



Woody Guthrie, American Radical (Music in American Life)

Will Kaufman

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Woody Guthrie, American Radical reclaims the politically radical profile of America's greatest balladeer. Although he achieved a host of national honors and adorns U.S. postage stamps, and although his song "This Land Is Your Land" is often considered the nation's second national anthem, Woody Guthrie committed his life to the radical struggle. Will Kaufman traces Guthrie's political awakening and activism throughout the Great Depression, World War II, the Cold War, the Korean War, the Civil Rights struggle, and the poison of McCarthyism. He examines Guthrie's role in the development of a workers' culture in the context of radical activism spearheaded by the Communist Party of the USA, the Popular Front, and the Congress of Industrial Organizations. Kaufman also establishes Guthrie's significance in the perpetuation of cultural front objectives into the era of the "New Left" and beyond, particularly through his influence on the American and international protest song movement. Utilizing a wealth of previously unseen archival materials such as letters, song lyrics, essays, personal reflections, photos, and other manuscripts, Woody Guthrie, American Radical introduces a heretofore unknown Woody Guthrie: the canny political strategist, fitful thinker, and cultural front activist practically buried in the general public's romantic celebration of the "Dust Bowl Troubadour." A portion of the royalties from the sales of this book will be donated to the Woody Guthrie Foundation.

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