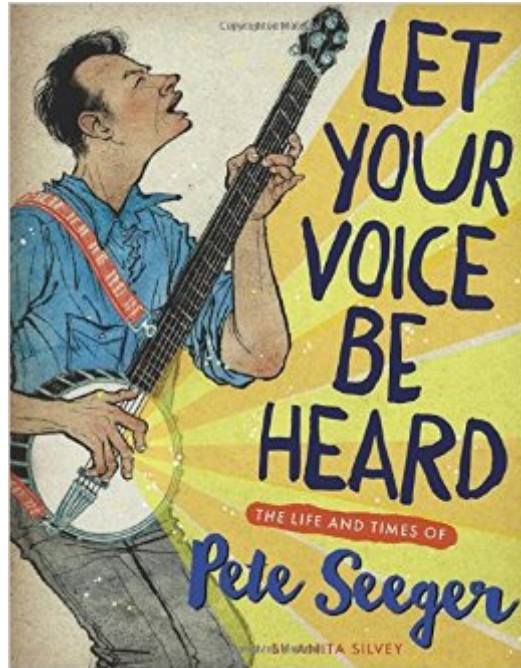


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Let Your Voice Be Heard: The Life And Times Of Pete Seeger



Synopsis

Pete Seeger, the iconic folk musician and multiple Grammy winner, discovered early in life that what he wanted to do was make music. His amazing career as singer, songwriter, and banjo player spanned seven decades, and included both low points (being charged with contempt of Congress) and highlights (receiving the Kennedy Center Honor from President Clinton). An activist and protester, Seeger crusaded for the rights of labor, the rights of people of color, and the First Amendment right to let his voice be heard, and launched the successful campaign to clean up the Hudson River. Archival photographs and prints, source notes, bibliography, index.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 1050 (What's this?)

Hardcover: 112 pages

Publisher: Clarion Books (August 2, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 054733012X

ISBN-13: 978-0547330129

Product Dimensions: 0.8 x 7.5 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars See all reviews (20 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #190,116 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #13 in Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Music > Popular #48 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Musical #72 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Social Activists

Age Range: 10 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 - 7

Customer Reviews

Pete Seeger is of one of my all time heroes, for many reasons, not only his wonderful singing but his courage in the McCarthy days, his good works, his example of humanity at its best. The text in this book, written for young adults but interesting for this codger, does full justice to his life. I would award a fifth star, but the black and white illustrations do not do him justice, especially after the superb cover. My own personal experience: my late wife loved a wide range of music: Beethoven, Pavarotti, Billy Joel, Springsteen, Peter, Paul and Mary, ABBA, Queen, Willie Nelson. But at the top of the heap were the Weavers and particularly Seeger. We went to a dozen of his concerts over the years, and he would often come down into the crowd and encourage folks to sing. I had been told I

was tone deaf as a kid and never sang, just hummed the words. Pete came up to me and said: "Sing." "I can't sing." "Put your head back as far as you can, close your eyes, and sing." So I did! It was amazing how good it felt and to me at least sounded. Four years ago I went to a Christmas concert at Albert Hall in London and sitting in wonderful seat on the front row of the first balcony sang 12 Christmas carols, the audience alternating with a wonderful group of soloists and a fine choral group. Sounded great all around. The next year I sang Christmas carols in a cathedral in New Orleans -- people started to sing around me -- we sounded awfully good. Thank you Pete -- you added great joy to Janet's life ... and to mine. Robert C. Ross June 2016

What a wonderful book. I have listened to and admired Pete Seeger for years, but there were many things about his life journey that I learned and will treasure. I do hope many, many young readers are introduced to his ethical and important life through this book. We are so in need of details about a life lived by making well thought out choices and holding to principles when it is difficult to do. Kids learn about "heroes" in history, but they are mostly just given the names and time period and a short biography, but they are not given the gift of how and why they chose the life they did. This book does that. What a treasure the author had in the opportunity to talk with Pete when he was in his nineties! "Pete became intrigued by folk music. 'They sang of heroes, outlaws, murderers, fools.... Above all, they seemed frank, straightforward, honest.' Pete loved the directness of the emotions conveyed in folk music-the heartbreak and despair, the love and sense of community, and the protest against injustice." "Pete Seeger had great rapport with his audiences; they trusted him and they loved him. While most singers try to make the music their own, Pete involved members of the audience so they would feel that the music belonged to them. In the words of singer Dave Van Ronk, 'He genuinely respects the people who are listening to him.... He is not 'preserving' folklore but living it.' Singer Arlo Guthrie, Woody's son, believed that the Weavers' strength came from 'songs and stories-communication, not hype.'" (less)

I found this to be an enjoyable biography of a legendary folk singer. It explained how Seegar, born into a fairly wealthy life and one of privilege, was a voice for the underdog. Once his art teacher asked what else he did. He said he played the banjo and she told him he should focus on that. From there, he hooked up with some other amazing musicians and was able to travel the country and let his voice be heard. He was a symbol of peaceful protest and an advocate for change. I think this is a good biography for young readers, particularly those interested in music. It's not too long, which is great for young readers getting into factual and biographical texts. The chapters are clear,

straightforward, and include several photographs of Pete and his fellow musicians. It's recommended for ages 10 to 12, but I think readers older than 12 would get a lot out of this biography too.

Well, I'll be damned. Pete Seeger has gotten himself in a wonderful book for ages 10-12. Author Anita Silvey got ol' Pete's approval to write this, and it's wonderful stuff. Packed, and flowing with Pete's actual words and historical photos, the life-long legacy of this gentle folk hero, a man denounced by J Edgar Hoover's Red Squad, is both an intelligent read for young people and a history lesson on how important people cross paths for massive cultural change. I loved Pete Seeger's music all of my life, and our children listened to his tapes and old LPs; Seeger is pretty much sacred around these parts; Silvey's superb labor of love is one for the ages... just like it's subject matter. The kids will be inspired.

Here is a clear and well-illustrated biography of Pete Seeger, intended for middle grade children, but enjoyable for adults too. It's the right length for middle graders, and gets right to the point. Covers his childhood briefly, lays out his life in music and politics (including the HUAC stuff and the blacklisting - not sensationalized), and ends with the Clearwater. Lots of stuff about family later on, which will appeal to the middle graders I think. Pete emerges as a mildly heroic figure, which is what one would expect. But it stays proportionate. There is information on sources, which adds to the credibility without burdening the book.

This biography aimed for elementary school-aged kids does a wonderful job of describing Pete Seeger's long life, his accomplishments and challenges. Don't let the kid-friendly aspect fool you because the book is well-researched. I also learned about Pete Seeger. The book doesn't shy away from difficulties and injustices Seeger saw, like the divorce of his parents, being in love with a half-Japanese woman (later his wife) during the World War II, getting through the McCarthy Era, fighting for civil rights and equality, etc... Seeger fearlessly and relentlessly shared his music to improve our society. What a fascinating life he had.

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