

Steve Earle

Quotes

*Writing, People, Thinking, Song, Believe, Years, Country, Democracy, Records,
New York, Way, Hands, World, Home, Bob, Ifs, Real, Kids, Ends, Cities*

Townes Van Zandt is the best songwriter in the whole world, and I'll stand on Bob Dylan's coffee table in my cowboy boots and say that.

~Steve Earle

America's criminal justice system isn't known for rehabilitation. I'm not sure that, as a society, we are even interested in that concept anymore.

~Steve Earle

I don't believe that songwriting has to be profound, but I truly believe that it's a crime for you to go outta your way for it not to be.

~Steve Earle

I have a low tolerance for mediocrity in music and life. I'm into pain and joy and the in-between doesn't interest me.

~Steve Earle

Actually, in its purest form, Islam is incredibly tolerant. That makes what's going on in the world really bizarre.

~Steve Earle

All we do as songwriters is rewrite the songs that have impressed us till we find our own voice. It's part of learning the craft.

~Steve Earle

You see things differently at 40 than you do at 31. Especially if you got to 40 the way I did.

~Steve Earle

Every day on Earth is another chance to get it right.

~Steve Earle

I don't really think in terms of obstacles. My biggest obstacle is always myself.

~Steve Earle

What's important is you wake up in the morning and something doesn't exist, and when you finish your day's work something is in the world that wasn't there before.

~Steve Earle

To me, religion is an agreement between a group of people about what God is. Spirituality is a one-on-one relationship.

~Steve Earle

If I can get Me out of the way, I can do anything.

~Steve Earle

The reason music became so powerful to our generation is that it's art you can consume in your car, and we were driving around a lot.

~Steve Earle

I don't care what's happening in the mainstream of country music. I haven't in a long time.

~Steve Earle

My objection to the death penalty is based on the idea that this is a democracy, and in a democracy the government is me, and if the government kills somebody then I'm killing somebody.

~Steve Earle

I'm not a racist, but I do have to work at not being a racist, because of where I grew up.

~Steve Earle

If there is such a thing as a workaholic, I'm it, and that's what passes for leisure.

~Steve Earle

People hate good books to be over. I wish I could write a 700-page book.

~Steve Earle

Maybe I'm not as big a star as Bruce Springsteen because I'm not as good. I don't know. It doesn't matter. I still have an audience of a certain size. I think it's one of the things I'm luckiest.

~Steve Earle

I do not believe Tony Blair was a fundamentally good man who went bad. I believe he was evil in the first place.

~Steve Earle

Me, I'm spiritually retarded, I need to be knee deep in water with a fly rod in my hands, that's about as close to God as I get.

~Steve Earle

I have no doubt in mind that I justify the space I take up in the world.

~Steve Earle

Like most kids, I grew up singing 'This Land Is Your Land' in grammar school, but with the most radical verses neatly removed. This was before I knew it was a Woody Guthrie song.

~Steve Earle

You know I ain't never prayed before 'Cause it always seemed to me
That prayin's the same as beggin' Lord, I don't take no charity.

~Steve Earle

I'm a very disciplined person when it comes to my work, but discipline can't save m from being a drug addict.

~Steve Earle

Greg Trooper writes great songs, including one of my very favorite

songs in the world, Little Sister. On top of all that, there's his voice - an instrument I have coveted for 15 years.

~Steve Earle

I don't separate writing songs from poetry and short fiction. In the area where I work in my house, there's a word processor and a guitar.

~Steve Earle

Critics are notoriously liberal with their use of the term 'genius'.

~Steve Earle

I grew up counterculture. I'm essentially a hippie, and I'm essentially a folkie.

~Steve Earle

I love baseball. I'll probably end up one of those old farts who go to spring training in Florida every year and drive from game to game all day.

~Steve Earle

I don't think I'm a political songwriter as much as I am just a political person. I think it's in my fabric.

~Steve Earle

I think the criticism that I take to heart is from other writers that I respect.

~Steve Earle

Poetry is the hardest thing that there is. It fascinates me, so I want to write more of it.

~Steve Earle

From the moment [Bob] Dylan arrived as a songwriter, he was [so] much better than everybody else around.

~Steve Earle

I've been a serial husband, and I've done it badly every time.

~Steve Earle

I'm supposed to make people cry, but not by manipulating.

~Steve Earle

Fundamentalism, as practiced by the Taliban, is the enemy of real thought, and religion, too.

~Steve Earle

Every country that's ever been the most powerful country in the world ceases to be the most powerful country in the world at some point.

~Steve Earle

My dad was in a wheelchair and on oxygen for the last few years of his life.

~Steve Earle

I have a theory that the people who cook in jails are British chefs.

~Steve Earle

I had everything I need to get me killed.

~Steve Earle

I wish I was as sure about things as Bill Monroe was sure about things.

~Steve Earle

Gregory Corso used to get really pissed when people called Bob Dylan a 'poet.' After writing poetry for a few years, I can understand that.

~Steve Earle

I mainly read non-fiction, and that's probably because I have a huge

amount of insecurity about my lack of education and the things I don't know.

~Steve Earle

I've never known of Wal-Mart to be a good neighbor in any town it's ever moved into.

~Steve Earle

Bob Dylan is one of the very few people in the history of popular music who you can unquestionably apply that word [genius] to.

~Steve Earle

I make an embarrassing amount of money for a borderline Marxist, just by selling 100,000 records. I don't sell millions of records, and I don't need to.

~Steve Earle

Every leap forward that I make is by reaching back and firmly getting a footing in the past, and pushing forward as hard as I can.

~Steve Earle

I just had a child on purpose at age 56, I'm pretty f---ing optimistic.

~Steve Earle

Politics has always been in my music. Anybody who doesn't understand how political "Copperhead Road" is isn't listening very well.

~Steve Earle

What saves me from being a drug addict is sort of the opposite. It's me realizing that I don't really control anything.

~Steve Earle

It's incredibly irresponsible to allow victims' family members to witness executions.

~Steve Earle

Woody Guthrie was what folks who don't believe in anything would call an anomaly.

~Steve Earle

I love theater. I go all the time. It's one of the reasons I moved to New York. But I understand that I have limited range as an actor. I can only play people who talk like me.

~Steve Earle

Having a child at 55... that's optimism.

~Steve Earle

Bob Dylan emerged from nowhere, like an alien. And that was just the start.

~Steve Earle

At home, I'm lucky if I can write three or four hours before the phone starts ringing and the kids want to go to soccer.

~Steve Earle

I don't usually read reviews.

~Steve Earle

I'm not a Democrat; I'm something well to the left of a Democrat, but I'm just realistic about the system.

~Steve Earle

I can deal with conservatives in a democracy. With real conservatives, I don't agree with them, but I understand why they believe what they believe and I believe they're being honest with me about it.

~Steve Earle

I still write more songs about girls than anything else.

~Steve Earle

I ain't ever satisfied.

~Steve Earle

You know, I'm not comfortable with people whose politics are static in a democracy.

~Steve Earle

I'm from Texas. I hitchhiked to Tennessee when I was 19 years old, and it is really beautiful in Tennessee.

~Steve Earle

I wasn't raised to not write about issues, and I'm just living in really politically charged times. You know, I'd rather write songs about girls, but it's just hard to do right now.

~Steve Earle

My main area of activism is the death penalty, and it will continue to be once this crisis is over with.

~Steve Earle

Funerals are a pagan rite. There's not any doubt about it.

~Steve Earle

Sonnets are guys writing in English, imitating an Italian song form. It was a form definitely sung as often as it was recited.

~Steve Earle

I'm one of the few people that I know that sings better than they did 20 years ago.

~Steve Earle

My audience doesn't agree with me on everything, but I love my audience, because they're totally okay with us having a dialogue.

~Steve Earle

The stupidest thing that a writer can do is write a memoir I think, unless it's right before you die -- maybe.

~Steve Earle

Politics and music don't necessarily go hand in hand. They just do for me.

~Steve Earle

My politics were really radical when I was younger, and then I moderated like everyone else does when they start having kids.

~Steve Earle

I think the music business is changing. Artists that don't want to tour and just want to collect royalty checks and stay home are not going to be able to do that.

~Steve Earle

I feel like I owe my audience something. They feed my kids. And I really like my job, a lot.

~Steve Earle

Sympathetic characters usually have a voice. They usually don't have any trouble being heard.

~Steve Earle

There's a long tradition of people from the South living in New York City.

~Steve Earle

Becoming interested in poetics got me interested in theater. Theater is

supposed to be poetry, you know, before it's anything else. It just doesn't fly if it isn't musical.

~Steve Earle

He's the real deal. Eric Taylor was one of my heroes and teachers when I started playing around Houston in the early 1970s.

~Steve Earle

I'm constantly warning people that are involved in my life that I can go busk and make a living. I can make my rent in New York City in the subway, I promise, if I'm forced to.

~Steve Earle

San Antonio is like a military town. It's like literally - when I was growing up there, there were five Air Force bases, plus Fort Sam Houston. I was always sort of near the military.

~Steve Earle

The revolution starts now.

~Steve Earle

I'm used to writing stories with a beginning a middle and an end in four minutes.

~Steve Earle

People can try to make me into anything they want, but I think they're really throwing around language but saying the same thing.

~Steve Earle

I don't spend a lot of time feeling sorry for myself, trying to compare how many records I've sold or how much money I've made.

~Steve Earle

New Orleans is a unique environment.

~Steve Earle

The creative core of New York has never been native New Yorkers; it's people from all over the world.

~Steve Earle

Songwriters are expanding time rather than compressing time. My short stories tend to be old fashioned, with a beginning, middle and end.

~Steve Earle

I've been on every interstate highway in the lower forty-eight states by now and I never get tired of the view.

~Steve Earle

I was born on this mountain, this mountains my home, she holds me and keeps me from worry and woe.

~Steve Earle

I'm trying to make records where people don't feel cheated. Nashville has been guilty of insulting the Country Music audience for years and years.

~Steve Earle

I'm not going to waste a second feeling sorry for myself because I'm not a bigger star than I am. I can walk down the street in most places in the world and I still drive really nice cars.

~Steve Earle

Or you can be like the Soviet Union, start out with ideals, and end up ceasing to exist.

~Steve Earle

I think it's obvious that democracy is something that is contagious, and it always has been.

~Steve Earle

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