

For everything, there is a season

Caitlin Hendel | Jan. 28, 2014 NCR Today

The first record album I ever owned was Peter, Paul and Mary's "Movin' On." I was 5 when my parents gave it to me because it had "Puff, the Magic Dragon" on it. I loved Puff -- I even carried a stuffed green dragon around with me. But as I listened to that album over and over (yes, getting up to physically flip it over), I also learned to sing along with all the songs, thus beginning a lifelong love of folk music.

But it wasn't just the music and the melodies that seeped into my soul. Through the work of musician-activists such as Pete Seeger, I heard repeatedly the lyrical messages of peace and justice: "Where have all the soldiers gone?" "This land is your land, this land is my land." "How many times must a man look up before he can see the sky?" "I'd hammer out the love between my brothers and my sisters ... "

Seeger and his guitar-wielding companions sang the message in coffee houses, on campuses, at anti-war rallies, and, later, advocacy concerts such as Farm Aid. They cried out for racial equality and against war, using their talents to draw millions to their cause.

And that music -- along with parents who could not tolerate intolerance ? inculcated in me many of the values I hold today. In early 2003, as I was leaving my office near Dupont Circle in Washington D.C., I saw a poster stuck on a light pole advertising an anti-war rally at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. Peter, Paul and Mary would be playing there. I took my son, who was 16, because I wanted him to experience passionate and yet peaceful resistance to government decisions to send young people off to war, to promote something called ?shock and awe.? It was a beautiful spring evening. We listened to the speeches, we held candles, and we sang the songs of outrage and of hope.

As a child of the 60s, I'm afraid I must ask ? who are the folkies of today? Who is writing the songs that implore society to change and citizens to care? Who are the Pete Seegers of the 21st century?

My son and the young people I know of his generation would tell me they're out there. I hope so, because this world still needs the message to be sung.

If you have any similar stories to share, please email me at chendel@ncronline.com [1]. In the meantime, I leave you with one of [my favorite](#) [2] Seeger songs.

Source URL (retrieved on 07/27/2017 - 15:39): <https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/everything-there-season>

Links:

[1] <mailto:chendel@ncronline.com>

[2] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T1tqtvxG8O4>