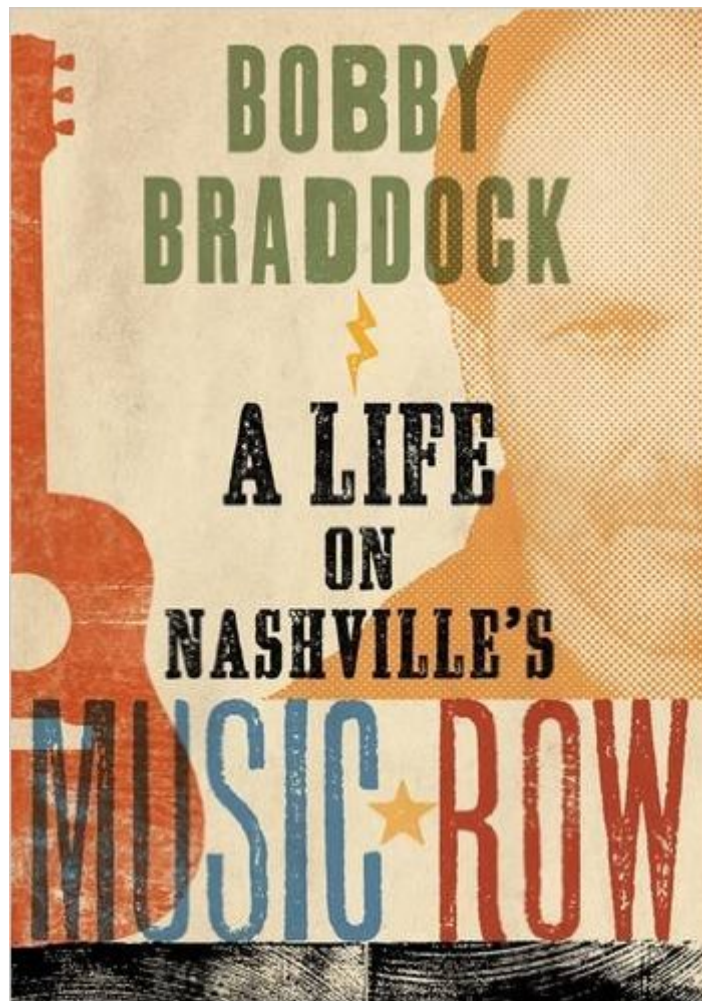


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# **Bobby Braddock: A Life On Nashville's Music Row (Co-published With The Country Music Foundation Press)**



## Synopsis

If you know country music, you know Bobby Braddock. Even if you don't know his name, you know the man's work. "He Stopped Loving Her Today." "D-I-V-O-R-C-E." "Golden Ring." "Time Marches On." "I Wanna Talk About Me." "People Are Crazy." These songs and numerous other chart-topping hits sprang from the mind of Bobby Braddock. A working songwriter and musician, Braddock has prowled the streets of Nashville's legendary Music Row since the mid-1960s, plying his trade and selling his songs. These decades of writing songs for legendary singers like George Jones, Tammy Wynette, and Toby Keith are recounted in *Bobby Braddock: A Life on Nashville's Music Row*, providing the reader with a stunning look at the beating heart of Nashville country music that cannot be matched. If you're looking for insight into Nashville, the life of music in this town, and the story of a force of nature on the Row to this day, Bobby Braddock will take you there.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is not only a chronicle of a fascinating life, but an important historical document about the complexities of the music business in Nashville from the sixties until the present. Bobby Braddock tells ALL about himself: the good, the bad, and the unflattering. Writing with a distinctly Southern flavor, Braddock's talent as a wordsmith makes it apparent why he has remained one of Country music's top songwriters for so many decades. His wry wit made me laugh out loud at his adventures and observations. It's hard to read the book without thinking about what I was doing when "We're

Not the Jet Set," or "He Stopped Loving Her Today," or "Faking Love" were playing on the radio. The Braddock songbook is a replay of the music of my life.

Bobby Braddock is one of the great songwriters in the history of country music -- or any music genre for that matter. From a small town in Florida, he arrived in Nashville a virtual stranger, an odd mixture of shyness and bulldog determination. He got a job as a road musician for Marty Robbins, then hit the jackpot early on as a staff writer for the powerful Tree International Publishing Company. Nobody "got" him in there. He got himself in there, and started writing hit country songs. He tried his hand at everything creative in country music: worked a little as a session musician; got five recording deals and failed at every one of them; struggled in his efforts to be a record producer until late in his career when he achieved enormous success producing the albums that made Blake Shelton a star; and most notably wrote number 1 country hits in five consecutive decades, the only living country songwriter to achieve such an honor. This book, his second, is a distinct new achievement, because like no one before him he gives his readers a mercilessly honest picture of the glorious and sinister forces that drive the life of a supremely creative writer. Songwriting and love thrive on the dynamics of rejection and acceptance, and it's easy to see how his active and varied love life has energized his creativity. But there is so much more. He loves his nation's history and its politics, and those too color his songs. He loves clever wordplay, and makes them work in his songs. He loved the creative world of Music Row in those incredible days long before Music City became the "It" city, when Nashville was a big little town sending its distinct musical message out into the world. To Bobby Braddock, writing songs is as natural as breathing. No writer's block for him. No fears that the muse has deserted him, even when years go by without a hit. Oh, I haven't mentioned any of his hits: "I Wanna Talk About Me," "D-I-V-O-R-C-E," "Time Marches On," "He Stopped Loving Her Today," "People Are Crazy," "Golden Ring," and on and on and on. He is a member of the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame, the Songwriters Hall of Fame in New York and the Country Music Hall of Fame -- very rare for a songwriter to achieve all three of those honors. He is striving for that sixth decade number 1 record and I wouldn't bet against him. If you care about country music -- if you care about music -- if you care about songwriting -- if you care about how the creative mind lives and works -- if you just want a great read -- pick up this book and plunge into the weird and wonderful world of songwriting on Nashville's Music Row through the eyes of one of its greatest creators.

Bobby Braddock and my Bob grew up together. So reading Braddock's book gave me greater

details on some of the stories I had heard. The best part of this book comes from Braddock's remarkable candor, some times brutal honesty, about himself. That takes courage and is to be admired; and is what makes the book so interesting.

I suppose we've all wondered, if we could spend some time with a great person from the past, who would it be? For me, Lincoln, Ben Franklin or Jesus. And if you're an artist, how about spending an hour with Picasso, or if you're an architect, an hour with Frank Lloyd Wright? Well, as someone who's put more effort and more hope into the craft of songwriting than anything else, my hero and idol is master country songwriter Bobby Braddock. At some point I realized that most of the country songs I had particularly liked and recorded, were written or co-written, amazingly enough, by one guy, Bobby Braddock! "AUDIO CLIP "Would You Catch a Falling Star?" AUDIO CLIP "Something to Brag About," For anyone even vaguely familiar with country music, the list of Braddock's songs is unbelievable, as is the cleverness and heart in his lyrics: AUDIO CLIP "D-I-V-O-R-C-E", (AUDIO CLIP "HARD TIMES") I'll never forget when I first heard his co-written song, "He Stopped Loving Her Today," generally considered the best country song ever recorded, sung by George Jones, I was driving on a busy street in Los Angeles, and had to pull over quickly to hear this song which had almost caused my heart to stop: (AUDIO CLIP HE STOPPED LOVING HER TODAY..) I was privileged to finally meet Braddock in Nashville recently, to interview him about his song, D-I-V-O-R-C-E as it relates to jingles, the subject of a documentary I'm doing, and I later picked up a copy of his new memoir, A LIFE ON NASHVILLE'S MUSIC ROW, the subject of this review. Braddock is the only songwriter to have had number one hits as a songwriter in each of the past five decades, an amazing accomplishment in itself. Now over 70, he came to Nashville as a young man with virtually no connections or prospects, but quickly got a job as piano player for Marty Robbins, which of course led to further friendships and connections, and eventually songwriting. His reflections on Marty Robbins as well as countless other top singers and songwriters are fascinating, but what's most interesting is his incredibly frank account of his romances, marriages, tragedies and struggles. He and his wife lost their first child, and the marriage went downhill for years, but his enduring love for his next child, and her adventures and accomplishments, is somehow mesmerizing to read about. You don't get to be a top songwriter without being articulate, and Braddock's reflections and insights are as clearly and simply written as his songs. He is afflicted with a rare form of Tourette's, and is self-diagnosed obsessive-compulsive, and he kept a journal every day of his adult life no matter he

was feeling at the end of the day “ from which many of these incredible stories are taken. I thought I knew Bobby Braddock’s catalog, but reading his book revealed scores of songs I didn’t know were his; he has simply never stopped. He discovered and produced hit artist Blake Shelton, and here’s a recent hit written by Braddock, recorded by Toby Keith: AUDIO CLIP: I WANNA TALK ABOUT ME. We all enjoy music, and it’s good to be reminded that someone writes the songs, and Braddock has written an incredible number of them. Whether you’re familiar with his music or not, this book is rich with some of the most honest, to-the-bone reflections on losing your parents, on aging, on temporary insanity and parenthood, on evolving from a hard-core southerner and all that goes with it politically and culturally, on fame versus anonymity “ on the general business of living -- that I’ve ever seen. I honestly don’t think most people would need to be country music fans nor familiar with Braddock’s incredible catalog of work, to be as drawn in by this book as I was. “Bobby Braddock “ A Life on Nashville’s Music Row “ offers a portrait of a genius, though a humble one not at all taken or impressed with himself. (this is the text of a review I did on video, hence the reference to Audio Clips.

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