

Little Songs of Long Ago



A concoction of new and old verse

Written by: Melissa Kelsey

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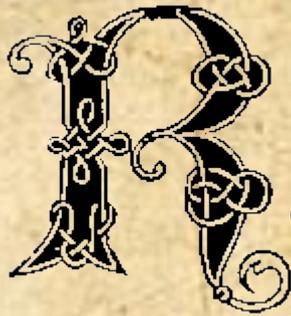
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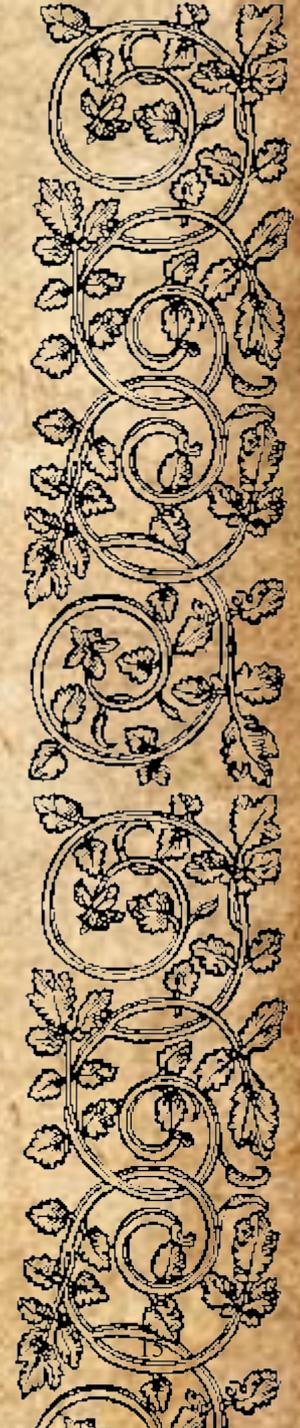
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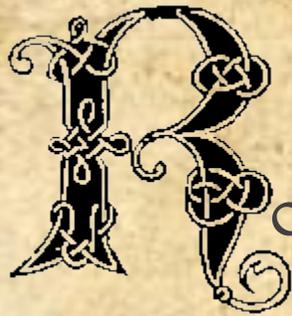
Little Bo-Peep...

Mary Had a Little Lamb...



oꝛ is dɛcomposing
rɛligious right, imposing
thɛ massɛs, thɛ massɛs
if wɛ'd all spit thɛn thɛy'd drown.



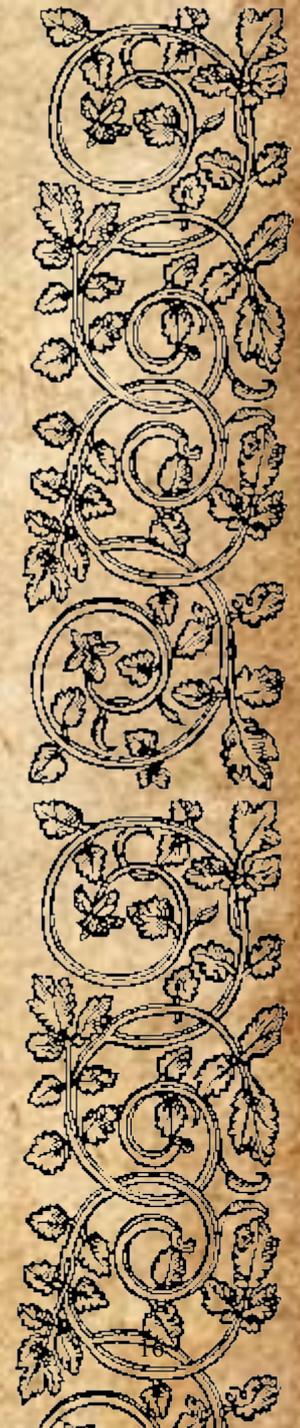


oe Roe Roe v. Wade

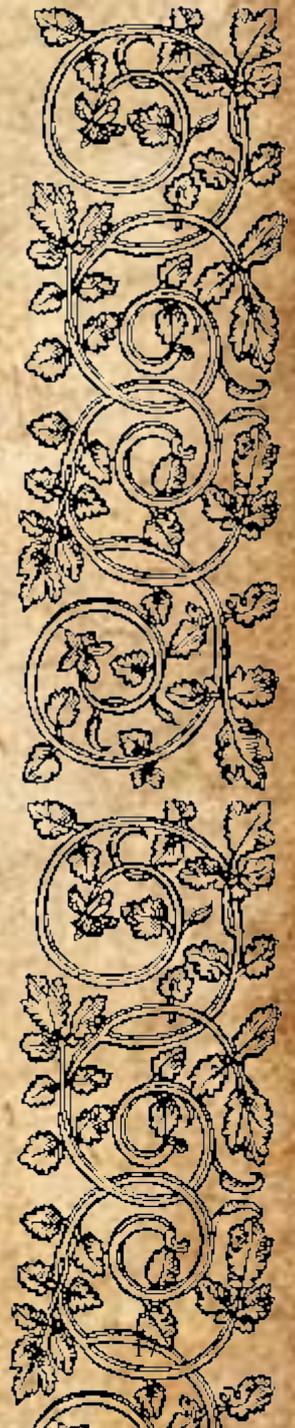
slipping through the cracks-

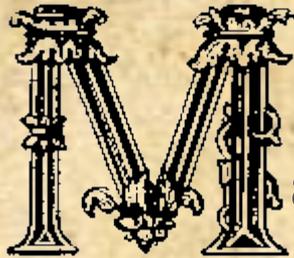
wearily wearily wearily wearily

wę're not going back!

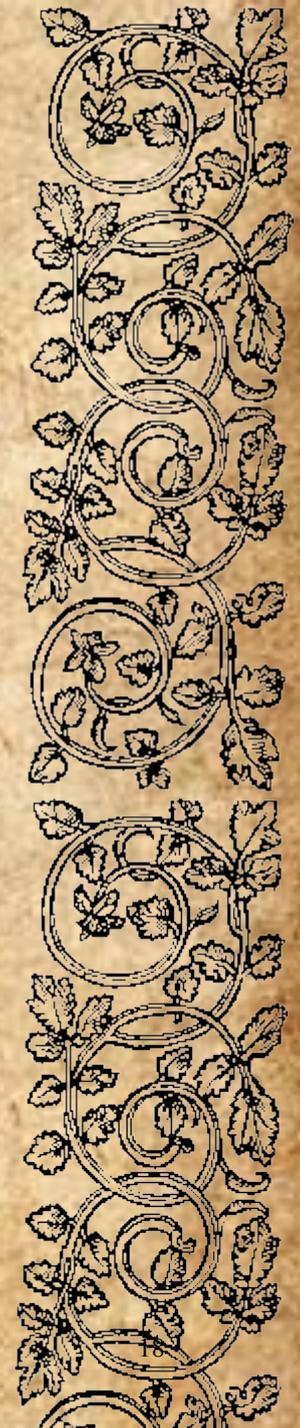


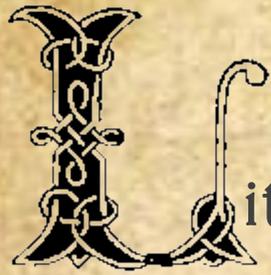
Jack and Jill both need a pill
and for what, it shouldn't matter-
but they're in Arizona, and allow me to warn ya
some pills aren't allowed for the latter.
If you are Jack, no health care you lack
but uterus owners take heed-
your body's the site, for attacks from the right
on the birth control options you need.





ary Mary popped her cherry
and then she missed her flow-
abstinence sex education
left her with nowhere to go.





Little Miss Muffet had had enough of it-
watching her rights chipped away.

Laws more imposing, so the clinics were closing-
women harassed at the gates.

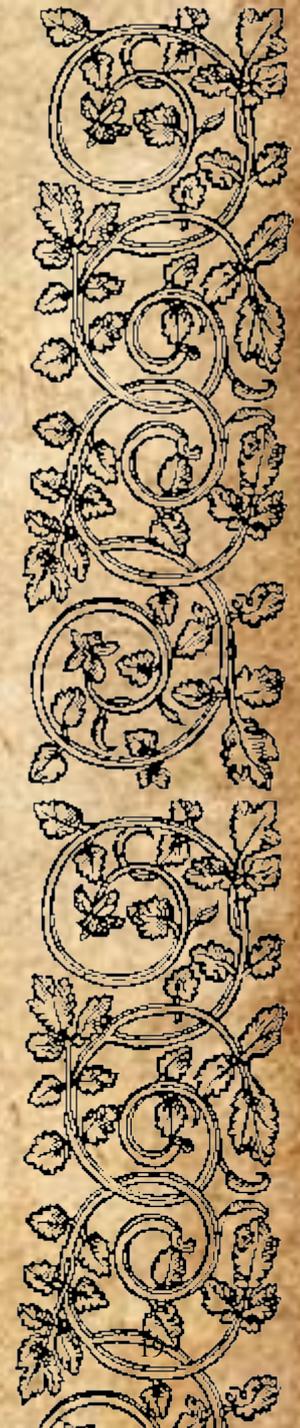
Now Miss Muffet's a fighter

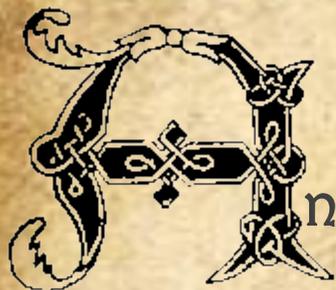
with all of her fiber

she knows there's no time to waste-

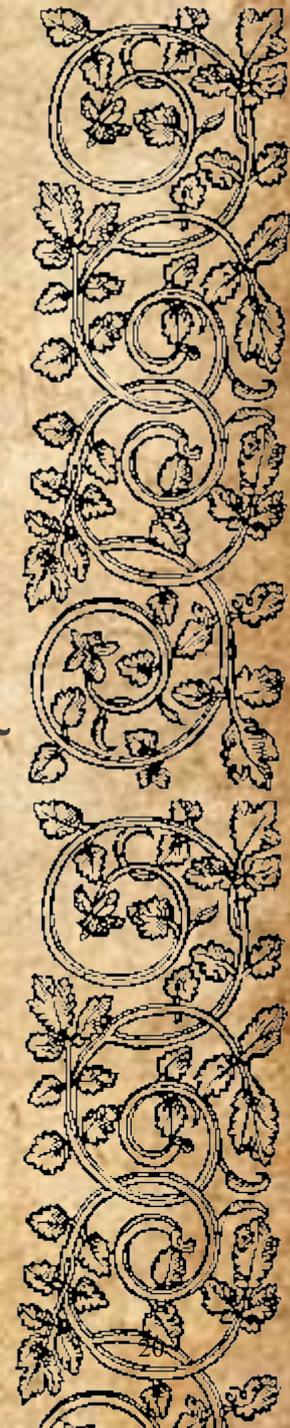
access must be equal, free to all people

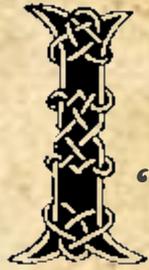
regardless of class, gender, race.



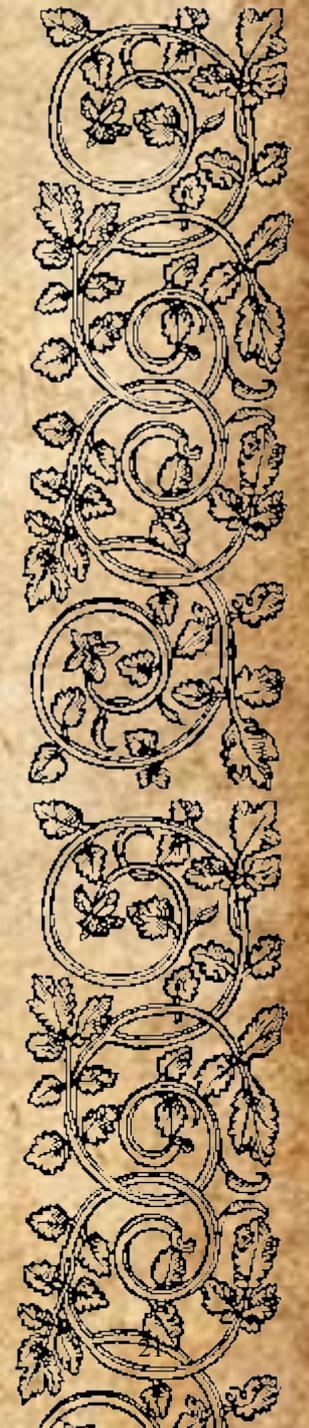


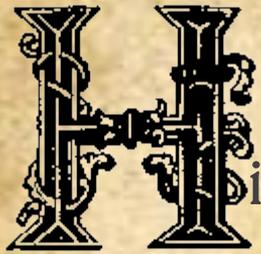
An egg attached to my uterine wall,
A political chip in a gambling hall-
The republicans shriek, the democrats bend-
Who can we count on our rights to defend?!





'm a little sɛxpɔt
there's no doubt,
too much sɛx to handle
government, help mɛ out-
no control whɛn I'm workɛd up
I'm such a slut!
that's what birth control's about.





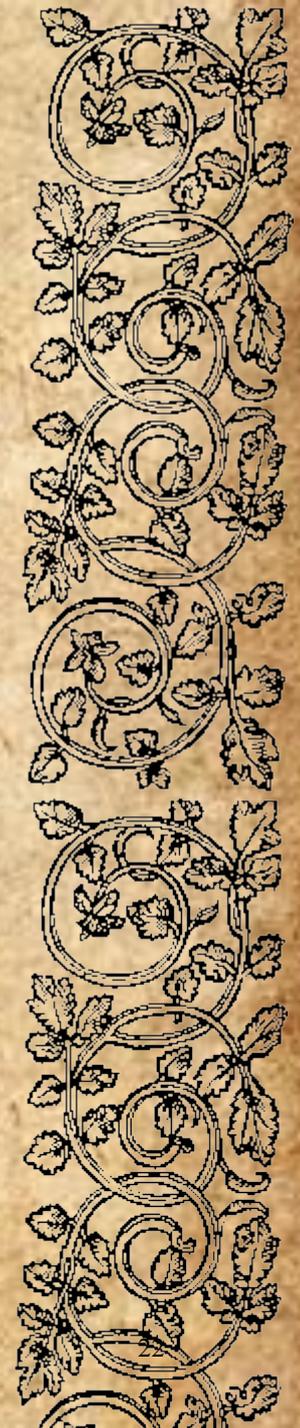
Hickory dickory dock

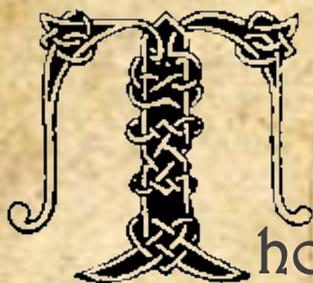
they want to turn back the clock-

to when abortions were none

so our fight is not done-

cause the doors of the clinics are blocked.





Those anti-choice creeps

have got us in deep-

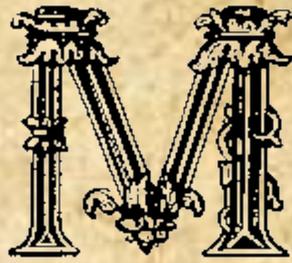
and we know where to find 'em.

We can't leave 'em alone-

we refuse to stay home

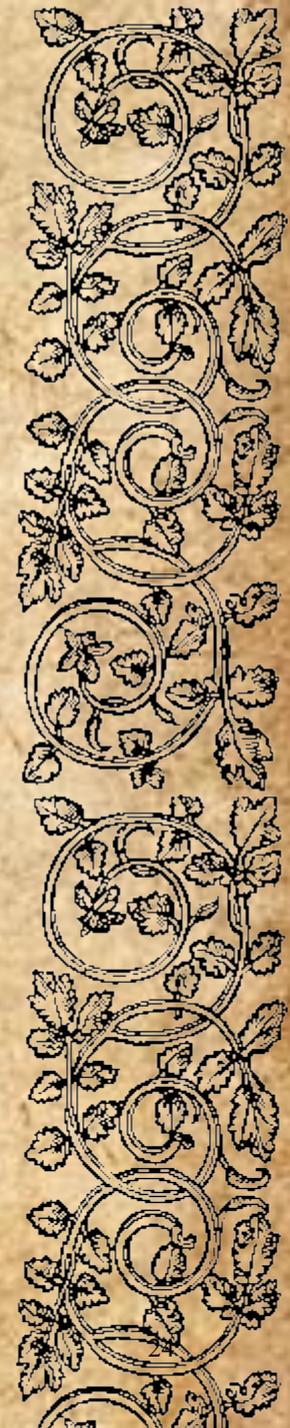
our chants will serve to remind 'em.





ary called her Uncle Sam
to shake up the status quo-
With every message Mary left
her anger seemed to grow.
Petitions signed, donations paid
what else could Mary do?
Uncle Sam had many aids
to filter complaints through.

Now Mary is a radical, effective tools we need-
The system is not capable, the people need to lead.
Uncle Sam's not one of us and never will provide-
We have to take, and fight we must!
Standing side by side.



Sources

Alchin, L.K. Rhymes.org.uk (Nursery Rhymes lyrics and Origins) Retrieved from <http://www.rhymes.org.uk>

Denslow, W. W. (1901). *Denslow's mother goose : Being the old familiar rhymes and jingles of mother goose*. (p. 14, 16, 36, 58, 66, 70-72). New York: McClure, Phillips. Retrieved from <http://lcen.loc.gov/01025765>

Sanders, G.H. (1939). The teapot song [R.Kempfer]. [sheet music]. New York : Kelman Music Corporation.

Smith, S. (2005). *Women and socialism: Essays on women's liberation*. (pp. 52-92). Chicago: Haymarket Books.

Willibrock Le Mair, H. (1912). *Little songs of long ago: More old nursery rhymes*. (cover image). New York: A&C Black. Retrieved from <http://lcen.loc.gov/88753353>

[Bunting and 16th century letters]. Retrieved April 19, 2012, from: <http://www.retrokat.com>

Abstract

“Little Songs of Long Ago: A Concoction of New and Old Verse” offers commentary on reproductive rights, most notably, on abortion. I recognize this to be a narrow focus which leaves many reproductive rights issues unexplored. I welcome anyone’s effort to expand this form. My work as an activist and as a student is informed by Marxist theory. I have included a resource page following this submission to serve those interested in Socialism and Marxist analysis. On the issue of abortion: Socialists argue that access to free abortion on demand is a prerequisite for women’s equality...

A woman’s right to choose has become front and center once again as this 2012 election cycle grinds its way through campaign rhetoric and spectacle.

President Obama’s election in 2008 was countered in 2010 when congressional elections swung in the opposite direction, ending the comfortable majority democrats had in both the house and senate. Due in part, though not entirely, to this backlash in representation, the United States has seen an upsurge in anti-choice legislation. It is no exaggeration to state that in the last two years over 1,000 bills have been introduced at the state level which would limit the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision (Feminist Majority Foundation, 2012). Hundreds of these bills have been passed, collectively called “The War on Women” by many on the left. This war on women is not limited to abortion access but also attacks birth control and access to insurance that would provide these health care needs. It is clear from the trajectory of these bills that women are not considered autonomous adults with the capacity to make reproductive choices for themselves or their families.

So if women are not adults with the ability to think and act in a way which reflects their belief system and needs, what are they? Perhaps “ward of the state” or “child” more accurately describes the position of women regarding reproduction and government intervention. An

analogy of woman as child may be developed further by analysis of the pre-pubescent bodies which trend in and out of popularity. The image is easily conjured of a hairless youth, nary a wrinkle or pucker to denote aging or experience as with childbirth or disability.

The mission of “Little Songs of Long Ago: A Concoction of New and Old Verse” is to simply begin work within this analogy by co-opting traditional children’s nursery rhymes for satirical purpose. Nursery rhymes are useful tools for developing reading skills in young children due to their sing-song nature and repetitive sounds. They may also serve to teach children about societal morals. Thus, they are at once innocent and indoctrinating. I have chosen this form in an attempt to exaggerate the juvenile status given to women and the ability to make their own reproductive choices.

References

Feminist Majority Foundation. (2012). Her votes: Top ten historic advances for women now at risk. Retrieved from <http://feminist.org/HERvotes/index.htm>

Further Reading

Thanksabortion.com

Plannedparenthoodaction.org

Marxists.org (a phenomenal archive of Marxist thinkers)

Internationalsocialist.org

Isreview.org

Wearemany.org

Socialistworker.org

Additionally I recommend:

Frederick Engels's *Origins of the Family*, 1884 (found at Marxists.org)

Alexandra Kollontai's *The Social Basis of the Women's Question*, 1909 (found at Marxists.org)

Christine Delphy's *For a Materialist Feminism*, 1975

Martha Gimenez's *The Oppression of Women: A Structuralist Marxist View*, 1978

Annette Kuhn and Ann Marie Wolpe's *Feminism and Materialism*, 1978

Rosalind Petchesky's *Morality and Personhood: A Feminist Perspective*, 1984

Katha Pollitt's *Fetal Rights: A New Assault on Feminism*, 1990

Sharon Smith's *Women and Socialism*, 2005