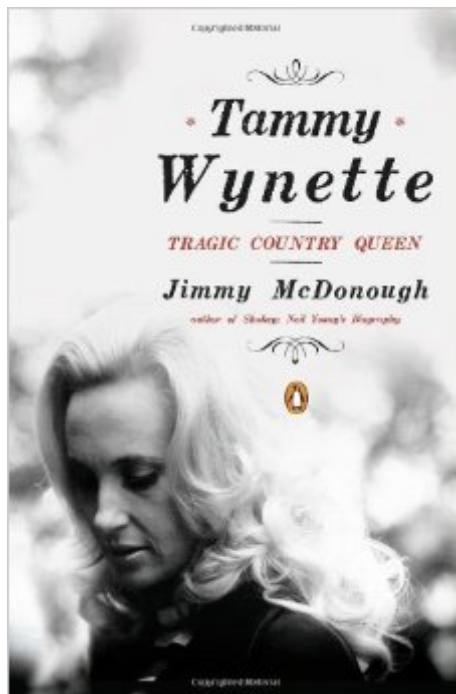


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# Tammy Wynette: Tragic Country Queen



## Synopsis

From the New York Times bestselling biographer—the first book-length portrait of music legend Tammy Wynette. Known for his acclaimed biographies of Neil Young, Russ Meyer, and Andy Milligan, Jimmy McDonough now delivers an emotional and revealing exploration of the life of the Queen of Heartbreak. Based on dozens of interviews, McDonough's book unveils a life of profound extremes, from Wynette's impoverished youth in Mississippi, to her meteoric rise after meeting legendary producer Billy Sherrill, to her star-crossed marriage to music legend George Jones. What emerges is an unforgettable view of a Nashville that no longer exists—and a woman whose life mirrored the sadness captured in her music.

## Book Information

Paperback: 464 pages

Publisher: Penguin Books (February 22, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0143118889

ISBN-13: 978-0143118886

Product Dimensions: 5.6 x 1 x 8.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.1 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (73 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

With a voice that cut through the noise of modern life as clearly as a champagne glass tapped with a silver knife at a wedding reception, Tammy Wynette touched the hearts of millions of Americans and left them better for having heard. It's doubtful any American during the past half-century was not stirred by 'Stand By Your Man' which, like 'D-I-V-O-R-C-E' became her defining signature. These songs are an opera within themselves, a "sound bite" that defines the hopes and fears of millions. Wynette's crystal voice soared above the noisy chatter of everyday life with a clarity that could only be envied by everyone who wants to speak to the public. Her voice was awesome. What then of the woman around that voice? This book says the answer was a ceaseless relentless merciless obsession for perfection, relevance and acceptance that eventually destroyed the mind and body

that housed it all. If heartbreak and tragedy are the price of fame; then, Lord God, Wynette paid the price in full. She sought too much from life. In so doing, she trusted too many erratic husbands and too many selfish advisors who placed their own interests first instead of Wynette's best interests. As Wynette said after one divorce, "If ever a home was broken up by outsiders, it was ours."

McDonough points out, "Contrary to the legend, Wynette did not crawl out of abject poverty . . ." As she said on one occasion, "I have always gotten everything I ever wanted, but I didn't get what I needed." The "poverty" legend became part of the glitter of her life. Dolly Parton once summed it up her own background nicely by telling an interviewer, "Well, you didn't live in the country and nearly starve to death.

Those four words above describe the new book. The author has done his research extensively and backs up his claims with his resources. Tammy Wynette was a very complicated woman, looking for the idealistic life. She did not find it in this life. Up to her death she was constantly looking for that "Elusive Dream"....that ideal "love". The author is incredibly fair in his assessment of Wynette's character. He pulls no punches. She was not a perfect human being and he does not portray her as one. She says she embellished the truth to make it more exciting. He has also conducted an extensive array of interviews with Don Chapel (Tammy's second husband), Tammy's close friend and pal growing up, Linda Cayson, Chapel's daughter, Donna, George and Nancy Jones, Wynette Biographer Joan Dew, Loretta Lynn (Tammy's best girlfriend in the music business), Jan Howard and many, many others. He also gave George Richey a chance to tell his story but he declined to be interviewed. This book also contains a great career retrospective and a great chapter on Billy Sherrill, Tammy's long-time producer. True, this book does not portray George Richey in a good light....but the author is fair as he gets quotes here from Richey's defenders. Unfortunately, Richey's defenders are in the minority. When all is said and done, the final analysis here is that Wynette was, like Judy Garland, an addictive personality who had to be under the control of a man....well she got what she wanted....there was no one more controlling than George Richey. There are several testaments here to the fact that Tammy loved her daughters and her daughters loved her. No, their relationship wasn't ideal (what is???)

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