



How Can I Keep from Singing: Pete Seeger

David King Dunaway

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Who is this skinny, 78-year-old man with the five-string banjo, whose performances over five decades have touched millions of people? Entertainer? Composer? Communist? Bob Dylan once called him a "saint." Joan Baez has said, "We all owe our careers to him." But Pete Seeger's considerable musical achievements have been overshadowed by political controversy. He was investigated for sedition by the House Committee on Un-American activities, harassed by the FBI and CIA, blacklisted, picketed, and even stoned by conservative groups. *How Can I Keep from Singing* is an inside history of Pete Seeger, whose life has remained a closely guarded secret until now. In this ASCAP award-winning book, David Dunaway parts the curtain through interviews with Pete, his family, friends, and fellow musicians to present a rich, compelling portrait of one of the most remarkable performers, composers, and activists of this century.

How Can I Keep from Singing: Pete Seeger Details

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kay says

Tells the Story of Pete Seeger. This man made a difference.

Laura says

Took me months to get through this one. Dense and not great story-telling. Loaded with information, but it was hard to follow the attributions (notes were in the back).

Karen says

I need to confess, I didn't finish this book. I got some interesting facts about Pete Seeger's past but found the writing to be so cumbersome as to totally preclude any further reading. I looked at all the photos and learned quite a bit about his wife who was the wind beneath his wings in so many ways. So, I just stopped and returned it to the library for some guilty pleasure in the form of the latest Michael Connelly book - The Black Box.

Linda says

Pete Seeger is an amazing guy, living his life completely according to his principles. Made more meaningful because of our encounters with him at Jazz Fest.

Jim says

The writing is pretty lousy, really, but the story of this American legend is SO powerful and compelling that the book is still a great read. Dunaway seems to have had full access to Seeger's correspondence and files, and I wonder why he makes so little use of it. Seeger is a liberal in the 1930s mold---communist really, ultra pro-union, socialized medicine, big government. I'm all for it. And the music!

Kai says

There is an updated and revised edition (2008) to this only biography of the legendary Pete Seeger whose undeniable ability to galvanise audiences everywhere to not only sing together but promote social changes will forever earn him a significant place in American history.

This is a very good read for those who are interested in American folk music scene of the 20th century. Seeger was a controversial figure in Am cultural and social/political history, yet his ultimate humanity shines through in all her dark pages, and has earned him great honour justly deserved.

It also provides ample insights into Seeger's motivation and longevity as a song singer /composer / social activist, to name just a few of his achievements.

Rick Jones says

A great overview of Seeger's life....it doesn't pull back from criticisms of him, but makes clear the steadfastness and sincerity of his belief in song as a transformative medium. If you want to see the range of triumphs and setbacks in Seeger's life, this is a good place to start. My only criticism is that many of the episodes (and there were a lot!) are covered quickly. This is a good chronology, but some depth would make for more satisfying reading.

Maryellen says

Great read. As a child of the 60's, Pete Seeger was one of my favorite folk singers. So interesting to learn about Peter, the man, not just the singer and composer of great songs.

Patrick Macke says

A fascinating, principled, disciplined, intelligent, talented American ... It is an exemplary life and an enduring musical life that continues to resonate, continues to prove, the pure power of song ... Pete is a national treasure and the author tells his story with well-researched perspective, a historian's passion and an intellectual's curiosity

Ledell Mulvaney says

As a lifelong fan of Pete, this book helped me to get inside the man and understand his passions. What a great American!

Lil Jen says

Having grown up listening to Seeger's songs from my family, this was a very interesting read.
