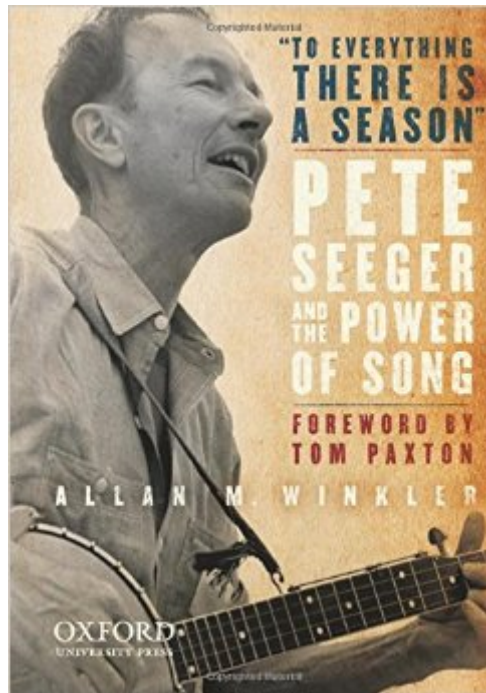


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"To Everything There Is A Season": Pete Seeger And The Power Of Song (New Narratives In American History)



Synopsis

Author or coauthor of such legendary songs as "If I Had a Hammer," "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" and "Turn, Turn, Turn," Pete Seeger is the most influential folk singer in the history of the United States. In "To Everything There Is a Season": Pete Seeger and the Power of Song, Allan Winkler describes how Seeger applied his musical talents to improve conditions for less fortunate people everywhere. This book uses Seeger's long life and wonderful songs to reflect on the important role folk music played in various protest movements of the twentieth century. A tireless supporter of union organization in the 1930s and 1940s, Seeger joined the Communist Party, performing his songs with banjo and guitar accompaniment to promote worker solidarity. In the 1950s, he found himself under attack during the Red Scare for his radical past. In the 1960s, he became the minstrel of the civil rights movement, focusing its energy with songs that inspired protestors and challenged the nation's patterns of racial discrimination. Toward the end of the decade, he turned his musical talents to resisting the war in Vietnam, and again drew fire from those who attacked his dissent as treason. Finally, in the 1970s, he lent his voice to the growing environmental movement by leading the drive to clean up the Hudson River. The book seeks to answer such fundamental questions as: What was the source of Seeger's appeal? How did he capture the attention and affection of people around the world? And why is song such a powerful medium? Richly researched and crisply written, "To Everything There Is a Season": Pete Seeger and the Power of Song is an ideal supplement for U.S. history survey courses, as well as twentieth-century U.S. history and history of American folk music courses. To purchase Pete Seeger songs discussed in the text, visit the following link for an iTunes playlist compiled by Oxford University Press: (<http://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewIMix?id=375976891>)

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Until I read this book, I did not realize the debt I owe to Pete Seeger. Some years ago, I was asked to play guitar and lead some singing for a Cub Scouts campfire. I had never lead campfire songs before and was unsure of how it was all going to work. Specifically, I needed some easy songs that everyone could sing, the type that if you didn't know it already, you could learn it quickly. The first song that I thought of was "If I Had a Hammer" (also known as "The Hammer Song"), which I now know was co-written by Pete Seeger. The song was a complete success and continues to be an integral part of my campfire repertoire. This book is sparse on the biographical details of Seeger's life, since there is an extensive biography on Seeger already, *How Can I Keep from Singing?: The Ballad of Pete Seeger*. However, it focuses on the development of Seeger's beliefs in social change and how he used his chosen medium--singing and the banjo--to promote that change. In that regard, this book does a fine job. Having thought of Seeger as a musician first and an activist second, this book tells me that it was in fact the other way around. Still, Seeger's musical influence is large. After the success of that first campfire, I felt I needed more material. I purchased a copy of *Rise Up Singing* which not only includes numerous songs by Seeger, it is published by Sing Out! magazine, which was started by--you guessed it--Seeger.

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