

Discussion points and suggested questions for Lori Rader-Day's *Wreck Your Heart*

(on sale date January 6, 2026 from Minatour/SMPG)

Discussion points

- The author grew up in a rural part of Indiana and went to her first country music concert at age 8 at the Indiana State Fair, but had long ago given up listening to country music.
- The COVID lockdown, a writing challenge, and then a bout with cancer led to the author to chase joy in the process of writing, something she felt she had lost.
- Country music is the one of the most popular musical styles in the United States, including in places one might not expect. Like all art forms, the divide between genres of music are blurry.
- Chicago has a long history with country and Americana music. Two years before the founding of the Grand Ole Opry, the WLS Barn Dance broadcast out of Chicago. The term "Country and Western was coined at the urging of "a record man from Chicago."

More information at <https://chicago.suntimes.com/columnists/2024/04/18/country-music-history-chicago-wls-radio-national-barn-dance-loretta-lynn-mark-guarino-book>

- Country, Americana, and folk music are having a renaissance. New fans are finding the genre thanks to cross-over artists like Mumford & Sons, Beyoncé, Taylor Swift, Maren Morris, and more.

Suggested questions

- Why country music? Is country music the genre you've always listened to?
- Why country music in Chicago?
- Where did this story begin for you?
- This story is lighter than your past books. How was that a conscious choice for you? Why is that important to you?
- What kind of research did you do for this story?
- Hmm, I thought country music was for people who lived, you know, in the country...? Explain yourself, Lori!
- Which country/Americana musicians do you recommend for a novice listener or someone returning to the genre?