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Todd Snider
East Nashville Skyline
(Oh Boy Records)

How is it that country music has so often been a vehicle for protest yet remains beloved of the kind of folk who vote Bush because he seems like a guy you could crack a beer with? Todd Snider must make country-lovin' good ol' boys' heads explode; his music is the real thing - beautifully crafted songs with a voice that sounds as if he gargles Bourbon before breakfast, but his lyrics are lefty, clever and extremely funny. This, his self-produced fourth album, pays oblique homage to the Dylan album whose title he's adapted, and is worth buying just for the track 'Conservative Christian, Right-Wing Republican, Straight, White American Males'. An easy target for 'tree-huggin', peace-lovin', pro-choice and gay weddin', lazy-ass hippies like me', as Snider sings, but I defy anyone to find a more succinct description in song of what's wrong with America than 'soul-savin', flag-wavin', Rush-lovin', land-pavin', personal friends of the Quayles'. Brilliant.