



# Country Music as Reflection on the American Culture

*Juliane Hanka*

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Seminar paper from the year 2005 in the subject American Studies - Culture and Applied Geography, grade: 1,5, Dresden Technical University (Unstitut für Anglistik/Amerikanistik), course: Readings in North American Cultural Studies, 14 entries in the bibliography, language: English, abstract: In my term paper I will examine the question “Why is Country Music in America so popular?” Therefore, I will concentrate on the development of country music from traditional folk music to commercial music. I will reflect on the influences of the immigrants who entered the USA to build a brave new world, different to the old world of Europe, which they assumed to be overpopulated and morally corrupt. On the basis of several selected books and articles, like those of Bill Malone, Seymour Martin Lipset and Rachel Rubin, I will emphasize the meaning of the most traditional music of America. Analyzing changes in the musical development, I will explain them as a consequence of the country’s changing social circumstances by using the example of the Bakersfield movement in the 1930s. I will furthermore outline the most important facts and events regarding the music, including the life and work of Merle Haggard, who perfectly represented the theme of nostalgia in country music. At the end, I will emphasize the commercial aspect of country music, its Western image and the high efficiency of the Nashville music publishing industry.



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