



Waylon: An Autobiography

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Waylon Jennings relates the story of his life as a country music star. His beginnings were poor but he became Buddy Holly's protege before sinking into drug abuse and 3 failed marriages. His success came when he met his present wife, Jessi Colter.

Waylon: An Autobiography Details

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From Reader Review Waylon: An Autobiography for online ebook

JL says

do yourself a favor and listen to the audiobook version to hear Waylon dish it

Mary Rowland says

As a Waylon Jennings fan I found this book quite fascinating true and honest. Also found Wayland to be very interesting and found things out about him in his life that I never would have known he was a fascinating person and even though he struggled with drinking and drugs somehow he found his way out and found love in the end totally recommend this totally a good read and a special if you like autobiographies and biographies to read

Zach McGillis says

Intriguing figure, very colorful life story. Writing was so-so.

Curtis Sweitzer says

As a huge fan of Waylon Jennings I was glad to read this book. Especially since the main contributor to this book was Waylon himself. Waylon's willingness to go to some of the most painful memories and failures of his life mixed with his wit and humor made this a enjoyable book to read.

Melanie Rigney says

I'm a super big Waylon fan, and got this book for Christmas. I put off starting it in part because I worried his voice might not translate well to prose. I needn't have worried. This is all Waylon, all the time. I cried at the vulnerability he showed about his time with Buddy Holly... shudder a bit at the quantity of pills he ingested... and laugh and shake my head at the in-your-face attitude in the early days in Nashville. This is one I'll be sad to finish... just as I'm sad we lost this "American original," as John Cash called him, far too soon.

Cwn_annwn_13 says

This is a well written and entertaining as told to autobiography of Waylon Jennings and has all you would expect from a Waylon biography if you are familiar with his music and life. More often than not, even if they make great music, most musicians are phony narcissistic human beings. Waylon is a guy thats hard not to like and I enjoy his music. I wish he was still around.

Barry Hammond says

Even though for years I was more into rock and jazz (though I've made many excursions into classic country, bluegrass, and alt-country), I've always listed Waylon Jennings "Dreamin' My Dreams" as one of my all-time favorite discs and probably one of the best-produced discs of all time. I stand by that opinion. I think producer Jack Clements helped capture not only a specific feeling and sound on that disc but the sort of both raw and polished creativity that rarely gets laid down on any recording. I was pleased to read in this autobiography that Waylon Jennings knew very well it was the best record he ever made. Waylon has lots of stories to tell and he tells most of them in this book with candor, honesty and a sense of humble humour about himself and his industry image. Yes, he had his moments of being a wild man and a rebel but, mostly, he was just trying to get down the sounds he had in his head without outside interference. Anyone interested in music will have that disc as a "must-hear" and this book as a "must-read." - BH.

Sean Keefe says

Up there with Springsteen's Born To Run and Dylan's Chronicles in terms of great musical autobiographies for me.

Waylon tells you everything you ever wanted to know about his life and country music, all the while sounding like a southern wise man. This was just a joy from start to finish. We still miss you, big fella.

Bob Garrett says

Waylon Jennings was always my favorite country music performer. When I sought out biographies of him, I was disappointed by the selections. Thus, I placed this autobiography on my Christmas wish list, and my mother-in-law gifted me a copy.

An autobiography has certain advantages and disadvantages over a biography. In the latter category, there's the loss of objectivity and the unreliability of memory. As compensation, however, the reader receives a more personal – and often more engaging – account.

Certainly, WAYLON is a lively read. Jennings – with aid from co-author Kaye – proves a great storyteller, and I often felt as though I were sitting in a bar, listening to Jennings talk. He relays tales of his impoverished upbringing, his stint as Buddy Holly's bass player, his early record deals, his later successes, his drug abuse and recovery, his failed marriages and long-term successful marriage to Jesse Colter, etc. The book provides a great "insider's perspective" on the music business, conveying a sense of how cutthroat it often is, and of course, Jennings and Kaye also recount Jennings' relationships and encounters with other music stars, including Johnny Cash, Willie Nelson, Kris Kristofferson, Tompall Glaser, George Jones, Merle Haggard and Elvis Presley (Warning to Elvis fans: The latter does not come off well here.).

This book was originally published in 1996, when Jennings turned 59. The narrative voice thus reflects that of a man of maturity, who is examining his life with the benefit of age and experience, and I enjoyed his insights. For example, I liked his comment on how he had personal music heroes and that there was a difference between a hero and a role model. Jennings, with his years of cocaine abuse and failed marriages, is by his own admission no role model. He did, however, succeed in a sometimes-rough business and did it

by blazing his own trail. Kudos to him, and I really wish that he hadn't been taken from us so soon.

I recommend this book for fans of Waylon Jennings and/or country music.

ROBERT says

First 3/4ths was good. It ended up with a string of anecdotal reminiscences and thoughts the last 100 pages I thought.

Great read for a Waylon fan. Good read if you know nothing about him and want background. It was just too long for me and not as informative the last 100 or so pages.

Adamskmckenzie says

A good read if you are interested in this artist. It begins slowly, and Waylon's colloquial writing style often irritates at first, but I felt real emotion in some of his more intense stories.

I did not realize that he was so close with Buddy Holly. He described Buddy, at the time of his death, as his best friend and states that he slipped in to a deep depression for two years following the plane crash. This section deals with the survivor's guilt that he experienced and was perhaps one of the most complex and "real" moments in his story, but he fails to elaborate or explore sufficiently. Still, it does provide some insight and credit must be given for the intensity and empathy provoked in such a short passage - although perhaps this is an illusion, the short passage and provocative feeling allows the reader to insert his own experiences. Is this accomplishment of a master storyteller/emotion-smith? Or is it just lazy writing, fear of self-probing? Isn't instilling such empathy the goal of all, at least most, writers?

The other most interesting aspect of his storytelling is his description and analysis of failed relationships. Though his descriptions typically indicate plenty of blame between the two parties, he does not shy from exploring his flaws and inadequacies and questioning his judgment; and he makes no excuses. When he approaches the subject of his children becoming involved in the painful process and describes their "tiny loyalties being tested,"

Ironically, the element most ignored in this autobiography is the music. It is always there, but given the dispassionate treatment of two strangers swapping stories of past career changes or automobiles owned. But perhaps this is unimportant, as anyone reading this book is already familiar with the tunes, but perhaps not with the philosophy and experiences of the tunesmith. And there is the occasional "studio hijinx" story, often involving Willie Nelson. One of the most eccentric being that Willie is very sensitive about his singing and, following what may be described as a producer's constructive criticism, becomes defensive with the producer and then comes to Waylon for coddling and reassurance.

Finally, from a sociological perspective, the tales of Waylon's development from childhood to young adulthood can be read as an outsider's pushing back against the conventions of rural, small-town life while embracing its best elements. His bucolic stories of life on the farm, miles out of town, combine with his left-of-center sensibilities to form a challenge to current media-popcultural archetypes of red state and blue state men, which benefit only political fundraisers and should be flatly rejected.

Morgan says

This is a pretty good account written by the man himself. It covers Waylon's days on the farm growing up,

his short time with Buddy Holly, his career long battle with pills/drugs on the way to becoming a country legend, and his life after he kicked the habit by staying out in the desert for a month. This book is written by Waylon so the way he talks/writes is a reflection of the way that he actually talked and rembered things so the account can get a little confusing when the down home country accent bleeds through, also somtimes the narrative can jump decades and back in the same paragraph. That was my only complaint with this book. It does give good insight on how Waylon and the rest of the outlaws changed how country music sounded and how Waylon had to fight to get a fair contract that he could live with. If your interested in his music or how that era helped shape today's country music give it a read.

m.a.c

Matte says

Done did everything that needs done.

Robert says

When I was looking at reading this book I read somewhere that someone said this book was almost like sitting down with Waylon and having him tell his life story over a few beers. That actually fits quite well. Waylon was one of the first to really break the conventienal country music barriers mainly because he wanted to play the music as he felt it. This tells all of his struggles as he went through those barriers and broke through Nashvilles walls into a new label known now as outlaw country. Waylon also tells of his excessive drug usage and how 20 to 30 amphetamines a day would help get him through from one gig to the next. And his story of shaking the big monkey of coke and pills off his back. Some of the more personal stuff towards the end of the book is really touching. I really enjoyed the stories of him hanging with some of the all time great folks that made country music. If anyone is interested in a real personal down and dirty look at Waylon Jennings this would be the book I would tell them to pick up.

Michael says

Pretty good - gets a bit long in the end, a few too many disconnected anecdotes and memories toward the end, but overall, very good. I particularly loved the stories about playing bass behind Buddy Holly on Holly's last tour, and getting Waylon's feelings on Buddy's death and his own lucky survival. (Waylon gave up his seat on the plane to the Big Bopper, as Bopper was sick.)

Some great stories about trying to find his voice and realizing that the music he wanted to make went against Nashville's standard way-of-doing-things, too. Definitely worth a look if you're a Waylon Jennings fan.

And if you're not a Waylon fan, listen to the album *Dreaming My Dreams*. You will be. ;)
