
 So we came to Morecambe Bay;
 This is where the cockles sleep
 In their beds so soft and sound;
 This is where our watch we keep
 On these weary cockle grounds

I have met them in the markets,
 Brushed their arms in grocery queues,
 I should have grabbed them by the jacket,
 Should have told them what I knew;
 Told them what my mother told me
 As we paddled in the waves
 Never try and race the tide
 Across the sands of Morecambe Bay

For the devil's in the tide's flood
 He'll be weighing down your shoes
 He'll be churning up the sea's mud
 This is one race he won't lose
 Yes the tide's the very devil
 And the devil has his day
 On the weary cockle grounds of
 Morecambe Bay

Now I see them in the distance
 Laid out in the dawn's hard light,
 Helpless in the sea's persistence,
 Twenty-three drowned in one night.
 Up above in skies so clear
 Their phone calls half the world had crossed
 'Between the rivers Kent and Keer
 We have raced the tide and lost.'

In Fujian, Xelang, Baihu,
 Where they mourn their kith and kin,
 Where the men with snake tattoos,
 Rack up the debts and call them in;
 Parents stand, their arms flung wide
 As their children walk away,
 Heading out to race the tide
 Across some foreign bay.

(Oh) the tide's the very devil,
It can run you out of breath,
It can race you on the level,
It can chase you to your death,
Yes the tide's the very devil

And the devil has his day
On the weary cockle grounds of
Morecambe Bay
On the weary cockle grounds of
Morecambe Bay.

Hero of War

Rise Against

He said, "Son, have you see the world?
Well, what would you say if I said that you could?
Just carry this gun, and you'll even get paid."
I said, "That sounds pretty good."
Black leather boots, spit-shined so bright
They cut off my hair but it looked alright
We marched and we sang, we all became friends
As we learned how to fight.

A hero of war, yeah that's what I'll be
And when I come home, they'll be damn proud of me
I'll carry this flag to the grave if I must
'Cause it's the flag that I love
And a flag that I trust

I kicked in the door, I yelled my commands
The children, they cried, but I got my man.
We took him away, a bag over his face
From his family and his friends.
They took off his clothes, they pissed in his hands
I told them to stop, but then I joined in
We beat him with guns and batons not just the once
But again and again.

She walked through bullets and haze
I asked her to stop, I begged her to stay
But she pressed on, so I lifted my gun
And I fired away.
The shells jumped through the smoke
And into the sand that the blood now had soaked
She collapsed with a flag in her hand
A flag white as snow

A hero of war is that what they see
Just medals and scars so damn proud of me
And I brought home that flag, now it gathers dust
But it's a flag that I love, it's the one flag I trust

He said, "Son, have you seen the world?
Well what would you say, if I said that you could?"

Alone Without You

Tom wrote “Alone Without You” after seeing an early screening of ‘SiCKO’ before it was released. He was so inspired that he went back to his hotel and wrote the song that night. It ended up being featured in the closing credits.

Tom Morello

Sick of the waiting and praying and hoping
Sick of the cold whispered dreams and not knowing
Sick of the strength that it takes to keep going
Sick as I’m losing this fight and it’s showing

Aah aah unforgivable but true
Aah aah I’m alone without you

Sick of the fear and sick of the cold
Sick ‘cause it’s worse for the weak and the old
With two broken legs I’m climbing this hill
Sick of deciding who gets what in my will

Aah aah unforgivable but true
Aah aah I’m alone without you

Sick ‘cause I’m stuck on the wrong side of town
And sick ‘cause I’m pulling but still sinking down
And sick ‘cause I can’t turn this whole thing around
And sick ‘cause I’m too weak to hunt somebody down

Sick ‘cause this hammering litany of sins
Is banging and burning I can’t stand the din
Sick ‘cause the darkness keeps seeping on in
Sick to be leaving my family and friends

Aah aah unforgivable but true
Aah aah I’m alone without you

Which Side are You On (British)

lyrics by Billy Bragg

This government had an idea
And parliament made it law
It seems like it’s illegal
To fight for the union anymore
Which side are you on, boys?
Which side are you on?

We set out to join the picket line
For together we cannot fail
We got stopped by police at the county line
They said, “Go home boys or you’re going to
jail”

It’s hard to explain to a crying child
Why her Daddy can’t go back
So the family suffer but it hurts me more
To hear a scab say “Sod you, Jack”

I’m bound to follow my conscience
And do whatever I can
But it’ll take much more than the union law
To knock the fight out of a working man

Took the Children Away

“They take your young from you and you have so many taken, you are not whole,” says Helen Eason, an indigenous Australian woman. The Stolen Generations, only brought to a halt in the 1970s, remains a traumatic and salient black mark on Australia’s history. As part of the government’s Child Removal Policy, Helen Eason had her four children – including her 15-month-old son, taken from her for seven years by national authorities. Just as her children were effectively stolen from her, so too was their connection to their indigenous roots and their family. “Even when they come home, as much as they’re all there, all the pieces can never ever be put back together.”

<https://bpr.berkeley.edu/2019/02/10/the-stolen-people-australias-aboriginals/>

Words and Music: Archie Roach

This story’s right, this story’s true
I would not tell lies to you
Like the promises they did not keep
And how they fenced us in like sheep.
Said to us come take our hand
Sent us off to mission land.
Taught us to read, to write and pray
Then they took the children away,
 Took the children away,
 The children away.
 Snatched from their mother’s breast
 Said this is for the best
 Took them away.

The welfare and the policeman
Said you’ve got to understand
We’ll give them what you can’t give
Teach them how to really live.
Teach them how to live they said
Humiliated them instead
Taught them that and taught them this
And others taught them prejudice.
 You took the children away
 The children away
 Breaking their mothers heart
 Tearing us all apart
 Took them away

One dark day on Framingham
Come and didn’t give a damn
My mother cried go get their dad
He came running, fighting mad
Mother’s tears were falling down
Dad shaped up and stood his ground.
He said ‘You touch my kids and you fight me’
And they took us from our family.
 Took us away

They took us away
Snatched from our mother’s breast
Said this was for the best
Took us away.

Told us what to do and say
Told us all the white man’s ways
Then they split us up again
And gave us gifts to ease the pain
Sent us off to foster homes
As we grew up we felt alone
Cause we were acting white
Yet feeling black
One sweet day all the children came back
 The children come back
 The children come back
 Back where their hearts grow strong
 Back where they all belong
 The children came back

Said the children come back
The children come back
Back where they understand
Back to their mother’s land
The children come back

Back to their mother
Back to their father
Back to their sister
Back to their brother
Back to their people
Back to their land
 All the children come back
 The children come back
 The children come back
 Yes I came back.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=br83o_JpIFw (studio recording with lyrics)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TC-I0vQHIWs> (live with actors)

Do It Now

Tune: Bella Ciao, Words by Nic Balthazar and Stef Kamil Carlens, 2012

We need to wake up, we need to wise up
We need to open our eyes
And do it now, now, now
We need to build a better future
And we need to start right now

We're on a planet that has a problem
We've got to solve it, get involved
And do it now, now, now
We need to build a better future
And we need to start right now

Make it greener, make it cleaner
Make it last, make it fast
and do it now, now, now
We need to build a better future
And we need to start right now

No point in waiting or hesitating
We must get wise, take no more lies
And do it now, now, now
We need to build a better future
And we need to start right now