



Rednecks, Queers, and Country Music

Nadine Hubbs

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In her provocative new book *Rednecks, Queers, and Country Music*, Nadine Hubbs looks at how class and gender identity play out in one of America's most culturally and politically charged forms of popular music. Skillfully weaving historical inquiry with an examination of classed cultural repertoires and close listening to country songs, Hubbs confronts the shifting and deeply entangled workings of taste, sexuality, and class politics.

In Hubbs's view, the popular phrase "I'll listen to anything but country" allows middle-class Americans to declare inclusive "omnivore" musical tastes with one crucial exclusion: country, a music linked to low-status whites. Throughout *Rednecks, Queers, and Country Music*, Hubbs dissects this gesture, examining how provincial white working people have emerged since the 1970s as the face of American bigotry, particularly homophobia, with country music their audible emblem. Bringing together the redneck and the queer, Hubbs challenges the conventional wisdom and historical amnesia that frame white working folk as a perpetual bigot class.

With a powerful combination of music criticism, cultural critique, and sociological analysis of contemporary class formation, Nadine Hubbs zeroes in on flawed assumptions about how country music models and mirrors white working-class identities. She particularly shows how dismissive, politically loaded middle-class discourses devalue country's manifestations of working-class culture, politics, and values, and render working-class acceptance of queerness invisible.

Lucid, important, and thought-provoking, this book is essential reading for students and scholars of American music, gender and sexuality, class, and pop culture.

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