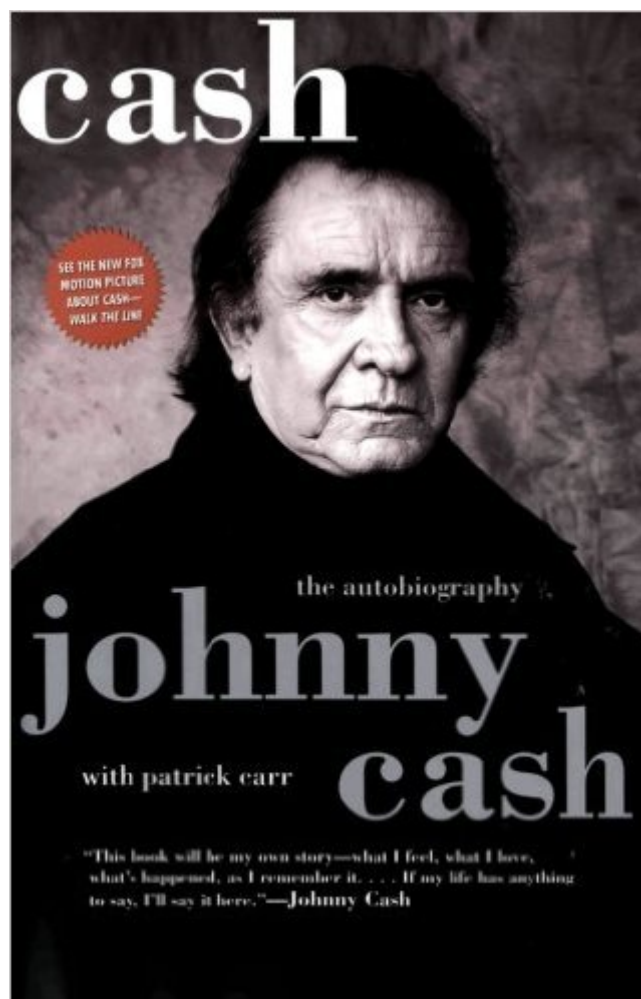


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Cash: The Autobiography



Synopsis

He was the "Man in Black," a country music legend, and the quintessential American troubadour. He was an icon of rugged individualism who had been to hell and back, telling the tale as never before. In his unforgettable autobiography, Johnny Cash tells the truth about the highs and lows, the struggles and hard-won triumphs, and the people who shaped him. In his own words, Cash set the record straight -- and dispelled a few myths -- as he looked unsparingly at his remarkable life: from the joys of his boyhood in Dyess, Arkansas to superstardom in Nashville, Tennessee, the road of Cash's life has been anything but smooth. Cash writes of the thrill of playing with Elvis, the comfort of praying with Billy Graham; of his battles with addiction and of the devotion of his wife, June; of his gratitude for life, and of his thoughts on what the afterlife may bring. Here, too, are the friends of a lifetime, including Willie Nelson, Roy Orbison, Bob Dylan, and Kris Kristofferson. As powerful and memorable as one of his classic songs, Cash is filled with the candor, wit, and wisdom of a man who truly "walked the line."

Book Information

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: HarperOne; unknown edition (October 7, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0060727535

ISBN-13: 978-0060727536

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.8 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (181 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #26,287 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #5 in Â Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Country #7 in Â Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Biographies > Country & Folk #282 in Â Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Arts & Literature > Actors & Entertainers

Customer Reviews

I've recently become re-acquainted with the music of Johnny Cash. Thanks to seeing Walk the Line and buying Rick Rubin's astounding American recordings (American Recordings, Unchained, Solitary Man and The Man Comes Around), plus nearly all of Johnny's remastered CD back catalog (including the perfect The Legend box set), I've gained enormous respect for this charismatic and talented music star. I can't seem to get enough of him, in fact. I wanted to know more about Johnny

Cash. However, I nearly always approach biographies and autobiographies with a grain of salt, skeptical that they'll be (a) untruthful, or (b) unable to hold my attention. With *Cash: The Autobiography* my natural skepticism was totally eliminated within the first 10 pages. This book is wonderfully engaging. It reads exactly like a conversation with an old friend. In fact, I can hear Johnny's rich baritone voice in my head as I read it. I can picture his sincere face. And I'm enthralled. If you want to know who Johnny Cash was, this book is a great introduction to the man. Not just because of what he wrote about; but, also, because of how it was written: conversationally, openly, honestly, and sincerely. I'm about 3/4 of the way through the book. I love it. I highly recommend *Cash: The Autobiography*.

Johnny Cash had a profound impact on the American music scene, and much of that was due to his 1990s revival via his four *American Recordings* albums. This is a simplistic, downhome bio of Americana's Johnny, and though it's not sparkling in form, prose, or organization, it comes straight from Johnny's heart. It's well worth reading if you want to know a little more about how the man views life and learning. It's not the most *interesting* bio, but it's a look-see into his soul. He's simple, he's straightforward, and he's honest, though he's not too giving of all the details. Hence his lack of candor. One thing you do grab from this is how Johnny and June were soulmates, how they shared life's best and worst moments, and how Johnny knows and understands any mistakes he's made there. Thankfully, he doesn't practice victimology and blame the rest of the world for his problems. Instead, he tells us he looks to God for guidance. He tells the reader a few stories that will be new to them, in regards to his life of celebrity. Other than that, this is not a summarization of all that he's done or where he's been, but instead, it's a small window through which he viewed life and its assorted players. Read it if you are really interested in Johnny Cash.

Johnny Cash tells his life story in this book. It's not written in a linear style; he jumps all over the place to different times in his life. But it works; it comes across very conversationally, like Cash was in the room with you saying, "Oh, yeah, and then there was the time that this happened." It's a good read, and the *Man in Black*'s fans should really enjoy it.

Cash was an old soul with many layers to his personality. For anyone who admires Johnny Cash the person, loves the music of the *Man In Black*, or just wants to read about a life that was lived as far from the chains of "ordinary" as it's possible to get, then this is an autobiography that will not disappoint. I was impressed not only with Cash's sometimes devastating honesty about himself and

his views on his own failings as a father, a husband, a Christian and a man, but I kept thinking what a gift for telling a good story he had. There isn't a boring chapter here and scarcely a page escapes without this great American passing on an anecdote that leaves the reader laughing, awestruck, amazed, or close to tears. Cash was an original and a man of courage, insight and drive. Whether he was going against the popular stance and opposing the Vietnam War, or disregarding his record company's advice and playing concerts among hard-timers in prison, Cash did things his way. He experienced all the cards in life's hand from pain and tragedy, to triumph, glory and redemption, and, yes, amidst this extraordinary life, he also delivered a collection of songs that won him legions of fans the world over. After finishing this book, I admired Johnny Cash even more than when I started. His was a life spent standing up for the underdog and this book is his own story of how a sharecropper's son from Arkansas named JR struggled to the top (more than once) and became the legend Johnny Cash.

I've read a lot of autobiographies, some of them self-serving, some of them whining, and some of them boring. Johnny Cash's is none of these, it is one of the best books I've read in recent years. I read this book as someone who only knew him from his VH1 Duet with Willie Nelson, as well as his acoustic album American Recordings. Despite this, it was easy to follow his narrative of his life. As I read about the man in his autumn years, I do not feel sorry for him. He was human, he lists his mistakes, and goes on. This is a man I can respect, inside and outside of music. That is the impression this book gives me.

Like a lot of people, I knew of Johnny Cash, and even liked a few of his songs. However, after watching Walk the Line and rediscovering his music, seeing a snippet of his life, I became enthralled. I've since bought several of his albums, plan on buying more, and was quite delighted to find a copy of this book. I was expecting an autobiography, but I guess that's what the Man in Black is, which is sadly out of print (is anyone doing anything about that?). This book is more analogous to a journal, a collection of thoughts about Johnny Cash's life, career, friends, family, and music. It's a little disjointed, a little rambling once or twice, but who's journal isn't? It offers profound insight into the mind of one of the most brilliant musicians of our time. Anyone who has been a long time fan, or just recently discovered Johnny Cash will enjoy this book. Just don't expect to read the exact story portrayed in Walk The Line through Johnny's eyes, but do expect to gain even more respect and insight into a modern folk legend.

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