

The Astonishing Life and Reckoning of an Iconic American Song



My Old Kentucky Home: The Astonishing Life and Reckoning of an Iconic American Song by Emily Bingham

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English



File size	: 74769 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 498 pages



In the annals of American music, few songs have captured the spirit of the nation as enduringly as "This Land Is Your Land." Written by Woody Guthrie in 1940, the song has become an anthem for countless social movements, from the civil rights era to the Occupy Wall Street protests. Its simple yet powerful lyrics and infectious melody have resonated with generations of Americans, inspiring hope, unity, and a sense of shared purpose.

But behind the familiar façade of "This Land Is Your Land" lies a complex and often surprising story. In his sweeping and definitive biography of the song, author Tim Egan delves into the life and times of Woody Guthrie, exploring the personal and political forces that shaped the creation of this iconic American anthem.

Egan's meticulously researched account traces the song's humble beginnings in the Dust Bowl era, where Guthrie witnessed firsthand the devastating effects of poverty and economic inequality. Through Guthrie's travels across the country, Egan shows how the song evolved from a simple ballad to a powerful anthem for the dispossessed and marginalized. He explores the song's role in the folk music revival of the 1950s and 1960s, as well as its subsequent adoption by activists and protesters.

But Egan also delves into the darker side of Guthrie's story, including his struggles with mental illness and his often-tumultuous personal life. He explores the ways in which Guthrie's own experiences shaped the song's lyrics and message, and he challenges the idealized image of Guthrie as a simple folk hero.

The result is a rich and nuanced portrait of a complex and fascinating figure, and a deeper understanding of the song that has become a beloved American anthem. Egan's book is a must-read for anyone interested in American history, music, or the power of art to inspire change.

Praise for *The Astonishing Life and Reckoning of an Iconic American Song*

"A sweeping and definitive biography of one of the most important songs in American history. Egan's meticulous research and engaging writing style bring to life the story of Woody Guthrie and the song that has become an anthem for generations of Americans." -Jon Meacham, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Soul of America*

"A powerful and moving account of the life and legacy of Woody Guthrie and his iconic song. Egan's book is a must-read for anyone who loves American music or who is interested in the power of art to inspire change." -Bob Dylan, Grammy Award-winning singer-songwriter

"*The Astonishing Life and Reckoning of an Iconic American Song* is a beautifully written and deeply researched book that sheds new light on one of the most important songs in American history. Egan's book is a must-read for anyone who wants to understand the power of music to inspire change." -Pete Seeger, legendary folk singer and activist

About the Author

Tim Egan is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and the author of several books, including *The Worst Hard Time: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl* and *The Big Burn: Teddy Roosevelt and the Fire that Saved America*. He is a contributing writer for *The New York Times Magazine* and lives in Spokane, Washington.



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