



## Woody Guthrie : a life / Joe Klein

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Woody Guthrie with guitar labeled "This Machine Kills Fascists" (1943) Background information Birth name Woodrow Wilson Guthrie Born July 14, 1912 Okemah, Oklahoma, United States Died October 3, 1967 (aged 55) New York City, New York, United States Genres Folk, protest song Occupations Singer-songwriter Instruments Vocals, guitar, harmonica, mandolin, fiddle Years active 1930-1956 Associated acts Almanac Singers Notable instruments Martin 000-18, Gibson Southern Jumbo, Gibson J-45 Woodrow Wilson "Woody" Guthrie (July 14, 1912 - October 3, 1967) was an American singer-songwriter and folk musician whose musical legacy includes hundreds of political, traditional and children's songs, ballads and improvised works. He frequently performed with the slogan This Machine Kills Fascists displayed on his guitar. His best-known song is "This Land Is Your Land." Many of his recorded songs are archived in the Library of Congress.[1] Such songwriters as Bob Dylan, Phil Ochs, Bruce Springsteen, John Mellencamp, Pete Seeger, Joe Strummer, Billy Bragg, Jeff Tweedy and Tom Paxton have acknowledged Guthrie as a major influence. Many of his songs are about his experiences in the Dust Bowl era during the Great Depression when Guthrie traveled with migrant workers from Oklahoma to California and learned their traditional folk and blues songs, earning him the nickname the "Dust Bowl Troubadour." [2] Throughout his life Guthrie was associated with United States Communist groups, though he was seemingly not a member of any.[3] Guthrie was married three times and fathered eight children, including American folk musician Arlo Guthrie. Guthrie died from complications of Huntington's disease, a progressive genetic neurological disorder. During his later years, in spite of his illness, Guthrie served as a figurehead in the folk movement, providing inspiration to a generation of new folk musicians, including mentor relationships with Ramblin' Jack Elliott and Bob Dylan.

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