

Subject: TUNES WEEKLY - Part 1: "The Worst Number One Songs EVER!!!!"

From: The Tunes Company <bross@tunescompany.com>

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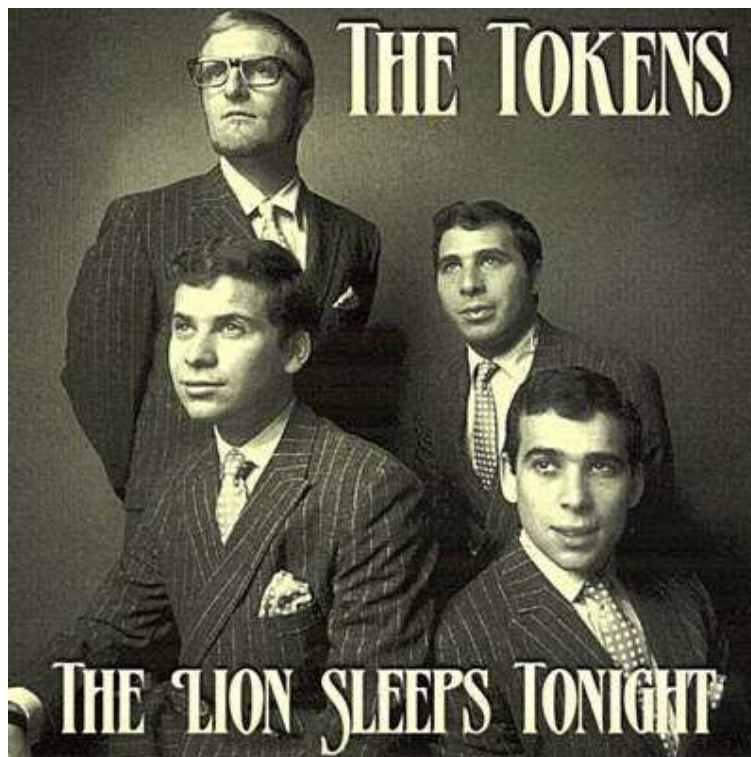
This is it. The newsletter we've always wanted to do, but haven't haven't had the guts...until now. We want to list the WORST of the BEST. We have compiled a list of the *worst number one songs ever*. These are those songs that topped the charts but were not really

worthy.

Mind you, these are songs that sold in *droves*...but they all totally sucked. How can that be?

Every one of these songs was a number one hit...and I hated them all. We mostly tried to avoid novelty songs here because, let's face it; everyone freely admits those types of songs suck. I think we buy novelty songs because we think there is a "cool factor" attached to being in on the joke. So here are the worst of the best in chronological order.

Here is Part 1 of *The Worst Number One Songs EVER*. Prepare for impact.

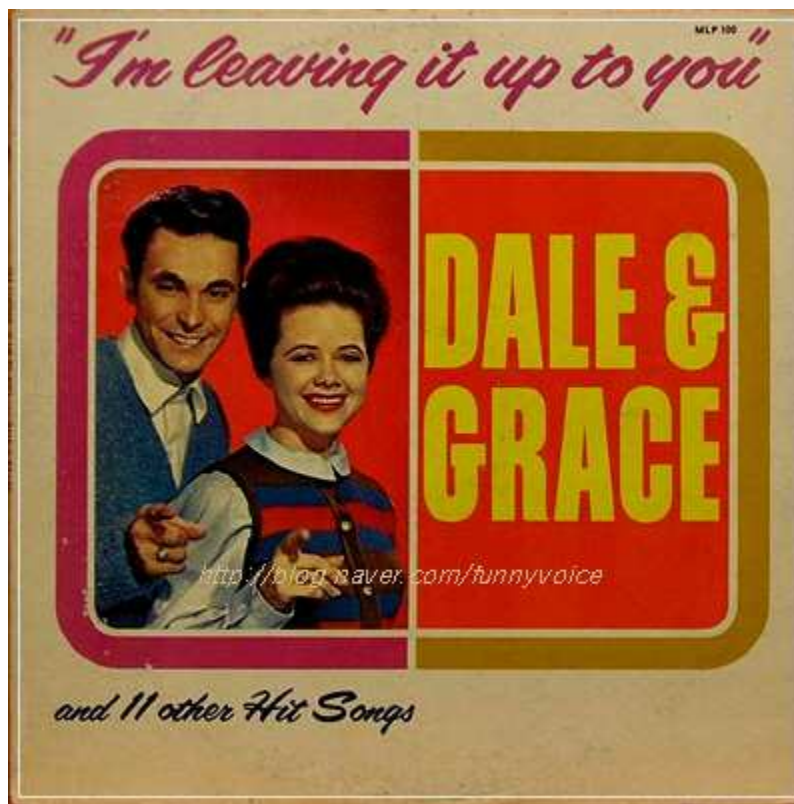


1. "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" by The Tokens (1961)

Why, why, why? This song just *fries* my central nervous system. Each "Wimoweh" is like a taser to my soul; like little beavers gnawing at my synapses. I just can't understand why people love this song. It was written in the 1920s by Solomon Linda, a singer of Zulu origin, and it was titled "Mbube" (Zulu word for "lion"). It's been covered to death, but not the way I would like to see it covered: under six feet of

dirt.

Listen- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FGI5ReYunoY>



2. "I'm Leaving It up To You" by Dale & Grace (1963)

Why, why, why? This tune was the number one song at the time of President Kennedy's assassination. I can only assume that the Russians or Fidel Castro had a hand in this song's success. As a matter of fact, Dale and Grace were in Dallas on that day and were scheduled to perform that night as part of Dick Clark's Caravan of Stars. Moments before the assassination, they waved at Kennedy's motorcade. Dale...Grace...Grassy knoll? You tell me. They look like they're capable.

Listen- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5L5i7ARdAY>



3. "I'm Telling You Now" by Freddie and the Dreamers (1965)

Why, why, why? Dance crazes were big in the '60s. The Swim, the Mashed Potato, the Pony, and of course the Twist were all huge. Then along came an Englishman named Freddie Garrity and his band the Dreamers. They decided to cash in on the whole dance craze thing and came up with "The Freddie" which consisted of Garrity swinging his arms and legs around like he was having a full body seizure. Check out the link provided. You will be spellbound. Freddie passed away on May 19, 2006 from pulmonary hypertension at the age of 69. "I'm Telling You Now" actually wasn't so bad, but "The Freddie" was horrendous.

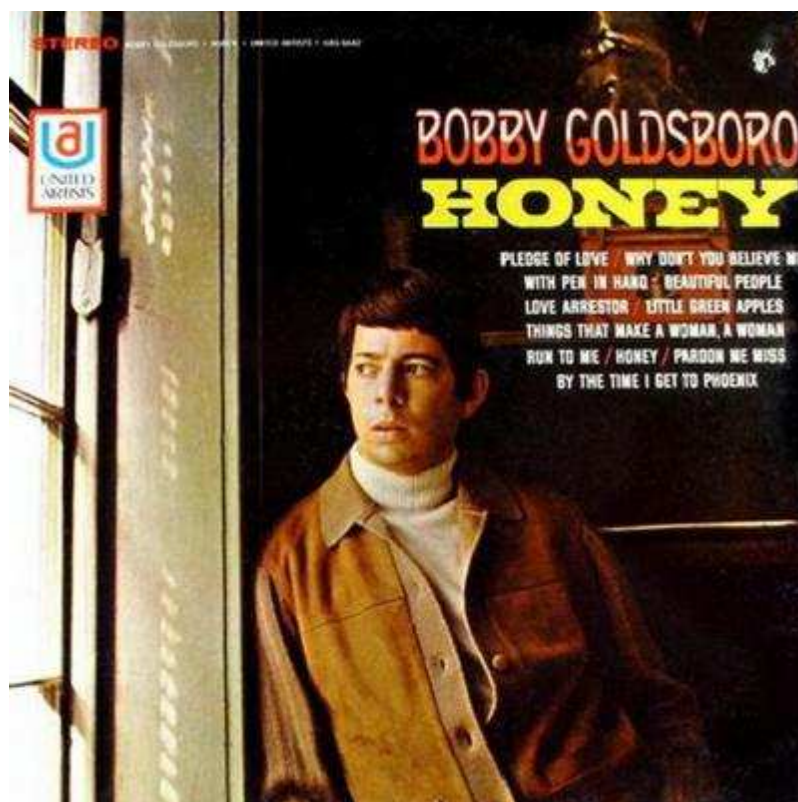
Listen- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUqjuAUus5Y>



4. "I'm Henry the VIII, I Am" by Herman's Hermits (1965)

Why, why, why? I've never been a fan of these guys. Check out the link provided and you'll hear and see why. See, it seems that the widow next door was married seven times before and every damn one of them was named Henry. And this Henry is the eighth guy! Get it?? The song and the Cockney accent are excruciating. But in 1965, with THE ACTUAL BEATLES alive, well, and making history with each new release, we went out and bought a ton of this record. It's as if Herman's Hermits were a living, breathing Krispy Kreme and the "Hot Now" sign was lit up.

Listen- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cly_2pGTNw



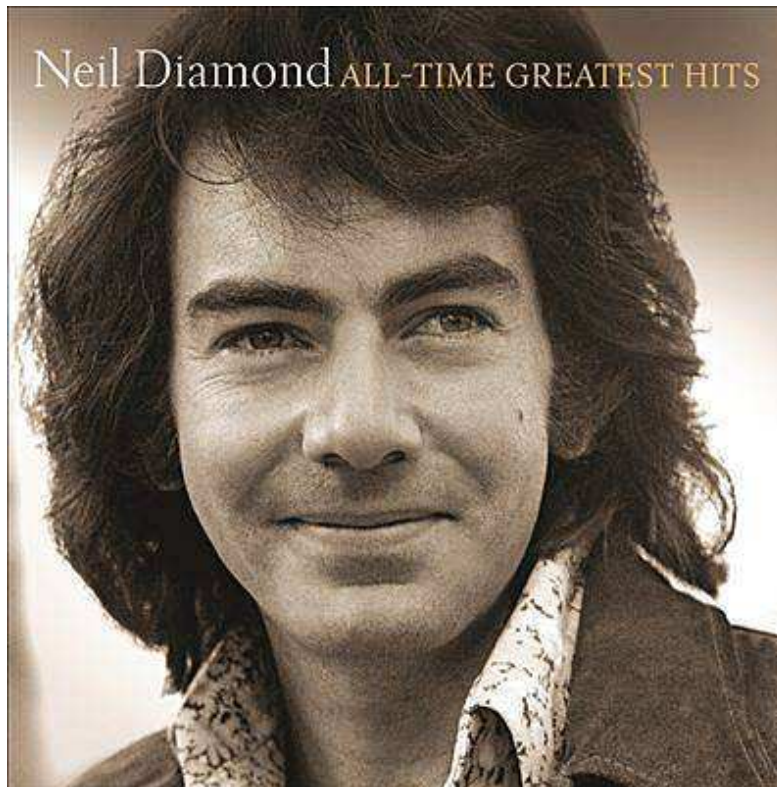
5. "Honey" by Bobby Goldsboro (1968)

Why, why, why? 1968 was such a cool year. The charts were ruled by The Beatles, Otis Redding, The Doors, Marvin Gaye, and...Bobby Goldsboro. "Honey" was the largest seller in the world in 1968. Yes, it even outsold "Hey Jude" (Suddenly, the flower children don't seem so cool anymore do they?). "Honey" is about the loss of a loved one, and it hit number one a week after the assassination of Martin Luther King. It was a very tough time and I think we were all in a weakened state. Here is a sample lyric of Goldsboro describing his deceased wife:

"She was always young at heart, kinda dumb and kinda smart and I loved her so."

Yeah, the guy was a real charmer.

Listen- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ShAkerGftoU>



6. "Song Sung Blue" by Neil Diamond (1972)

Why, why, why? Neil Diamond is a talented guy and a good songwriter, but something about him has always irked me. He seems to just squeeze the hell out of every song he sings. "Cherry, Cherry"; "Cracklin Rosie"; "Longfellow Serenade"... I did love the "Turn on your Heartlight" song though, and I may get killed for this, but his version of Leonard Cohen's "Suzanne" is my favorite. Upon hearing it for the first time, I felt like I might actually know what the hell it was about. I also have a special fondness for "Kentucky Woman" for personal reasons. Anyway, "Song Sung Blue" puts me to sleep. It might sound fine sung around a campfire, but honestly, I never did like to camp.

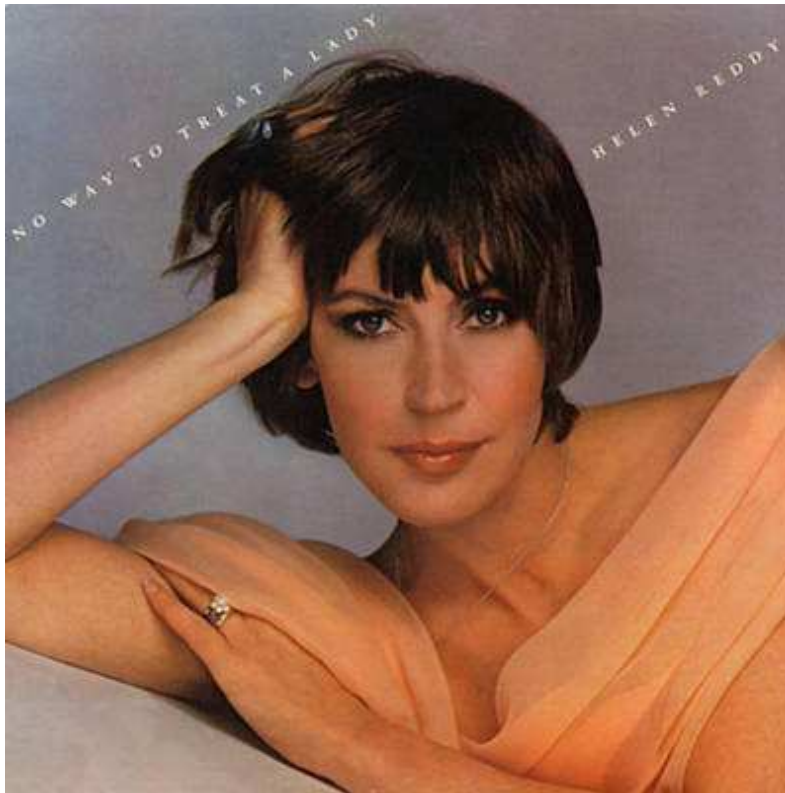
Listen- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ighSddnnaPE>



7. "Half-Breed" by Cher (1973)

Why, why, why? Do I even have to write anything? "Half-Breed" somehow sold over a million copies. Interestingly, Cher went 25 years without performing it live until her *Do You Believe? Tour* in 1999. I was especially touched by Cher's passionate support of the song's troubled protagonist and for the plight of half-breeds everywhere when I saw the video and promo shots of her wearing a skimpy, sexy, stylish Indian costume.

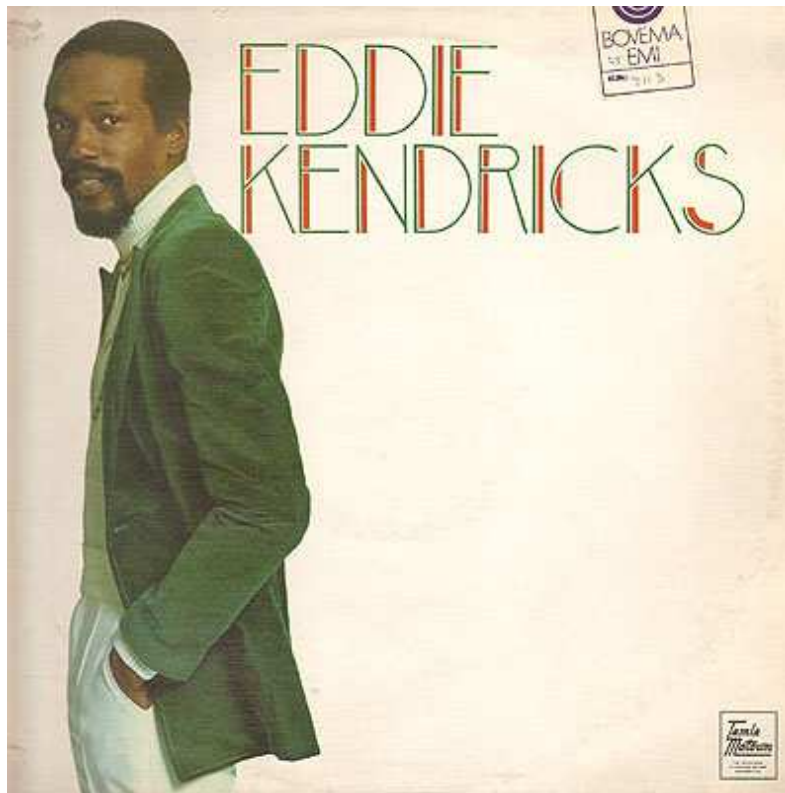
Listen- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zt9XDdzzp2k>



8. **"Delta Dawn"** by Helen Reddy (1973)

Why, why, why? "Delta Dawn" sure is a well-traveled song. It's been covered a lot, and pretty successfully too. It was Aussie Helen Reddy's turn to take a shot at this tune about a weathered, obsessive southern belle looking for a former boyfriend, and she managed to get a little more juice out of it, despite the fact that the entire song was sung through her nasal passages. Why do people love this song? Could it be a faded rose from days gone by?

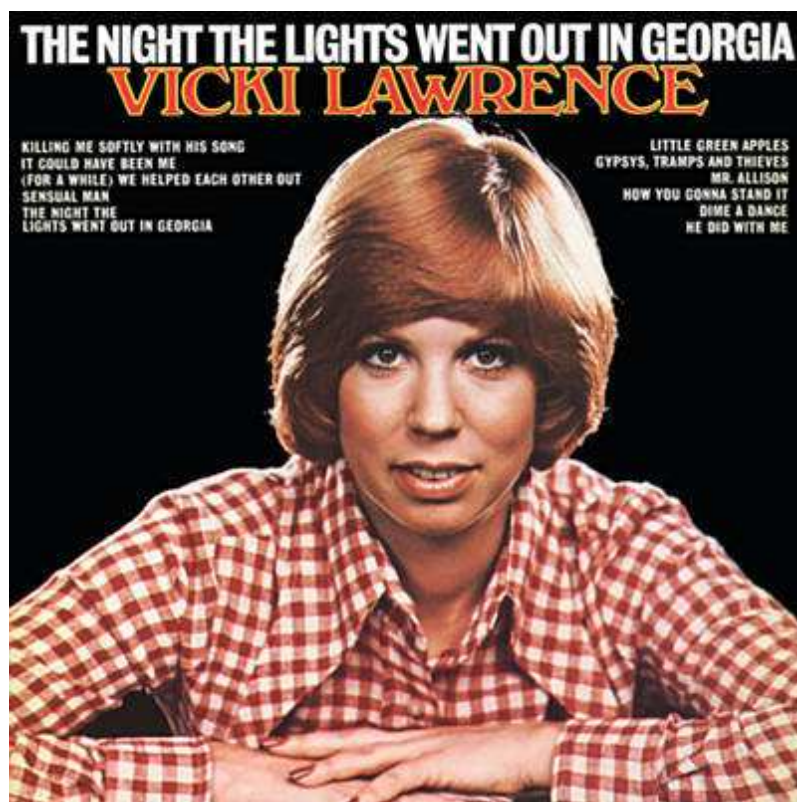
Listen- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=afsp7MU-nTI>



9. **"Keep on Truckin (Part 1)"** by Eddie Kendricks (1973)

Why, why, why? This tune felt dated about two months after it was released; songs written around catchphrases have a short half-life. Eddie Kendricks, of course, was a co-founder of The Temptations and was their falsetto voice for years, singing hits like "Just My Imagination (Running Away With Me)," "Get Ready," and "The Way You Do The Things You Do." "Keep on Truckin" just never rocked my world. Eddie passed away from lung cancer in 1992 at the age of 52.

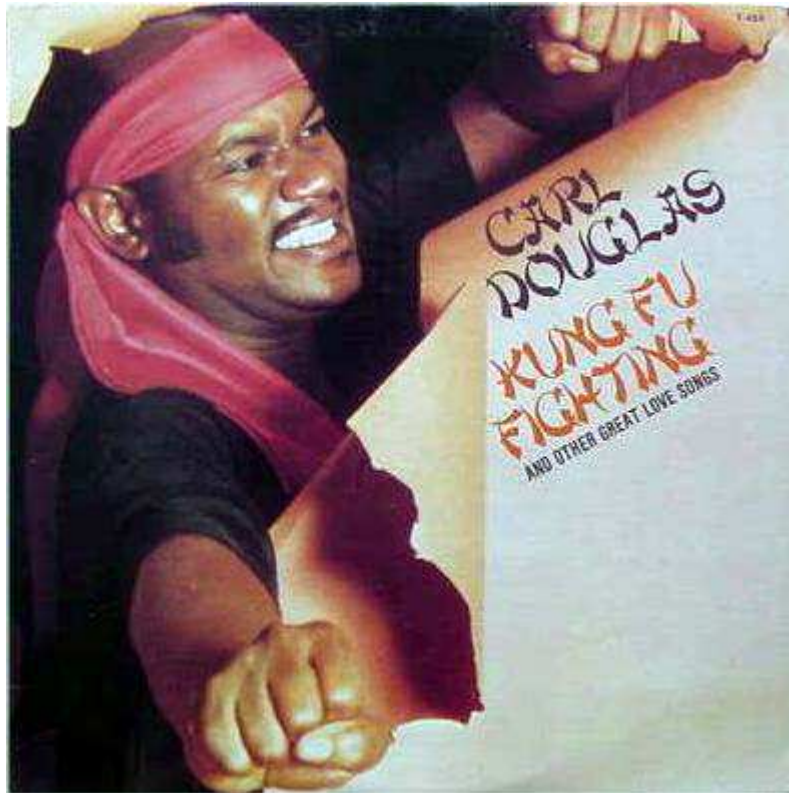
Listen- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mx43392TEbA>



10. "The Night the Lights Went Out in Georgia" by Vicki Lawrence (1973)

Why, why, why? You'll remember Vicki Lawrence as Carol Burnett's very funny sidekick on *The Carol Burnett Show*, but she also sang, and she had herself a number one hit in 1973 with "The Night the Lights Went Out in Georgia." It had sort of a Southern Gothic thing going on with it, not unlike Bobby Gentry's "Ode to Billy Joe." It was set in the south and involved a cheating wife, a murder, a "backwoods southern lawyer," an unjust verdict, and a shocking plot twist; all fine and good. The problem, for me, was that the music was pretty cheesy, and if you ask me, they could've shortened the title by about half. "Ode to Billie Joe" had the same southern drama, but also had this mysterious, swampy, musical vibe to it; along with Bobby Gentry's sultry, smoky voice (Bobby Gentry was also pretty hot). Vicki Lawrence never scaled the charts again, but did release two more albums.

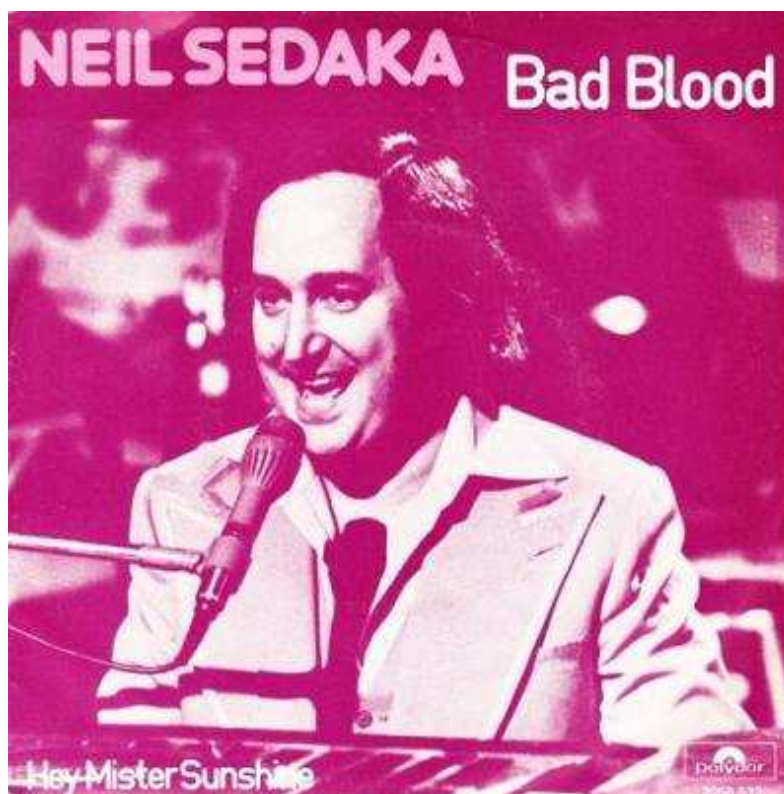
Listen- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sE-8MTP37uY>



11. "Kung Fu Fighting" by Carl Douglas (1974)

Why, why, why? There is a reason why music industry professionals never call and ask for my opinion. That reason is this: I think "Kung Fu Fighting" is one of the worst songs I've ever heard, and it sold over 11 million copies worldwide, making it one of the best-selling singles of all time; so much for my opinion. It came out around the time when all those cheesy "chopsocky" martial-arts movies were so popular. It was recorded during the last minutes of a three-hour recording session and was meant to be a B-side; sort of a throwaway track. They threw on that familiar little Oriental riff (the one that always lets you know it's an Asian thing), added some karate chop sound-effects and it was a done deal. It gained its foothold in the dance clubs and is the sole reason why Carl Douglas is hanging out by his pool right now.

Listen- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yRtrCq6LWt8>



12. "**Bad Blood**" by Neil Sedaka (1975)

Why, why, why? I think this is about as funky as Neil Sedaka ever got, which is to say not very. Hey, who is that other voice that keeps popping in? Why, it's an uncredited appearance by Elton John! Unfortunately, he sounds like he was huffing helium balloons in the studio that day. Neil Sedaka is great, of course, and this song isn't disgusting, but is it really worthy of being in the number one spot for three whole weeks? Which song replaced it as number one? Elton John's "Island Girl." 1975 was sort of a weird year anyway.

Listen- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YTTVx--i3m0>



13. "I Write the Songs" by Barry Manilow (1975)

Why, why, why? Let me first say that I am a long-time Barry Manilow fan and have taken much abuse for it over the years. Barry is responsible for some of the best records ever...but this isn't one of them. The reasons are many. First, it's not a real good idea to release a song called "I Write the Songs" if you didn't actually write it (it was written by Beach Boy Bruce Johnston). Second, it starts out with "I've been alive forever and I wrote the very first song" and goes downhill from there. Bruce Johnston said he was working from the point of view that "I" was God, and in that context, it does make more sense. Word is that Clive Davis talked him into it even though Manilow said the song sounded like a giant ego trip. Exactly.

Listen- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vHIdHIWfnl4>



14. "Torn Between Two Lovers" by Mary MacGregor (1976)

Why, why, why? This song is just so...wrong. It's about a love triangle where this chick is about to send some poor guy into therapy. She loves both guys, and she's trying to make it sound so noble...but it mostly comes off as patronizing. I give you these lyrics as exhibit A:

*"There's been another man that I've needed and I've loved
But that doesn't mean I love you less.*

*And he knows you can't possess me and he knows he never will
There's just this empty place inside of me that only he can fill."*

Seriously? That's messed up.

Listen- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TzGbvTl4mpg>



15. **"You Light up My Life"** by Debby Boone (1977)

Why, why, why? After ten weeks at number one and being assaulted with this song and its s-l-o-w tempo day after day after day, I was sure that Pat Boone had spawned a devil child that would, one day, destroy planet Earth. Instead, it destroyed The King. "You Light up My Life" was released on August 16, 1977...the same day that Elvis Presley died. During this tune's ten-week run, I often found myself sitting in my car, in the garage; windows up; motor running; with bananas stuffed into my exhaust pipe. I was being severely Debby Booned. I was always saved by a little voice in my head that pleaded: "Don't do it man; it's not worth it. It can't last forever!" Thankfully, it didn't.

Listen- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nC9sEAqEjxs>

D. Tillis writes "TUNES WEEKLY" exclusively for www.tunescompany.com

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