



We Shall Overcome: A Song That Changed the World

Stuart Stotts

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"We Shall Overcome" isn't a complicated piece of music. The first verse has only twenty-two words, most of them repeated. The melody is straightforward. The chords are basic. Yet the song has had a profound effect on people throughout the United States—and the world.

In clear, accessible language Stuart Stotts explores the roots of the tune and the lyrics in traditional African music and Christian hymns. He demonstrates the key role "We Shall Overcome" played in the civil rights, labor, and anti-war movements in America. And he traces the song's transformation into an international anthem. With its dramatic stories and memorable quotes, this saga of a famous piece of music offers a unique way of looking at social history.

Author's note, bibliography, source notes, index.



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