

Greetings!

**"If I had a Hammer"**



**This anthem** was written in 1949 to support labor rights and later the civil rights movement. As a "freedom song" it sings of equality, diversity and justice. It is a song of empowerment, a rallying call. It was released by Peter, Paul and Mary in 1962. It was featured in a [post by Michael Moore](#) after the May 24th mass shooting in Uvalde, Texas. It is a call for us to "stand up, snap out of it, start singing and acting as if our lives depended on it." I sure feel that. Maybe you too.

*Hammer!  
Bell!  
Song!*

**Listen to "The Hammer Song"**

*Danger!  
Warning!*

*Justice!  
Freedom!  
Love!*



**Stories, insights  
and action for a  
world that works  
for all of us**

~ ~ ~

*Justice is what love  
looks like in public.*

Cornel West

~ ~ ~

**Favorite  
Resources**

- [Yes! magazine](#)
- [The Optimist Daily](#)
- [350.org](#)
- [Climate Reality Project](#)
- [The Small Planet Institute](#)
- [Local Futures Network of Spiritual Progressives](#)
- [Future Crunch](#)
- [Reasons to be Cheerful](#)
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- [Desert Rose Press](#)
- [VirginiaMudd.com](#)

~ ~ ~

**When are we gonna do something?**



**"When are we gonna do something?"** demanded Steve Kerr at a press conference shortly after the mass shooting at Uvalde, Texas. Kerr is the coach of the Golden State Warriors basketball team. [Listen to his passionate plea here.](#)

"I'm not going to talk about basketball.... Any basketball questions don't matter.... Fourteen children were killed 400 miles from here, and a teacher, and in the last ten days we've had elderly Black people killed in a supermarket in Buffalo, we've had Asian churchgoers killed in Southern California, and now we have children murdered at school. WHEN ARE WE GONNA DO SOMETHING? I'm tired, I'm so tired of getting up here and offering condolences to the devastated families.... I'm tired of the moments of silence. Enough. There's 50 senators...who refuse to vote on HR 8, which is a background check rule that the House passed a couple years ago.... Ninety percent of Americans, regardless of political party, want...universal background checks.... We are being held hostage by 50 senators in Washington who refuse to even put it to a vote despite what we the American people want... because they want to hold onto their own power. It's pathetic." He then walked out the news conference.



### ***What are we doing? What are we doing?***

Senator Chris Murphy spoke to the Senate with *his* plea for lawmakers to "DO SOMETHING so that mass shootings are at least less likely to happen in the future, instead of doing nothing, which is a choice, an endorsement of how things are in this country." [Listen here.](#)



### **Why Japan Has No Mass Shootings**

In Japan they start with the premise that guns should not have a place in civilian society. Gun deaths in Japan are under ten. In the U.S. we have 33,000 deaths annually. This 2 min. film tells us a lot about what we could do in this country. [Watch it here.](#)



### **Two excellent related commentaries**

Heather Cox Richardson gives us a brief history of the NRA and the Second Amendment. She also addresses our lack of ability to pass significant gun control legislation. Worth reading ["Letters from an American, May 24.](#)

Marueen Dowd writes about ["America's Human Sacrifices."](#) She gives us evidence of the positive effects of stopping mass shootings with gun control legislation that are worldwide. Why not us? She writes, "The Republicans are doing everything they can to stop women from having control over their own bodies and doing nothing to stop the carnage against kids; they may as well change the party symbol from an elephant to an AR-15."

**Danger . . . Warning . . . Love . . . A Poem**



**Usually I reserve this section of the newsletter for good news stories.**

And while I have plenty of those (and you can always check out sites like Future Crunch, The Optimist Daily, Reasons to be Cheerful) I am more inclined this month to echo Peter, Paul and Mary to ring out danger and warning about where we're at in this country. We're in danger of losing our democracy. We're up against people who choose guns over human lives. We're faced with catastrophic consequence of climate change.

**Did you know** that a Republican Congressman from New York dared to stand up for a ban on assault weapons. The backlash from the Party compelled him to abandoned his re-election campaign. ([Read here.](#))

**It could have been worse.** Here's another heart-sickening piece: After the school shooting in Uvalde Governor Abbot reportedly commented, "It could have been worse."  
**It could have been worse?!**

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**Students Should Refuse to Go Back to School.** The author discusses how most Americans want some kind of gun control legislation and that lawmakers can't or won't respond to the will of the vast majority of citizens. He makes the case that this disconnect can give rise to effective social movements that will generate real change. This idea for a national movement to deal with gun violence and effect gun control legislation is presented in [this Atlantic Monthly article](#). "Things do get better when people act."

### **Hymn for the Hurting Amanda Gorman**

Everything hurts,  
Our hearts shadowed and strange,  
Minds made muddied and mute.  
We carry tragedy, terrifying and true.  
And yet none of it is new;  
We knew it as home,  
As horror,  
As heritage.  
Even our children  
Cannot be children,  
Cannot be.

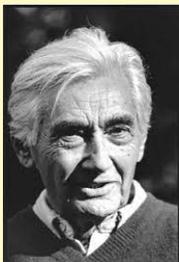
Everything hurts.  
It's a hard time to be alive,  
And even harder to stay that way.  
We're burdened to live out these days,  
While at the same time, blessed to  
outlive them.

This alarm is how we know  
We must be altered —  
That we must differ or die,  
That we must triumph or try.  
Thus while hate cannot be terminated,  
It can be transformed  
Into a love that lets us live.

May we not just grieve, but give:  
May we not just ache, but act;  
May our signed right to bear arms  
Never blind our sight from shared  
harm;  
May we choose our children over  
chaos.  
May another innocent never be lost.

Maybe everything hurts,  
Our hearts shadowed & strange.  
But only when everything hurts  
May everything change.

## **Wisdom for Our Time**



*The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live now as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvelous victory. --Howard Zinn*

This quote comes from an excellent article entitled "[Why Politics is Both the Poison and the Cure.](#)" In the article the author quotes a friend saying, "Let's not be OK. Let's find power in not being OK. Let's honor our brokenness—and the brokenness of our country—by finding the collective strength to fight for change." I highly recommend the article about broken hearts, outrage, hope and action. You can read more excerpts in my [Monthly Column](#).

*Thoughts and prayers are not enough*

**GUNS DON'T  
SOLVE PROBLEMS**   
**PEOPLE SOLVE PROBLEMS**

Let's be problem solvers. For starters let's stand up to all those who resist taking effective action on gun control. Let's elect leaders who will enact legislation to ban assault rifles, demand background checks and limit the age of those able to purchase guns.

Check out these action organizations and get involved.

[EVERYTOWN.ORG](http://EVERYTOWN.ORG)

[BRADYUNITED.ORG](http://BRADYUNITED.ORG)

[GIFFORDS.ORG](http://GIFFORDS.ORG)

*Wishing everyone a hopeful and active  
month of July  
Virginia / Gibi*



## My Column

### **Politics, Hope and Action**

Read more on understanding gun violence with good articles and excerpts.

**May peace and  
commitment to life  
prevail on Earth**

