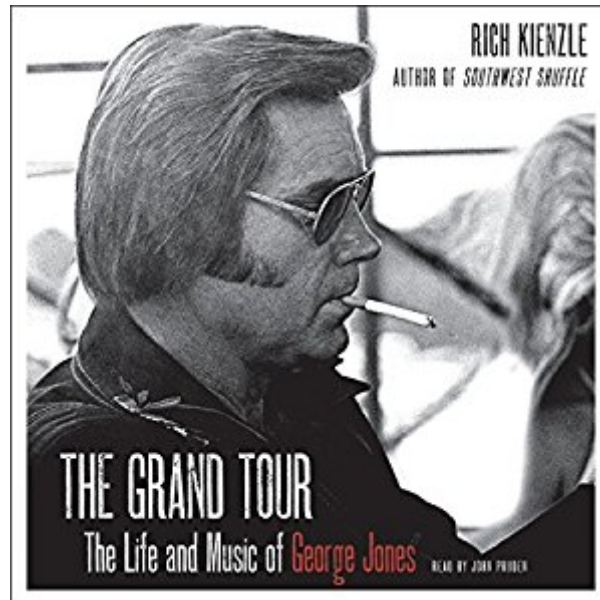


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# The Grand Tour: The Life And Music Of George Jones



## Synopsis

In the vein of the classic *Johnny Cash: The Life*, this groundbreaking work explores the wild life and extraordinary musical career of "the definitive country singer of the last half century" (*New York Times*), who influenced, among others, Bob Dylan, Buck Owens, Emmylou Harris, John Fogerty, George Strait, Alan Jackson, and Garth Brooks. In a masterful biography laden with new revelations, veteran country music journalist/historian Rich Kienzle offers a definitive, full-bodied portrait of legendary country singer George Jones and the music that remains his legacy. Kienzle meticulously sifted through archival material, government records, and recollections by colleagues and admirers, interviewing many involved in Jones' life and career. The result: an evocative portrait of this enormously gifted, tragically tormented icon called "the Keith Richards of country". Kienzle chronicles Jones' impoverished East Texas childhood as the youngest son of a deeply religious mother and an alcoholic, often-abusive father. He examines his three troubled marriages, including his union with superstar Tammy Wynette, and looks unsparingly at Jones' demons. Alcohol and later cocaine nearly killed him until fourth wife Nancy helped him learn to love himself. Kienzle also details Jones' remarkable musical journey from singing in violent Texas honky-tonks to Grand Ole Opry star, hitmaker, and master vocalist whose raw, emotionally powerful delivery remains the gold standard for country singers. The George Jones of this heartfelt biography lived hard before finding contentment until he died at 81 - a story filled with whiskey, women, and drugs but always the saving grace of music.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Given that three years have now elapsed since George Jones's passing, I had thought, given the storied credentials of the author, Rich Kienzle, who has written many booklets for country CD reissues including those for the definitive Bear Family/Musicor boxed sets on Mr. Jones, that this book, described as a "definitive biography" would be up there with Colin Escott's bio (written with co-authors Merritt and MacEwen) of Hank Williams and Peter Guralnick's 2 volume bio of Elvis. When the book arrived I became a little concerned that the font size was on the large side further reducing the content of the already modest 258 pages of text and then discovered it lacked an index. This book is thus rather superficial and also condescending with Kienzle's narrative lacking empathy for its subject. While Mr. Jones's life had its ups and downs, what shines through a great many of his recordings is his native talent that has led many, including Frank Sinatra, to contribute to the opinion that George Jones was the greatest country singer of the 20th century. Even today, long after his prime in the charts, his emotional delivery still cuts through the 24/7 classic country airplay on Sirius/XM's "Willie's Roadhouse". While easy to read, Mr. Kienzle's writing focuses more on the demons that plagued Mr. Jones's personal life - at times reflecting more than a little schadenfreude rather than presenting a balanced and objective study of a gifted performer. The early recordings on Starday, Mercury, UA and Musicor receive little in the way of objective analysis other than reflecting on Pappy Daily's limitations as a producer. Midway in the book (p.125 actually) Mr.

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