# "YOU WANNA PLAY IN MY BAND, YOU'D BETTER COME TO PICK": DUANE ALLMAN AND AMERICAN MUSIC

by

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Dedicated to Suzi and Pat Beatty. Thank you, Mom and Dad, for the unwavering support of all of my various interests and in my pursuit of my life and career goals. I am sorry you aren't here to celebrate this moment with me.

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Ultimately this dissertation would not have even been possible had it not been for the music of the Allman Brothers Band. I first encountered the ABB when I purchased a cassette tape of *At Fillmore East*. I was deep into the electric blues of Muddy Waters and Eric Clapton, and the album was simply too much for my thirteen-year-old ears. I finally *got* the music nearly a decade later and found it to be the perfect combination of everything I love about music, in style, in substance, and in intent. Thank you Duane Allman for assembling this band whose music has provided such a soundtrack to my life and to all of the band members who played a part in it.

# ABSTRACT

"'You Wanna Play in My Band, You'd Better Come to Pick': Duane Allman and American Music provides an understanding of why Duane Allman and the Allman Brothers Band were groundbreaking and important. American music is quintessentially Southern music and Duane Allman and the Allman Brothers Band, the band he founded in 1969, is found at that intersection. In combining multiple genres of southern music (nearly all African American in origin)—blues, rhythm and blues/soul, gospel, rock 'n' roll, country and western, and jazz—into a cohesive sound, the Allman Brothers Band ultimately created a new form of American music.

This dissertation demonstrates how that came to be. It puts Duane Allman into context as a singular force in American music and the culture and music of the South. Duane Allman's legacy is a story of the pursuit of musical excellence on his own terms. That he did so from the South, with an integrated band, following an uncompromising musical path, is what sets him apart.

Allman was a giant among his peers whose accomplishments in his brief career dwarf those of many of his contemporaries. He created a sound that many other bands have tried (and failed), to duplicate and a band that outlasted his own tenure by four decades.

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# Introduction

"Berry Oakley, Dickey Betts, Butch Trucks, Jai Johanny Johanson, Gregg Allman, and I'm Duane Allman!" exclaimed Duane Allman in the early morning hours of March 14, 1971, following a nearly 35-minute version of the Allman Brothers Band's instrumental *tour de force* "Mountain Jam." The improvisation closed out the group's triumphant run at Bill Graham's Fillmore East on March 11 through 13, 1971. Allman's joyous introduction reflected the confidence he felt in the six shows they had recorded. He and his bandmates knew they had finally properly captured the septet's sound for its next record, released in July 1971 as *At Fillmore East*.

The release of *At Fillmore East* and its subsequent success represented the apogee of a musical journey Duane Allman had pursued in earnest since 1965. It was a somewhat unique quest for two reasons. First, while Allman was neither a singer nor a songwriter, he was known as the undisputed leader and "face" of the Allman Brothers Band, the group he founded in March 1969 in Jacksonville, Florida. Second, Allman did so from the South. While it is a region that produced a number of influential musicians and birthed multiple musical genres, few bands had emerged directly from the South in the rock 'n' roll era. Many of Allman's contemporaries, therefore, had to leave the region to

pursue musical fame and fortune, a course Allman himself had followed (unsuccessfully) as well.

The story of how Duane Allman and his band so profoundly affected the world of rock music can be traced back to 1960, when he picked up his first guitar. Shortly thereafter, Allman formed his first band, the Uniques. Later known as the Escorts, this group began playing cover songs in and around his home in Daytona Beach, Florida. By 1965, Allman and his brother began to tour in the South as the Allman Joys. In summer 1966, the brothers served a brief, and ultimately unsuccessful, apprenticeship in Nashville under the tutelage of songwriter John D. Loudermilk, who could not garner record company support for their efforts.

The Allman Joys disbanded soon after, and the brothers joined forces with several other southern musicians as Hour Glass. In March 1967, Bill McEuen, manager of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, discovered the band and helped them secure a contract with Liberty Records in Los Angeles. Hour Glass recorded two records with Liberty, a self-titled debut record (released in October 1967) and *Power of Love* (released in March 1968). The experience was fraught with tension. Allman bristled under the direction of producer Dallas Smith. His list of grievances was long. Not only did he dislike the material Smith chose and the manner in which Smith recorded the band, but he hated Liberty's restrictions on Hour Glass playing live. Smith and Liberty, however, operated within the traditional music industry structure where the producer and record label wielded authority over the artist. At that particular moment, Allman offered little else to his

employers besides the ability to play lead guitar (no matter how well), which limited his options to them. In 1968, Allman angrily left Los Angeles to settle in at Rick Hall's FAME Recording Studio in Muscle Shoals, Alabama.

At FAME, Allman first earned renown beyond a relatively small circle of intimates and bandmates, recording as a session guitarist with Wilson Pickett, Clarence Carter, and Aretha Franklin, among other notables. It was also in Muscle Shoals where Allman secured music industry support—first with Rick Hall and later with Atlantic Records executive Jerry Wexler and Macon, Georgia-based music empresario Phil Walden, who had managed the late Otis Redding. Wexler and Walden's patronage was crucial, as it afforded Allman the opportunity to pull together musicians to play music however he (and they) desired, independent of record label or industry trends or pressures. Their support also allowed Allman and his band to remain in the South.

Southern music comprises the foundation of Allman's story. The Allman Brothers Band emerged from the region playing a new form of rock music that leaned heavily on the band members' southern roots and influences. The region "gave rise to virtually every form of American popular music," write as Bill C. Malone and David Stricklin.[1] The Allman Brothers Band reflected this in their sound. The band fused elements and influences of Appalachian string music and its bluegrass descendent, the acoustic blues of the Mississippi Delta, the electric blues and rhythm and blues of the Great Migration, jazz, country, western swing, gospel, and southern soul, among others. In melding a wide variety of these southern influences with the contemporary sounds of psychedelic rock,

the Allman Brothers Band created a distinct form of American music. It was an original approach that Allman lacked in his previous forays with the Allman Joys and the Hour Glass.

On March 26, 1969, guitarists Duane Allman and Dickey Betts, drummers Jai Johanny Johanson and Butch Trucks, bassist Berry Oakley, and Duane's younger brother Gregg on Hammond B-3 organ and vocals played together for the first time at Trucks's house in Jacksonville. "The Jacksonville Jam," as it has since been dubbed, birthed the Allman Brothers Band.[2]

Allman was a bona fide guitar hero in the mold of British blues guitarists Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck, and Jimmy Page and Americans Jimi Hendrix and Mike Bloomfield. Each of these men built on the early electric guitar stylings of Chicago bluesmen like Muddy Waters, Hubert Sumlin, and Buddy Guy and early rock 'n' roll guitarists such as Chuck Berry, Link Wray, Eddie Cochran, and Duane Eddy. Their playing mostly reworked the electric blues stylings that had emerged from Chicago and other Midwestern (and even southern) cities as part of the Great Migration of African Americans from the South to more charitable economic climates in the North.

Where Allman differs from these musicians is how he employed the form. Allman’s playing differed significantly in that—unlike Clapton, Beck, Page, Hendrix, and Bloomfield—he infused elements of jazz improvisation into his music and especially his solos. By extending solos beyond the three-minute constraint of an AM radio single, Allman and his bandmates created a new genre of jazz-influenced, blues-based rock. He

also played electric bottleneck slide guitar, theretofore used infrequently in rock music. Allman also diverged from his peers in choosing to form a band of musical equals, one that included a second lead guitar player, Dickey Betts. Consequently, the Allman Brothers Band in no way solely served as Duane Allman's supporting band. Instead, Allman was one-sixth of a band that together exceeded the sum of its parts. This was an intentional—and brilliant—decision by Allman.

For an example of this, one can listen to Allman's early efforts in the Allman Joys and Hour Glass—bands that included his brother Gregg. Both groups, while adept at covering popular material of the time, lacked a spark and attracted scant music industry interest and even less radio listenership. A stint with the 31st of February, the first Allman-related project to include a future member of the Allman Brothers Band other than his brother (drummer Butch Trucks), reflects likewise. Though the Allman Joys, Hour Glass, and the 31st of February all were noted for incendiary live performances, the sounds they captured on record never translated into appreciable interest or sales.[3] The scant recorded material of guitarist Betts and bassist Oakley's pre-Allman Brothers ensemble, the Second Coming, also reflects these missing elements. The band's sole single, a cover of Cream's "I Feel Free" backed with the Jefferson Airplane's "She Has Funny Cars," demonstrates an arrangement similar to the originals, with little evidence of originality. Nor does the studio recording reflect the power and creativity that many observers noted about the Second Coming's live performances. In fact, all of the members' pre-Allman Brothers Band groups were best experienced live, a key element

that carried over to the formation of the Allman Brothers. This power, creativity, and intensity ultimately made the *At Fillmore East* record so critical to the Allman Brothers Band's breakthrough to wider audiences.

Many writers and scholars incorrectly identify the band solely as the progenitors of Southern Rock—a genre of music that emerged in the early 1970s as part of an effort term to market and codify rock bands from the American South.[4] The term "Southern Rock," Christopher M. Reali writes,

> [W]as coined by music writers from the northeast and west coast to differentiate between music created by bands from the North or West. The adoption of the phrase helped the music business to market bands from the South and exploited some of the stereotypical images that northerners held of the South—hard-drinking, pickup trucks, Confederate flags and gun racks. Several Southern Rock bands which formed after the Allman Brothers Band embraced the term, and the images it represented.[5]

There is no doubt that the success of the Allman Brothers Band made way for other southern bands with similar influences to emerge from the South—Lynyrd Skynyrd, the Charlie Daniels Band, Marshall Tucker Band, Wet Willie, among others. The Allman Brothers Band, however, was something else entirely in Duane Allman's lifetime and therefore, from 1969 to 1971 (the primary era of this study), does not reflect what many refer to when they write about Southern Rock. As this predates by at least two years the origin of the term "Southern Rock," the comparison does not work chronologically with Duane Allman's tenure with the band. Allman's Allman Brothers Band played American music.

As a whole, Southern Rock bands played a more country-influenced style than the Allmans did in Duane Allman's time. Though Allman and Betts incorporated country music into their guitar duels, they were modeled on western swing harmony lines of Bob Wills's Texas Playboys—and thus utilized more as musical interpretive tools rather than following a particular musical form. In addition, many Southern Rock musicians dressed the part: wearing snap-button shirts, donning cowboy hats and boots, and using Confederate flags in onstage backdrops and in marketing campaigns. The Allman Brothers only reflected Southern Rock of popular imagination after the 1973 release of *Brothers and Sisters* (two years after Allman's death).

Observers who connect the Allman Brothers only to Southern Rock when addressing Duane Allman and his influence on American music build their arguments on a flawed premise. Yes, the Allman Brothers Band was a rock band from the South—thus a southern rock band. But because Allman himself had no affiliation with the Southern Rock movement, it is wrong to winnow his influence solely to his band's role in the genre that emerges after his death. Doing so overlooks Allman's true contribution to American music, a fusing of southern musical forms into a progressive form of rock.

Scholarship that lumps the Allman Brothers Band together with Southern Rock almost exclusively focuses on the post-1973 version of the band as an example of its Southern Rock bona fides. In "Freedom, Manhood, and White Male Tradition in 1970s Southern Rock Music," Ted Ownby utilizes a 1975 Charlie Daniels Band tune, "The South's Gonna Do it Again," to frame his argument that the genre reflected the reaction of

young, white, southern musicians to the changes wrought by the Civil Rights Movement and the subsequent criticism other regions of the country lobbed against the South.[6] This does not reflect Duane Allman, who never publicly expressed pride in the South as overtly as Daniels.

Ownby's focus on the preeminence of the country music influence to Southern Rock is also misplaced when examining Duane Allman's tenure with the Allman Brothers. Yes, the band had country influences, but these were more muted. As writer Joel Selvin noted in 1971, "The only strain of country background is Dickey Betts. . . . Southern kids, according to Duane, don't listen to country music anymore and haven't since rock 'n' roll. It's their parents' music."[7] Ownby also misses the mark by using the Dickey Betts country-inflected song "Ramblin' Man," a song on which Allman did not play, as his primary Allman Brothers-related example.[8]

What Ownby does get right, however, is to identify Southern Rock musicians with W. J. Cash's "helluvafella" tradition. The primary goal of the helluvafella was, Cash writes, "to stand on his head in a bar, to toss down a pint of raw whiskey in a gulp, to fiddle and dance all night, to bit off the nose or gouge out the eye of a favorite enemy, to fight harder and love harder than the next man, to be known far and wide as a helluvafella." Though Ownby never specifically mentions this comparison in relation to Duane Allman (and the violent tendencies Cash highlights are atypical for Allman), much of Cash's archetype fits Allman well.[9]

Mike Butler's "'Luther King Was a Good Ole Boy': The Southern Rock Movement and White Male Identity in the Post-Civil Rights South," also uses Cash's helluvafella to discuss white male identity in the post-civil rights South. By bringing up Southern Rock bands' usage of the Confederate flag and related imagery, Butler argues that the bands projected an image of following traditional Southern beliefs about race. This is simply not true for the Allman Brothers Band. First, as an integrated band, the group rejected the appearance of traditional forms of racial superiority. Second, the band used the rebel flag imagery only once in its history: in promotions for a 1974 tour at the height of the Southern Rock era.[10]

Butler's piece also gives insight into examples of Southern Rockers' intense regional pride. This, too, misses the mark as it relates to the early Allman Brothers Band. For while the Allman Brothers Band of Duane Allman's time was unabashedly southern, expressions of parochialism about the South were limited only to the band's desire to remain in their homeland to launch their career.[11] When asked about the region's influence on the band, Duane Allman retorted, "I don't know! You can't ask about something like that. How do *you* think it's affected our music? You can look at it objectively, I was busy doing it so I don't know."[12] To Allman, the southern influence was evident in his music.

In "Growing Roots in Rocky Soil: An Environmental History of Southern Rock," Bartow J. Elmore uses a changing physical environment in the South as a lens through which he examines Southern Rock. It is also an ill fit for the Allman Brothers. Nearly every

member of the band hailed from an urban or suburban environment. Though surely band members were familiar with pastoral visions of the South, only Betts had a rural background. Elmore does, however, identify what he sees as a quintessential image of southern iconography on the cover of the band's album in a photograph taken on the portico of what looked like an old plantation home—actually a home within the Macon, Georgia, city limits—and in its gatefold (a photo of the band sitting naked in a stream).[13] And while arguing that Southern Rock was a reaction to the changing southern environment and landscape, Elmore uses examples from only two Allman Brothers' tunes from the Duane Allman era: Dickey Betts's "Blue Sky"—with its pastoral images of a river and a blue bird—and Allman's instrumental "Little Martha," before discussing Betts's ubiquitous 1973 Southern Rock anthem "Ramblin' Man." Elmore's argument, while interesting, ultimately falls short in defining the Duane Allman era as Southern Rock.[14]

In *Dixie Lullaby: A Story of Music, Race, and Beginnings in a New South,* journalist Mark Kemp meditates on his own upbringing in the post-integration South. The memoir uses the story of Southern musical culture as a form of self-therapy. Kemp's interviews provide information not only on the milieu of Southern music, but also a window into Southern culture as a whole. The actors in his story discuss the struggles of succeeding as Southern musicians—whites playing what was then known as black music. It was the Allman Brothers, all agree, who were the first to remain in the South yet still find success in the music industry. Kemp invokes the influence of the music's working class roots, citing how the songs of the era morphed from being the cry of the underdog in mournful

blues such as the Allman Brothers Band's "Dreams" and "Whipping Post" to the indignation found in the songs of Southern Rock such as Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Sweet Home Alabama" and the Charlie Daniels Band's "The South's Gonna Do It Again."[15] However, no Allman Brothers Band songs truly fit this paradigm and Kemp's reflections decades are tainted by the passage of time and the author's own attempts to come to grips with his own southern upbringing. Yet while Kemp's take ultimately lacks much definitive analysis beyond his personal experience, he does get into something others have yet to discuss: the audience experience as it pertains to the meaning of the Allman Brothers Band.

What Kemp calls indignation in the songs of Lynyrd Skynyrd and the Charlie Daniels Band, Ownby, Butler, and Elmore identify as rebellion. Ownby and Butler focus on how this rebellion manifests southern masculinity; Elmore examines the concept as it related to the southern landscape. Though neither are completely incorrect assessments, each adds more to the Allman Brothers Band story than existed when Duane Allman was alive. It is abundantly clear that Allman's focus was simply pursuit of excellence through music, an ambition nearly all he encountered—bandmates, record label executives, other musicians, critics, and listeners—maintain Allman achieved. His rebellion, therefore, was against forces he believed precluded him from reaching that goal.[16] It included playing African American-influenced music and affiliating closely with black musicians as well as pushback against the traditional hit-making aspect of the music industry. It also meant abandoning a promising career as a session guitarist in Muscle Shoals to form a road band, bringing an African American into that band, rejecting music industry suggestions

about how to feature that band, remaining in the South to live and record, and an uncompromising approach to his band and its music. Thus, while Duane Allman was alive, the Allman Brothers Band was not a Southern Rock band as these observers define it. Allman instead founded a southern rock (lowercase "s" and "r") band—or a rock band that hailed from south of the Mason–Dixon line.

For the Allman Brothers Band, the term "Swamp Music," which Jerry Wexler coined in *Billboard* magazine in December 1969, is more apropos than Southern Rock. By Wexler's definition, Swamp Music encompassed more than just bands from the South. It was instead music inspired by southern sounds. "It is the Southern sound," Wexler wrote. "R&B played by Southern whites." It included the Macon-based Allman Brothers Band; Tony Joe White from Louisiana; the studio rhythm sections at Stax in Memphis and FAME and Muscle Shoals Sound in Muscle Shoals; Los Angeles-based southern musicians Taj Mahal, Delaney & Bonnie, and Leon Russell; musicians and venues in New Orleans; Miami's Criteria studio; among many others. "What it is," Wexler concluded, "is authentically country Southern, and the exceptions, Taj [Mahal], [Creedence Clearwater Revival's John] Fogerty, and four of The Band, don’t disprove a rutting thing because they know what the roots are."[17] Despite Wexler's strong case for the appellation, Swamp Rock never gained in popularity, and the Allman Brothers have been forever chained to Southern Rock when defined within a musical genre.

In addition to incorrectly associating Duane Allman with Southern Rock, many simply lump Allman together with other guitar-playing peers of his era. It is a facile

comparison. Allman was more than just another excellent guitar player of the rock era. He was instead one of a long line of southern musicians who changed musical history by incorporating various genres and influences to create new musical forms that appealed to musicians and audiences alike. Allman's band of five southerners and one Midwesterner (Oakley) embody Malone and Stricklin's premise of the South "as an incubus of entertainers and styles that have shaped the entire realm of American popular music."[18] Allman formed a band whose players brought forth elements that created a unique form of American music. The Allman Brothers Band emerged from a deep well of southern popular music: jazz, blues, country, rock, soul, rhythm and blues, gospel, and even pop. They added to this mix an improvisation-heavy attack, jazz-like in approach, with elements of the psychedelic sounds that emanated from San Francisco and elsewhere. The Allmans' sound was truly contemporary American music built on longstanding traditions and trends.[19]

Allman's career, therefore, is more a reflection of southern musicians such as Jimmie Rodgers, Charlie Patton, Robert Johnson, Louis Armstrong, Fiddlin' John Carson, Charlie Poole, A.P. Carter, Bob Wills, and even Elvis Presley than it is of his peers of the rock era. Like Allman, these southern musicians incorporated a variety of sounds in their music and played wide-ranging repertoires that included not only their "home" style of music (country for Rodgers, Poole, Carter, and Wills; jazz for Armstrong; blues for Patton and Johnson; and rock 'n' roll for Elvis), but also elements of mountain music, minstrelsy, blues, Tin Pan Alley standards, jazz, ragtime, and pop.[20] Allman did likewise in the Allman

Brothers Band. His life's work reflected his musical forebears not only as a native of the South, but in the wide repertoire his band played. He diverged from these precursors in that he did his best work in a band context rather than as a solo performer.

Like these antecedents, Allman's band played a wide repertory. It covered electric blues by Muddy Waters ("Trouble No More"), Sonny Boy Williamson ("One Way Out"), and Elmore James ("Done Somebody Wrong"). It based its cover of Blind Willie McTell's acoustic "Statesboro Blues" on Taj Mahal's electric version of the same song. The band stretched out two popular blues and rhythm and blues standards, Ray Charles's cover of "I'm Gonna Move to the Outskirts of Town" and Bobby "Blue" Bland's "Stormy Monday," to nearly twice their original length. The Allman Brothers Band's take on Junior Wells's two-plus-minute song "You Don't Love Me" eventually exceeded nineteen minutes. Pop songs made it into the band's repertoire in the form of "Mountain Jam"—an extended instrumental take based on the melody of Donovan's "There is a Mountain" and in teases of popular songs that the band's soloists performed live.[21] And the song that leads off the band's debut album, "Don't Want You No More," was an instrumental version of the B-side of the Spencer Davis Group's minor pop hit from 1967, "Time Seller."

Though country music was not a major inspiration for the songs the band played, its influence is nonetheless evident. Inspired by western swing, in particular, Allman and Betts played improvised harmony lines on "Mountain Jam." Betts employed country-inflected major pentatonic licks frequently, most notably on the Gregg Allman-penned

"Midnight Rider." And Betts's own "Blue Sky," one of the last songs Duane Allman recorded, features harmony lines directly inspired by Bob Wills's western swing.

The band also wrote and played instrumentals (which might be considered a curious choice considering the high-caliber vocalist they had in Gregg Allman). Dickey Betts's "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed" is perhaps the band's most famous instrumental and in form, structure, and performance, it is jazz played in a rock context. "Hot 'Lanta," an instrumental credited to the entire group, is shorter and more tightly structured than "Elizabeth Reed," and also reflects the band's jazz leanings. In addition to these examples, the band's improvisational approach to nearly all of its songs, demonstrates the influence of jazz on its overall sound.

Two additional songs in the Allman Brothers' early repertoire further define the band. The first is the dreamy waltz-time blues "Dreams." Gregg Allman's lyrics bring to mind Malone and Stricklin's depiction of the South "as a source of images and symbols, both positive and negative, which have fueled the imaginations of musicians and songwriters."[22] The song also contains one of the younger Allman's finest vocals and a mesmerizing guitar part from Duane Allman that includes an extended slide guitar solo that drew praise from casual listeners and critics alike.

The second is "Whipping Post," another original blues by Gregg Allman. "Whipping Post" is a song about loss and hard times caused by a woman. The song's title and lyrics also reflect a particularly memorable image of the antebellum South, though it is an experience southern whites had probably only borne witness to. These are by no

means distinctly southern themes, but they are universal in blues music. The band's execution of the song demonstrates its uniqueness. "Whipping Post," particularly the extended live version from *At Fillmore East*, contains elements of everything the Allman Brothers Band brings to the table: strong vocals; excellent blues lyrics; multiple solos by both guitarists (including call-and-response playing); propulsive rhythm anchored by the bass guitar playing lead lines with, underneath, and through the music; multiple time signatures; all played with a spirit of improvisation and risk. It is perhaps the song most representative of the original Allman Brothers Band.

Despite this assessment, no single song in the Allman Brothers' oeuvre is truly indicative of the band's repertoire. The Allman Brothers Band are therefore not Southern Rock but, rather, American music. For while its music may not appeal to fans of each of the genres it plays, the band provides an access point for listeners that is at once familiar but also unique, as it takes music to new forms and in new directions. This dissertation traces how the Allman Brothers Band reached that point. Duane Allman is at the center of the story. As with all history, the narrative does not unfold in a straight line and, sadly, Allman is killed in a motorcycle accident just as the band begins to achieve the success and renown for which he strove.

Allman had to first learn not only to master his instrument and hone his talent as a musician, but also to discover how to bring originality to the music. He also had to learn to tame some of his impulses and frustrations with the larger music industry. He, like his

peers, experienced his share of failures. What he learned from each of these was important in how he constructed the Allman Brothers Band in 1969.

It seems obvious to a twenty-first-century observer looking at the breadth of Allman's achievements, but without talent, Allman would never have emerged from Daytona Beach, Florida, in the first place. Unlike his younger brother Gregg, he was not a singer of any great ability, nor was he a songwriter. Thus, the traditional route to success in the music business (through hit singles) was not ideal for him; initial stints with John D. Loudermilk and Dallas Smith ultimately resulted in frustration and failure.

These setbacks honed in Allman a decision to put his musical vision first, to the near-exclusion of a successful career by traditional means. This choice was counterintuitive, particularly once he gained recognition as a session guitarist in Muscle Shoals. While Allman certainly enjoyed the attention and the money he made as a session musician, he missed the excitement and the interaction of a live audience and the dynamic of working in a band context.

After securing the patronage of Jerry Wexler and Phil Walden, Allman set out to form his band. He found them in Johanson, Oakley, Betts, Trucks, and his brother Gregg.[23] The band was to be a band foremost. It would operate without a designated front man or a declared leader. "When we need a leader, I'm it," he told Laurel Dann in 1971. "Everybody understands that." But the Allman Brothers Band did not need a leader. "Because we got that goal, that attitude I told you about," he said.[24]

Each member of the band was a seasoned performer in his own right. Brothers Duane and Gregg Allman had begun touring throughout the South in the mid-1960s as the Allman Joys. Jai Johanny "Jaimoe" Johanson, Duane's first recruit to his new band, had served as a drummer for a number of rhythm and blues performers including Percy Sledge, Arthur Conley, and Otis Redding. Born in Chicago, bassist Berry Oakley initially played lead guitar in the Shaynes, a Chicago band that had once opened for the Byrds in 1965. The following year Oakley joined the band of pop star Tommy Roe and toured with them until 1967, when he relocated to Sarasota, Florida, where he first met guitarist Dickey Betts. A Floridian like the Allmans, Betts had been a touring musician since the age of sixteen as part of a traveling carnival called the World of Mirth. He formed his own Florida-based bands, where he crossed paths with the brothers Allman, and in 1968 founded the Second Coming with Oakley. Drummer Claude “Butch” Trucks, from Jacksonville, originally met the Allmans after his band had failed an audition at a Daytona Beach club. In 1968, Trucks had joined forces with the Allman brothers in a short-lived band called the 31st of February.

In assembling his band, Allman not only chose proficient instrumentalists, but also players who pushed musical boundaries. Somewhat modeled on the music of British blues guitarists such as Jeff Beck and Eric Clapton, Allman added a new element to the equation: twin lead guitars. Until this point in rock’s evolution, a single guitarist typically handled lead duties. With Betts, Allman changed this dynamic. He brought in a player whom he (and later critics, contemporaries, and listeners) acknowledged as his equal.

Bassist Oakley, himself a former lead guitarist and formidable player in his own right, commanded the bass as a third lead instrument, ultimately giving the band three guitar soloists. Allman also added to the mix two drummers, Trucks and Johanson, a concept rarely employed in rock music.[25]

That he subsumed his own ego, which by all accounts was considerable, in the service of the collective of musicians he pulled together, puts Allman in a category by himself. That the band he formed lasted four decades after his death speaks to Allman's prescience as an artist. From 1973–1976, the Allman Brothers Band was one of the top-grossing acts in American music. It co-headlined the Watkins Glen Summer Jam with the Grateful Dead and the Band, and was instrumental in the early stages of Jimmy Carter's 1976 presidential campaign. It survived not only Oakley's death a year after Allman's, but also multiple lineup changes, several breakups, financial ruin, and a bitter split from founding guitarist Dickey Betts in 2000. On October 28, 2014, the Allman Brothers Band played its final concert, leaving behind a forty-five year legacy of music.

The unit that played that final show mirrored the band Duane Allman created in 1969. In addition to original members Gregg Allman, Butch Trucks, and Jai Johanny Johanson, it featured two guitarists steeped in the tradition of the Allman Brothers Band in Warren Haynes and Derek Trucks (drummer Butch Trucks's nephew), an adventurous lead bass player in Oteil Burbridge, and percussionist Marc Quiñones. As Haynes said on the eve of the band's final run of shows in October 2014, "The thing I'm most proud of is that we've been able to carry the mantle of a great tradition. . . . It was based on trying to

tap into the vision and proud tradition of the original band."[26] The origins of that vision and proud tradition are what I explore in this work, showing why Duane Allman holds a truly unique place in American music.

This dissertation focuses almost exclusively on the music and musical roots of Duane Allman. It will not address in more than a cursory fashion the typical tropes of sex and drugs and rock 'n' roll. There is already plenty of material available that discussing these issues as they relate to Allman and the Allman Brothers Band. This well-trod ground is simply not of interest to this writer.[27]

I intentionally avoid the money-related troubles the band had with manager Phil Walden. This is not because I find the story immaterial. Indeed, it is significant and indicative of how the music business changed from the rhythm and blues era in which Walden had come of age to the rock era—when rock music became a much more complex and more lucrative business. All this is true, but it is already well documented and falls beyond the scope of this study, which ends with *Eat a Peach*, the album the Allman Brothers released after Allman's death on October 29, 1971.[28]

The Allman Brothers Band's story stretches from 1969 to 2014, making its later years too recent for historical study. For this reason, I have focused my research on the Duane Allman era and the band's output from 1969 to early 1972. This period encompasses the four albums released in Allman's lifetime or shortly thereafter: *The Allman Brothers Band* (1969), *Idlewild South* (1970), *At Fillmore East* (1971), and *Eat a*

*Peach* (1972). I avoid much discussion of the band's career after Duane Allman's death in October 1971—except as those discussions add context to the original era of the band.

Chapter One sets the story in the locale where it begins: the American South. Following the Civil War and Reconstruction, the South began a long process of modernization, reflected in the region's urbanization and through technology. These two elements greatly affect southern culture and music. Improved transportation networks—initially railroads and, later, roads and automobiles—made it easier for southerners to migrate to towns and cities and to traverse the region. Modernization in the form of phonograph records and the ubiquity of radio meant listeners could enjoy music in settings other than live performances and thus, strains of southern music reached well beyond the region. This chapter also addresses the racialization of southern culture and music. African American southerners faced tremendous obstacles in the pre-civil rights era. Black musicians documented their experiences, first through acoustic blues, which, in tandem with urbanization, evolved to electric blues and rhythm and blues. Black music's popularity led to the creation of what Karl Hagstrom Miller called "a musical color line."[29] Despite attempts at strict enforcement of this segregation, musicians, listeners, and record buyers routinely crossed the racial barrier. In the 1950s, rock 'n' roll evolved from this social and cultural milieu.

The sounds of rock 'n' roll, blues, and rhythm and blues inspired brothers Duane and Gregg Allman and other southerners of the third generation of rock 'n' roll to pursue music. This is the subject of Chapter Two, which spans from 1960 to 1967. The Allmans,

like nearly all southern musicians of this era, followed the same path: they picked up instruments in their early teens, founded garage bands, learned and sometimes recorded a wide repertoire of cover songs, and began touring regionally. The musicians also publicly flaunted racial conventions. Like fellow white, southern, rock 'n' roll pioneers such as Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Buddy Holly, and Carl Perkins, they venerated and emulated African American music and culture. Unlike their predecessors, however, Allman and his peers much more prominently exhibited blues and rhythm and blues—rather than country—inspiration. In doing so they added a sense of originality to southern music. This chapter discusses how these experiences helped create the opportunity for a renaissance in southern musical form and traditions with Duane Allman's founding of the Allman Brothers Band.

For Duane Allman, however, the resurgence he led would have to wait. Chapter Three documents that Allman had to first discover the vagaries of the music industry in an ultimately failed trek to Los Angeles with his band, Hour Glass. It is here that Allman confronted the stark reality that his talent as a guitar player is less valuable to the music industry than he believed it should be. The chapter unfolds Allman's time in California, his return to Florida, and his groundbreaking session work for Rick Hall in Muscle Shoals, which ultimately secured Allman a recording contract.

After unsuccessful recordings as a solo artist, Allman decided to form another band. Following his disastrous experience with Hour Glass, the guitarist determined several things about his new project. First, it was important that the band remained in

the South, a lesson he learned recording demos with Hour Glass at FAME. Second, the band would harness the collective talents of each of its individual members rather than a group supporting a front man. Third, it disavowed adherence to any music industry pressures.

Chapter Four covers Allman's formation of the Allman Brothers Band, focusing on the careers and musical influences (mostly southern) of each band member and highlighting how each contributed to the band's overall sound. In particular, it underscores the importance of the first two members of the ensemble: drummer Jai Johanny Johanson and bassist Berry Oakley. This chapter also delves more deeply into two elements somewhat unique to the Allman Brothers Band: the use of two drummers and twin lead guitars. The chapter also describes how the band's various musical influences morphed into the Allman Brothers' particular form of American music.

Guitarist Dickey Betts said the band developed in phases. Chapter Five charts that development. It discusses the group's decision to follow a course divorced from the hit-making path each had followed earlier in their musical careers. The chapter also explains more in depth how the band's individual and collective influences manifest themselves in the band's repertoire, both original and cover songs. Chapter Five also explores how the band and its management presented themselves to audiences as a touring ensemble and nonpareil live act. The group's relentless touring pace and frequent live shows propelled a popularity that belied the relative paucity of success garnered by their first two records:

*The Allman Brothers Band* and *Idlewild South*. Both factors led to the decision to record the band's third album live.

Chapter Six traces how essential Phil Walden was to the early Allman Brothers Band. Walden was the band's manager and primary benefactor. He not only encouraged and supported the band's idea to record a live record, but also shepherded the process through the executives at Atlantic Records. *At Fillmore East*, the album released in July 1971, was Walden's reward for his belief in Duane Allman's vision. Since 1969, Walden had supported the Allman Brothers Band financially and materially—including resisting suggestions to relocate the band from the South. Without his backing, I argue, the Allman Brothers Band would never have achieved renown beyond the small cadre of fans it had reached solely through touring.

Chapter Seven introduces introduce a new element to the study of the Allman Brothers Band: audience reception. To date, books and literature on the band have focused on the statements and recollections of band members and people within the group's immediate sphere of influence. While some have also included critical commentary, the authors have presented this material more in passing than giving it any significant analysis. This is remedied in a chronological study of reception of the band's live concerts and albums and singles. Ultimately, it proves that most listeners—fans and critics alike—responded positively to the new form of American music Duane Allman’s band created.

Duane Allman as a person, a band leader, and a musician comprises Chapter Eight. A truly unique individual firmly dedicated to his craft as a musician and hyper-focused on achieving his singular musical vision, he lived vicariously. The latter proved his ultimate downfall, as he died tragically at age twenty-four. The chapter expands on daughter Galadrielle's argument that her father’s life was a love affair with music. Chapter Eight describes how that romance unfolded in Allman's time not only with the Allman Brothers Band, but also his appearances and recordings with peers such as Delaney Bramlett and Eric Clapton. Allman's enduring legacy is a band that outlived him by forty-three years.

Finally, a concluding chapter examines the public history implications of the Allman Brothers Band. The band's various lineups from 1969 through 2014 provide historians and ethnomusicologists a prism through which to examine a variety of music industry trends, including the aforementioned Southern Rock period of 1973–1982, the resurgence of rock through the classic rock radio format, and the band's regrouping as a touring act beginning in 1989. In addition, this chapter discusses Allman Brothers material culture through the Allman Brothers Band Museum at the Big House, in Macon, Georgia.

In sum, this dissertation seeks to provide an understanding of why Duane Allman and the band were groundbreaking and important. It fills an important gap as current literature on Duane Allman and the Allman Brothers Band is biographical in nature and lacks the insight historians bring to their work. To date, five books about the Allman

Brothers Band and/or Allman have been published. They are: Tom Nolan's *The Allman Brothers Band: A Biography in Words and Pictures* (1976); Scott Freeman's 1995 book *Midnight Riders: The Story of the Allman Brothers Band*; Randy Poe's *Skydog: The Duane Allman Story* (2006); Gregg Allman's autobiography, *My Cross to Bear* (2012); a full history of the band, Alan Paul's *One Way Out: The Inside History of the Allman Brothers Band* (2014); and Galadrielle Allman's story of her relationship to her father's music, *Please Be With Me: A Song for My Father Duane Allman* (2014).

Each of these books is integral to any telling of the band's story, but stop far short of being a work of scholarship. Only Galadrielle Allman's book begins to touch on the "why" of the importance of the band, and primarily as conjecture from her father's perspective.[30] None addresses audience reception in any meaningful way and none put the band in the context of the time period in which they developed, lived, played, and thrived. As the only existing biographical works on the Allman Brothers Band, this work leans on these sources. In addition, I have culled a number of primary sources, many from college and alternative newspapers; magazines such as *Rolling Stone*, *Crawdaddy*, *Creem*, and others; interviews of the band spanning 1972 through today; and bootleg recordings of the original band.

Taken together, these sources put Duane Allman into context as a singular force in American music and the culture and music of the South. Duane Allman was a giant among his peers whose accomplishments in his brief career dwarf those of many of his contemporaries. In creating the American music of the Allman Brothers Band, Allman

invented a sound that many other bands have tried (and, I believe, failed), to duplicate and a band that outlasted his own tenure by four decades. American music is quintessentially Southern music and Duane Allman and the Allman Brothers Band, the band he founded in 1969, is found at that intersection. This dissertation will demonstrate how that is.

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[1] Bill C. Malone and David Stricklin, *Southern Music/American Music* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2003), 18.

[2] N.B.: A quick note on terminology. I refer to drummer Jaimoe as Jai Johanny Johanson throughout this work. While Johanson was called Jaimoe during Duane Allman's lifetime, he did not formally adopt this moniker until years after Allman's death. In addition, for consistency's sake, I have corrected the spelling of guitarist Dickey Betts's first name in each case I encountered it. In the band's early days, writers used "Dicky," "Dickie," and "Dick" (he later used Richard Betts when touring and recording). I have done likewise with the spelling of Gregg Allman's name.

[3] Shades of the soon-to-form Allman Brothers Band are very evident in the combination of Trucks' powerhouse drumming, Gregg Allman's vocals, and Duane Allman's guitar playing and arrangement of the 31st of February's version of Canadian folk singer Bonnie Dobson's "Morning Dew"—made famous by the Grateful Dead.

[4] I have capitalized Southern Rock intentionally to highlight it as a marketing/music industry term and genre.

[5] Christopher M. Reali, "Blues-Rock, Progressive: A Style Analysis of the Allman Brothers Band," (master's thesis, Hunter College of the City University of New York, 2007), 1.

[6] Ted Ownby, "Freedom, Manhood, and White Male Tradition in 1970s Southern Rock Music," in *Haunted Bodies: Gender and Southern Texts*, eds. Anne Goodwyn Jones and Susan V. Donaldson (Charlottesville, VA: The University Press of Virginia, 1997), 369–388.

[7] Joel Selvin, "Duane Allman," *Earth*, January 1971.

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[8] A majority of Ownby's examples are songs by Lynyrd Skynyrd, who fit the Southern Rock archetype much better than the Allman Brothers.

[9] W.J. Cash, cited in Ownby, 371.

[10] Butler correctly highlights Bill Graham's use of a plantation image in a promotional poster from a September 26, 1973 show at the Winterland in San Francisco.

[11] Mike Butler, "'Luther King Was a Good Ole Boy': The Southern Rock Movement and White Male Identity in the Post-Civil Rights South," *Popular Music and Society* 23, no. 2: 41-61.

[12] Ellen Mandel, "The Georgia Peach," *Guitar World*, November 1991, 73.

[13] His article also sites random Duane Allman quotes about the South to support his thesis.

[14] Bartow J. Elmore, "Growing Roots in Rocky Soil: An Environmental History of Southern Rock," *Southern Cultures* 16, no. 3 (Fall 2010): 102-128.

[15] Mark Kemp, *Dixie Lullaby: A Story of Music, Race, and New Beginnings in a New South* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 4-12, 25-28, 38, 50-51, 67-81, 87, 104.

[16] Many argue that Allman's use of drugs became one of the forces that impinged his music-making ability—and would only have gotten worse in the future. I do not necessarily dispute this contention, though it's impossible to know.

[17] Jerry Wexler, “What It Is—Is Swamp Music—Is What It Is,” *Billboard*, December 1969, accessed February 2, 2016, https://www-rocksbackpages-com.ezproxy.mtsu.edu/Library/Article/what-it-is--is-swamp-music--is-what-it-is.

[18] Malone and Stricklin, 14.

[19] Were it not for the band's grounding in blues-rock, in fact, it might have been dubbed *fusion*: the jazz/rock musical combination that emerged in 1969 with the Tony Williams Lifetime and Miles Davis's *Bitches Brew* band.

[20] See Patrick Huber, *Linthead Stomp: The Creation of Country Music in the Piedmont South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Jocelyn R. Neal, *The Songs of Jimmie Rodgers: A Legacy in Country Music* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009); and Barry Mazor, *Meeting Jimmie Rodgers: How America's Original Roots Music Hero Changed the Pop Sounds of a Century* (Oxford:

Oxford University Press, 2009). Bill Monroe is another of these antecedents, who took old-time Appalachian mountain/folk music, sped it up, and added lightning-fast, jazz-like breaks to form bluegrass music.

[21] For example, in recordings from shows on July 3, 5, 9, and 10, 1970, Duane Allman quotes "Aquarius" by the Fifth Dimension as he begins his solo on "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed."

[22] Malone and Stricklin, 14.

[23] It is somewhat ironic that the last person to join Allman's new band was his brother Gregg—as the Allmans had been in bands together since first picking up instruments. But when Allman pulled his band together, Gregg Allman was in Los Angeles fulfilling the Hour Glass contract his brother had walked out on.

[24] Laurel Dann, "The Last Interview with Duane Allman," *Creem*, December 1973, accessed September 18, 2017, https://www.duaneallman.info/duaneslastinterview.htm.

[25] Allman wanted two drummers, Johanson said, "'Because Otis Redding and James Brown have two.'" Quoted in Alan Paul, *One Way Out: The Inside History of the Allman Brothers Band*, 1st. ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2014), 19.

[26] Alan Paul, *One Way Out: The Inside History of the Allman Brothers Band*, 1st St. Martin's Griffin ed. (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2015), 414.

[27] See Paul, *One Way Out*; Galadrielle Allman, *Please Be With Me: A Song for My Father* (New York: Random House, 2014); Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear* (New York: HarperCollins Press, 2012); Scott Freeman, *Midnight Riders: The Story of the Allman Brothers Band* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1995); Tom Nolan, *The Allman Brothers Band: A Biography in Words and Pictures* (Sire Books-Chappell Music Company, 1976); Willie Perkins, *No Saints, No Saviors: My Years with the Allman Brothers Band* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2005); and Randy Poe, *Skydog: The Duane Allman Story* (San Francisco: Backbeat Books, 2006).

[28] Freeman's *Midnight Riders* provides the most thorough account of the band's issues with Walden's management and contracts.

[29] Karl Hagstrom Miller, *Segregating Sound: Inventing Folk and Pop Music in the Age of Jim Crow* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2010).

[30] Similar to Erik Larsen's *Devil in the White City*, *Please Be With Me* is a combination history/novel. It is not a work of historical fiction, but includes the author's conjecture of thoughts and motives.

# Chapter 1

## This Is a Story about the South

This is a story *about* the South—not *of* the South, nor of a *monolithic* South. Rather, it reflects the region in which Duane Allman and his bandmates grew up, mastered their instruments, learned to play other people's songs, wrote their own songs, and toured the South playing them. It is also where the Allman Brothers Band was formed.

It is not a story about a rural, agricultural South—though elements of it are inexorably interwoven. And while urbanization plays a major role in the narrative, it is not the primary focus. Instead, the tale unwinds in small communities and along the highways and byways of the region in the post-World War II era. And as the elements of the journey finally come into place, they do so in Macon, Georgia, a quiet middle Georgia town ninety miles from the state's capital in Atlanta.

As this is a story about the South, a black/white racial dynamic prevails. Segregation was strictly enforced legally and extra-legally throughout much of the time period covered in this work. In spite of the efforts to keep the races separate, southern youth had access to and gravitated toward the music of both blacks and whites. It was the music of black southerners that initially inspired Allman and those who would become his bandmates to pick up instruments and adapt into their own repertoires. In combining multiple genres of southern music (nearly all African American in origin)—

blues, rhythm and blues/soul, gospel, rock 'n' roll, country and western, and jazz—into a cohesive sound, the Allman Brothers Band ultimately create a new form of American music.[1]

A generation of historians has explored the social, racial, and economic dynamics of the South in the postbellum era.[2] Following the Civil War and Reconstruction, the South began its long, arduous process towards modernization in two main ways central to this story: the African American struggle for equality, and transformation from a rural, agricultural-based economy one more centered on industry. This progression rarely followed a straight line, but without it, the Allman Brothers Band would never have achieved any renown.

Though the region never urbanized to the extent of its northern neighbors, this modernization and transformation manifested itself in urbanization on a larger scale than ever seen before in the South. The migration from the country to the city manifested itself physically, economically, and metaphorically. These movements begin in the latter part of the nineteenth century and continue apace throughout the next century. The changes were dramatic.[3]

As southerners moved from farms to cities and towns, they carried with them a vibrant culture preserved and adapted from Old South traditions and mores. Historian David Goldfield finds the rural South and its cities to be intimately connected and inseparable, and thus refutes the conclusion of early twentieth-century sociologist Louis Wirth, who maintained cities were distinctive environments that destroyed or

permanently altered their migrant cultures. While true of America's immigrant-heavy, turn-of-the-twentieth century cities in the North and Midwest, it was not true of the South. Nevertheless, these rural immigrants greatly shaped the southern cities to which they migrated.[4]

The South had remained primarily rural from its earliest days of European settlement and urbanization in the antebellum South was remote and diffuse: Typically, cities of four thousand people or less established to support the region's staple agricultural economy. In the decades following the Civil War, southern urbanization continued to lag, increasing only slightly, from 9.6 percent of the population in 1860 to 12.2 percent, in two decades. (In contrast, northeastern urbanization grew from 35.7 to 50.8 percent.)[5]

As the region's predominant export and the axis around which much of its economy revolved, the cotton economy dominated the region and its urbanization patterns and trends. The South's largest cities were port cities that grew up to support the export of cotton. It was big business. In 1830, 20 percent of the nation's leading cities were southern. Yet by 1900, only one remained, New Orleans. Modernization in the efficiency in processing raw cotton and improved marketing techniques precipitated this decline. The result was a different kind of urbanization than in the more industrial North and Midwest: a growth of smaller towns and cities that grew up around these new enterprises.[6]

Railroads fully unhitch the New South from the Old. Construction of southern railroads outpaced the rest of the nation in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. By 1890, nine of every ten southerners lived in a county serviced by a railroad. Southern villages quickly sprouted around railroad stops, doubling in number between 1870 and 1880, and doubling again by the turn-of-the-century two decades later.[7] Stores, storehouses, and taverns emerge along with rural railroad stations. This national network of railroads led to southern shopkeepers bypassing the South's larger port cities altogether.

After 1890, southern cities began "a new era of consolidation and expansion," Edward L. Ayers writes. Railroad stations "pulled hitherto scattered activities under one roof, reopened the flow of traffic by consolidating rail lines and crossings, and made land previously used for railroads and their ancillary activities available for other businesses." Consequently, by 1910 nearly one-third of southerners lived in a city or town. These New South cities, Ayers concludes, no longer stood "as isolated islands in a vast rural sea but rather as the center of trade and ambition for dozens of smaller towns and cities."[8] Southern life and culture, including music, thus began to revolve around urban areas for the first time in its history.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, another transportation-related technological breakthrough overlapped, and later overtook, railroads: the automobile. Along with it came the need for a more efficient network of paved roads. Many southern cities responded accordingly, constructing roads first as part of the Good Roads

Movement, and later in answer to America's need to more efficiently move men and materiel in World War I. "Road building," Tammy Ingram argues, "was a crucial linchpin in the transition to the modern South, a transition that shaped the region's political institutions as much as its infrastructure." The expansion of infrastructure spurred economic growth, that in turn lead to an increase in southern manufacturing in the early twentieth century. Roads also offered an escape from the isolated life of many rural southerners.[9]

Economic opportunity expanded exponentially as result of federal investment in the region beginning in World War I, and continuing with the New Deal. And while both were transformational for the region's infrastructure, the Second World War proved the major catalyst for the region's infrastructure and economic growth. This activity spurred another round of Southern urbanization.

Because the South lagged far behind the nation in per capita income and resources, the federal government invested heavily in the region during the World War II years, often to the exclusion of other areas of the country. The South became home to more than two-thirds of America's military bases. This infused the region's economy with both money and people, further spurring additional economic gains and modernization. The region continued its urbanization, with the farm population decreasing by 20 percent and urban population growing by 36 percent. At the height of the war buildup between 1940 and 1943, David Goldfield writes, "Forty-three of the South's forty-nine

metropolitan areas reported population increases, compared with twenty-five of seventy-four metropolitan areas in the North."[10]

These economic and transportation enhancements also led to an industrialization of the South also industrialized. Beyond the economic boon to the region, how industrialization impacted southerners culturally is critically important to understanding the context and significance of the Allman Brothers Band's story. Rural southerners migrating to these new southern cities carried their cultural and musical traditions with them. The sense of community they developed is particularly evident in their musical traditions.[11]

Historian Patrick Huber finds this music an authentic representation of its people. “Millhand singers and musicians," he writes, "wrote and performed songs that bore the stamp of both the older rural, largely agricultural world . . . and the newer urban-industrial world that they themselves occupied. The musicians, he argues, "lived at the precise historical moment that allowed them to combine the collective memories of the rural countryside with the upheavals of urban-industrial life to create a distinctive American music that spoke to the changing realities of working-class life in the early twentieth-century South.”[12] Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, et al. assert it more plainly. "Country music in the 1920s and 1930s bolstered a sense of unique, regionwide identity."[13]

Two other modernizing elements emerged within this urban migration: the phonograph and radio. Both were significant in the proliferation of popular music in the South, most notably radio. As Hall, et al. note, "The radio and the phonograph put

millhands across the region in touch with each other, allowing those who missed [live concert] performances to hear and enjoy the same music." Music became a communal ritual to these new urban migrants. "Millhands carried on a conversation about their favorite songs," Hall, et al. write, "talking not so much about the factory as about the stuff of daily life—family and friends, romance, and personal tragedy." The sentiment evoked by lyrics "struck chords of recognition" with audiences; some, such as "Wreck on the Highway" and "Little Mary Phagan," reflected actual events and personal experiences. Eventually, they argue, this music is "homogenized and commercialized."[14]

Radio is a critical ingredient in this mix. The medium literally opened up the airwaves to the sounds of southern performers and southern vernacular music. Out of it spawns a national musical culture. This culture manifests itself both with southern music and a music industry that evolved from the sale of Tin Pan Alley sheet music to the proliferation of recordings. This transformed the music business, setting the stage for the explosion of rock 'n' roll in the decades to come.[15]

Understanding the impact of radio and the music business that grew to support it is key to comprehending southern musical culture. Radio provided access to southern music across North America and even worldwide. The development of a recording process (and industry) spurred generations of southerners to seek opportunities to share their music beyond merely live performances.

Radio also helped break down the region's most notable social barrier: the separation of the black and white races. Race and race relations loom large throughout

all of southern history; lessons in how southerners adapted and reacted to these racial boundaries live throughout southern music of the early, mid-, and late-twentieth century. For while social mores and Jim Crow laws restricted physical interaction between southerners of different races, radio accomplished no such thing. Despite consistent and multiple attempts to the contrary, it was impossible to truly segregate the airwaves. Radio carried the music of southerners to the masses and, in turn, brought African American music and culture into the lives of white southerners in ways theretofore unavailable. In short, technology crossed the South's color line.

For southerners migrating to cities, music offered not only a connection to their rural pasts, but also presented a way to cope communally with their living conditions. This is true for the music of black and white southerners alike. "Southern rural music—blues, country, gospel, work songs, and field hollers," Pete Daniel observes, "evolved from the everyday trials, tribulations, and hopes of southern farmers." In the era before the proliferation of the radio or the phonograph, Daniel reports, itinerant musicians "traveled along an invisible network composed of the shifting and overlapping itineraries of minstrel and vaudeville shows, one-night stands in small towns, street corners, brothels, juke joints, and honky-tonks." Whether country and western (then dubbed "hillbilly"), blues (called "race" music until 1949), or gospel, the music of these rural southerners was vibrant and continually evolving. Younger musicians, Daniel argues, "might well have learned how their ancestors played, but its presentation addressed contemporary concerns and provided a commentary on family, love, tragedy, and

frustration." The music of rural southerners of both races had its roots firmly in the rural soil. That music, Daniel maintains, fueled a "mid-century revolution."[16] It was a revolution Duane Allman was a part of as well.

Things were worse for blacks. While whites at the bottom of the economic spectrum suffered mightily in this environment, at the end of the day they were still white, and had opportunities as whites that were simply not available for African Americans. In 1903, W.E.B. Du Bois articulated a principle that must be understood today: Knowledge of the black freedom struggle—and white reaction to it—is critical to understanding the modern South. “The problem of the twentieth century," he writes, "is the problem of the color line."[17] From the earliest days of Emancipation through the Civil Rights Movement and beyond, the region has struggled to integrate African Americans into full citizenship. This was intentional and politically motivated. Following the Civil War, white southern landowners created systems to keep blacks in a form of permanent peonage through sharecropping. Thus, black southerners were rarely able to ascend the agricultural ladder from tenancy to land ownership. By creating laws that kept African Americans from access to political or economic power, whites also drove a wedge between the economic interests of the poorest of the South's residents, white and black. In doing so, white elites maintained control of the lower castes in the South, black and white. To express and relieve their frustrations, many black southerners turned to music, blues in particular.

Of all of the southern musical genres, the blues have probably received the most scholarly attention.[18] Although elements of the blues seeped into white performers' repertoires prior to the rock 'n' roll era, blues was predominantly the domain of African Americans. Blues musicians gave voice to their listeners' concerns,, Robert Palmer argues. They "gave their audience a music that was theirs and theirs alone." Blues, he continues, expressed "something profoundly important about the depth, vitality, and continuity of African American culture."[19]

Just exactly what those profoundly important messages represented to African Americans has long been contested. Initial interpretations emerged in the early 1960s as scholars Paul Oliver and Samuel Charters and folklorist/song collector John Lomax interpreted blues music as ultimately conservative in nature. To these writers and their adherents, blues lyrics connote an acceptance of the African American plight—the individual cries of anguish. Lomax's son Alan, and later scholars such as Amiri Baraka (née LeRoi Jones) refute these interpretations and see within the blues a latent resistance and resentment toward the Jim Crow system. Indeed, they see a rejection of accommodation, finding instead liberation in the songs of bluesmen.[20]

Blues music, whether accommodationist or a form of resistance, was a form of protest against the racial conditions of segregation. Yet because of Jim Crow's stultifying nature, blues as protest was rarely an overt endeavor. Its song forms, lyrics, and performances were often veiled in double meanings, a significance southern blacks understood all too well. W.E.B. Du Bois dubbed this the “double consciousness” of

African American life. The navigation between acceptance and resistance to Jim Crow enabled black performers to preach a message of personal freedom despite the oppressive environment in which they lived.[21]

As time passed and circumstances changed, scholars now find the blues to be both resistant and accommodationist.[22] As new opportunities became available for African Americans, the countercultural messages of blues lyrics changed from those of bluesman Charlie Patton singing of sharecropping's hardships, to Big Bill Broonzy celebrating the urban migration, to Peetie Wheatstraw singing the praises of the New Deal, and to Sonny Boy Williamson singing of patriotism in World War II. R. A. Lawson identifies this dichotomy in the change from a “me”-centered mentality to the “we,” whereby the artists changed from eschewing traditional values of work and sobriety to praising “hard work, national unity, and patriotism.”[23]

Jim Crow provided the environment in which blues culture thrived. It also provided an outlet for blacks to subtly undermine the system. Their resistance lived in the margins—the private spaces to which society relegated African Americans. There, bluesmen and their audiences subverted and ridiculed Jim Crow. As southern mores forced African American deference to whites in public, blues musicians projected a braggadocio that offered acknowledgement of a shared experience with their audiences.[24]

Because of the ubiquity of Jim Crow, many black blues musicians made only short stops in southern cities (or bypassed them altogether) as they migrated north. While they

found continuing discrimination and prejudice in the North as well, one thing was absent: Jim Crow. Like country music to white, rural southerners living in cities, blues connected black immigrants to the urban North to their roots. For both black and white southern migrants to cities, Pete Daniel maintains, "The culture that had served them so well in the country evolved to fit city spaces. Across the country, the collision of rural music with the energized urban beat reshaped the cultural landscape."[25] As the sister of Clarksdale, Mississippi-born bluesman Muddy Waters once remarked to him, "They don't listen to that kind of old blues you're doing now, don't nobody listen to that, not in Chicago."[26]

The louder noises of the city added their own challenges to the music of itinerant southern bluesmen. By the 1940s, black popular music morphed into what Robert Palmer calls "a mixture of older black blues and vaudeville styles and material with the newer swing rhythms."[27] The music of rural African Americans in cities became urbanized and amplified, and soon morphed into rhythm and blues.[28]

As southerners adapted their rural musical traditions to the environs of cities and small towns, the business of music remained strictly segregated. As radio began its ascension as the main medium through which people accessed music, strict divisions emerged along genre and racial lines. For the American music industry (and many of its consumers), country music became the dominion of whites, as rhythm and blues became for African Americans. Karl Hagstrom Miller dubs this phenomena “segregating sound.” As Miller notes, the musical color line created around facile distinctions of race and region “did not reflect how generations of southern people had understood and enjoyed

music.” The ideal, he argues, was fundamentally flawed. “People's musical worlds were less defined by who they were—in terms of racial, class, or regional identity," Miller writes, "than by what music they had the opportunity to hear.”[29]

Radio revealed these opportunities for listeners. Historian Charles L. Hughes notes that program managers attempted to enforce this musical color line as most radio stations segregated black and white music. Some exceptions emerged, mainly all-black WDIA, which broadcast out of Memphis, Tennessee. "But," Hughes argues, "the majority of radio stations gave black musicians a much smaller space than their white counterparts."[30]

Despite this relative dearth of programming and the limited number of black-owned stations, radio was absolutely critical in changing the South's racial dynamic. The medium, Brian Ward concludes, helped promulgate notions of racial harmony. Leaders of the modern Civil Rights Movement, he notes, leveraged radio “to persuade [the] vast middle ground of white southerners to accept racial change and ultimately to help fashion a new, more racially tolerant white southern identity.”[31]

But it was ultimately consumers, both black and (especially) white, who effected changes through their buying and listening habits. White radio station owners and programmers took note, and stepped up efforts to provide listeners what they wanted to hear. While some were genuinely interested in the freedom struggle, most responded to market forces and worked to stay in sync with listeners. “At the point of listening,” Ward writes, “Southern black and white audiences often consumed much of the same cultural

materials and imbibed in many of the same social value." This consumption challenged the "tyranny of Jim Crow," he concludes.[32]

Multiple facets of African American life—social, economic, emotional, legal, and cultural—intersected on the airwaves. Radio countered the prevailing negative images of African Americans and thus, Ward argues, "promote[d] a more inclusive vision of American democracy."[33] This manifested itself particularly in the lives and musical influences of white youth in the postwar South.

Attempts to enforce the racial divide on the radio ultimately failed. The airwaves simply could not be segregated. Black and white youth could listen to any program of their choice, regardless of intended audience or the performer's race.[34] As Hughes notes, "a growing body of listeners heard an expanding variety of musical programming that simultaneously defied the supposed separations between musical categories."[35]

While WDIA in Memphis was the first prominent station to migrate to an exclusively African American format (particularly Dewey Phillips's *Red, Hot, and Blue* program that ran from 9:00 p.m. to midnight), few radio stations carried more weight than Nashville, Tennessee's WLAC.[36] The station had broadcast pop and country music since the 1930s, but a fortuitous call to the station from a group of black college students in 1946 spurred a sharp change in direction that would prove highly influential. The men, attending college on the GI Bill, asked deejay Gene Nobles to play "some boogie or some blues." Nobles responded affirmatively, asking them to bring him records to play. They brought Noble platters by Roy Milton, Pete Johnson, and Louis Jordan, which the deejay

substituted for the station's usual fare of Glenn Miller and Frank Sinatra.[37] Audience response was overwhelming. Within ten days, David Henry reports, "The station started getting mail from listeners in Nashville, El Paso, Washington, Detroit, New Orleans, the Bahamas, Jamaica, Panama, Venezuela, Canada, and Tuscaloosa. People wanted to know more about this music, and where they could buy the records."[38]

WLAC agreed to Nobles's request to change the show's format permanently, provided he found a sponsor, which he did in the person of Randy Wood. A white man (like Nobles), Wood operated an electronics store in nearby Gallatin, Tennessee, that also sold records, mainly pop and classical. Soon after Nobles unveiled his rhythm and blues show, Wood noticed a spike in customer requests for the music the deejay played. In response, Wood started a mail-order record business and began sponsoring Nobles's show. The partnership was a rousing success for both men. Randy's Record Shop became a major catalyst in the widespread, national popularity of black rhythm and blues music.[39]

Initially, Nobles played music by African American artists such as Louis Armstrong, Pearl Bailey, Billie Holiday, and Fats Waller. Later WLAC deejays such as John "John R." Richbourg and Bill "Hoss" Allen proved instrumental to careers of such African American stars as Little Richard, James Brown, Ray Charles; groups such as the Coasters and the Dixie Hummingbirds; blues musicians Jimmy Reed and B.B. King; and soul music icons Otis Redding, Marvin Gaye, and Aretha Franklin.[40] And as America's major recording companies (Columbia, RCA, Decca, Capitol, Mercury, and RCA) continued to focus exclusively on white pop music, WLAC's playlists reflected tunes from a network of

independent record labels that sprang up: national labels such as Chess, Atlantic, and Savoy; as well as Nashville-area companies such as Dot, Bullet, Republic, Tennessee, and Excello.[41]

WLAC appealed to black and white audiences alike. In addition to Nobles, two younger white men joined WLAC as deejays: the aforementioned "Hoss" Allen and "John R." Both men affected an African American-inflected patois that fooled listeners, black and white alike, into thinking that they were black. No less an authority than James Brown, the self-proclaimed Godfather of Soul, reflected, "[John R.] had so much soul that people in the black community thought he was black!"[42]

The station's influence also extended well beyond the American South. The station's 50,000-watt, clear channel signal boasted listeners in twenty-eight states, three Canadian provinces, and four continents. Mavis Staples, of the famous R&B group the Staple Singers, recalled the story of one such listener from Hibbing, Minnesota, Robert Allen Zimmerman, better known as Bob Dylan. In the early 1960s, a mutual admirer introduced Dylan to the Staple Singers. "'Bob,' Staples remembers the man saying, 'These are the Staple Sing—' That's as far as he got before young Dylan turned huffy (in Mavis's reenactment) and cut him off. 'I know who the *Staple Singers* are,' he snapped. 'I've been listening to the Staple Singers since I was twelve years old.' Mavis recalls her father Pops Staples's astonishment. How did this Jewish kid from Minnesota know so much about the Staple Singers? "'I listen to Randy,'" Dylan answered, identifying WLAC by a nickname associated with its sponsorship by Randy's Record Shop.[43]

WLAC is rightfully credited for its groundbreaking influence on popular music in the latter part of the twentieth century, particularly the music that evolved from the South. “I've interviewed a thousand musicians over the years,” said Scott Mullins, program director at WTMD in Baltimore, “and so many of them have cited WLAC as an early influence. I doubt there is a country, rock 'n' roll, blues, R&B, or soul artist from that era east of the Mississippi who wasn't touched by the magic of that station.”[44]

"It was often a choice between listening to country music on WSM, or to our blues," Allen, recalled. "And they'd rather listen to blues than country. We found this to be true at the University of Alabama, LSU, Georgia, Florida, all the colleges, we had them locked up. And out in the country also. White guys growing up in Tennessee, Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, Texas, Alabama, if they were musically inclined they *played* country music but they *listened* to WLAC, as well as to the Grand Ole Opry on WSM, and it all influenced them. . . . [B]ut it didn't come out like Muddy Waters or Howling Wolf, it came out rockabilly, and from rockabilly came white rock 'n' roll."[45]

Rock 'n' roll carried with it a mélange of influences, black and white. As Pete Daniel notes, "Southern musicians profoundly influenced musical development in the twentieth century, not because they embodied pure European or African traditions but because they dynamically exchanged and incorporated their vast musical knowledge." It was a vibrant cultural exchange, he explains, one "that produced jazz, blues, country, gospel, rhythm and blues, rock 'n' roll, and soul music."[46] Robert Palmer gets more specific than Daniel. "[T]here were boogie and blues in the Deep South," he writes, "jazz-

flavored jump blues and western swing in Texas and the Southwest, hard-driving gospel rhythms in the black churches, street-corner vocal groups in the big cities, and myriad forms of boogie-woogie: barrelhouse piano in the logging camps, country boogie for the hillbillies, big-band boogie in the urban dance halls."[47]

Rock 'n' roll is the sound of the first generation of American children to have significant buying power, the result of the post-World War II Baby Boom and an unprecedented era of American economic prosperity. It was also the soundtrack of the first youth generation to have a music that was truly its own. Prior to rock 'n' roll's ascendance, white popular music was issued in two categories: pop records for adults and children's records for youth. The former typically consisted of soothing, romantic ballads from Perry Como, Bing Crosby, and Johnny Mathis and the orchestras of Montovani, Percy Faith, and their contemporaries. Children's records included songs such as "The Ballad of Davy Crockett."[48] In response—or perhaps rebellion—white youth gravitated toward rhythm and blues. "Compared to Perry Como and Patti Page," Palmer asserts, "even the most formulaic R&B seemed to sizzle." More sexually suggestive than their parents' music and with an emphasis on the forceful backbeat perfect for dancing, rhythm and blues, he continues "seemed to mirror more directly the flux and frenzy of the times as seen through a teenager's eyes."[49]

The musical taste of American teenagers of the 1950s and 1960s influenced a noteworthy shift American culture. The music "signaled a significant generational departure from traditional racial attitudes and comportment," Michael Bertrand writes.

Rock 'n' roll, he argues, represented "an experience capable of affecting the ideology of race." White southern youth “allowed African American culture and taste to penetrate and shape their own behavior and perspectives. . . . [and] seemed more receptive to change in social relationships, signaling the inauguration of a new era in reference to race in the South.” Music disrupted racism as it opened avenues of interracial communication and interaction. Radio is most responsible for serving as the conduit. It enabled black-influenced music and artists to proliferate and began the long process of breaking down social and musical barriers.[50]

Nearly every book on the origins of rock 'n' roll cites its mainstream cultural explosion to Elvis Presley's arrival on the scene in 1954.[51] Presley has long been called the "King of Rock 'n' Roll," a title that many African American musicians of the era (most notably "Little Richard" Penniman) dispute. Presley, they claim, was a pale imitation of black rhythm and blues shouters Wynonie Harris and Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup, whose "Good Rockin' Tonight" and "That's All Right" Presley recorded. Even Presley's combination of rhythm and blues and country, they argued, was imitative—as African American performers such as pianist Fats Domino and guitarist Chuck Berry had long before woven country-inflected sounds into their music.

What is probably most significant about Elvis and his white rock 'n' roll peers is what Bertrand characterizes as "a willingness to identify completely with the rhythm and blues singers they emulated. They were not pretending to be, or making fun of, African American artists." Presley and his contemporaries instead attempted to connect to black

musicians through performance style, fashion, and presentation. And thus, Bertrand concludes, "They were forcing their way out of the complex, rigid southern folk and country music tradition into which they had been born."[52]

At the dawn of the 1960s, the heavily black-influenced sounds of rock 'n' roll were firmly established as a new musical genre. A cultural outgrowth of the South's modernization, southern white youth became inspired to pick up instruments, form bands, and write and perform songs similar to those of black rhythm and blues performers and white rock 'n' rollers. Brothers Duane and Greg Allman were so inspired.

The music broadcast by WLAC held sway to a generation of southern youth. As Augusta, Georgia, native Willie Perkins and future Allman Brothers Band road manager recalled, "Every red-blooded southern boy tuned in to [WLAC] every night."[53] He continued:

> Back then, there were not any rock radio stations. There were radio stations that would play country and western music in the morning, big band music during the day, black music in the afternoon, and then at night they would have network programming.
>
> So there were certain time segments during the day that you could listen to black music on the radio. I always was attracted to that kind of music. When I got into high school I started hearing about the clear channel stations that broadcast at night. There was WLAC in Nashville and WCKY in Cincinnati as well as a station in Del Rio, Texas.
>
> These big stations boomed all over the South and played black music at night. They played the early Chess Records like Chuck Berry, Muddy Waters, and Bo Diddley, among others. These stations had sponsors from Nashville that were primarily record shops. I recall that Randy's and Ernie's record shops were two of the sponsors. Their advertised specials were you could get six or eight records for

> half price. While I didn't turn out to be a musician, hearing black artists on these stations did have a big influence on me.
>
> At the same time Duane and Gregg were also listening to the same programs at night as well as a lot of other guys. You'll find that a lot of musicians especially those from the South were really influenced by what they heard on WLAC radio.[54]

WLAC also proved to be the source through which Duane and Gregg Allman discovered African American music, particularly the blues. "We heard all them people [on WLAC]**:** Muddy Waters, Jimmy Reed and so on," Duane Allman recalled.[55] "We would listen to WLAC," brother Gregg noted. "Good God almighty, the music we heard on that station! Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Little Milton, Bobby 'Blue' Bland, Sony Boy Williamson—WLAC is where we first heard them all, and it just went from there."[56]

For Duane and Gregg Allman, the music represented more than just notes and melodies. It was, Duane Allman shared, "The truth and light for sure." Through WLAC's programming, he discovered "Muddy Waters, Bobby Bland, J.B. Hutto, Little Walter—and they led to older cats like Robert Johnson and Blind Lemon Jefferson and Blind Willie Johnson. Have you heard 'Dark was the Night' by Blind Willie? That gave me *chills* when I heard it."[57]

As Allman and his band toured the nation from 1969 to 1971, others noticed the influence they carried with them from of African American rhythm and blues artists. It was clear, Michael Smith of the *Chicago Tribune* wrote in a review of a 1971 Allman Brothers concert in Chicago, that Allman had spent an "inordinate amount of time tuning in the late night rhythm and blues shows from Nashville's WLAC." Though the Allman

Brothers Band's music was a much-updated version WLAC content, Duane, Gregg, "and four others who share Duane's musical vision set up in the Auditorium Theater and bore extraordinary witness to what WLAC hath wrought."[58]

What WLAC wrought was a truly unique band borne of the region it called home. Just as the early sounds of rock 'n' roll emerged from a combination of black rhythm and blues and white country music, the Allman Brothers Band played an amalgam of sounds they heard growing up in the South. The band's influences themselves derived from the musical heritage of rural southerners and are ultimately the products of a modernized, more urban South. The band Duane Allman founded comprised five southerners (Duane and Gregg Allman, Dickey Betts, Butch Trucks, and Jai Johanny "Jaimoe" Johanson) and one midwesterner (Berry Oakley of Chicago). All six were deeply influenced by the region's music.[59]

Four of the players hailed from Florida: Betts, Trucks, and Duane and Gregg Allman. While the most geographically southern state of the continental United States, Florida today is in many ways completely unlike the rest of its southern neighbors. A state full of transplants, its urban areas are much more reflective of urban cultures in other regions of the country. Yet at the time Duane and Gregg moved to Daytona Beach (from Tennessee) in 1957, Florida was very much a part of the Civil Rights-era South. The brothers were a product, therefore, of the rapidly changing southern culture of the modern era of the Civil Rights Movement.

[1] By the early 1970s the popular marketing term for this new music is Southern Rock—an appellation the band members themselves rejected.

[2] W.J. Cash was one of the first to attempt to explain the Southern mindset and its impact on the region in *The Mind of the South*, first published in 1941. Political scientist V.O. Key examined Southern politics in the post-World War II era in his seminal 1949 tome *Southern Politics in State and Nation.* The dean of mid-twentieth century Southern historians, C. Vann Woodward, published several books on the South following Reconstruction. His groundbreaking *Origins of the New South: 1877-1913* (1951), volume IX of the series *A History of the South*, by LSU Press, refuted both Lost Cause interpretations of Southern history and New South business boosterism. Two other volumes in *A History of the South*, volume X, George Brown Tindall's *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945* (1967) and volume XI, *The New South, 1945-1980* by Numan V. Bartley also inform understanding of the New South. Tindall examines the transformation of the region from agriculture to industry; Bartley discusses the implications of the changes Tindall identifies in the post-World War II era. James C. Cobb has focused much of his work on Southern identity. See: James C. Cobb, *The South and America since World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); James C. Cobb, *Away Down South: A History of Southern Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); and James C. Cobb, *The Most Southern Place on Earth: The Mississippi Delta and the Roots of Regional Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

[3] In addition to the books listed in the previous footnote, for more details on the changing South in the twentieth century see Jack Temple Kirby, *Media-Made Dixie: The South in the American Imagination* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1986); John P. Diggins, *The Proud Decades: America in War and in Peace, 1941-1960* (New York: Norton, 1989); Jack Temple Kirby, *Rural Worlds Lost: The American South, 1920-1960* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987); Dewey W. Grantham, *The South in Modern America: A Region at Odds* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 1994); Jack Temple Kirby, *The Countercultural South* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1995); Peter Applebome, *Dixie Rising: How the South Is Shaping American Values, Politics and Culture* (New York: Times Books, 1996); Sheldon Hackney, *Magnolias without Moonlight: The American South from Regional Confederacy to National Integration* (London: Routledge, 2017).

[4] David R. Goldfield, *Region, Race, and Cities: Interpreting the Urban South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997), 5-7, 39. Louis M. Kyriakoudes studies the impact of these changes in Middle Tennessee in *The Social Origins of the Urban South: Race, Gender, and Migration in Nashville and Middle Tennessee, 1890-1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

[5] Goldfield, 46.

[6] Goldfield, 46-47.

[7] See Grantham; Bruce J. Shulman, *From Cotton Belt to Sunbelt: Federal Policy, Economic Development, and the Transformation of the South 1938–1980* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994).

[8] Goldfield, 20, 75; See also Grantham; Bartley; Kirby.

[9] Tammy Ingram, *Dixie Highway: Road Building and the Making of the Modern South, 1900-1930* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 2, 5, 32.

[10] Goldfield, 249.

[11] Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, James L. Leloudis, Robert Rodgers Korstad, Mary Murphy, Lu Ann Jones, and Christopher B. Daly, *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World*, The Fred W. Morrison Series in Southern Studies, ebook edition (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), xxiii. Hall, Jacqueline Dowd, et al. delve deep into the term "family" and its meaning in Southern mill communities, particularly as it relates to gender dynamics in pages 152-164.

[12] Huber, 4, 41.

[13] Hall, Jacqueline Dowd, et al., 261-262.

[14] Hall, Jacqueline Dowd, et al., 261-262.

[15] For discussion on the role radio played in American and Southern culture, see Brian Ward, *Just My Soul Responding: Rhythm and Blues, Black Consciousness, and Race Relations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Brian Ward, *Radio and the Struggle for Civil Rights in the South* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004); Michael T. Bertrand, *Race, Rock, and Elvis* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2005); Craig Havighurst, *Air Castle of the South: WSM and the Making of Music City* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2007).

[16] Pete Daniel, *Lost Revolutions: The South in the 1950s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for Smithsonian National Museum of American History, Washington, D.C, 2000), 121. See also Ed Ward, *The History of Rock 'n' Roll: Vol. 1, 1920–1963* (New York: Flatiron Books, 2016); Ward, *Just My Soul Responding*; Ward, *Radio and the Struggle for Civil Rights in the South*; Bertrand, *Race, Rock, and Elvis*; Craig Havighurst, *Air Castle of the South*.

[17] W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Rockville, MD: Arc Manor, 2008), 9.

[18] *The Country Blues* (1959) by Samuel Charters was the first scholarly treatment of blues music. *Blues Fell This Morning: The Meaning of the Blues* (1961), by British historian Paul Oliver soon followed. Both Charters and Oliver continued to publish books on blues music throughout the following decades. LeRoi Jones (now Amiri Baraka) was the first African American writer to tackle the blues in *The Negro Music Experience in White America and the Music that Developed from It* (New York: Morrow Quill Paperbacks, 1963). See also: William R. Ferris, *Blues From the Delta* (New York: Da Capo Press, Inc., 1984); Julio Finn, *The Bluesman: The Musical Heritage of Black Men and Women in the Americas* (New York: Interlink Books, 1992); Michael Haralambos, *Right On: From Blues to Soul in Black America* (New York: Da Capo Press, Inc., 1979); Charles Keil, *Urban Blues* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970); Alan Lomax, *The Land Where the Blues Began* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993). More recently, Elijah Wald argues against prevailing notions of blues authenticity regarding Robert Johnson in *Escaping the Delta: Robert Johnson and the Invention of the Blues* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004). Marybeth Hamilton does similarly in *In Search of the Blues: Black Voices, White Visions* (New York: Basic, 2008), finding the roots of blues music extend beyond the Mississippi Delta region from where it is most commonly thought to emerge. Brian Davis Dempsey adds to blues scholarship in his study of blues culture in heritage tourism, "Refuse To Fold: Blues Heritage Tourism and the Mississippi Delta" (Ph.D. dissertation, Middle Tennessee State University, 2009).

[19] Robert Palmer, *Deep Blues* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), 17-19.

[20] R.A. Lawson, *Jim Crow's Counterculture: Blues and Black Southerners* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2010), 12, 14.

[21] Lawson, x.

[22] In addition to Lawson's *Jim Crow's Counterculture*, see also Charles Joyner, *Shared Traditions*: *Southern History and Folk Culture* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1999); and Craig Werner, *A Change is Gonna Come: Music, Race, and Soul of America* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2006).

[23] Lawson, x-xi, 196-197.

[24] Lawson, 20.

[25] Daniel, 122.

[26] Palmer, *Deep Blues*, 135.

[27] Palmer, *Deep Blues*, 135.

[28] Daniel, 121. *Billboard* magazine used the term "race" records until 1949, when Jerry Wexler coined the phrase "rhythm and blues." See Jerry Wexler and David Ritz, *Rhythm and the Blues: A Life in American Music* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 62-63.

[29] Miller, 2, 8.

[30] Charles L. Hughes, *Country Soul: Making Music and Making Race in the American South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 17. See also Louis Cantor, *Wheelin' on Beale: How WDIA-Memphis Became the Nation's First All-Black Radio Station and Created the Sound That Changed America* (New York: Pharos Books, 1992); Louis Cantor, *Dewey and Elvis: The Life and Times of a Rock 'n' Roll Deejay* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 66-73; Robert Gordon, *It Came From Memphis* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001).

[31] Brian Ward, *Radio and the Struggle for Civil Rights in the South*, 11, 22.

[32] Ward, *Radio and the Struggle for Civil Rights in the South*, 15.

[33] Ward, *Radio and the Struggle for Civil Rights in the South*, 358-59.

[34] This is a central premise to Bertrand's *Race, Rock, and Elvis* as well as a major part of the argument of Brian Ward's *Radio and the Struggle for Civil Rights in the South*.

[35] Hughes, 16.

[36] See Daniel, 126-128.

[37] William Barlow, *Voice Over: The Making of Black Radio* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), 160.

[38] Hughes, 19; David Henry, “The 50,000-Watt Quartet,” oxfordamerican.com, November 1, 2013, accessed December 21, 2016, http://www.oxfordamerican.org/magazine/item/998-the-50-000-watt-quartet. See also, Cantor, *Dewey and Elvis*, 65-66.

[39] Hughes, 19; Carroll Van West, "WLAC," *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture* version 2.0, ed. Carroll Van West (Nashville: Tennessee Historical Society, 1998), accessed March 26, 2018, http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entry.php?rec=1525. Wood also founded Dot Records and recorded Pat Boone, whose saccharine covers of early rock 'n' roll originals by African American performers such as Little Richard and Fats

Domino, among others, caused considerable consternation within the black community of musicians. See also Jessica Foy, "WLAC," in *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, ed. Bill C. Malone (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 388-390; C. Joseph Pusateri, "Radio," in *The New Encyclopedia of Southern*, 111-113.

[40] Barlow, 163.

[41] Havighurst, 184; Bertrand, 61.

[42] Barlow, 163.

[43] Henry; West; Foy.

[44] Henry.

[45] Robert Palmer, *Rock 'n' Roll: An Unruly History* (New York: Harmony Books, 1995), 20.

[46] Daniel, 122.

[47] Palmer, *Rock 'n' Roll: An Unruly History*, 18.

[48] Glenn C. Altschuler, *All Shook Up: How Rock 'n' Roll Changed America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 10-11.

[49] Altschuler, 17.

[50] Bertrand, 5, 54-55, 62.

[51] For more comprehensive histories of rock 'n' roll, see: Simon Frith, *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure, and the Politics of Rock 'n' Roll* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981); Jim Dawson and Steve Propes, *What Was the First Rock 'n' Roll Record?* (Boston: Faber and Faber, 1992); Ed Ward, Geoffrey Stokes, and Ken Tucker, *Rock of Ages: The Rolling Stone History of Rock 'n' roll* (New York: Rolling Stone Press/Fireside, 1993); Anthony DeCurtis, James Henke, and Holly George-Warren, eds., *The Rolling Stone Illustrated History of Rock 'n' Roll: The Definitive History of the Most Important Artists and Their Music*, 3rd ed. (New York: Random House, 1992); David P. Szatmary, *Rockin' in Time: A Social History of Rock-and-Roll*, 3rd ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996); James Miller, *Flowers in the Dustbin: The Rise of Rock and Roll 1947-1977* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000); Altschuler, *All Shook Up*. Peter Guralnick has published two books on Elvis Presley and one on Sam Phillips: *Last Train to Memphis: The Rise of Elvis Presley* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1994); *Careless Love: The Unmaking of Elvis*

*Presley* (Boston: Back Bay Books, 2000); and *Sam Phillips: The Man Who Invented Rock 'n' Roll* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2015).

[52] Bertrand, 99.

[53] *Song of the South: Duane Allman and the Rise of the Allman Brothers*, directed by Tom O'Dell (Prism Films, 2013).

[54] Willie Perkins, interview by Jack Weston, 1999.

[55] Tony Glover, "In This Band You Better Come to Pick," *Circus*, March 1971, accessed August 13, 2013, http://www.duaneallman.info/inthisbandyoubettercome topick.htm.

[56] Julie Wenger Watson, "A Conversation with Gregg Allman," *No Depression*, April 18, 2016, accessed May 30, 2017, http://nodepression.com/article/conversation-gregg-allman.

[57] Tony Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry," Capricorn Records promo, July 1971.

[58] Michael Smith, "Jamming with Allman," *Chicago Tribune*, August 30, 1971.

[59] In 1987, Johanson legally changed his name to Jaimoe.

# Chapter 2

## "Now Everything's Run Together and Melted Into One Big Thing": Duane Allman and Southern Musical Culture

Many white southerners of Duane Allman's era followed a similar path as musicians. They first formed garage bands and learned stylistically wide-ranging repertoires of cover songs. Some recorded low-fidelity recordings in local, ad-hoc studios. Still others grew into regional touring ensembles. A few, Duane Allman among them, ultimately left the South to pursue greater fame and fortune; many more stayed behind.

These musicians bucked tradition in three major ways. First, they overtly displayed and promoted a reverence for and appreciation of African American music and culture. In this way, they followed in the footsteps of fellow white southerners, first generation rock 'n' roll pioneers Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Buddy Holly, and Carl Perkins, among others.[1] They diverged in that they played music in a style and substance that more prominently displayed blues and rhythm and blues influences than the heavier country influences of Presley, et al. In addition, their live repertoires and early recordings also reflected the strong influence of the British Invasion/British blues: most notably in their close approximations of rhythm and blues or electric blues songs.

Allman followed this path with one significant detour: He ultimately achieved musical fulfillment and success by remaining in the South. In doing so, he blazed a trail for other southern musicians by demonstrating that playing and recording original music

in the South not only was possible, but also was preferable for the musicians and the audience.

In his time as a touring and recording musician from 1965 through 1968, Allman learned the importance of original material and original arrangements pursuant to his own musical vision. Originality mattered, region mattered, and race mattered. Combined, all three elements created an opportunity for a renaissance of southern musical form and traditions.

Little Richard, Elvis Presley, Fats Domino, Chuck Berry, and other stars of the early rock 'n' roll era provided the initial inspiration for southerners such as Allman (nearly all of them male) to pick up instruments, learn songs, and form bands. Though strongly inspired and influenced by African American music, racial boundaries—both stated and understood—severely hampered interaction between white and black musicians. Indeed, it could be quite dangerous. White musicians formed bands and barnstormed the region playing first in white teenage clubs and at white high schools and gymnasiums. Soon enough, they graduated to bars, nightclubs, and other venues that included both white and black patrons. Ultimately, a community of musicians across the South formed around Allman and his band that further introduced African American music to mainstream white culture. This community grew far beyond regional cover bands and blossomed into a full-fledged musical movement of southern rock music.[2]

Duane Allman and his contemporaries were a part of a third generation of American rock 'n' roll musicians. They followed southerners and original rock 'n' roll

progenitors—artists such as Berry, Richard, Domino, Presley, and Carl Perkins—who adapted and transformed the black rhythm and blues made famous by Louis Jordan, Wynonie Harris, Charles Brown, and others, often with a decidedly country music inflection and influence. The second generation of artists, the Teen Idols, often covered rhythm and blues and black rock 'n' roll artists, but "whitened" it in a way that stripped much of the music of its racial undertones. (See Pat Boone's decidedly antiseptic renditions of Richard's "Tutti Fruitti" or Domino's "Ain't that a Shame.") Allman and his southern peers added more musical flavor to the mix, and included in their repertoires the electric blues of such artists as Jimmy Reed, Muddy Waters, B.B. King, and Bobby "Blue" Bland.

The bands they formed were a product of the modern, postwar South and of the Civil Rights Movement. While more urbanized, the region comprised smaller towns and communities—and not necessarily suburbs of larger cities. It was the Sunbelt South. Allman's generation grew up and formed, toured, and recorded with bands in these smaller metro areas like Daytona Beach, Jacksonville, and Tampa, Florida; Florence, Sheffield, and Muscle Shoals, Alabama; and, later, Macon, Georgia.[3]

Just as in the country, race relations in these cities remained complex; crossing musical and cultural boundaries was always easier for whites than for blacks.[4] White musicians' attraction to African American music and culture was counter to southern social mores. Thus, while white musicians leaned heavily on the influences of black music, very few bands of this era were integrated.[5] And while these performers had been raised

with prejudicial attitudes toward African Americans, their attraction to black music helped to alter their racial perceptions. Allman and other white southern musicians of his era demonstrated connections and conversations between black and white southerners that extended beyond what was considered acceptable interracial interactions. Music became a prime vehicle for interacting with black culture and overcoming segregation's cultural divide. As Sonny Fussell, an early bandmate from Daytona Beach recalled, "We didn't care what color your skin was or what language you spoke. It was just a simple matter of fact, 'Man, you can play, and it sounds good.'"[6] Duane and Gregg Allman, in particular, reflected this sentiment, by playing black music with black musicians

Others recognized music's role in bridging the racial divide. Reflecting many years later, Harry Weinger of the African American doo-wop group the Platters noted, "Because of our music, white kids ventured into black areas. They had a sense of fair play long before the Civil Rights Movement."[7] Phil Walden, founder of Capricorn Records (the Allman Brothers Band's record label), agreed. "I think rhythm and blues had a hell of a lot to do with turning the region around on race relations. When people get together and listen to the same music, it makes hating kind of harder."[8] Yet while black music did hold some sway in cross-cultural communications, its reach was often limited. Many white southerners still had problems differentiating between black musicians and African Americans in general. This is reflected in a hand-written sign posted on a New Orleans telephone pole in late 1950s. "Send all the n----rs back to Africa," it read, "except for Fats Domino."[9]

In addition to the strong influences of indigenous African American music, the music Duane Allman first played professionally also carried strains of music arriving from across the Atlantic Ocean. Dubbed "The British Invasion" by the American press, bands such as the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, the Kinks, and the Dave Clark Five sparked a revolution in American youth culture through their purchase of records, attendance at concerts, and the formation of bands. These British musicians expressed a reverence for the music of the American South, particularly the blues and the early rock 'n' roll sounds of performers such as Presley, Berry, Richard, Holly, and many others.[10] In addition to providing a new musical direction—an amalgam of British musical traditions with American blues, rhythm and blues, and rock 'n' roll—many of the bands, most notably the Beatles, also wrote their own music. This was relatively unheard of in American popular music at the time.

The Beatles and their contemporaries also helped usher in a new chapter in rock 'n' roll (and American) music: the era of the band. Prior to the British Invasion, rock 'n' roll performers were either billed as individual singers (Presley, Berry, Domino, Richard) or top-billed in front of a group (Buddy Holly and the Crickets, Bill Haley and the Comets). British Invasion bands were collectives of musicians in which the whole was greater than the sum of its parts.[11] This inspired a generation of southerners to seek out like-minded individuals and form bands themselves. British bands demonstrated to American musicians the possibility of making music as a unit of (relative) equals rather than simply

serving as backing musicians in support of a singer. In such bands, no single performer had to carry the entire ensemble.[12]

The Beatles burst into most Americans' consciousness on February 9, 1964, with their appearance on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. The impact of the performance, viewed by an estimated seventy-three million people—then the largest audience in the history of television—is remembered by many as a cultural lightning bolt.[13] "The minute I saw the Beatles on the *Ed Sullivan Show*—and it's true of thousands of guys," Rock & Roll Hall of Famer Tom Petty of Gainesville, Florida, recalled. "*There* was the way out. *There* was the way to do it. You get your friends and your self-contained unit. And you make the music. And it looks like so much fun." "Within twenty-four hours," Petty continued, "everything changed. I wanted a group. I set about scouring the neighborhood for anybody that owned instruments, that could play instruments."[14] Greenville, South Carolina, native Toy Caldwell (later founder and leader of the Marshall Tucker Band), forged a similar path as Petty, forming a British Invasion-inspired band called the Ramblers shortly after the Beatles' *Ed Sullivan* appearance.[15]

Many of the early bands Allman, Petty, Caldwell, and others formed are today referred to as "garage bands." The term is less a professional connotation than a description of the music itself and who played it: amateur musicians, typically inspired by the artists of the British Invasion, playing cover versions of popular songs in living rooms, garages, and other non-professional settings. Their music, Roy Shuker contends, "was characterized by enthusiasm, commitment, and energy, rather than technical ability."[16]

"Garage bands," Jeffrey M. Lemlich claims, "were bona fide dignity makers. With even the most average student able to learn a few simple tunes . . . , this otherwise average student was transformed into something way beyond ordinary—a weekend star, more than just another fish in the difficult sea known as teenage life."[17]

Just as significant as the Beatles' arrival was a second wave of British bands, musicians who adhered much more closely to the repertoires, sounds, and formula of American bluesmen Muddy Waters, Robert Johnson, Son House, Howlin' Wolf, and others. British blues bands such as the Yardbirds, John Mayall's Blues Breakers, Fleetwood Mac, the Animals, and, later, Cream and Led Zeppelin, unveiled additional possibilities for southern musicians.[18] As Duane Allman noted in 1970, these bands actually imported the blues *back* to the United States. "The best thing that happened," he said:

> was that the British intervention of the scene made it possible to play what you wanted to play and do what you wanted to do without having to be relegated to the funky places. It widened the whole thing to the point where we didn't have to be restricted. Everyone began to dig the blues and everyone was getting it. At first I didn't like it because I felt it was pretty cheap and watered down. We were digging Jimmy Reed and Sonny Boy Williamson. In the beginning, I dug the Beatles more than the Stones because they were doing something new. Later I appreciated the Stones. Now everything's run together and melted into one big thing.[19]

For Allman, this "melting" was key—the Allman Brothers Band he was leading at the time of this quote epitomized a melding of multiple styles of southern music into a cohesive sound. Under Allman's leadership, the band fused elements of the electric blues made so popular by British blues bands; the rhythm and blues heard on radio stations

such as Nashville's WLAC and Memphis's WDIA; the rock 'n' roll of Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, and Little Richard; elements of country and acoustic string band music they encountered on Nashville's WSM and in their home parlors; and, eventually, the psychedelic sounds emanating from San Francisco. In doing so, they reflected a robust musical culture experienced throughout the South in the 1960s.

The extensive repertoires and influences were second nature to these southerners, as they were for previous generations. "Music," historians Bill C. Malone and David Stricklin argue, "has been one of the great natural resources of the South and one of its most valuable exports." The South is where America's two major folk music traditions—of the British Isles and of Africa—link and acquire "a special character because it arose in a society long defined by its limitations: a social context of poverty, slavery, suffering, deprivation, religious extremism, and cultural isolation." Music allowed southern musicians to transcend the region's limitations.

According to Malone and Stricklin, music was integral to southern cultural inheritance. "It provided a means of release and a form of self-expression that required neither power, status, nor affluence. The result was the creation of a body of songs, dances, instrumental pieces, and musical styles—joyous, somber, and tragic—that simultaneously entertained, enriched, and enshrined the musicians and the folk culture out of which they emerged."[20] The British and African styles from which southern music evolved did not arrive to the South undiluted and thus, southern music is deeply rooted in the past while continually demonstrating adaptability of present musical influences

and forms. This dichotomy, Malone and Stricklin argue, is one of the great realities of southern music.[21]

Such was the music of Duane Allman and the southern musicians of his era. Allman and his contemporaries, therefore, were players in a long tradition of southern music, one that morphed and changed from its roots, and incorporated a wide variety of sounds, styles, and influences. As fellow southern musician, music critic, and blues historian Robert Palmer reflected, "One thing we didn't talk about was what a contemporary music critic might call the astonishing eclecticism of our musical offering. There we were, stirring Dixieland and surf music, rockabilly and R&B, pseudo-jazz and honky-tonk country and western into a big gumbo. We had no idea we were breaking down barriers and cross-fertilizing genres. In those days, the definitions were not so firmly fixed."[22] Southern musicians like Palmer, Allman, and others made artistic choices that fused a new sound out of current and historic popular traditions in rehearsal spaces, on the bandstand, and in studio recordings at Stax, American, and Argent in Memphis and at FAME Studios in Muscle Shoals.

Southern musicians took many different paths to music. Some, such as Paul Hornsby of Elba, Alabama, received instruction at home. "My daddy . . . played old-time fiddle. . . . Not to be confused with bluegrass. [T]he tunes he learned, he learned them from other old-time fiddlers, and they learned them from other old-time fiddlers and probably a lot of those songs came over from the old country. . . . So I grew up hearing this kind of stuff, and when I was about fourteen I started playing."[23] The same is true for

founding Allman Brothers Band guitarist Dickey Betts. Immersed in music from a young age, his earliest experiences were Saturday night family gatherings for music making.[24] Betts's father also played fiddle. "But we didn't call it bluegrass. It was called string music, and he'd played Irish reels and things." Betts first played ukulele, mandolin, and banjo, and graduated to guitar at age sixteen.[25] Winter Haven, Florida, native Larry Howard, later of the band Grinderswitch, had similar first-hand exposure, learning music from his father, who had a bluegrass band that sometimes featured fiddle player and future Betts collaborator Vasser Clements (from Kissimmee, Florida). Eventually Howard studied music theory and composition at the University of Miami and later toured on trombone for six weeks with Count Basie's band as a fourteen-year-old. Upon his return in the fall of 1964, Howard joined his first band on guitar.[26]

Radio continued to wield a powerful influence on southern music and culture. "From listening to all that good music [on WLAC]," Allman told Tony Glover in 1971, "it was a simple step to wanting to learn how to play it."[27] Pianist Jim Dickinson highlights the influence of the all-black programming of WDIA in Memphis. "Probably the first thing I remember real well," he recalled in 1979, "would be Rufus Thomas's radio show. . . . Howlin' Wolf I was into as soon as I heard it." His early band, he recalled, "[P]layed rock 'n' roll in a very primitive way. Really in a Chicago way. . . . [A] lot of Chuck Berry, Muddy Waters sounding stuff."[28] Tom Wynn, who manned the drum chair for Macon's Cowboy, recalled the influence of local Orlando stations. "I used to listen to the local AM stations all the time—always Top 40 and the R&B station. . . . Even the radio stations were

segregated. . . . [There were] different record stores too, but eventually I found the R&B store downtown on Church Street next to the train tracks."[29] It was in a local record store that Chapel Hill, North Carolina, native Buck Williams started his first band. "Alex Taylor, my closest friend back in high school, and myself spent all this time in a place called Kymp's Music Store in Chapel Hill listening to old blues albums—Mississippi Fred McDowell, Lightnin' Hopkins, and all that stuff. Neither one of us could play anything, but we decided to put a band together anyway, and it became a pretty good band."[30]

Radio was important to the musical development of Jimmy Hall, front man for the Mobile, Alabama, band Wet Willie, as were his father's musical tastes. "My dad would bring home records and stuff that he enjoyed, like Elvis and Jerry Lee. I remember watching these guys on TV and seeing how much my dad liked them and him going, 'This is good, listen to this.'" Hall highlighted the black roots of the music he was hearing. Presley and Lewis, he reflected, "Had a real black influence. . . . I was listening to James Brown. . . . Wilson Pickett, I always loved him, the classic soul singer, [and] Otis Redding—just amazing energy."[31] Hall's experience with his father's musical tastes counters that of contemporaries. Buck Williams remembered, "My parents used to hate the music I would listen to. They listened to Guy Lombardo, Mitch Miller, and stuff like that. I listened to Fats Domino, the Platters, Buddy Holly, Elvis, and all this R&B stuff out of New Orleans—Ernie K-Doe, Lee Dorsey, Irma Thomas."[32] There was music in the Allman household as well. Gregg Allman remembered his mother Geraldine had listening tastes similar to Williams's. "[M]y mother did have a home entertainment center. . . . She had *Johnny's*

*Greatest Hits*, by Johnny Mathis. I always thought that was a beautiful record with all the strings and everything . . . .She listened to this other guy, [big band leader and singer] Vaughan Monroe. Vaughan would be on the radio when she took us to school in the morning—every morning."[33]

It was Gregg, a little more than twelve months his brother's junior, who provided the impetus for the Allmans to begin their pursuit of music. The brothers were born in Nashville, the familial home of their late father, Willis. Following his untimely death, they relocated to Daytona Beach, Florida, with their mother, and made regular treks back to Middle Tennessee to visit family. It was summer 1960 in Nashville when neighbor Jimmy Banes introduced Gregg to the guitar, playing either "She'll Be Comin' 'Round the Mountain" on a Silvertone or "The Long Black Veil" on a Beltone guitar. While Gregg's story of this incident has changed over the years, several details remain consistent: The song is a well-known standard, the guitar is cheap and difficult to play, and the instrument mesmerized him.[34] "My life changed that day," he wrote many years later. "It did. . . . We talked and talked about that guitar, and I went over the next day, and the next day, and I was so thankful for him."[35]

Later that same summer, the brothers caught another strain of musical fever from a Nashville rhythm and blues revue headlined Jackie Wilson.[36] The bill included black stars Otis Redding, B.B. King, Johnny Taylor, and Patti LaBelle, among others. The concert held the elder Allman brother in thrall, writes his daughter Galadrielle Allman. "[E]veryone rocked in their seats," she writes. "All except Duane. Gregg says his brother

sat forward on the edge of his seat perfectly still, transfixed."[37] "Little brother," he said to Gregg, "we've got to get into this."[38]

Picking up guitars was but the latest in a string of attempts the Allmans had made to learn music. "We wanted to get into the school band," Gregg remembered. "We both wanted to play trumpet, but we lost interest in it."[39] Efforts to learn piano via lessons also proved unfruitful. Duane Allman quit the lessons, telling the teacher, "The reason I don't want to do this is because I'm never going to need it for the rest of my life. I'll never need this damn music—take it and keep it.'" It was an unfortunate statement, one he still lamented years later. "She died before I could get back and apologize to her. I always regretted that really bad."[40]

Gregg Allman bought the household's first guitar. Upon returning from Nashville, he procured a paper route to earn money to buy it. The instrument became a bone of contention between Gregg and his older brother, who often absconded with the guitar to play it himself. Soon, Geraldine purchased a second guitar for her elder son.[41] Duane played his guitar constantly, and although Gregg was first to start, "[H]e passed me like I was standing still."[42]

The Allmans soon sought out others to play with. "Musicians find musicians," Gregg Allman recalled. "And I met every one of them in Daytona—black, white, and everything in between. Stealing licks—somebody would show you a lick, and that would open up a whole can of worms of licks. I was really studying them, and by this time, Duane was too."[43] His brother began learning guitar from Jim Shepley, a friend who was

three years his senior. Both Allmans revered Shepley. Gregg called him "the coolest thing that ever walked."[44] Duane acknowledged him as a mentor. "The cat that actually taught me how to play is Jim Shepley—old 'Lightning Fingers'. . . . If you wanted to learn to play something right, anything, you'd go to him."[45] Shepley, the younger Allman wrote, was a dedicated teacher. "He had a bunch of these hot licks down. . . . [H]e sat with Duane all the time."[46]

Duane Allman first gravitated to Shepley's mastery of Jimmy Reed's blues stylings. Reed, a bluesman from the Mississippi Delta, was one of the most popular blues artists of the 1950s and early 1960s, and his records were in regular rotation on WLAC. His hits became standard for southern musicians, black and white alike. "Ain't that Lovin' You Baby" was covered by a number of artists over the years, most notably by Bobby "Blue" Bland. The Rolling Stones recorded "Honest I Do" on their debut album. Reed's "Big Boss Man" appeared on the Grateful Dead's self-titled live album.[47] Reed was an early influence. "Duane had never really heard Jimmy Reed," Shepley remembered. "And he flipped out when he heard all this stuff, so he immediately wanted me to show him all this Jimmy Reed stuff."[48] "From the first day I showed him Jimmy Reed licks," he said, "Duane knew that he only wanted to be one thing: a rock 'n' roll star."[49] Memphis bluesman B.B. King was another mutual influence. "We both liked B.B. King," Shepley recalled. "I had learned a bunch of B.B. King songs, and I showed Duane as much B.B. King as I knew, because I was a pretty big fan of B.B. And so was Duane, once he heard him."[50]

In Daytona Beach in 1961, Duane Allman formed his first band: the Uniques.[51] He played lead guitar, his brother Gregg and Sonny Fussell played rhythm guitars, and Ted Petrucciani played piano (the band's drummer's name is lost to history and the Uniques never had a bass player).[52] The band enjoyed some regional success, Fussell recalled. "We played and won a talent show at the [Daytona Beach] bandshell. We did school dances at the high school and junior high school and played a couple of school assemblies and really rocked the place. Played Y-Teen dances, all the young stuff, high school stuff, all around town."[53]

While the band's exact repertoire is undocumented, it was surely patterned on the African American music they heard on WLAC. Petruciani noted the band members' interest in the blues and the attraction of black music led Allman and his bandmates to the African American neighborhoods of segregated Daytona Beach. "[We] went to black side of town regularly," Fussell said.[54] "When we first started," Allman recounted in an interview from 1970, "Gregg and me were playing rhythm and blues. We always had blues roots, but there weren't any other white groups in Daytona, Florida, and the only way we could break into the scene was to try to play black music in white clubs. It was tough because black musicians were doing black music in black clubs. Like we were all doing the same thing."[55] It was not insignificant that these interactions happened coincident with the events of the modern Civil Rights Movement, a time of great social and cultural change for the South and for the nation.

Playing music provided Duane Allman and his bandmates a mechanism to interact with African American culture. It was an act of rebellion. Duane, Gregg, and bandmates broke strict social mores when they ventured to the black side of town. It was also a risky proposition in the Jim Crow South. To Allman and his bandmates, it was a risk worth taking. "I don't remember ever having apprehension about going over there," Petruciani recalled. "But there were a lot of kids who as we grew up, had nothing to do with the blacks."[56] Floyd Miles, an African American singer who befriended Duane and Gregg Allman remembers the tension well.

> [I]t was sort of a frightening thing. Duane really admired blues, people like B.B. King and myself and guys that played in the band with us. . . . [H]e was one of the few white guys that would go in the black neighborhood and play. Well, he was one of the few guys that would go into the black neighborhood to a nightclub, period, back in those days.
>
> Being a musician, he knew most of the guys that was playing there, wherever he went, and most of the people got to know him—the white guy that plays blues, that plays the guitar so well. So he was accepted and people got to know him. He was just another one of the guys after a while.[57]

Miles recalled that at George's Place, a club in Daytona Beach's black neighborhood near Bethune Cookman College, Allman "would go play there for free, just to play the blues for the black people and with the black people."[58]

Miles met Allman sometime in 1963 when he and his brother played a brief stint in the House Rockers (a band that included Shepley). The white House Rockers served as backing band for the Untils, a group of black singers that included Miles. The integrated combo was the house band at the whites-only Surf Bar, a nightclub at Daytona Beach's

Ocean Pier. "The Surf Bar," Shepley remembered, "that's where we all got started in terms of being in a band and digging soul music. . . . This is where all the musicians in the area . . . went to play music, because this was the happening music. . . . This is where we all got schooled in music."[59] Fellow Daytona Beach musician Sylvan Wells also fondly remembers the music scene at the Pier:

> The Ocean Pier would book black acts, so the musicians would hang out there. . . . As a musician, you could go to any of the black clubs, and you were treated with respect and invited to come in as long as you wanted to sit in and play. So it wasn't unusual at all for white musicians to run around with black musicians. There may have been segregation on the street, but it didn't exist among musicians.[60]

Despite this relatively halcyon view of race, conditions differed greatly for black musicians. While Gregg Allman concurs with Wells's assessment about musicians accepting other musicians, he adds a small caveat that reflects the difficulties African Americans throughout the Jim Crow South experienced. "If a musician could play, we didn't look at his skin color, but unfortunately we were in the minority back then since when it came to racism the shit was boiling up in the South."[61] While it might not have been unusual for white musicians to play in segregated spaces, the situation was not reciprocal. Van Harrison, a later bandmate of the Allman brothers, recalls the older Allman as a fierce defender of his black peers. "Duane had a sense of social justice," he said. "We were spending time with black musicians. . . . [And] we got taken down verbally for doing that a few times we went into some restaurants where they did not want us to bring our black friends in with us. One time we had a confrontation. I forget if it was

Duane or me who told them to shove it up their ass. These were the friends that we had and these were the guys we were working with. It was normal for us.[62] Of the dominant racial mores of the time, Gregg Allman reflected, "Thank God I started playing music at it early enough age that I didn't develop that [racist] mindset."[63]

Despite their acceptance in the black musical community of Daytona Beach, the Allmans' mother Geraldine was none too happy about her sons' new acquaintances. Joining forces with the integrated House Rockers/Untils was, Gregg shared in 1973, "When the trouble started in the family. 'Going to play with them n----rs again?'," Geraldine would ask her sons. ("We had to turn my mother on to the blacks," he concluded. "Took a while, but now she's totally liberated."[64]) He offered a specific example of their mother's early objections to them playing music with African Americans:

> As Duane and I were playing our way through high school in Daytona, we met this guy Hank Moore who had the Hank Moore Orchestra, and Hank Ballard and the Midnighters were his back-up singers. We pooled our money and Hank Moore came down to our house, and we had the whole garage band together. He sat there and took us through "Done Somebody Wrong" and that changed my whole life. I saw the structure of music, and we all got it.
>
> Then my mama came home, and she'd never grabbed me by the ear. "I want to know what you're doing with that n----r in the front room."
>
> "N----r? Ma, that ain't no n----r that's Hank Moore."
>
> "So, what are you doing here?"
>
> "Well so far, he's taught us all kinds of good music."
>
> "I want him out of here soon as you can do it." She said it in a voice that meant business, but I forgot about that as soon as I got back in there I just picked up my guitar and started playing, and by now, man, we had it. My mother went back

> there to get dressed, and she noticed we were all playing together—that was the first time we ever sounded like a band. It didn't change her mind about a black man being in the house, but it changed her mind about the music.[65]

Interactions like the Allmans had with Hank Moore occurred on bandstands as well. Unwelcome in clubs on the white side of town after their sets ended, the Untils and other black musicians in Daytona Beach would retire with the Allman brothers in tow to clubs such as George's Place or the Paradise Inn, in the community's black neighborhood. "Everybody got to know Duane and Gregg," Miles recalled. "They were just like one of the guys. They were known as 'Those white boys who can play that funky music.' Duane could just play it all."[66]

It was in these after-hours jam sessions, Miles recalled, that "We really built our bonds." Miles, for one, felt a kinship with the Allmans. "They were called hippies because they had long hair and were weird. The bond was built between us because we all experienced some kind of discrimination."[67] This was, he said, "Probably why we got along so well. We had each other and we had the music." Miles, Gregg Allman remembered, "caught a lot of hell from his friends for hanging out with this white boy. He took me across the tracks, literally."[68]

There, in a combination barbershop, pawnshop, and record shop, Gregg and his brother would buy the records by the black stars of the era.[69] Miles served as an additional guide to African American music, a supplement to the playlists of WLAC. "He'd say, 'This is James Brown, and this is B.B. King, and this is Sonny Boy Williamson, and this is Howlin' Wolf."[70] "We bought as many records as we possibly could," he noted. "We

would save our money, borrow from others, whatever we had to do."[71] "We listened to Elmore James, Sonny Boy Williamson, Howlin' Wolf, Ray Charles, B.B. King. . . . Little Milton was about my favorite."[72] From these artists, the Allman brothers picked up additional songs for their live repertoire and also gained a deeper understanding of the various styles of African American music that had so inspired them.

The music they performed reflected the sounds they heard on radio, songs they learned from Shepley, records Miles introduced them to, and the setlists of bands at the Surf Bar. "We were about thirteen or fourteen," Duane Allman recalled, "doing Hank Ballard and the Midnighters stuff, Chuck Berry tunes—and trying to get the Beatles harmonies down."[73] Around 1962 or 1963 (Miles was unclear of the exact date), the Allmans played briefly in another of Miles's bands, the Universals. Miles remembers that the band's setlists included the music of African American performers: the Isley Brothers's "Twist and Shout" (originally performed by the Top Notes and released in 1961), the doo-wop hit "Daddy's Home" by Shep and the Limelites, and two Hank Ballard songs—"The Twist" and "Thrill on a Hill."[74]

Tired of playing in other people's bands, Allman formed in 1964 what has long been called his first true band, the Escorts. In the Escorts, Allman got his first taste of playing music beyond Daytona Beach. "There were a lot of little high school dance clubs and teenybopper clubs around the East Coast of Florida," bass player Harrison recalled. "We would play a lot of those things."[75] "[Duane] was a little too ambitious to stay in one

place," Miles recalled. "He wanted more. We were kind of settled there, so he started doing little things, like try to form his own group and travel some."[76]

Following the band formula of the Beatles', the Escorts featured Duane and his brother Gregg on guitar and vocals, Van Harrison on bass, and Maynard Portwood on drums. "The songs we played," Gregg Allman remembered, "were a collection of tunes that we all happened to know"—songs they played in the Uniques, the House Rockers, and the Universals and in after-hours sessions in Daytona Beach's black neighborhood. No matter the race of the artist whose songs they covered, the music was African American in influence and origin. "We did a whole bunch of old R&B love songs," Gregg Allman recalled. They covered songs by white artists—Roy Orbison's "Pretty Woman" and "You've Lost that Loving Feeling" by the Righteous Brothers—and black—The Impressions's "I've Been Trying" and Tommy Tucker's "Hi-Heel Sneakers." Allman recalled that brother Duane chose African American crooner Lenny Welch's "Are You Sincere" for the band's set, which also included "That Boy" by the Beatles, "because we had to play a Beatles song."[77] The Beatles had not only conquered the listening habits of American teenagers, they had invaded setlists as well.

The Escorts were strictly a cover band. "Most clubs just wanted us to be a jukebox on stage," Gregg Allman noted, "and we were a great one."[78] Despite their clear superiority as musicians, their cover repertoire hampered the band. They soon had crosstown competition from the Nightcrawlers, a band of fellow teenagers that made

some noise on local charts with an original song, "A Little Black Egg." As Nightcrawlers guitarist Sylvan Wells remembered:

> Gregg and Duane were always much better musicians. Their band was always, I thought, a lot better than we were. We were not near the musicians they were, but we started writing our own material very early.... We did that largely because if you tried to play covers, then everyone who heard you would compare you to the record and we couldn't be as good. So we were playing about 80 percent original material and people liked it. We got the jobs and breaks early because of that. Duane and Gregg were still playing basic old R&B. They were great, but they were not getting the recognition because they were a cover band.[79]

Wells had learned an important musical lesson, one the Allmans had yet to discover: Originality was key. "It used to drive them crazy," he continued, "because we were getting all the jobs and all the recognition, and they were so much better musicians that it was ridiculous. . . . But we were playing original material. That was the difference."[80] "We did no original songs," Gregg Allman (yet to unlock the door to songwriting that would later bring him acclaim) wrote. "At this point we never even thought about it."[81]

Lee Hazen, who operated a makeshift studio in a rented cottage in nearby Ormond Beach had a front-row seat to these developments. "It was funny," he remarked, "because Sylvan was learning to play from Duane, and Duane could play circles around him. But because these guys had some original material, they had a record that got airplay, and they became real popular. Even more popular than the Escorts." Sometime in early 1965, the Escorts ventured to Hazen's studio to record for the first time. According to Hazen, the band "wanted to come up and do a demo tape because they had heard

what the Nightcrawlers had done."[82] In addition to songs from their live repertoire, "Pretty Woman" and "You've Lost that Loving Feeling," they recorded a version of Ray Charles's "Don't Let the Sun Catch You Crying" and songs from British Invasion bands the Searchers ("Love Potion No. 9") and Gerry and the Pacemakers ("Ferry 'Cross the Mersey").[83]

While the Escorts lacked an original song of their own to promote, playing cover songs was not uncommon. "When you didn't have any records out," Floyd Miles recollected, "you had to duplicate those cover tunes, and that is what made you good or bad, because you didn't have anything to identify you. You had to make it on those cover tunes."[84] In addition, as original artists had theretofore eluded most white southern musicians who lacked the means and wherewithal to travel to the centers of the American music industry: Los Angeles, New York, or Chicago. It also stymied the growth of southern music, an observation Robert Palmer made in 1969, just as the Allman Brothers Band were coalescing. "Making a living at rock," Palmer observed, "meant playing Top 40. It's the same all over the South, and that's why southern bands have always been known for incredibly exact, mimetic renderings of the latest Beatles, Stones, and whatever. It is also why southern rock bands have been comparatively late getting into their own music and their own stylings; they simply had to live, and just having hair below your collar was enough of an impediment. In many ways, the black music, rhythm and blues, was more vital than rock in those days."[85]

With their well-executed repertoire of covers, the Escorts earned a regular engagement at the Martinique, a marquee venue in Daytona Beach. And in in April 1965, the Escorts and the Nightcrawlers co-opened a Daytona Beach concert for the Beach Boys—the most popular American band of the era. Sonny Fussell recalled that the gig emboldened Duane Allman. "It was a great performance for them. . . . You're used to playing in a small club to maybe fifty to eighty people. I don't know how many were there that night, but that's the first big stage opportunity that I know that they had and they hit the note for sure."[86] Escorts bass player Van Harrison agreed. "I remember it being a big deal. Duane said, 'Man, if this works out, we can make it big. We can go on the road.'" Harrison, still in high school, saw things otherwise. "I remember thinking, 'There's no way in hell I can go on the road except for weekend things.'"[87] Thus, Allman began to separate himself from the musical pack as one with professional aspirations.

After the Beach Boys show, the Escorts returned to Hazen's studio, this time with a new bass player, Bob Keller. Songs included two setlist staples of white southern bands of the era: Bobby "Blue" Bland's "Turn on Your Love Light" and "What'd I Say" by Ray Charles.[88] It also contained one original, an instrumental attributed to Duane and Gregg Allman.[89] Sometime in summer 1965, the band changed its name to the Allman Joys and hit the road as touring musicians.[90] "Duane," Jim Shepley remembered, "realized [he wasn't] going to make it out of Daytona Beach, Florida. So he immediately put together a club band. . . . They started traveling out into the Southeast, doing mainly rhythm and blues."[91] The year 1965 is significant for the beginning of their touring career as it was

when Gregg Allman graduated from Sea Breeze High School. (His brother had dropped out of high school a year or two earlier—"I can read. I can write, what more do I need?" his family recalls him saying—but often did Gregg's homework for him so he could focus on music.[92])

To reach a wider audience, the Allman Joys signed a booking contract first with an agency out of Atlanta, later switching to a company based in Nashville.[93] They toured a relatively small circuit in the Southeast that Duane Allman later dubbed "the garbage circuit of the South" because of its grueling nature.[94] The band "worked go-go and liquor bars in places like Atlanta and Mobile," Allman said.[95] They also played shows at regional colleges including some booked by former rival Sylvan Wells, who had quit playing music in 1965 but started booking bands when he attended Florida State University.[96]

The Allman Joys' first regional show was at the Stork Club in Mobile, Alabama. The band was paid $444 per week to play six, forty-five-minute sets a night, seven days a week. Their first encounter with the vagaries of the road in the South was a hairy one. "Boy, it was a nasty fucking place," Gregg Allman recalled.[97] When they arrived at the venue, he noted, "The head of the club greeted us and told us to come back to his office. He unbuttoned his shirt and turned around and show us an Army .45. 'You listen up here, if you all got any knives or guns, for any shit planned for my club, just remember, I got bigger ones than this in here.'"[98]

This threat of violence was a constant for southern musicians. Chuck McCorkle of Greenville, South Carolina (and brother of Marshall Tucker Band guitarist George

McCorkle) shared one such experience. "One night we were playing at some bar. . . . I saw a guy get stabbed to death. Several people jumped on this guy and started stabbing him to death. We just kept playing. The police came and hauled everybody off."[99] Robert Palmer, an Arkansas native, weaves a lyrical version of a similar tale from a club he played in rural central Arkansas. As the band played on the bandstand, "A rumpled old hillbilly approached . . . peered nervously over his shoulder and muttered low, 'Say, could you boys play me, oh *any* old Hank Williams tune? It sure would sound good to a man on the run. We played 'Your Cheating Heart'. . . . Half an hour later, the state troopers arrived . . . and questioned everyone. . . . A man had robbed a bank and they were hot on his trail; they felt sure he must have stopped here."[100]

In addition to the very real danger posed within the venues themselves, having long hair further complicated matters. As Marty Jourard writes about Gainesville, home of the University of Florida and a regular stop on Duane and Gregg Allman's tours. "It was hard to tell whom the rednecks hated more: African Americans because of their color, or white males who had long hair."[101] The Allman Joys experienced their share of this harassment. In 1965, the band lodged at the Anchor Motel in Nashville, where a number of Shriners were also staying. "After a series of increasingly hostile exchanges, catcalls, insults, and a beer can tossed at their van," the *Daytona Beach Morning Journal* reported in 1973, "Gregg retaliated by heaving a piece of brick into the Shriners' parking lot. Five or six Shriners, members of one of the motorcycle units burst into their room and worked Gregg over."[102]

As harrowing as things were for long-haired, white musicians, they were even harsher for African Americans touring the South. Jim Crow was enforced at every turn and this made life challenging—and dangerous—for black performers.[103] Some who overtly challenged the color line met with violence or even death. White bandleader Johnny Otis wrote of a black member of his band being brutally beaten at an Augusta, Georgia, concert in 1951 for neglecting to say "sir" in response to a white man's question. In 1960, while touring on a package show, Jackie Wilson refused to play a second show in Little Rock because it was reserved for whites only. "White residents brandished guns and chased Wilson's entourage out of town," *Rolling Stone* reported in 2017. "One of the performers, Jesse Belvin, who had a big radio hit with 'Goodnight My Love' and co-wrote 'Earth Angel,' accelerated his 1959 Cadillac so suddenly that his tires blew, the car swerved, and he and his wife died in the wreck."[104]

Terry Johnson of the doo-wop group the Flamingos, shared sinister threats received before a show in late-1950s Birmingham. When Johnson and his bandmates arrived at the concert hall, nearly four-dozen armed police officers greeted them. They escorted the band to their dressing room with strict orders: Do not, under any circumstances, make eye contact with whites in the audience. The trouble was, African Americans were confined to the venue's balcony, far toward the back. "It was ridiculous," Johnson recalled. "The cops were up there making sure we did not look at any white person. It was a rule when we came in: 'I don't want to see any of you darkies looking at the white women out there. If you do, your ass is mine.' Cruel things like that. We were

personalities. To say you can't look at someone who's smiling and applauding for you? It was hard. I'll never forget that."[105] Sonny Turner, of the Platters, shared a typical indignity endured by black performers. "We experienced it in Atlanta, Georgia. We would go out and just walk around the street and wanted to see the marquee—and we were not allowed to come into the front entrance."[106]

White rock 'n' roll star Tommy Roe, from Atlanta, also recalled the difficulties black musicians faced. In 1962, based on the success of his song "Sheila," Roe joined a package tour with African American stars Sam Cooke, Smokey Robinson, Jerry Butler, and the Impressions. Roe believed his presence as the bill's sole white performer was a matter of basic survival for the black musicians with whom he toured. African American artists, restricted from most eating establishments by law, custom, or both, needed Roe to pick up food for them. "One of the main reasons white artists like myself were considered a blessing and part of these tours," he wrote, "was for us to go into the restaurants and buy food to-go for the other artists." Doing so was a well-coordinated effort. "Someone would spy a restaurant along the road," Roe remembered, "and the bus would . . . stop at a point that was out of view. . . . It would then be my job to run inside and order some forty-odd hamburgers to go."[107]

Memphis native Bobby Whitlock, who toured with Delaney and Bonnie and later joined forces with Eric Clapton and Duane Allman in Derek and the Dominos, recounts struggles to procure lodging for the Short Cuts, an integrated band with four whites and one African American. "When we were in Mississippi we couldn't stay in hotels because

Eddie was black. So we would park outside the hotel in the dark and someone would go in and get the room." (The band followed a similar course at restaurants.) Integrated touring ensembles like Whitlock's Short Cuts, faced great difficulties. "When we were going through the South playing and Eddie was in the band it got pretty heavy and hairy at times. I couldn't believe it: Churches everywhere and we couldn't have safe passage through Mississippi because of the racial prejudice. If you were hanging out with black folks in parts of the South you were discriminated against."[108]

In addition to the discrimination, rhythm and blues touring was a grind. "Southern itineraries are very demanding," Jon Landau, music critic, record producer, and, most famously, manager of Bruce Springsteen wrote in 1969. "The turnover rate is high, fights and violence not infrequent. The musicians [often] become dependent on drugs." Black touring musicians were also treated poorly by the typically white managers, promoters, and booking agents. "Soul artists don't book for vast sums of money," Landau wrote. "But they work regularly. They earned an average of between $20,000 and $40,000 a month and paid their ten sidemen approximately $175 per week. This was, Landau observed, "good money for sidemen."[109] Speaking more than four decades later, Allman Brothers Band drummer Jai Johanny Johanson, himself one of the sidemen Landau was referencing, disputes Landau's notion that the pay was decent. "I had been playing on the rhythm and blues circuit, and they did business old school. In other words, we weren't paid jack shit."[110] Johanson later cited this inequity as the initial reason he sought to join forces with Duane Allman.

Despite shabby touring conditions, musicians of all colors soldiered on through the challenges. Touring not only earned income, it also built musical proficiency and instilled a sense of confidence in the younger artists, Duane and Gregg Allman among them. "For ten years," the elder Allman recalled in 1971, "I've been playing bars, night clubs, lounges, and before that high school dances, little Y-Teen dances, and before that for anybody who would listen. Just learning things. Man it's kind of like studying to be a doctor. You start out with a frog and then you work up and dissect a dog and go on up to human beings, and you work your way up to saving folks' lives and stuff."[111]

After completing their time at the Stork Club in Mobile, the Allman Joys ventured east to the Sahara Club in Pensacola, Florida. It was there that a moment was forever burned into the memory of Gregg Allman. The impact on the audience, and on him, as the band launched into the Beatles' rocker "Paperback Writer" to begin their set, was stunning. "We mesmerized those people. . . . For the first time, I believed it. I felt it. Pensacola was a real turning point in my life, because I realized that if we did things right, we could grab people with the first eight bars of a song, and we wouldn't have to worry about the rest of the night."[112]

As they toured, the Allmans encountered and inspired a wider network of musicians across the region. Some gravitated into the brothers' immediate musical circles, while others grew to fame and fortune separately. In either case, the impact of finding like-minded musicians was critical to the growth of the musical culture of white southerners of this era. In Gainesville, the Allmans competed with the Continentals, a

band that featured, at various times, guitarists and Rock & Roll Hall of Famers Stephen Stills, Bernie Leadon, and Don Felder.[113] Fellow Gainesville native Tom Petty remembers hoisting himself up on a cement wall to see the Allman Joys at a gig in 1966. "Duane just stood there, off to the side, ripping through these great leads," he recalled. "And there was his little baby-faced brother who opened his mouth and sounded like Joe Tex."[114] "It really started to hit me," local promoter Charles Ramirez noted about the possibilities inherent in music, "when I was in eighth grade and saw Duane and Gregg Allman in the Allman Joys at the local American Legion hall."[115]

The Allman Joys' mastery of British Invasion material also set them far apart from their contemporaries. Their skilled covers of the more-challenging, blues-based repertoires of the British bands are what Gary Rossington, who later formed the Jacksonville-based Rock & Roll Hall of Fame band Lynyrd Skynyrd, remembered best. "While other groups were still playing the Ventures and 'Mustang Sally,' Gregg and Duane were playing the Yardbirds and Beatles and Stones—and they'd have a new single figured out the day after it came out," he recalled. "We were still chubby little high school boys, baseball players, and they were like rock stars, skinny guys with long blonde hair and leather jackets. And they could both play the hell out of their guitars. We'd just stand there with our mouths open. They were that much better than everyone else."[116] Johnny Townsend, touring with a band called Dirty John and the Nightcaps, concurred. "We stopped by the Stork Club and saw these guys with long hair playing their asses off—

playing Yardbirds songs! We were playing some of the English stuff, but not like these guys were playing it. We were all just amazed."[117]

As people of similar age and background, the Allmans' attempt to earn a living as professional musicians was inspirational. "All the groups around had a rapport with the Allmans, but they were always looked up to," Tommy Tucker, another musician from Daytona Beach told an interviewer in 1973. "They went on the road early. The rest of us were just having a good time, squeezing out a living playing on the weekends. The Allmans were professionals. They were dedicated to doing this for the rest of their lives."[118] "The Allmans were the first band I knew that played music and did nothing else. That was their thing," Alabama native Paul Hornsby recalled. "They got blond hair down to their shoulders. . . . These guys were right on the cutting edge visually and audibly. Gregg was seventeen or eighteen years old and he already had that huge husky voice, that R&B voice. Duane was just playing like nobody I heard. Even though they were doing copy material, there was something about the way they were doing it that nobody else did."[119]

Duane Allman, in particular, encouraged his fellow musicians in more hands-on ways as well. Johnny Sandlin, Duane's bandmate in Hour Glass and, later, a producer for the Allman Brothers Band's record label, Capricorn Records, remembered his generosity to other musicians. "Duane was very well-known throughout the South as *the* guitar player. Every band had seen him, guitar players all watched him. He influenced a lot of people into playing their own thing instead of just being copy R&B bands. If he met other

guitar players that he thought were promising, he'd either loan or give them a guitar, anything he could do to help."[120] Don Felder had similar reminiscences. Until meeting Duane Allman, "Bernie [Leadon] had been the most talented musician I knew. Now Duane was surpassing even his high standards. . . . 'Close your eyes and listen to the music, man,' Duane told me. . . . 'Feel it in your heart, and when your spine tingles, you'll know it's right.' I felt like I was getting the best tutorial anyone could have, because he was quite simply a phenomenon."[121]

The Allman Joys gained confidence during their time in Pensacola, and their appearance at a later date in the same city had a great effect on another contemporary: Sandlin from Decatur, Alabama.[122] The band's musicianship floored Sandlin. His band the 5 Men-Its played a regular gig at Pensacola's Spanish Village. "One weekend," he recalled, "the Allman Joys played there on the outside patio. . . . It was just amazing, the best band I had ever heard. They came in and listened to our band play and were real nice to us."[123] Sandlin noticed what Townsend had also noticed, the expertise with which the Allmans tackled difficult material. "They were playing very different music from what we were: English stuff, Yardbirds, and Beatles' music," Sandlin recalled. "We had a lot of songs in common but they were playing the Blues Magoos, 'We Ain't Got Nothin' Yet' and 'Give Me Some Lovin'. They were just incredible."[124]

Sandlin also recalled the brothers Allman flouted southern social conventions. "They were the first band I'd seen with long hair, and I mean long hair. Hanging way down past their shoulders. They were in danger; their lives were in danger, in the South.

People just didn't cater to that in a Navy town."[125] "It was almost a cardinal sin to go around with long hair at that time, and I couldn't believe they hadn't gotten killed."[126]

A recording exists of the band Sandlin heard on July 22, 1966 in Pensacola. The repertoire reflected the rhythm and blues the Allman Joys had initially learned in Daytona Beach: Chuck Berry's "Carol," "On the Outside (Looking In)" by Little Anthony and the Imperials, and James Brown's "Good Good Lovin'." The band also played an impeccable cover of the Righteous Brothers' version of the show tune "Old Man River" (originally made famous by African American singer Paul Robeson). Lenny Welch's "Are You Sincere" remained in the setlist. Three songs reflect the influence of the British Invasion and British blues: "Help" by the Beatles; "Heart Full of Soul," by the Yardbirds; and "The Last Time," by the Rolling Stones.[127] Though the recording proves the Allman Joys adept musicians and imitators, the lack of any original material is evident. It has none.

In Pensacola the Allman Joys also encountered another group of musicians—a local teenage girl group, the Sandpipers, with whom they briefly joined forces. Duane Allman convinced the Sandpipers to travel with them to New York where they had some engagements booked. Sandpiper Charlyne Kilpatrick recalled the Allmans convincing her parents to let her join them, "[B]ring the girls out to New York, we're gonna be there during the summer at Trude Heller's in Greenwich Village." They auditioned with the Sandpipers for Bob Dylan's producer, Bob Johnston, who was then recording Dylan's epic *Blonde on Blonde* at Columbia Records's Studio A in midtown Manhattan. Johnston passed on the Allman Joys. The Sandpipers later landed a contract in New York with Tru-

Glo-Town Records. The Allman Joys were not chosen to back them in recording sessions, and Duane and Gregg headed back to Daytona Beach.[128]

Despite the setback, they returned to Florida unbowed. As Shepley remembered, "You could see Duane had been affected by New York City quite a bit. You know, the Southern boy goes to New York! I picked them up, and they were very high—when I say 'high,' I mean they were high about their music. They thought they'd been very successful up at Trude Heller's. They were very, very positive about the future, and they felt like some good things were going to happen for them."[129] Their enthusiasm belied less-than-desirable conditions in the Big Apple. "They had it pretty rough in New York," Shepley said. "They were living in one little icky room, and they were sleeping four in a bed." Perhaps their optimism was because the environment in New York was little different from those on the road in the South. It's also, though, because of their devotion to their craft. "That's the way they were," Shepley reported. "Those guys could live anywhere and do anything. . . . These people, they were committed and dedicated to their desires."[130]

Even before their New York sojourn, the Allman Joys had gained momentum as a touring act in the South. They eventually landed an engagement in Nashville at the Briar Patch. Located at Fifth Avenue South and Lea Street, the venue was one of one of Nashville's earliest rock clubs. Here they encountered songwriter and producer John D. Loudermilk. The band greatly impressed the music industry veteran. "[Elvis's manager] Tom Parker told me one time how to check out an artist. He said, 'You turn your back to the artist. . . . Just turn around and watch the audience. You can see the emotion in their

faces, and you can tell about how much they'll pay to continue having that emotion. . . . So I went to the Briar Patch and did just that. The kids were going crazy."[131]

Seeing promise in the young musicians, Loudermilk took them under his wing. Foremost, he encouraged the Allmans to learn the art of songcraft. "I told them, 'Well, what you need to do is start writing your own songs.'" They brother expressed reservation. "'We don't know if we can do it.' I said, 'Sure you can.' I wrote a lot of stuff with them. . . . They were quick to learn and they just listened to me. So we practiced. . . . [T]hey listened very carefully and they learned real quickly."[132] The lessons did not stick until several years later.

In August 1966, following a month living and working with Loudermilk, the Allman Joys entered Owen Bradley's studio, Bradley's Barn in Lebanon, Tennessee. The songs they recorded reflected their blues influences—Willie Dixon's "Spoonful" (made famous by Howlin' Wolf) and Robert Johnson's "Crossroads" (an arrangement they learned from a short-lived project called Eric Clapton and the Powerhouse—later made famous by Clapton's Cream) and three songs by the Yardbirds: "Shapes of Things," "Mister, You're a Better Man than I," and "Lost Woman." Only one, Gregg Allman's "Gotta Get Away," was an original.[133]

Buddy Killen eventually released a single of what Duane Allman called "a terrible psychedelic rendition of Willie Dixon's 'Spoonful'" on his label, Dial Records.[134] Although "Spoonful" sold relatively well in Nashville, Killen reached the same conclusion as Loudermilk. "Nobody really understood what Duane and Gregg were about at the time.

Eventually I gave them their release," he said.[135] The guitarist, perhaps somewhat in jest, remembered it differently. "We told [Killen] we wanted to be rock stars . . . and he said, 'No man, you cats better look for a day gig, you're never gonna make it—you're the worst band I ever heard.'" Several years later, when the Allman Brothers Band were in full swing, Killen called Phil Walden and offered to sell him his tapes. "You know Phil," he told Walden, "I knew I should've spent more time with those boys.'"[136]

While Loudermilk saw much promise in the Allman brothers, the players in the powerful music industry did not. "I tried to get all the guys I knew to go see them—like Owen Bradley and Chet Atkins. There were several other producers, and none of them saw it. . . . They went over with me, but nobody was knocked out with them."[137] The industry's response discouraged the Allmans. Loudermilk recalled a despondent Duane Allman remarking, "'I don't know what we're gonna do.'" Acknowledging the setback, Loudermilk offered encouragement. "You ain't going to get nothing done here," he told the young guitarist. "You ain't gonna get anybody to listen to you here. I can tell you what to do—get your ass out of here and get to the Coast."[138]

Loudermilk meant the West Coast: California. At the time of the suggestion, prospects were bleak for a leap from a regional cover band from the small-town South to the professional studios and music industry of Los Angeles. As they continued to tour on the same regional circuit as before, the Allman Joys began losing band members. Bassist Bob Keller quit, rejoined, and then quit the band again. Keller's replacement Ralph

Ballinger eventually tired of life as a touring musician. Drummer Bill Connell replaced Maynard Portwood but then, to avoid the draft, joined the Navy.[139]

In response, by early 1967, Allman turned to the musicians he had encountered in July 1966 at Spanish Village in Pensacola: notably Paul Hornsby and Johnny Sandlin, who, having been touring as a quartet, now called themselves the Men-Its. He suggested the band, who had recently lost its lead singer and guitar player Eddie Hinton, join forces with him and his brother. The group quickly coalesced around the older Allman's vision. "When there was a Duane Allman in your band," Hornsby reflected, "there was only room for one leader. Because he was going to do it his way and it wouldn't have mattered if you had another leader anyway, he wouldn't have listened to him. He had to do it his way. And it was probably the best, what he wanted to do."[140] The new band adopted the name the Allman Joys.[141]

This newly constituted band of southern musicians not only knew each other from touring (it was the Allmans, after all, who originally convinced the 5 Men-Its to tour: "[They] were trying to convince us we needed to go on the road, that life on the road was the next thing to Heaven—and they were lying like a dog," Hornsby recalled.[142])—they also shared musical influences and repertoires. Hornsby recalls that the combined band "did all of the R&B covers and a lot of the British covers—Yardbirds' stuff like 'Over Under Sideways Down.'" Their repertoire included Bobby "Blue" Bland's "Turn on Your Love Light" and Bland's cover of T-Bone Walker's, "Stormy Monday Blues," both standard in the sets of southern bands at the time.[143] They also worked up a version of John Lee

Hooker's "Dimples" that the 5 Men-Its had arranged with harmony guitar parts. Harmony guitar, popular in western swing music, was not yet employed in southern rhythm and blues and rock. It became one of the signature sounds of the Allman Brothers Band that formed two years later.[144]

After a few weeks practicing, the new band took to the road. Allman booked the band to play a multiweek engagement at Pepe's a Go Go in St. Louis—a regular stop on their touring circuit. It wasn't long before a chance encounter created the opening for him to follow Loudermilk's advice and head West.

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[1] The second generation is often referred to as the Teen Idol era. See David P. Szatmary, *Rockin' in Time: A Social History of Rock-and-Roll* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996); James Miller, *Flowers in the Dustbin: The Rise of Rock and Roll 1947-1977* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000); Glenn C. Altschuler, *All Shook up: How Rock 'n' Roll Changed America* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[2] This is later marketed as "Southern Rock"—a term that reflects a generation of southern musicians that grew to fame in the early-to-mid 1970s.

[3] Nearly each of these cities had military and/or federal government ties. Daytona Beach, Jacksonville, and Tampa, Florida, and Macon, Georgia, all hosted military bases. The Muscle Shoals region was powered by Wilson Dam, a part of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

[4] C*ountry Soul: Making Music and Making Race in the American South* by Charles L. Hughes is a masterful, in-depth study of southern musicians and racial dynamics in this time period.

[5] Duane Allman was in two of them: the House Rockers early in his career in Daytona Beach, and in the Allman Brothers Band, which he formed in 1969.

[6] *Song of The South.*

[7] Ward, *Just My Soul Responding*, 128.

[8] Mikal Gilmore, *Night Beat: A Shadow History of Rock 'n' Roll* (New York: Anchor, 1999), 121.

[9] Palmer, *Rock 'n' Roll: An Unruly History*, 22.

[10] For background on the British Invasion and its impact, see: Bob Spitz, *The Beatles: The Biography* (New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 2005); Barry Miles, *The British Invasion: The Music, the Times, the Era* (New York: Sterling Publishing, 2009); James E. Perone, *Mods, Rockers, and the Music of the British Invasion* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2009); Simon Philo, *British Invasion: The Crosscurrents of Musical Influence* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015); Jonathan Gould, *Can't Buy Me Love: The Beatles, Britain, and America* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2008). Many books contained detailed chapters on the British Invasion. See: Brad Tolinski and Alan Di Perna, *Play It Loud: An Epic History of the Style, Sound, and Revolution of the Electric Guitar* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2016); Jack Hamilton, "The White Atlantic: Cultural Origins of the 'British Invasion,'" in *Just around Midnight: Rock and Roll and the Racial Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 86-120; James Miller, *Flowers in the Dustbin: The Rise of Rock and Roll 1947-1977* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000); David P. Szatmary, *Rockin' in Time: A Social History of Rock-and-Roll* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996).

[11] This is much like southern gospel, a white musical genre typically featuring four singers accompanied by a piano. See James R. Goff Jr., *Close Harmony: A History Of Southern Gospel* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

[12] Musicians typically followed the Beatles' formula: two guitars, a bass, and a drummer, often with more than one person handling vocals. Many also added keyboards.

[13] Miller, 212.

[14] Marty Jourard, *Music Everywhere: The Rock and Roll Roots of a Southern Town* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2016), 30-31.

[15] Michael Buffalo Smith, "Toy Story: This Ol' Cowboy Lives On," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 23 (n.d.), 29.

[16] Roy Shuker, *Popular Music: The Key Concepts* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2017), 143.

[17] Jeffrey M. Lemlich, *Savage Lost: Florida Garage Bands, the '60s and Beyond* (Plantation, FL: Distinctive Pub. Corp, 1992), 1.

[18] Incidentally, three of these bands—the Yardbirds, the Blues Breakers, and Cream—featured future Duane Allman collaborator Eric Clapton on guitar. The Paul Butterfield Blues Band was also gaining some acclaim at this time. The band released its debut album in October 1965.

[19] June Harris, "Getting Together with the Allman Brothers," *Hit Parader*, September 1970, accessed July 13, 2015, Rock's Back Pages, www.rocksbackpages.com/Library/Article/getting-together-with-the-allman-brothers.

[20] Malone and Stricklin, 14-18.

[21] Malone and Stricklin, 18.

[22] Robert Palmer, *Rock 'n' Roll: An Unruly History*, 6.

[23] Michael Buffalo Smith, "Paul Hornsby: The Kudzoo Interview," *Kudzoo*, March 2017, 10.

[24] Malone and Stricklin document this tradition's Southern roots beginning in the late nineteenth century. See Malone and Stricklin, 24-26.

[25] Michael Brooks, "Meet Dick Betts," *Guitar Player*, October 1972, 20.

[26] Michael Buffalo Smith, *Capricorn Rising: Conversations in Southern Rock* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2016), 190-191.

[27] Bud Scoppa, *The Rock People: Interviews with 13 Top Stars and Groups* (New York, NY: Scholastic Book Services, 1973), 66.

[28] David Less, "Mr. Crump Don't Like It: An Interview with Jim Dickinson," *Dixie Flyer*, October 1979, 12-13.

[29] Michael Buffalo Smith, "Tom Wynn of Cowboy: The GRITZ Interview," *Swampland.com* (blog), n.d., accessed August 21, 2016, http://swampland.com/articles/view/title:tom_wynn_of_cowboy_the_gritz_interview.

[30] Phil W. Hudson, "Q&A: The Progressive Global Agency President Buck Williams Talks Widespread Panic, R.E.M., Chuck Leavell," Atlanta Business Journal, December 9, 2106, accessed December 18, 2016, www.bizjournals.com/atlanta/news/2016/12/09/q-a-the-progressive-global-agency-president-buck.html. Alex Taylor is the older brother of Rock & Roll Hall of Fame member James Taylor.

[31] Rick Garner, "Alabama Soulman," *Hittin' the Note*, Spring 1997, 35.

[32] Hudson.

[33] Gregg Allman and Alan Light, *My Cross to Bear* (New York: Morrow, 2012), 15.

[34] The most lyrical retelling of this story is in Galadrielle Allman, *Please Be with Me: A Song for My Father, Duane Allman* (New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2014), 48-49. See also Poe, 8.

[35] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 32.

[36] Poe, 9. Ray Waddell, "The Allman Brothers, the *Billboard* Interview," *Billboard*, December 18, 1999, 22. Gregg Allman long reported that this show happened at the Nashville Municipal Auditorium but two things precluded that. First, the venue opened in October 1962, or two-plus years after Gregg's summer 1960 memory. Second, according to the database Nashville Concerts.com, Jackie Wilson did not play there for the first time until 1966. See "Municipal Auditorium Concerts: A Complete List From 1963-1999," www.tennesseeconcerts.com/municipalauditoriumtickets.html, accessed February 10, 2018.

[37] Galadrielle Allman, *Please Be with Me*, 49.

[38] Poe, 9.

[39] Poe, 6.

[40] Scoppa, *The Rock People*, 61.

[41] See Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 33-34; Poe, 8; Paul, *One Way Out*, 1-2.

[42] Paul, *One Way Out,* 2.

[43] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 42.

[44] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 42.

[45] Mandel, 49.

[46] Poe, 9.

[47] Palmer, *Deep Blues*, 252.

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[48] Jim Shepley and Jas Obrecht, "Young Duane Allman: The Jim Shepley Interview," May 12, 1982, accessed August 6, 2013, http://jasobrecht.com/young-duane-allman-the-jim-shepley-interview/.

[49] Poe, 9.

[50] Shepley and Obrecht.

[51] The Uniques may not be Duane's true "first" band, as Randy Poe documents some early attempts at forming bands while he and Gregg attended at Castle Heights military school in Lebanon, Tennessee. See Poe, 9-13.

[52] Sonny Fussell, "The Uniques," n.d., accessed January 13, 2018, www.duane allman.info/note160.htm.

[53] *Song of the South*. Some accounts call this early band the Y-Teens, a misnomer that refers to the youth organization affiliated with the YMCA.

[54] *Song of the South.*

[55] Harris.

[56] *Song of the South*.

[57] Floyd Miles and Jas Obrecht, "Young Duane Allman: The Floyd Miles Interview," May 18, 1982, accessed September 20, 2015, http://jasobrecht.com/young-duane-allman-floyd-miles-interview/.

[58] Miles and Obrecht. John Bozzo documented more of the history of the black music venues in Daytona Beach in 2007. See John Bozzo, "Beat Went on Despite Segregation," *Daytona Beach News Journal*, October 17, 2007, accessed March 26, 2018, https://web.archive.org/web/20071017210335/http://www.news-journalonline.com/NewsJournalOnline/News/Headlines/frtHEAD02MUS101707.htm.

[59] Shepley and Obrecht.

[60] Poe, 15-16.

[61] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 43.

[62] Poe, 19.

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[63] John Lynskey, "Greg Allman: Simplicity Found," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 19 (n.d.), 16.

[64] Crowe, "The Allman Brothers Story," 47.

[65] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 44-45. In 1971, the Allman Brothers Band released a version of Elmore James's "Done Somebody Wrong" on *At Fillmore East*.

[66] Miles and Obrecht.

[67] Michael Buffalo Smith, "Floyd Miles," *Swampland.Com* (blog), October 2004, accessed August 21, 2016, http://swampland.com/articles/view/title:floyd_miles.

[68] Freeman, 10-11.

[69] Freeman, 11.

[70] Alan Paul, "Lowdown and Dirty: Gregg Allman: Looking Back . . . Looking Forward," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 26 (n.d.), 48.

[71] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 49.

[72] Robert Palmer, "Allman Brothers Band: A Great Southern Revival," *Rolling Stone*, May 3, 1979, accessed September 22, 2017, https://www.rollingstone.com/music/features/the-allman-brothers-a-great-southern-revival-19790503.

[73] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

[74] Miles and Obrecht.

[75] Poe, 18. The college towns he refers to are presumably Gainesville and Tallahassee.

[76] Miles and Obrecht.

[77] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 45, 49.

[78] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 49.

[79] Dave Kyle, "Remembering Duane Allman," *Vintage Guitar Magazine*, January 1997, accessed August 6, 2013, www.duaneallman.info/rememberingduaneallman.htm.

[80] Freeman, 13.

[81] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 62.

[82] Dave Kyle, "Remembering Duane Allman."

[83] Freeman, 13; Poe, 21.

[84] Michael Buffalo Smith, "Floyd Miles."

[85] Bob Palmer, "Memphis Underground," *Changes* 1, no. 13 (1969), 15.

[86] *Song Of The South*.

[87] Poe, 22-23.

[88] Gregg Allman released a live version of "Turn on Your Love Light" on *The Gregg Allman Tour* album in 1974.

[89] These recordings appeared in 2013 for the first time on *Skydog: The Duane Allman Retrospective*, Rounder/Concord Music Group, B0017877-02, 2013, CD.

[90] Poe says the band's second recordings with Hazen were under the Allman Joys moniker. *Skydog: The Duane Allman Retrospective*, produced by Duane's daughter Galadrielle Allman, documents them as the Escorts.

[91] Shepley and Obrecht.

[92] Galadrielle Allman, *Please Be with Me*, 69; Barney Hoskyns, Interview with Gregg Allman, May 27, 2002, accessed September 18, 2017, https://www-rocksbackpages-com.ezproxy.mtsu.edu/Library/Article/the-allman-brothers-bands-gregg-allman-2002.

[93] Poe, 28.

[94] Ed Shane and Duane Allman, "Ed Shane Interview with Duane Allman (WPLO FM, 1970)," track 1 on *The Duane Allman Dialogs*, Capricorn PRO-545, 1972.

[95] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

[96] Kyle, "Remembering Duane Allman."

[97] Crowe, "The Allman Brothers Story," 47.

[98] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 65-66.

[99] Michael Buffalo Smith, *Capricorn Rising*, 216.

[100] Palmer, *Rock 'n' Roll: An Unruly History*, 1-2.

[101] Jourard, 38.

[102] "The Allman Brothers: A Local Legend That Keeps on Growing," *Daytona Beach Morning Journal*, August 4, 1973.

[103] For an examination of rhythm and blues music and social change, see Brian Ward, *Just My Soul Responding*; Preston Lauterbach provides great detail on the lives of touring African American musicians in the rhythm and blues and early rock 'n' roll era. See also Guralnick, *Sweet Soul Music*; Robert Gordon, *Respect Yourself: Stax Records and the Soul Explosion* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013); Altschuler, *All Shook Up*; Bertrand, *Race, Rock, and Elvis*.

[104] Steve Knopper, "The Rope: The Forgotten History of Segregated Rock 'n' Roll Concerts," *Rolling Stone,* November 16, 2017, accessed November 30, 2017, www. rollingstone.com/music/features/rocks-early-segregated-days-the-forgotten-history-w509481.

[105] Knopper.

[106] Knopper.

[107] Tommy Roe, *From Cabbagetown to Tinseltown and Places in Between: The Autobiography of Tommy Roe* (North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Pub. Platform, 2016), 89-91. Interestingly enough, bassist Berry Oakley played with Roe prior to the founding of the Allman Brothers Band.

[108] Bobby Whitlock and Marc Roberty, *Bobby Whitlock: A Rock 'n' Roll Autobiography* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2011), 31.

[109] Jon Landau, Untitled Essay, May/June 1969. Collection of Mark Tucci.

[110] Alan Paul, "Allman Brothers Drummer Jaimoe Remembers Gregg Allman," *Rolling Stone*, June 2, 2017, www.rollingstone.com/music/news/allman-brothers-drummer-jaimoe-remembers-gregg-allman-w485240, accessed June 2, 2017.

[111] "An Interview with Duane Allman of the Allman Brothers Band," *Free Press*, February 1, 1971, accessed August 6, 2013, http://www.duaneallman.info/freepress 02011971.htm#top.

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[112] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 66.

[113] Warren Zanes, *Petty: The Biography* (New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2016), 26.

[114] Cameron Crowe, "Duane Allman - The Day the Music Died," *The Uncool - The Official Site for Everything Cameron Crowe* (blog), 1989, accessed June 1, 2017, www.theuncool .com/journalism/duane-allman-the-day-the-music-died/.

[115] Zanes, *Petty: The Biography*, 27.

[116] Paul, "Lowdown and Dirty," 47.

[117] Poe, 29.

[118] "The Allman Brothers: A Local Legend That Keeps on Growing."

[119] *Song of the South*.

[120] Jas Obrecht, "Duane Allman Remembered," *Guitar Player*, January 2012, 46.

[121] Don Felder and Wendy Holden, *Heaven and Hell: My Life in the Eagles (1974-2001)* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2008), 39. Felder's story references Duane teaching him slide guitar, but the timeline doesn't match up as Felder set this tale in 1966 and Duane did not pick up slide until 1968.

[122] Johnny Sandlin's memoir records the name as the Minutes. Advertisements for the show co-bill the Allman Joys with the 5 Men-Its. See "Advertisement," *Pensacola News Journal*, accessed July 17, 2017, Collection of Walter Vanderbeken, www.facebook. com/photo.php?fbid=762239140623467&set=gm.1153542391414442&type=3&theater. Before settling on the Minutes, the band had various names including the 5 Men-Its and the 5 Minutes. See Anathalee Sandlin, *A Never-Ending Groove: Johnny Sandlin's Musical Odyssey* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2012), 15-20.

[123] Dave Kyle, "Remembering Duane Allman."

[124] Sandlin, 21.

[125] Nolan, 7.

[126] Sandlin, 22.

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[127] The Allman Joys, "Allman Joys Spanish Village Patio Pensacola Beach Friday July 22 1966," accessed April 26, 2017, www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUoR3Ouzsuo.

[128] Nic Schuck, "Allman Brothers Band Classic Penned in Pensacola," *Sands Paper*, sandspaper.com/2016/09/19/allman-brothers-band-classic-penned-pensacola/, accessed September 19, 2016. Jeff Lemlich, "All Over But The Crying: The Sandpipers Story," www.spectropop.com/Sandpipers/, accessed January 17, 2018.

[129] Shepley and Obrecht.

[130] Shepley and Obrecht.

[131] Poe, 32.

[132] Poe, 32-33.

[133] *Skydog: The Duane Allman Retrospective*, Rounder/Concord Music Group, B0017877-02, 2013, CD.

[134] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

[135] Poe, 33, 36.

[136] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry." Killen later issued the Allman Joys' demos in 1973 as an album called *Early Allman*.

[137] Poe, 33.

[138] Poe, 36.

[139] Poe, 34-35, 39.

[140] *Song of the South*.

[141] Poe, 39; Freeman, 21-22; Sandlin, 25-27.

[142] Michael Buffalo Smith, "Paul Hornsby: The Kudzoo Interview," 14-15.

[143] Poe, 39-40.

[144] Sandlin, 26-27; Poe, 40.

# Chapter 3

## "It's Like I Brought Myself Back to Earth and Came to Life Again": Duane Allman Discovers His Musical Vision

Though discouraged after the Allman Joys' failed Nashville stint, Duane Allman remained undeterred. Allman learned valuable lessons from Loudermilk. First was the validation that he, indeed, had talent. Second, the music industry was such that the band would have to leave the South to make it big. He needed to relocate to the West. Last, and most importantly, was the importance of original material. It was a lesson Allman first encountered in Daytona Beach, when the musically inferior Nighcrawlers surpassed his band in popularity. It was also a lesson Allman had yet to internalize. Until he developed originality, Allman's destiny was as a sideman.

Pepe's a Go Go, the venue the Allman Joys set out for, was located in St. Louis's Gaslight Square district. Originally a bohemian area full of antique shops and bars playing Dixieland jazz, Gaslight Square emerged from the wreckage of a tornado that devastated the area in February 1959. What resulted was an entertainment district the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* later described as "the place to be for beats, preppies, well-dressed adults, street troubadours, and tourists." It was an area that hosted concerts by Barbra Streisand (who opened for the Smothers Brothers), readings by Beat Generation poet Alan

Ginsburg, and regular appearances by jazz trumpeter Miles Davis.[1] It was a logical first stop for the new Allman Joys/5 Men-Its combo.

The band's repertoire reflected the eclectic nature of their personal tastes, and what audiences on the southern touring circuit wanted to hear. Keyboardist Paul Hornsby maintained the band was "a powerhouse"—with the ability to play a variety of musical styles in close approximation to the originals.[2] Yet as good as they were musically, the end result was somewhat disjointed. The band's sound, however, was somewhat incoherent. "[T]hey had several different styles that hadn't quite coalesced into one," Nitty Gritty Dirt Band banjo player John McEuen recalled.[3] The band was, "Contemporary Adaptable," as Tom Nolan wrote. "One minute they were a go-go band, the next, a funkier Young Rascals with a strain of R&B evident throughout."[4]

The group played a setlist that leaned heavily on rhythm and blues and British blues.[5] It performed stalwarts such as "Mustang Sally" by Wilson Pickett, "These Arms of Mine" by Otis Redding, and "Stormy Monday" and "Turn on Your Love Light" by Bobby "Blue" Bland; covers of British blues bands Cream (its cover of Howlin' Wolf's "Spoonful") and the Spencer Davis Group's "Gimme Some Lovin'." It also had worked up what Sandlin called a wild, feedback-filled version of Loudermilk's "Tobacco Road."[6]

While picking up his wife at the airport soon after their March 1967 arrival in St. Louis, bass player Mabron McKinney ran into members of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, a rock band with strains of country music influence. Founded in 1966 in Long Beach,

California, the Dirt Band was in the area touring in support of their self-titled debut album. McKinney felt an immediate affinity for the Californians. "At that time," Sandlin recalled, "if you saw another person with long hair you felt an instant kinship."[7] McKinney invited his new friends to hear the Allman Joys live.

Despite a cover-heavy repertoire, the live Allman Joys astounded Bill McEuen, the Dirt Band's manager and brother of banjo player John McEuen. "It was like being drawn into a new musical form," he later recounted.[8] McEuen called contacts at Liberty Records, the company that had just released the Dirt Band's debut record, and said, "'I have just discovered the next Rolling Stones. I've found the greatest band in the world.'"[9]

McEuen encouraged the band to relocate to Los Angeles and sign with Liberty. While Duane Allman was eager to follow Loudermilk's suggestion to head west, brother Gregg was decidedly less enthused with the idea. "I said, 'No, Duane, that's a jive lick. Let's don't do it.'"[10] Sandlin shared Gregg's reticence. "It was scary because I'd never been anywhere close to California. . . . I wanted to do it and I *didn't* want to at the same time. It was one of those things where you were scared but knew if we were gonna get anywhere with the band, we had to go."[11] Both Gregg and his brother understood this. "Duane bought into it. . . . I think in part because he just wanted to get the fuck out of St. Louis. So we went."[12] In a move they all quickly came to regret, the band signed a recording contract with Liberty. Typical of the recording contracts of the time, the agreement gave them no artistic control.

For small-town southerners, Los Angeles, then experiencing its own version of the hippie movement overtaking its Northern California neighbors in San Francisco, was a wild place. It was home to bands like the Byrds, Buffalo Springfield (featuring their Florida contemporary Stephen Stills on guitar), and the Doors. The latter two had released debut records within months of the Allmans' arrival—the former had released a third record, one with decidedly psychedelic rock leanings, in February 1967.[13] All three reflected the burgeoning West Coast rock music scene, one that also included bands playing in and around San Francisco: the Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead, and Big Brother and the Holding Company (with Janis Joplin). Music was rapidly evolving as these bands began replacing the more danceable forms of rock 'n' roll and rhythm and blues in pursuit of music-as-art, more to be listened to than danced to.[14]

From the beginning, California was an ill fit for the southerners. The scene they encountered unnerved them. "Things seemed to be happening then which, I guess, were hip things to be happening, but they scared me to death. I didn't like them. . . . When we got out there we ended up doing the whole Hollywood trip—the clothes, everything. Most of us felt awfully alienated."[15] "California seemed to drive the whole band crazy," he continued. "Being from [the South] and going out there was just strange, strange, strange."[16]

The band also experienced first-hand the caprices of the music business. They were hard lessons for the young, eager musicians to learn. Liberty assigned a staff

producer, Dallas Smith who, as was typical at the time, attempt to managed the entirety of the band's image from clothing choices to song selection to recording and arranging techniques. He changed the band's name from the Allman Joys to Hour Glass, greatly minimizing the chance that audiences might associate the band with its two obvious stars: Duane and Gregg Allman.[17] Ultimately, Smith and Liberty's handling of the band was a calamity, one that the brothers Allman and bandmates Sandlin, Hornsby, and Pete Carr would lament for the rest of their lives.

Smith's ideas about records and record making reflected a record company-focused mentality that emerged shortly after Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, Little Richard, and other early rock 'n' roll stars had burst onto the American music scene. Caught by surprise, the entire American entertainment establishment quickly reacted and began searching out and recording "Teen Idols"—younger, clean-cut males (nearly always white, and not always teenagers) singing pop songs written by professional songwriters in the Tin Pan Alley tradition. It was the mainstream music business's reaction to rock 'n' roll's quick ascension into the minds (and wallets) of America's youth.

Ricky Nelson, son of Ozzie and Harriet Nelson of the hit television show *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*, ushered in the era in April 1957, with a performance on the show (and subsequent single) of the Fats Domino standard "I'm Walkin'." The success of Nelson's record not only put the music industry on notice of the emerging teen market, it also began to shape it.[18] Record labels and impresarios nurtured dozens of

teen stars along with Nelson. Many adopted Americanized stage names: Fabian (Forte), Bobby Rydell (Robert Louis Ridarelli), Frankie Avalon (Francis Thomas Avallone), and Del Shannon (Charles Weedon Westover). This Teen Idol era, which continued through the Beatles' arrival on the American charts in January 1964, sapped rock 'n' roll's edgy appeal, scholar Glenn C. Altschuler argues. "Rock 'n' roll," he writes, "had become less vital, edgy, and creative, but it was producer induced, not consumer driven."[19] The arrangement hurt the artists more than the consumers. "Record companies didn't know what they were doing," John McEuen recalled. "They don't make records, they distribute records, and quite often they think they actually 'make' records, so they find a group with a lot of energy, and they think they should dress one way or another, or should record one way or another."[20] This dynamic changed with the rise of the band era, launched in part, by the British Invasion.

Before assuming control over Hour Glass's career, Dallas Smith's greatest success had been with Teen Idol Bobby Vee (née Velline). Winner of an on-the-spot talent contest to replace Buddy Holly, Vee's career began the day after the plane crash that killed Holly and two other early rock 'n' roll stars: J.P. "The Big Bopper" Richardson and Richie Valens.[21] While on Liberty, and with Smith guiding his career, Vee scored eight Top-10 hits between 1961 and 1969.[22]

Having achieved success with Vee, Smith attempted to repeat his formula with Hour Glass. He chose the band's songs, which they subsequently learned and recorded at

Smith's direction.[23] Because their music comprised mostly covers and the band had had no appreciable success beyond touring as a live act, Hour Glass reluctantly went along with Smith's plan. "At first we were happy just to be in L.A.," Paul Hornsby recalled. "We wanted to please the record company and do what they wanted us to do. We were glad to be doing anything."[24] However, the arrangement frustrated Duane Allman, who had long been in charge of deciding what his band would play and when.

To Smith, Hour Glass was less band of equals and more Gregg Allman's backing group. He completely ignored the elder Allman's talents. "[Liberty] knew Gregg was a good singer," Hornsby noted, "[but] Dallas Smith was just used to producing records in his fashion, which was miles from what we were doing." With Hour Glass, Smith followed the same formula he had with Vee. "He knew how to cut records that way," Hornsby said, "where you have a lead singer and you have backup guys and Duane was just a backup guy as far as he was concerned."[25] Sandlin concurred. "All along they wanted to cut Gregg like Gerry and the Pacemakers, with him out front in the band being inconsequential. They hated anything we liked and we hated anything they liked."[26]

While the band members may have been incredible players, their repertoire remained limited to covers. "We had chops out the ass," Gregg Allman said, "but didn't have the originality thing down yet." Thus, the band's first album featured songs by outside, professional songwriters. "They handed us that basket of songs," he recalled, "and said 'Okay, now pick out your album.'"[27] Beyond the choice of material, Smith's

heavy-handed style grated on the band, particularly the elder Allman. "We didn't have any say-so about it," Hornsby recalled. "It was an absolute dictatorship and again you don't dictate to Duane. He and the producer never got along. . . . It wasn't turning out too well, we didn't like it. We weren't impressed by it."[28]

Worse still, in a bizarre marketing ploy, Smith and Liberty restricted Hour Glass from playing live shows. As Gregg Allman recalled, "Liberty wouldn't let us play that many gigs. They were 'saving' us."[29] It was an odd decision, given that the band's best work was done in front of an audience. But it was somewhat typical of the music business—much earlier, Tom Parker took Elvis Presley off the road, hoping to generate more enthusiasm for him. It was no surprise, then, that Smith and Liberty took a similar tack with Hour Glass. "They didn't want us to be overexposed," Hornsby noted. "They felt like it would cheapen the band if we played so much right in L.A." This severely hampered the band. Given that their records weren't selling well, their only income was from live shows.[30]

To make matters worse, the material Smith had Hour Glass record was a far cry from the band's blues and rhythm and blues-heavy repertoire. "We didn't fit in too well musically," Sandlin said, "All our roots had been in R&B music."[31] Gregg Allman recalled that the records felt dead. "The music had no life to it—it was poppy, preprogrammed shit." Professional songwriters had written much of the material the band recorded. Its production put Gregg Allman at the fore, burying the band deep in the mix.

Playing live, however, was a different story. "[W]e realized we couldn't play that stuff on that record," Hornsby recalled.[32] When the band played live gigs "we did nothing off the record," he remembered. "Boy did that piss them off."[33] They exacted satisfaction by playing the music they knew best—southern music with strong African American roots. They remained, however, all covers. "When we were able to play shows, we were playing a lot of R&B and some blues," Gregg Allman wrote. "We always stuck to our guns musically. We were determined to do what we did best and how it was the most comfortable for us, so we did songs like 'Leaving Trunk' [Sleepy John Estes by way of Taj Mahal], 'I'm Hanging Up My Heart For You,' the Solomon Burke tune, and [John Lee Hooker's] 'Dimples,' which took on a life of its own. We did 'Stormy Monday,' 'Feel So Bad,' and 'Love Light' [all by Bobby 'Blue' Bland]."[34]

In addition to their standard repertory, the band also began to weave other musical elements into their live sets—presaging a wider variety of music in the Allman Brothers Band. "They would open their sets with an instrumental version of [the Beatles'] 'Norwegian Wood' and close it with a song by [country star] Buck Owens and the Buckaroos," John McEuen remembered. "It was good, but all over the place." The band, he continued, "Didn't know their position in the musical world yet—but they knew they were good. . . . They were seeking their identity, but anyone who heard them understood how good they were. Duane had total command and authority of the guitar and Gregg was just a great singer who could make anything his own."[35]

By limiting their ability to play live, Liberty Records stunted the band's potential to garner the success that they, and others, believed they were destined for. "We only played about once a month," Gregg Allman recalled, "at rock halls like the Avalon, the Kaleidoscope, the Fillmore, the Vault , the Troubadour, a place called the Magic Mushroom, and a couple of times at the Whiskey. They were somewhere between nightclubs and opera houses, so basically they were roadhouses. . . . We wanted to play all the time but they just wouldn't let us."[36]

These relatively rare live appearances commanded the attention of peers and audiences alike. The band was every bit as good live as advertised. And Duane Allman was its focal point. "When Duane played guitar," Bill McEuen recounted:

> He was part of the song, he was part of the lick, he was visually interpreting his music like when you watch John Lee Hooker or you got a chance to watch Hendrix. He was obviously totally glued and tuned in to those licks, and he knew that he wasn't just playing notes, that they were things that should communicate and when they did it was very exciting.[37]

"Duane was absolutely great to the point where when they played at Whiskey's the place was packed," John McEuen recalled.[38] Johnny Townsend, a compadre from the southern touring circuit, was there as well. "People—pretty much a lot of the Hollywood elite in the music world—were there that night to see them just burn the stage. Frightened people to death, really: 'What the hell is this? These guys are fucking killers!'"[39]

When allowed to play live, Hornsby recalled, the band hosted jam sessions.[40] Hour Glass jam partners comprised a who's who of the era's contemporary rock music

scene: Paul Butterfield of the Chicago-based Paul Butterfield Blues Band, Janis Joplin and Big Brother and the Holding Company, the Allmans' Florida contemporary Stephen Stills and his Buffalo Springfield bandmate Neil Young, drummer Buddy Miles, and Eric Burdon, singer of the British Invasion band the Animals.[41] The band acquitted themselves well. "Man, you sure were a tough act to follow," Stephen Stills told Gregg Allman years later.[42] His bandmate Neil Young, hinted at the band's live presence in the liner notes for the *Power of Love*, Hour Glass's second album:

> I first saw Hour Glass at the Whisky A Go-Go in Hollywood. They were together then, too. I can't remember who the lead act was. I went back to see them a few times more before we left on a ten-day tour. Then Christmas '67 found us together at the Fillmore in San Francisco.
>
> Before our last set all five of us (Buffalo Springfield) sat down in front of the stage. We listened to the sounds of the South. Sweet country sounds swelled through the Hour Glass.[43]

"We went to San Francisco played Fillmore auditorium," Hornsby recalled. "We opened for Jefferson Airplane, Moby Grape, the Animals and it was a big deal. Here we were, we were nobodies, but I'd have hated to be the headline act to follow the Hour Glass when we played."[44]

What they weren't, however, was a good fit with Liberty Records nor Dallas Smith. Their recorded output reflected this. For their first album, *Hour Glass*, Smith reduced the band Bill McEuen believed to be the next Rolling Stones to recording songs completely out of their realm. Recorded in summer 1967 and released that October, all but one tune, Gregg's "Got to Get Away," was a cover. This was not out of the ordinary,

Hour Glass was a cover band after all, but the material did not reflect the band's rhythm and blues roots. Instead, the band's self-titled debut included works from a variety of songwriters, including Brill Building songsters Gerry Goffin and Carole King (who'd penned four *Billboard* Hot 100 hits for Smith protegee Bobby Vee), African American soul musicians Curtis Mayfield and Jimmy Radcliffe, Del Shannon, and future folk rock superstar Jackson Browne.

The band's experience recording their second album, *Power of Love*, in January/February 1968 was basically a repeat of the first. Smith again wielded a heavy hand and chose the band's material. As one who wrote no songs nor sang, Duane Allman offered no alternative to Smith's plan. Out of frustration, he quit the band before recording his lead tracks and made haste for Daytona Beach. (He later returned, uneventfully, and completed the recording.)[45] The record, released in March 1968, once again failed to make a dent on the charts.

An exception between Hour Glass's first album and *Power of Love*, however, is Gregg Allman's songwriting; he penned seven of the album's twelve tracks. While none were particularly memorable and none reached the repertoires of any of Duane or Gregg Allman's future bands, the improvement of Gregg Allman's compositions was notable enough that Smith included them on the album. Also significant is that three of the other five tracks were written by fellow southerners—one by Spooner Oldham and Dan Penn and two more by the team of Marlon Greene and Eddie Hinton, the latter a former 5

Men-Its bandmate of Sandlin and Hornsby. Oldham, Penn, Greene, and Hinton had all begun their careers in Rick Hall's FAME Studios in Muscle Shoals —a place that factors greatly into the next part of the Duane Allman saga.

And while Hour Glass bombed commercially, the entire experience led Duane Allman to further hone an ideal musical project in his mind—one he would realize less than a year after the release of *Power of Love.* In private moments, Allman and his bandmates played the songs of the South. Hour Glass had yet to bring an original spin to its music, but continued to bond over the music of their home region—a particularly important development given that the band's members were at a low ebb in their professional lives. Their friend from Daytona Beach, Pete Carr, who joined Hour Glass on bass for its second album, remembered playing the country standard "The Long Black Veil" with the Allmans. "I remember us harmonizing on it, and it really was a moment separated from everything else we were doing. It was like a close family thing."[46]

Bill McEuen remembered discussing musical ideas with Duane during this time period. "Duane and I would sit for hours in my front room playing guitar and we'd discuss the possibilities of getting that guitar up front, but we didn't know what kind of music to do it with because there weren't many guitar instrumentals that were making it, and Duane didn't sing very much."[47] It is clear that after several years in cover bands, Duane Allman heard a sound in his head, but it was one he was as yet unable to harness on record or in any original format.

While in Los Angeles, Allman discovered a new technique on guitar that would bring him great renown: bottleneck slide. Stories conflict about his first exposure to the slide guitar. Some cite Jeff Beck's slide solo on "Beck's Bolero"—a 1966 recording that later appeared on *Truth,* the Jeff Beck Group's first album, in 1968. The more common understanding traces Allman's affinity for the technique to Jesse Ed Davis, the guitarist on bluesman Taj Mahal's self-titled debut record. The disc featured Davis's slide guitar on an electric version of Blind Willie McTell's "Statesboro Blues." Hornsby remembered seeing Davis live as the inspiration for Allman picking up the slide. Gregg Allman recalled it was the *Taj Mahal* record. None disagree that a glass bottle containing Coricidin cold medicine was his choice of slide. "I took him a bottle of pills for a cold he had, plus a copy of the first Taj Mahal album with Jesse Ed Davis playing slide. Well, about three hours later he called me and said, 'Baby brother, get over here.' And he'd dumped all the pills out of the bottle, washed the label off, and was playing bottleneck. The next time I saw him, he was just burning. It really put a new charge in him. He entered a new musical universe."[48]

While Duane Allman soon achieved great proficiency with the electric slide, his brother's recollection that he was a natural refutes that of Sandlin, Hornsby, and Allman himself. "He drove us crazy," Hornsby recalled. "There's nothing in the world worse than hearing somebody learn how to play the slide guitar, unless it's hearing somebody learn how to play the fiddle." Duane Allman agreed, "For a while it was everybody looking at

me and thinking, 'Oh no! He's getting ready to do it again!' Everybody lowered their heads. . . . But then I got a little better at it."[49]

After recording *Power of Love*, Hour Glass embarked eastward on a tour. The band played one date with Janice Joplin's Big Brother and the Holding Company in St. Louis, where the Allman Joys and Hour Glass had achieved some measure of success.[50] It also performed in Cleveland, Jacksonville, and Montgomery and Tuscaloosa, Alabama. At some point during the tour, the band pooled its money and visited Rick Hall's FAME Studios in Muscle Shoals to record demos. Sandlin had done some work at FAME and Eddie Hinton, his former bandmate, was on staff there.[51] The sessions marked a turning point in Duane Allman's career, but not in the way he expected it to be.

Sandlin remembered that the band met Hinton at FAME on a Sunday in April 1968. Jimmy Johnson, the studio's regular session guitarist, engineered the recordings, which cost the band $500.[52] They recorded three tracks. Three were B.B. King tunes performed as a medley, the arrangements near-perfect covers (solos excluded) of King's own versions from his 1964 *Live at the Regal* album, "Sweet Little Angel," "It's My Own Fault," and "How Blue Can You Get?" The second was a cover of "Ain't No Good to Cry" by Al Anderson (later of the seminal Louisville outfit NRBQ). The third was the only original composition in the bunch: Gregg Allman's "Been Gone too Long."

Hour Glass was ecstatic with the results. The band felt more at home recording in the South and away from Smith's dictates. "We knew that was the way we were

supposed to be recorded," Gregg Allman remembered. "We had the freedom to dictate those sessions and it was the way we were meant to sound."[53] "We just liked the sound we got at FAME better, and we felt better recording there," Carr recalled. "None of us had been real comfortable with the sound we got in L.A., or with the overall approach to the recording process there."[54] The band was also comfortable in their home region. "It felt so good because we were back down South, on our turf," Gregg Allman recalled, "'Why did we ever leave, man?'" he remembered Sandlin asking.[55]

While the band had once again recorded mostly covers, the session's production reflected the more organic process of the southern soul studios than what they'd experienced in Los Angeles. At FAME, Hour Glass also recorded as a band rather than sidemen for their lead singer. After two failed attempts with Liberty Records pushing Gregg Allman out front, this was an important step in the development of brother Duane's musical career. His next band, still eleven months into the future, would be a band of equals, with no explicit front man leading a group of nondescript backing musicians.

Hour Glass returned to Los Angeles invigorated by the tour and the music they recorded at FAME—that is, until Dallas Smith rejected the demos and the band's new direction. It left the band dejected. "We got back to California all excited about the great music we'd cut and they didn't want to hear it," Gregg Allman recalled. "The people at Liberty hated it, they thought it was garbage. We had gone back there with the attitude

that we had had a good tour, and this music was what we were really all about."[56] "They thought it was the biggest bunch of trash they ever heard," Hornsby recalled.[57] "Dallas was a pop producer," Pete Carr remembered, "and the tapes we cut at FAME were not pop hit-type songs in his mind."[58] While Rick Hall had garnered a reputation at FAME as having a good ear for pop music, Smith seemed tone-deaf regarding the Hour Glass tapes. The music the band brought back to Liberty did not reflect Smith's conception of hit-making material. The producer simply didn't hear what the band heard in itself.

Dallas Smith had in his mind a different sound for the Hour Glass, one that was, according to Hornsby decidedly less southern (and, therefore, less African American) in style and substance. "They didn't know what a southern rock band was supposed to sound like. It was black blues-based rock 'n' roll. . . . He kept referring to us as a Motown band. I said, 'Well we do black-oriented music but you've got the wrong [part] of the country, it's southern blues, southern black blues. It's not Motown."[59] While Motown was the most successful black-owned music label at the time, founder Berry Gordy focused on a pop sound for white audiences. That was quite a departure from the rhythm and blues recorded at southern studios in Muscle Shoals and Memphis. To the members of Hour Glass, the "Motown sound" did not reflect their own.[60] To Dallas Smith and Liberty Records, Hour Glass's perception of its sound had no sales potential whatsoever.

Bill McEuen, a much more savvy music industry veteran than the members of Hour Glass, understood the philosophical conflict between Smith and the band—

particularly Duane Allman—but also saw the limitations relative to the Allmans' career. While McEuen recognized Smith as a formulaic producer who lacked an ear for good music, he believed the band was too inexperienced to usurp Smith's control. Why he never intervened in the matter is unknown. "In the case of the Hour Glass," he noted, "I don't think they developed enough to push through a few cool things yet. Nor were they of the mindset where they could force control and say, 'Well, this is the way were doing it.' It's their first record deal. . . . They hadn't gotten to that stage yet where they could say, 'This is what we do.'"[61] Paul Hornsby, speaking decades later, agreed, "I just can't believe that they overlooked Duane."[62]

The truth, of course, lies somewhere in the middle. Yes, Allman was a tremendous lead guitarist. Yes, his work in Hour Glass was buried in Smith's production. Yes, Smith focused on Gregg Allman instead of the band. But Hour Glass simply was not able to counter Smith's ideas with anything original of their own, certainly not anything that Smith believed would sell.

There has been much speculation that Hour Glass just wasn't the right combination of musicians for the musical vision Allman realized less than a year later when he formed the Allman Brothers Band. While this has proven to be true, it certainly wasn't because the players in Hour Glass somehow lacked talent. They were serious musicians who maintained long careers after Hour Glass disbanded. Hour Glass bassist Pete Carr eventually settled in the Muscle Shoals area where he replaced Eddie Hinton as

the lead guitarist for the Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section (dubbed the "Swampers" in Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Sweet Home Alabama"). Drummer Johnny Sandlin and keyboardist/guitarist Paul Hornsby both continued to play music and each ended up as renowned producers for Phil Walden's Capricorn Records.

Hour Glass lacked any significant originality to its music. By all accounts, they were an amazing live band, yet without an original spin on their music, they were simply unable to crack the nut that was the formal American recording industry. And even when they were able to capture what they believed to be a truer indication of their sound, the music they recorded in Muscle Shoals reflected either by-the-book rhythm and blues covers (albeit with a scorching lead guitar part from Allman and deep, bluesy vocals from his brother), or subpar originals.

As Liberty label mate John McEuen concluded, "If [Liberty Records] had just gone ahead and recorded what the Hour Glass was doing, what the Allman Joys were doing, and just called them the 'Allmans' it would have been fine. That wasn't the pattern to be in that time period, and possibly the group wasn't really ready."[63] Pete Carr believed that if the band had been able to return to FAME to record, it would have had hit-making potential. "We could have been an American/southern/early Rolling Stones-type of group—but better anyway."[64] But, he lamented, "[It] just wasn't ready to go yet. Wasn't ready to happen yet."[65]

They clearly weren't ready. The Los Angeles-based music business was obviously a poor fit. Allman had yet to find the right mix of musicians, and brother Gregg's songwriting was still coalescing. They were, however, beginning to develop a sound, one that presaged the Allman Brothers Band, formed less than a year later. Based on the demos Hour Glass recorded at FAME, the sound reflected the music that emanated from southern soul studios. It was heavily based on rhythm and blues and tightly arranged. Gregg Allman's vocals were prominent, but it was Duane's guitar work that really stands out from previous Hour Glass recordings. On "Ain't No Good to Cry," Duane's guitar answers his brother's vocals throughout the song, a musical dynamic that portended his forthcoming work at FAME. The band's "B.B. King Medley," highlighted Allman's mastery of the blues guitar. Dallas Smith failed to harness either of these elements. Duane Allman would do so with the Allman Brothers Band.

Following Smith's rejection of the FAME demos, Duane Allman gave up on Hour Glass specifically and Los Angeles in general. He felt he had no other choice. The band was contracted to Liberty Records, and the label was disinterested in the direction Allman sought to take the band. This stalemate "weighed heavily on Duane," Hornsby recalled, "him more so than the rest of us. I would have been happy to stay in L.A. and play forever. But Duane was sick of the label, and he wanted to come back to the South where he could be—I think I'm quoting him on this—'A big fish in a small pond.'"[66] "I just

hate it out here," Hornsby recalled the guitarist saying. "I need more respect than this."[67] He might have felt he deserved more respect, but he had yet to earn it.

Gregg Allman recalled his brother as much more emphatic about his departure. Though he had little bargaining power and no other options, Duane Allman announced, "I'll tell you what. You, you, you, and you and Liberty Records can kiss my fucking ass. Me and the guys are picking up and going to fuck back down South, or anywhere but here. Fuck this place, and all the tinsel, and all the other bullshit. Stick your papers and contracts up your ass. We're out of here."[68] Allman packed up and returned to Florida with bandmates Sandlin and Carr. Hornsby decamped home to Tuscaloosa, Alabama.[69] Though Gregg Allman joined his brother on the trek east, he had always intended to return to Los Angeles to fulfill the terms of the Liberty contract.[70]

In spite of yet another failure in the music business, Allman learned some powerful lessons that he carried with him as he began to consider the next phase of his career. The experience reinforced his belief in himself as a musician and band leader—particularly how well Hour Glass captured their preferred sound on tape at FAME. He also gained a much better understanding of the workings of the music industry. His next move in that direction would be one that gave him full control over his music both in the studio and in a live setting. He would never again be constrained in the pursuit of his musical passion. Ultimately, Allman would say of the experience, "A good damn band of misled

cats was what it was."[71] It is a quote that nearly every author uses in reference to Duane Allman's time with Hour Glass.

Duane and Gregg Allman returned to Florida, arriving in Daytona Beach early in the morning of September 23, 1968.[72] Ever eager to start their next musical phase, the brothers crossed paths with drummer Claude "Butch" Trucks from Jacksonville. Trucks first met the brothers in 1966 when the Bitter Ind, his band with high school classmates Scott Boyer and David Brown, unsuccessfully auditioned at the Martinique in Daytona Beach. Its repertoire, heavily informed by the folk rock sounds of the era, most notably Bob Dylan, the Lovin' Spoonful, and the Byrds, was unappealing to many club owners as undanceable.

Soon after that initial meeting, Trucks accompanied the Allman Joys on drums for a show at the Beachcomber in Jacksonville. At Duane Allman's urging, the owner of the venue, a fan of Dylan and the Byrds, booked the Bitter Ind to take over the Allmans' engagement there. According to Trucks, the Beachcomber catered to a crowd of sailors from nearby Naval bases, who were less interested in dancing than drinking and meeting women. Thus, the repertoire of the Bitter Ind reflected changing fashions in American popular music away from the danceable rhythms of rock 'n' roll and rhythm and blues and toward rock music as an art form. It was a trend the Allmans were soon to embrace.[73]

Changing its name to the 31st of February, the band began touring the South's club circuit where they occasionally crossed paths with the Allman Joys.[74] The 31st of February struggled with a problem Duane and Gregg Allman had yet to encounter: a lack of interest in their original music. "At a club date in St. Pete," guitarist Scott Boyer recalled, "we were playing . . . 'Mustang Sally' and the owner still wasn't satisfied. 'You guys do too many originals!' It was a three-day gig; we got fired the first night."[75]

The group signed with the folk label Vanguard Records and released a self-titled debut in 1968. Of the record's twelve songs, eight were originals. The three covers were "Sandcastles" by Muscle Shoals-area songwriters Spooner Oldham, Dan Penn, and Chips Moman; "The Greener Isle" by rock 'n' roll songstress Jackie DeShannon; and Canadian folksinger Buffy Sainte-Marie's "Cod'ine." The record didn't dent the charts.

The band sought to expand their sound in response. "We were gonna try to get a little more into jamming because what we did was the Byrds, a lot of vocal stuff, and three-part harmony stuff," Trucks noted, "with Scott Boyer just playing Fender twelve-string guitar and finger-picking. So we'd be a real full sound, but there wasn't really a lead guitar player per se in the band."[76] In September 1968, as the 31st of February was recording its second album in Miami, the band encountered the Allman brothers, who had just returned from Los Angeles. The bands joined forces, with Gregg on vocals and Duane Allman supplying the lead guitar the 31st of February was seeking.

Accounts of the ultimate intention for the newly minted 31st of February differ. Trucks long considered the ensemble a full-fledged, long-term musical project. The newly constituted band returned traveled to Miami to record and played shows together in the Southeast. "With what we had, and the way Duane was playing and the way Gregg was singing, that was a smoking-ass band," he recalled.[77] The younger Allman agreed the 31st of February was a good band, but maintained there was never any long-term collaboration in the works. The combination of players, he believed, didn't jibe with him, nor with his elder brother. "The right players weren't assembled for those sessions," he remembered. "Butch and those guys had been playing Dylan, the Byrds, with the twelve-string guitar and Fender bass—the whole folk rock thing. They sounded very, very good, and live, the 31st of February was real good. I saw them many times, and they were great. But that sound isn't what me and my brother were all about. We were coming from a completely different direction."[78]

The truth probably lies somewhere in between. The band had potential, and Duane Allman and Trucks both saw that. But Gregg was eager to get back to California where he had a solo deal waiting at Liberty Records and a producer, Dallas Smith, who was sympathetic to his talents as an artist. Geraldine Allman injected a third voice into the conversation. A letter to her niece dated September 25, 1968, shows a keen understanding of her sons' musical careers and ambitions. In it, she stated that it was actually Gregg who ventured to Jacksonville and brought home to Daytona Beach

members of the 31st of February. The rest of the band joined soon thereafter. "The band is practicing, and these boys are seasoned musicians," Geraldine wrote. "Scott sings and writes, David helps Duane with the MC shit, and Butch is a terrific drummer. They are really a great bunch of young people."[79]

Whatever the true story, this much is certain: The 31st of February, now featuring Duane and Gregg Allman, recorded nine sides in Miami. Four were covers. One was Scrapper Blackwell's "Nobody Knows When You're Down and Out," that Bill McEuen introduced to Duane Allman in Los Angeles. "Down in Texas" was yet another Eddie Hinton/Marlon Greene collaboration. "Morning Dew"—a folk song by Canadian Bonnie Dobson about a post-apocalyptic world—was later made famous by the Grateful Dead. "In The Morning When I'm Real" by Robert Pucetti was the fourth. Bandmate David Brown penned two songs. Most notable, however, were Gregg Allman's three original contributions: "God Rest His Soul" (about the recently assassinated Martin Luther King, Jr.), "Well I Know Too Well," and "Melissa."[80]

Of the sessions Scott Boyer recalled, "That was some stuff we sent to Vanguard [Records] . . . to secure a budget for a second album."[81] While there was excitement around the sessions, the label rejected the request, and the band soon broke up.[82] Gregg Allman sold his three songs to producer Steve Alaimo for airfare to return to California. He called his brother from Los Angeles and told him Liberty would release the rest of Hour Glass from their contracts if he stayed and recorded solo. "I was with Duane in

Daytona when he got the call from Gregg," Trucks remembered. "I believe if Duane could've gotten through the phone he would've strangled Gregg on the spot."[83] Hornsby felt the younger Allman returned to California quite willingly. "I've always heard that Gregg was forced to return. But I doubt they had to twist his arm very much. I think he really liked it. He liked the personal attention they were giving him. . . . Can't blame him for that."[84]

While the 31st of February ultimately was a short-lived project for Duane Allman, it is significant for several reasons. Foremost, the recordings show his brother's growth as a songwriter, with "Melissa" being the first of the pre-Allman Brothers Band songs he wrote that eventually made it onto an Allman Brothers Band album (1972's *Eat a Peach*). Just as important, it is on "Melissa" that Duane Allman first records slide guitar. Last, and equally significant, is this: The nine recorded tracks feature one-half of the soon-to-be Allman Brothers Band; with the addition of drummer Butch Trucks, it was the first of Allman's bands to include a future member other than his brother Gregg.[85]

After the breakup of the 31st of February, Duane Allman traveled first to the home of Berry Oakley in Jacksonville. Allman and Oakley had first met in 1968 when the guitarist was touring with Hour Glass. Oakley manned the bass chair of the Second Coming, a psychedelic blues-rock outfit that also featured one of Florida's hottest lead guitar players, Dickey Betts. The Second Coming had garnered a significant following in

Jacksonville's hippie scene, playing free weekly shows in a local park.[86] From Jacksonville, Allman ventured to a gig as a studio guitarist at FAME Studios in Muscle Shoals.

Facts refute a story Rick Hall later shared widely that Allman had driven to Muscle Shoals on his own volition and asked him for a job—living in a pup tent in the parking lot until Hall gave him a shot on a session.[87] Instead, Hall, who was about to record with Wilson Pickett in November 1968, sent Allman a telegram in Jacksonville. "One day a telegram came for Duane from Muscle Shoals," Oakley told Tony Glover in 1971. "[Rick] had a very important Wilson Pickett session coming up," Allman remembered, "like a trial session to get Pickett's recording business, if things went good. He was getting musicians from all over to be on hand."[88] Hall's interest in the guitarist for the session was surely at the urging of Jimmy Johnson, the engineer for the Hour Glass sessions earlier in 1968. The session turned out to be the career-changing moment Allman had long sought.

Hall was immediately struck by the uniqueness of Allman's approach to his instrument. "I saw him do things with a guitar that I'd never seen done before, or since," he shared. "Technically, it was so strange to my ear, it was so new, it was unreal."[89] In addition to his guitar playing, Allman's physical appearance also turned heads in the conservative studio environment. Jon Landau, who witnessed the Pickett sessions, remembered Allman as very different from his peers at FAME. "He had this incredibly long hair," he wrote, "down to his ass back then. He wore red-white-and-blue tennis shoes, and he basically did not look like your ordinary Muscle Shoals regular."[90] "He was a

freak at that time around here because we were all wearing our weejuns and our khaki pants," said FAME bassist David Hood. "I had never really truly met a free-spirited person until I met him," guitarist Jimmy Johnson recalled.[91] Allman's uniqueness was not lost on the session's star either, who granted him the sobriquet Skyman. "To me, he was a weirdo from the git-go. This was back in 1968. He came in with his long hair, and his weird pants on. . . . He was a weird guy to me. So I said to him, I think I'll call you Skyman. . . . I guess because he looked high all the time."[92]

And while an outsider to Muscle Shoals and FAME, Allman was by no means a wallflower. "He was kind of a way-out person at that time, far-fetched in his ideas," Hall remembered. "He was very optimistic about himself, and about playing guitar. . . . I thought he was a brilliant person. . . . He had a rough way of doing things, but he had a great mind."[93] "He was the most dynamic man that I've ever had walk in the studio," Hall continued. "He was very confident, but not cocky. He had an abundance of confidence that he could do anything that we were going about the whole thing bass-ackwards."[94]

Allman asserted himself immediately in the Pickett session, urging the star, who had scored nearly two dozen Hot 100 hits since 1962, to cover a version of "Hey Jude" by the Beatles. Those who were there recall Allman's persistence when both Hall and Pickett rejected the idea. While it wasn't out of the ordinary to cover the Beatles—Otis Redding had recorded "Day Tripper," Little Willie Walker "Ticket to Ride," and the Bar-Kays an instrumental version of "A Hard Day's Night," among others—they deemed it too unusual

to cover a song that was currently rising on the charts.[95] Hall recalls Pickett answering, "Are you crazy? The Beatles have released it, it's in the 20s [on the charts]. It'll be #1 in two weeks." "That's the whole point," Allman replied. "It shows we've got balls. We'll cover the Beatles, the biggest thing in the world. This is going to get the world's attention that you, as a black act, have the guts to cut the same record which the Beatles have got out and that you think you can have a hit record with it."[96]

No one knows exactly how Allman convinced the reticent Pickett to record "Hey Jude"—or what, in particular, inspired Allman to suggest the song—but everyone recalls the same circumstances under which it happened. The session halted for a meal break. Southern racial/social tensions kept the two artists behind at the studio. "Back then it was a little touchy for a black guy to go out with five or six white guys to eat," Jimmy Johnson recalled. "And Duane was in a precarious situation, he had long hair. And people that had long hair that went out with us got worse looks than the black guys. And so the two of them stayed back and that's when Duane talked him into doing 'Hey Jude.'"[97] "It was quite an effort I understand," Johnson continued. It was the first song the band cut when they returned.[98]

Just like what Allman encountered with Liberty Records in Los Angeles, it was standard practice for producers and record label executives to select the songs to be recorded in southern studios. "Rick Hall and Jerry Wexler [of Atlantic Records, Pickett's label] would have songs picked," David Hood remembered, "and that was something you

didn't mess with. So that was pretty unusual that Duane would go to Wilson and say, 'Hey, you need to cut 'Hey Jude,' especially since it was already on the charts with the Beatles. . . . Who ever heard of cutting something while something else was still on the charts? But it was a brilliant idea." Hall was impressed as well. "That's how Duane thought, which was an incredible attitude to have towards our business and our world."[99]

In addition to asserting himself in both the song selection and in its arrangement, Allman's solo on the song's coda brought him acclaim. About 2:44 into the recording, the band hit a vamp behind his lead guitar and Pickett's singing that lasted to the song's fade out. "It just developed into that ending," Johnson recalled. "Which was an incredible, intense ending. Duane started playing those incredible, incredible licks that he's noted for and nobody'd ever heard that from him before and when we got through it was like kind of a shock, we didn't want to stop playing."[100] "He stood right in front of me as though he was playing every note I was singing," Pickett told an interviewer four months after the session. "And he was watching me as I sang, and as I screamed, he was screaming with his guitar."[101]

In his autobiography, Rick Hall wrote that "Duane's playing on 'Hey Jude' was. . . . nothing like I had ever heard Duane do before, but boy, it glued the song and the groove together and made the record sing, sing, sing. . . . I lost any control I had on the console and the record took on a life of its own."[102] Hall immediately phoned Wexler in New York and played the track to him over the phone. "The vocal was fabulous," Wexler recalled,

"but it was the guitar solo, a running obbligato over and under Wilson's impassioned cries, that held the whole thing together. I knew all the session guitarists, but not this guy. So who was he?" Hall answered, "He's got hair down below his butt. He's a hippie. . . . I'll be damned if he didn't talk Pickett into singing the song. Wilson said a Beatles' tune didn't fit him and the hippie said, 'What's wrong, you don't got the balls to sing it?'"[103]

The "Hey Jude" session catapulted Duane Allman into the next phase of his career—one that saw him reach the heights he was reaching for since he formed his first bands in Daytona Beach. According to music writer Bud Scoppa, "That performance kicked open the door for him"[104] After fits and starts, and a disastrous stint in Los Angeles, Allman finally found acclaim for his guitar playing and his song-arranging ability. And it was at FAME, in the South, the region he called home, where he put these two skills on display and finally gained notice. "Duane's whole career spun off that Pickett session," Jimmy Johnson recalled, "It's amazing how one incident, one session, can change a person's life."[105] Change Allman's life it did, leading to the formation of a band several months later that impacted the trajectory of American music.

Allman played on the entire Pickett album, most of which was recorded in November 1968. "Hey Jude" was released as a single that December. Hall signed him to a recording and management contract and invited the guitarist, who had returned to Florida after the session, to relocate to Muscle Shoals.[106] "Rick liked my playing a lot,"

Allman shared. "He said, 'Why don't you just go home and get your gear and move up here? You can play anything that comes through the door and make gobs of money.'"[107] In a letter to his girlfriend (and later his wife and mother of his daughter Galadrielle) Donna Roosman, he recognized the inherent possibility to pursue his own musical vision at FAME. "I've been doing regular session work . . . at the recording studio in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, but it looks like I'm going to have to move up there soon. If I do, there's a good chance I'll be able to cut an album of my own soon."[108] After the frustrations he experienced in California, the move rejuvenated the young guitarist. "I went up. Rented a little cabin, lived alone on this lake, with big windows looking right out on the water," he told Tony Glover. "I just sat there and played to myself and got used to living without a bunch of jive Hollywood crap in my head. It's like I brought myself back to earth and came to life again. Through that, and through the sessions with good R&B players.[109]

Recording at FAME contrasted greatly with Liberty Records. While Hall and Wexler typically dictated what was recorded, the sessions themselves were more free-form. This was due to the combination of a more laid back atmosphere in the South, and the artists that recorded at FAME. "We did mostly R&B stuff and those cats were real loose," Allman said. "They just wanted everybody on the session to play their ass off; they never told you what to play. I guess they did tell you what not to play sometimes."[110] "Play whatever the hell you felt," he recounted to Tony Glover, "just organic music."[111]

In his relatively brief stay at FAME, Allman recorded highly regarded sessions with luminaries Arthur Conley, Clarence Carter, King Curtis, Laura Lee, and Spencer Wiggins. He also began build a stellar reputation as a skilled slide guitar player. He overdubbed slide on Carter's "The Road of Love"—which had already been released as a single a year earlier 1967 (the album version of the song contains the additions of Allman's slide solo and horns)—and recorded a blistering slide solo on Aretha Franklin's version of the Band's "The Weight."[112]

While he gained renown at FAME as a tremendous lead guitar player, electric slide guitar became Allman's calling card. Despite its appearance on Jeff Beck's "Beck's Bolero" and Taj Mahal's "Statesboro Blues," slide guitar was a relatively novel concept in the world of rhythm and blues music. Hall once said that the first time he heard slide was when Allman played it.[113] This is probably not true, as country and blues musicians had long employed the technique of running a piece of metal, glass, or even a knife along a guitar's strings, mimicking a person's voice or a harmonica. But what Allman truly opened up was the use of *electric* slide guitar, which offered wider tonal possibilities than when played on acoustic instruments.

Whether playing slide or traditional, fretted guitar, nearly all of the players in Muscle Shoals speak highly of the guitarist's talent, none more so than Rick Hall. Allman, he said, "Didn't write songs or sing, but he could eat up a guitar like no one I had ever heard in my life, especially a bottleneck guitar. He had absolute faith in his abilities. Like

me, he believed that he was the most unique and gifted guitar player in the world." Allman's infectious personality also impacted the producer. "Duane never had a down moment in his life. He always had a positive attitude and a smile from ear to ear. I never heard him say a bad word about anybody—not ever. He was so wrapped up in his music that he didn't have time for jealousy or gossip. . . . He was always totally focused on his music and totally wrapped up in the moment."[114]

But the producer and guitarist did not see eye to eye when it came to the latter's musical direction as a solo artist. Allman, Hall recalled, "wanted to record all the old 1950s stuff. . . . He kept telling me, 'Rick, that's the big thing, man. Kids today are digging on all that old blues stuff—bottleneck guitars, harmonicas, and that Mississippi Delta back porch sound.' I said, 'Dog, you're ten years behind the times. I'm not interested any of that old garbage.'"[115] While Hall supported Allman as a musician and friend, he was unable to unlock his talent in a way that led to financial success—that is, hit records. Instead, Allman found that patron in Phil Walden of Macon, Georgia.

Walden had been involved in rhythm and blues music since the early 1960s. He had managed Macon native Otis Redding's career until Redding's tragic death in a plane crash in December 1967.[116] Well acquainted with the world of southern and African American music, Walden had become affiliated with Atlantic Records when the label distributed a single he recorded with Macon native Johnny Jenkins called "Love Twist."[117]

While on a visit to New York City, Walden encountered Hall who invited him to hear the newly recorded Wilson Pickett track. Walden recalled,

> As I listened, I mentioned to Rick, "That's not your guitar player—who the hell is this guy? He's great!"
>
> Rick said, "One of those long-haired old hippie boys . . . but boy, he can play the guitar."
>
> I said, "Hell, I'm going down there to sign him up and put a group together," which is exactly what I did. I put together a band, which we initially tried to record with Rick, but they weren't what Duane was looking for, thank goodness.[118]

Allman had had the same effect on Wexler. "I loved his playing so much I bought his contract from Hall."[119] The $10,000 they paid was a hefty sum for a musician who was neither a singer, songwriter, or, at that point, a bandleader.[120]

Allman was finally on his way to greater acclaim, and on his own terms. On December 12, 1968, he wrote his girlfriend Donna Roosman, about his excitement. "I just signed a personal management contract with Phil Walden. He used to manage Otis Redding, and he still manages Arthur Conley, Clarence Carter, Aretha Franklin, and a bunch of other people." In a diary entry from January 6, 1969, he expressed enthusiasm about Walden's connections to Atlantic Records. "I met Jerry Wexler. What a good cat. Saw Tom Dowd and met Arif Mardin and all the Atlantic folks. A damn good organization."[121]

Allman had reason to be excited by his prospects with Walden and Atlantic. First, the label was one of the more successful independent record labels in the country. It was

home to stars such as Pickett, Carter, and Franklin, all of whom he had backed in sessions. Atlantic had also nurtured the careers of Ray Charles and Otis Redding and had a foothold in the rock music market, with artists such as Buffalo Springfield and British blues bands Cream and Led Zeppelin.[122]

Another factor that encouraged Allman to gravitate to Walden was that his relationship with Hall was growing tense. Allman's solo sessions had not been going well. "Rick was a brilliant record producer," Jon Landau, who witnessed Allman's time at FAME, said, "but a very dark person, very intense, very old-school, very straight. There was no cultural connection between Hall and the musician. Phil was clearly a more appropriate fit."[123] "First part of session terrible," Allman wrote in his diary on January 5, 1968. "Couldn't get Rick to accept new idea for guitar parts. . . . What a drag."[124]

Allman initially invited his old Hour Glass bandmates to join him as backing musicians on the sessions.[125] "'I'm in Muscle Shoals,'" he said to Paul Hornsby. "'I'm cutting sessions up here, and they've heard some of my playing and these people at Atlantic like what I'm doing and want me to cut some demos and they might want to sign me.'" Hornsby joined Allman in Muscle Shoals. "And he liked the Hour Glass sound that we had. . . . Johnny Sandlin was there and Berry Oakley was there that day. So Berry Oakley played on the demos and the whole thing was featuring Duane, finally he gets to step out."[126]

The sessions featured an amalgam of tracks, none of them particularly distinctive except that they were the first recordings to include both Allman and Berry Oakley. Johnny Sandlin played drums and Hornsby played piano. Only one of the songs was an original, Allman's tongue-in-cheek road song "Happily Married Man." His recording of "Goin' Down Slow," popularized by Howlin' Wolf, is most like Allman's future output with the Allman Brothers Band: a blues standard with an urgent, stinging electric guitar. What it had in musical power, it lacked in vocals. While poignant, Allman's singing is strained. None of the songs ultimately made the repertoire of the Allman Brothers Band.[127]

Despite a focus on Duane Allman rather than his younger brother (as it had been in Hour Glass), neither Hornsby nor Sandlin accepted the opportunity to join his new project. "In the past it had always been the Gregg show. But here was Duane. We'd just spent two years in Hour Glass and those were the stepping stones," Hornsby recalled. "I'd done stepped on that stone, and I wasn't ready to be back in Hour Glass . . . I was just trying to move on."[128] Geography played a part in Sandlin's decision making. "I don't think there had ever been a rock band that had broken out of the South," he said. "Anybody from the South that made it had to go to L.A. or New York, and I definitely didn't want to go that route. We'd just been through it, and I was just burned out from it."[129]

The Hour Glass experience had also soured Allman—"The group thing left a bitter taste in my mouth," he said. But the solo project inspired in him a desire to form another group. "[W]e did some cuts," he continued, "and nothing came of it except the desire to

get back into the group thing."[130] The "as-yet uncreated new band," he remarked to Jon Landau in 1969, "was going to be a pure music band, one that would work hard, work honestly, but would not compromise for anyone, no matter what the cost."[131]

The lessons Allman had learned in Hour Glass and as a session musician at FAME inspired his decision to form the Allman Brothers Band. His time at FAME, particularly his success on Pickett's "Hey Jude," validated his musical vision—one that Dallas Smith had ignored. Duane believed in his ability, but to that point had not been able to get anyone interested in his talent. This is somewhat understandable, for while he was known as a fantastic guitar player, the music business was replete with such players. What he lacked was originality, something he unleashed with "Hey Jude," which opened the door to Phil Walden, Jerry Wexler, and Atlantic Records. The Los Angeles and FAME experiences also solidified for Allman how critical it was for him to pursue music *sans* the interference of non-musicians. While playing sessions at FAME was a much more organic process than he'd experienced in Los Angeles, the studio environment was still too constraining for him. Finally, Allman learned that he needed a band. This was something that could not happen if he continued to back the soul and rhythm and blues stars who recorded at FAME. All had their own careers and did not want to be upstaged by their guitar player.

Allman also learned that he was not cut out to be a band's front man. The sessions he recorded, while decent musically, missed some key elements, most notably the vocals. "More than being a guitar player, they wanted him to sing too and Duane just

wasn't a singer," Paul Hornsby remarked. "He could have been but I think it bored him. He wanted to play guitar."[132]

The guitarist also missed performing live. "After six or eight months of [studio work]," he told Patrick Snyder-Scumpy, "I got really tired of it and bored. I wanted to get to playing in joints again, which is what I did before I did anything else. Play for people."[133] "In about a month I'm going to start getting my gigging band together," he wrote Roosman in December 1968. "I can hardly wait. I love working in the studio, and it is very valuable experience, but I know I was born to play for a crowd, and I'm really itching to get started."[134]

Allman was simply too antsy for full-time studio life. "Those cats in Muscle Shoals couldn't understand why I didn't just lay back on my ass and collect five bills a week," he said to Joel Selvin. "I'm just not the laying-back-on-your-ass sort of person."[135]

He gravitated back to Jacksonville to play with a collective of musicians who had begun coalescing around Berry Oakley and Dickey Betts's band the Second Coming. Oakley had played bass on his FAME recordings. The two had already "talked it all out about getting a group thing, and we decided on what would be the best group we could possibly get together," Allman recalled. "Then I told Rick the studio thing was stringing me out and I wanted to go back to Florida and work in a little more creative capacity."[136] While Allman continued to record sporadically at Muscle Shoals, Phil Walden remembered Allman's quest for like-minded musicians. "He would call from time to time

from this place or that," Walden noted, "and I'd send him a little money. Finally, he called me from Jacksonville, Florida, and said, 'I've got it.' I said, 'You've got what?' He said, 'I've got the band.'"[137]

The band he formed, the Allman Brothers Band, comprised six musicians, five of them from the South: Berry Oakley of Jacksonville, by way of Chicago, on bass; Jai Johanny Johanson (also known as Jaimoe) of Ocean Springs, Mississippi, on drums; Dickey Betts of West Palm Beach, on lead guitar; Butch Trucks of Jacksonville, on drums; Duane Allman on lead guitar; and Duane's brother Gregg on organ and vocals. The musicians' individual influences contained a melting pot of American music—nearly all of it Southern in origin. The Allmans and Johanson all were seasoned rhythm and blues players. Johanson was also steeped in jazz. Oakley, Betts, and the Allman brothers were heavily influenced by the blues. Betts was also intimately familiar with various strains of country music (especially string band music, bluegrass, and western swing) and he and Oakley had also begun to incorporate improvisational elements into their music, ala the psychedelic music emanating from San Francisco. Trucks's bands had a decidedly folk and folk-rock bent and Gregg Allman's time in California had inspired his songwriting in that direction as well. All of them, had grown up playing rock 'n' roll music. And all of them were road-hardened hardened veterans of the touring circuit. What they had was a band that blended multiple forms of southern music into a singular form: American music.

[1] Tim O'Neil, "A Look Back: Gaslight Square in St. Louis Burned Brightly but Briefly in the 1960s," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, March 23, 2013, accessed February 12, 2018, http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/a-look-back-gaslight-square-in-st-louis-burned-brightly/article_93b2d302-cd76-5f38-a9d1-2844d33d1aef.html.

[2] *Song of the South.*

[3] Poe, 41.

[4] Nolan, 7.

[5] Poe, 41.

[6] Sandlin, 28-29, 251.

[7] Freeman, 22.

[8] Richard Albero, "A *Guitar Player* Tribute: Duane Allman 'Just Rock On, and Have You a Good Time,'" *Guitar Player*, June 1973, accessed August 23, 2015, http://www.duaneallman.info/gpmagazinemayjune1973.htm.

[9] *Song of the South.*

[10] Crowe, "The Allman Brothers Story," 47.

[11] Sandlin, 29-30.

[12] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 77.

[13] Gregg Allman also remembered other bands from the L.A. scene: Spirit, The Seeds, Love, Electric Flag (with blues guitar phenom Mike Bloomfield), Jackson Browne, Tim Buckley, and Moby Grape.

[14] The movement from the dance-oriented rock 'n' roll to the more artist-focused "rock" is one that several scholars have written extensively about. Elijah Wald affixes blame for this trend on the Beatles and their release of *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* in summer 1967. See Elijah Wald, *How the Beatles Destroyed Rock 'n' Roll: An Alternative History of American Popular Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). Jack Hamilton devotes an entire chapter to this discussion and cites Bob Dylan's 1965 recording of "Like a Rolling Stone," released as a single and on Dylan's *Highway 61*

*Revisited*, as where rock diverged from rock 'n' roll. See Jack Hamilton, "Darkness at the Break of Noon: Same Cooke, Bob Dylan, and the Birth of Sixties Music," in *Just Around Midnight: Rock and Roll and the Racial Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 26-85. Theodore Gracyk moves the timetable further back for both Bob Dylan and the Beatles, citing Dylan's March 1965 release of *Bringing It All Back Home* and the Beatles' release of *Rubber Soul* in December 1965. See Theodore Gracyk, *Rhythm and Noise: An Aesthetics of Rock* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996), 12.

[15] Ray Townley, "Makin' It in Macon," *Downbeat*, September 12, 1974, 17.

[16] Nolan, 7.

[17] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 82.

[18] Many authors have discussed the rise of the teen idols in books on the history of rock 'n' roll. See Ed Ward, *The History of Rock 'n' Roll: Vol. 1, 1920–1963* (New York, Flatiron Books, 2016); James Miller, *Flowers in the Dustbin: The Rise of Rock and Roll 1947-1977* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000); Robert Palmer, *Rock 'n' Roll: An Unruly History* (New York: Harmony Books, 1995); Glenn C. Altschuler, *All Shook Up: How Rock 'n' Roll Changed America* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Ed Ward, Geoffrey Stokes, and Ken Tucker, *Rock of Ages: The Rolling Stone History of Rock 'n' Roll* (New York: Rolling Stone Press/Fireside, 1993); Anthony DeCurtis, James Henke, and Holly George-Warren, eds., *The Rolling Stone Illustrated History of Rock 'n' Roll: The Definitive History of the Most Important Artists and Their Music*, 3rd ed. (New York: Random House, 1992); David P. Szatmary, *Rockin' in Time: A Social History of Rock-and-Roll*, 3rd ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ" Prentice Hall, 1996).

[19] Altschuler, 161-162.

[20] Poe, 41.

[21] Ward, et al., 195-196.

[22] Xander Zellner, "Bobby Vee's Top 10 Biggest Billboard Hits," *Billboard*, October 24, 2016, accessed February 13, 2018, https://www.billboard.com/articles/columns/chart-beat/7550125/bobby-vee-biggest-billboard-hits.

[23] Dallas Smith's experience as Vee's producer was in a music business strongly geared toward the major players in the music industry: the labels, publishers, and songwriters. He was part of a long trend in American music stretching back to the late

nineteenth/early twentieth centuries in New York City, where song publishers and songwriters worked in an area in New York City dubbed Tin Pan Alley. By the mid-twentieth century, much of this activity centered around the Brill Building, a few blocks north of Tin Pan Alley, but also in Manhattan. See Philip Furia, *The Poets of Tin Pan Alley: A History of America's Great Lyricists* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); John Shepherd and David Horn, eds., *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World Volume 8: Genres: North America* (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group, 2012), 91-94; Ken Emerson, *Always Magic in the Air: The Bomp and Brilliance of the Brill Building Era* (New York: Penguin, 2006); Timothy E. Scheurer, editor, *American Popular Music Volume II: The Age of Rock: Readings from the Popular Press* (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1989); Marc Myers, *Anatomy of a Song: The Oral History of 45 Iconic Hits That Changed Rock, R&B and Pop* (New York: Grove Press, 2016); Mitchell K. Hall, *The Emergence of Rock and Roll: Music and the Rise of American Youth Culture* (London: Routledge, 2014).

[24] Jake Feinberg and Paul Hornsby, "I Need More Respect than This," *The Jake Feinberg Show*, June 3, 2017, https://www.facebook.com/jake.feinbergshow/posts/1350271061716088.

[25] *Song of the South.*

[26] Paul, *One Way Out*, 5.

[27] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 83.

[28] *Song of the South.*

[29] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 85.

[30] Poe, 47.

[31] Townley, 17.

[32] Feinberg and Hornsby.

[33] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 83-84.

[34] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 91. Many of these songs remained in the setlists of the Allman Brothers Band. "Stormy Monday" became a staple of the band's live

repertoire and "Dimples" is a song the band played in its early days with Duane on vocals. Gregg later recorded live versions of "Feel So Bad" and "Turn on Your Lovelight."

[35] Paul, *One Way Out*, 5.

[36] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 85.

[37] Albero.

[38] Derek Halsey, "John McEuen," *Swampland.Com* (blog), January 2002, accessed August 21, 2016, http://swampland.com/articles/view/title:john_mceuen.

[39] Poe, 45.

[40] Poe, 45.

[41] Poe, 45.

[42] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 88.

[43] Neil Young, Liner Notes, *Power of Love,* Hour Glass, Liberty Records, Liberty LST-7555 (1968).

[44] *Song of the South.*

[45] Poe, 52; *Song of the South.*.

[46] Michael Buffalo Smith and Roxanne Crutcher, "The Most Important Things in Life Are Rock and Roll, and a Hot Carr: An Interview with Muscle Shoals Guitar Legend, Pete Carr," *Swampland.Com* (blog), May 2000, accessed August 21, 2016, http:// swampland.com/articles/view/title:pete_carr. This is an extension of the family concept that Jacqueline Dowd Hall, et al. documented about rural southerners who had migrated to urban mill communities in *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World*.

[47] Albero.

[48] Barney Hoskyns, "Southern Men: The Long Tall Saga Of The Allman Brothers Band," *Mojo*, December 2002.

[49] Freeman, 31; Poe, 56-57.

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[50] Poster: Big Brother & the Holding Company, Iron Butterfly, Hour Glass.

[51] Poe, 59; Jake Feinberg and Paul Hornsby. FAME was the first of two studios that operated in the Muscle Shoals area. It was also one in a long line of independent studios throughout the South that recorded and nurtured southern musicians in the early blues, rhythm and blues, and rock 'n' roll eras. Many books have been written about their place in American musical culture. See Peter Guralnick *Last Train to Memphis: The Rise of Elvis Presley* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1994); *Careless Love: The Unmaking of Elvis Presley* (Boston: Back Bay Books, 2000); Peter Guralnick, *Sam Phillips: The Man Who Invented Rock 'n' Roll*, (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2015); Peter Guralnick, *Sweet Soul Music: Rhythm and Blues and the Southern Dream of Freedom* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1999); Robert Gordon, *Respect Yourself: Stax Records and the Soul Explosion* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013); Glenn C Altschuler, *All Shook up: How Rock 'n' Roll Changed America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Michael T. Bertrand, *Race, Rock, and Elvis* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2005); Charles L. Hughes, C*ountry Soul: Making Music and Making Race in the American South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015); Rick Hall and Terry Pace, *The Man from Muscle Shoals: My Journey from Shame to Fame* (Monterey, CA: Heritage Builders, LLC., 2015).

[52] Sandlin, 62. The website Duaneallman.info, which is somewhat the definitive site for information about Duane's career, lists the date as April 22 which is actually a Monday.

[53] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 95.

[54] Poe, 60-61. Perhaps burdened by Dallas Smith's reception to his work Los Angeles, Johnny Wyker recalls Gregg's insecurity about his performance.

[55] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 95.

[56] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 95.

[57] Feinberg and Hornsby.

[58] Poe, 63.

[59] *Song of the South.*

[60] For more on the development of Motown, see Suzanne E. Smith, *Dancing in the Street: Motown and the Cultural Politics of Detroit* (Harvard University Press, 1999).

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[61] Poe, 42.

[62] *Song of the South.*

[63] Derek Halsey, "John McEuen."

[64] Poe, 63.

[65] *Song of the South.*

[66] Poe, 64.

[67] Feinberg and Hornsby.

[68] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 96.

[69] Freeman, 37; Obrecht, "Duane Allman Remembered"; Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 96.

[70] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 96.

[71] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

[72] Galadrielle Allman, *Please Be with Me*, 125-128.

[73] Paul, *One Way Out*, xix-xx. See Wald, *How the Beatles Destroyed Rock 'n' Roll* and Hamilton for additional discussion about the evolution from rock 'n' roll to "rock" music.

[74] Poe, 26-27. Freeman, 40. Paul, *One Way Out*, xix-xx.

[75] Nolan, 10.

[76] Kevin Spangler and Ron Currens, "Butch Trucks, the Different Drummer," *Hittin' the Note*, Fall 1996: 6-7.

[77] Spangler and Currens, "Butch Trucks," 6-7.

[78] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 100.

[79] Galadrielle Allman, 125-128.

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[80] Poe, 66-67. Duane later recorded "Nobody Knows When You're Down and Out" with Eric Clapton on the *Layla* album. The Allman Brothers recorded Gregg Allman's "Melissa" sans Duane, for its *Eat a Peach* album, released in 1972.

[81] Michael Buffalo Smith, *Capricorn Rising*, 140.

[82] Michael Buffalo Smith, *Capricorn Rising*, 140; Spangler and Currens, "Butch Trucks," 6-7; Nolan, 10.

[83] Butch Trucks, "Foreword," in Alan Paul, *One Way Out: The Inside History of the Allman Brothers Band* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2015), xx-xxi.

[84] Poe, 66.

[85] Trucks's contribution to the future sound of Duane Allman's next endeavor is the powerful drumming he brings to "Morning Dew."

[86] Galadrielle Allman, 129.

[87] Poe, 77. See also Rick Hall and Pace; *American Revolutions: Southern Rock*.

[88] Tony Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry"; Tony Glover, "In This Band You Better Come to Pick"; Crowe, "The Allman Brothers Story," 50; Spangler and Currens, "Butch Trucks," 6.

[89] Nolan, 10.

[90] Nolan, 10.

[91] *American Revolutions: Southern Rock*.

[92] Nolan, 14. Many stories circulate as to how Allman acquired his nicknames. Rick Hall's account agrees with this early Pickett interview. Jaimoe attributes the name to the bird calls Duane played on slide guitar. Eventually Duane's Skyman nickname merged with "Dog" (a name he had been called in Hour Glass and one the Shoals players called him because of his shaggy hair and appearance) to "Skydog," a moniker Ronnie Hawkins invoked as Duane began a quick slide solo on Hawkins's cover of Carl Perkins's "Matchbox" recorded at Muscle Shoals.

[93] Nolan, 10.

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[94] Poe, 83.

[95] Tony Fletcher, *In the Midnight Hour: The Life & Soul of Wilson Pickett* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 40.

[96] Ahmet Ertegun, *"What'd I Say?" The Atlantic Story: 50 Years of Music* (New York: Welcome Rain Publishers, 2001), 238.

[97] *American Revolutions: Southern Rock*.

[98] *Song of the South*.

[99] Ertegun, 238.

[100] *Song of the South*.

[101] Fletcher, 141.

[102] Rick Hall and Pace, 281-282.

[103] Wexler and Ritz, 224-225.

[104] *Song of the South*.

[105] Ertegun, 238.

[106] Harris.

[107] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

[108] Galadrielle Allman, 132.

[109] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

[110] Dann.

[111] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

[112] This track was not recorded at FAME but at the Atlantic Records studio in New York City, after Rick Hall and Franklin's husband Ted White had a falling out.

[113] Nolan, 10.

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[114] Rick Hall and Pace, 281-282.

[115] Rick Hall and Pace, 281-282.

[116] For more detail on Redding's career, see Jonathan Gould, *Otis Redding: An Unfinished Life* (New York: Crown/Archetype, 2017).

[117] Russell Hall, "Capricorn Records," *Swampland.Com* (blog), April 2004, accessed August 21, 2016, http://www.swampland.com/articles/view/title:capricorn_records. Redding had served as Jenkins's driver earlier in the latter's career—leaving Jenkins for his own success after driving him to Memphis for a session at Stax that Redding ended up recording in. See also Michael Buffalo Smith, *Capricorn Rising*, 115.

[118] Ertegun, 239.

[119] Wexler and Ritz, 224-225.

[120] Ertegun, 239.

[121] Galadrielle Allman, 141, 143. Walden never managed Aretha Franklin.

[122] Both Cream and Led Zeppelin featured guitarists who'd formerly played in the Yardbirds, a band that the Allman Joys and Hour Glass covered regularly.

[123] Paul, *One Way Out*, 10.

[124] Galadrielle Allman, 142.

[125] Harris.

[126] *Song of the South*.

[127] It is notable that none of the songs ultimately made the repertoire of the soon-formed Allman Brothers Band. Duane recorded at least two other songs in his aborted solo project, songwriter Jackie Avery's "Voodoo in You" and Bob Dylan's "Down Along the Cove"—both of which later appeared as backing tracks on Johnny Jenkins's *Ton Ton Macoute* record.

[128] Michael Buffalo Smith, "Paul Hornsby: The Kudzoo Interview," *Kudzoo*, March 2017: 20-21.

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[129] Freeman, 37.

[130] Harris.

[131] Jon Landau, "Allman Brothers Band: Homage to the King," *The Phoenix*, August 24, 1971.

[132] *Song of the South*.

[133] Patrick Snyder-Scumpy, "The Allman Brothers: Boogie or Bust!," *Crawdaddy*, October 1973.

[134] Galadrielle Allman, 140.

[135] Selvin, "Duane Allman."

[136] Harris.

[137] Ertegun, 239.

# Chapter 4

## "The Band Was So Good We Thought We'd Never Make It": The Formation of the Allman Brothers Band

Dickey Betts likened the band that Duane Allman began to coalesce around him as one that developed in parts, like a Polaroid photograph. "Nobody knew what it was going to be," but in terms of the music and the connection the musicians felt to each other, "We knew what we now had."[1] And that was something that honored each members' individual roots, but was truly original in its approach.[2]

First, Allman realized that forging ahead as a solo artist was not a path he wanted to take. "He wasn't really hot on doing the solo album," Betts recalled. "Rick Hall wanted him to do a Hendrix power-trio thing. But Duane was too warm and personal for that. He needed a lot of other guys to get that full sound he wanted."[3] As he assembled the pieces of his new band from January through March 1969, he sought a band of musical equals.

Duane Allman came of age as a bandleader in the era of the guitar hero—and he was one in a continuum of hotshot lead guitar players of his time. Others included Mike Bloomfield, who had made a name for himself with the Paul Butterfield Blues Band (and backing up the infamous "Bob Dylan goes electric" set at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival). Jimi Hendrix burst onto American youth consciousness with a scene-stealing performance at the Monterey Pop Festival in 1967. And there was the triumvirate of

British blues guitarists who had all played in the Yardbirds: Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck, and Jimmy Page, who, Robert Palmer wrote, "made it their business to learn everything about blues music and blues culture, and in the process . . . developed into something of a breed apart."[4] Each guitarist provided particular inspiration for Allman.[5]

The guitarist's influences evolved from many of the same places as Beck, Page, and Clapton. Mississippi acoustic bluesman Robert Johnson was one of his biggest inspirations, particularly as a slide player. He also studied Elmore James for his electric slide skills.[6] Taj Mahal's guitarist Jesse Ed Davis, whose slide guitar on "Statesboro Blues" initially led Duane to take up the technique, "was always a hero of ours," Betts recounted. "All of us talked about his playing a lot, and Duane really liked him."[7] Of Davis, Allman said, "About my favorite player for all kinds of stuff is Jesse Davis. He plays so pretty man. Like you've got Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page ringing all the tension and hard loud violent sounding stuff, then Davis comes along and it's like somebody came in and open the window in the cool air came in when he's playing. Man that's the kind of stuff I like."[8]

It was Eric Clapton's band Cream that provided the clearest template for Allman's next band. "The first time I heard [Cream]," he stated, "I said, 'What the fuck is he doing?' I couldn't believe it. Just an all-around pretty sound, he can sure do it. . . . The prettiest solo I ever heard him do was that tiny solo 'I Feel Free.' Knocked me out. Powerful, powerful player."[9]

What Allman heard in Cream was a band playing an amalgam of hard rock and a heavy electric blues. Clapton had formed Cream in 1966 with bass player Jack Bruce and drummer Ginger Baker after a short stint with John Mayall's Blues Breakers. (He'd left the Yardbirds in March 1965.) Clapton envisioned Cream as a blues trio, but the exploratory bent and jazz chops of both Bruce and Baker transformed the band into something far more than he imagined.[10] As he told interviewer Robert Palmer,

> We were just three musicians who had to suddenly make a repertoire up and I was throwing in Skip James songs and Robert Johnson songs and Jack . . . and Ginger [were] composing and so this melting pot came together which was completely hybrid. And we had no control over it whatsoever. We were just scrambling for the forefront. The real feedback we got was when we played in front of an audience, we realized that they actually wanted to go off somewhere. And we had power to take them there.[11]

What audiences responded to was Cream's heavily improvisational take on the blues. Several years later, they had a similar reaction to the Allman Brothers Band.

Cream imploded in 1968 but left a template for countless other bands to follow. The band, comprised of three instrumental virtuosos, played blues originals and new arrangements of blues covers with a strong dose of jazz-influenced improvisation. It was a template Allman adapted as he formed the Allman Brothers Band.

While Berry Oakley was the first future Allman Brother on Allman's new endeavor, drummer Jai Johanny Johanson was first to sign on. "People ask me things like, was I in the original band?" Johanson told Cameron Crowe in 1973. "Shit, I was with the band when it wasn't no band."[12]

By 1969, when he met Allman, Johanson had been playing music professionally for five years. "I didn't choose music—music chose me long before I ever knew it," he said.[13] His mother, Helen Johnson, recalled her son's musical dreams beginning when, as a teenager, when saw pianist Arthur Rubenstein on television. "One of these days," he told his mother, "I'm going to play Carnegie Hall." In response to the seemingly far-fetched possibility for an African American from Mississippi, Mrs. Johnson answered, "Baby, mother would be proud if you do it."[14]

Johanson began playing drums in his high school marching band. Lessons were few and far between, and he learned more about drumming from other drummers than through formal lessons, particularly rudiments—the building blocks of drumming. "In my school, I was like the rudiment champion."[15] The marching band was a liberating experience. "When I joined the school band, all of a sudden, all of that stuff that I had really dug—I didn't want to be bothered with it anymore."[16] He soon gravitated to the rhythms of jazz. "It was like jazz had just slapped me in the face—it knocked the sense right out of me."[17]

Jazz became an obsession for the young drummer. He devoured copies of *DownBeat,* the preeminent jazz magazine of the era—"God sent *DownBeat* magazine to 33rd Avenue High School for me," he said. "And I used to read that magazine from front to back, everything in it."[18] His fixation on jazz led Johanson to consciously ignore the popular songs played on the radio. "As far as I was concerned, if it wasn't Miles Davis or

John Coltrane, I didn't want to hear nothing about it."[19] On a short-wave radio he listened to radio stations from as far away as Cuba and Europe. There, he recalled, "I heard all kinds of music, music that they certainly didn't play in the United States, not like that. I mean, continuously playing it. A lot of the stuff that I played came from listening to Dizzy Gillespie and Stan Kenton. Because they had some of those cats in their big bands—conga players, timbale players." It inspired not only his listening habits, but also his drumming. "I got my introduction to basic percussions from having listened to those parts. When you start doing that, stuff in your head starts coming out."[20]

His first professional gigs were in 1964 as a drummer for a local Mississippi band called the Sounds of Soul (with future Allman Brothers Band bassist Lamar Williams).[21] A year later, Johanson first hit the road, touring with rhythm and blues singer Ted Taylor. By 1966, he had joined Otis Redding's band. But the drummer found his jazz inclinations a poor fit with Redding's harder-edged rhythm and blues sound. "I used to sit and practice being a jazz drummer, and I got this call to go do this gig with Otis Redding and a lot of the stuff I really I wasn't ready for. I could play my drums and all that stuff, but my timing wasn't all that good," Johanson recalled. He struggled to maintain the precision Redding's music required. "My timing was terrible because I was always so into the future, I wasn't into what was happening now."[22] Redding's band carried two drummers and Johanson chose to play behind the other acts on the tour, noted rhythm and blues stars in their own right: Sam and Dave, Percy Sledge, Patti LaBelle, and James Carr. "Otis was into that

rock 'n' roll type thing," he recalled, "I'm talking about energy. I didn't have the experience playing like that. And I wanted to play behind all the other artists because it gave me the chance for variety. I'd rather play for three hours behind them rather than play for an hour behind Otis."[23] Ultimately, he concluded, "I couldn't play in that Otis band—it was way too loud. And I couldn't play rock 'n' roll like I can now."[24]

The touring circuit helped Johanson hone his craft—particularly in learning how a drummer can provide the most support to his bandmates and propel the music forward. "When I started off I wanted to be the greatest drummer in the world," he said. "That rhythm and blues thing, the road thing, I kind of found out that making the music sound good was more important than my personal gains, and through that I learned a lot."[25] It was a lesson he brought with him as one of two drummers in the Allman Brothers Band.

By 1968, Johanson grew weary of the rhythm and blues touring circuit. "I had been playing with rhythm and blues artists like Clarence Carter, Percy Sledge, and Arthur Conley," he remembered, "and I was done with that whole scene. The people who became stars treated their musicians just like they were treated—like dogs."[26] Some band leaders treated backing musicians well; most did not. This dichotomy became an issue for Johanson. "People get a break, they sell a few records, they start getting paid better, and some of them become so knocked out by what's going on they forget what the hell is going on," he reflected.[27] Life as a rhythm and blues backing musician was also a grind. In addition to the racism the musicians encountered, the touring itineraries were

extremely demanding. "The turnover rate is high, fights and violence are not infrequent."[28] An incident touring with Clarence Carter in winter 1968 and 1969 led to a fateful decision for Johanson. Rodgers Redding (Otis Redding's brother) was managing Carter. He docked the drummer $25 from his first week's wages for "driving costs"—a charge for his transportation from gig to gig. He decided at that moment to leave rhythm and blues touring for good.[29]

The drummer had joined Carter's touring band from his new home base in Macon. He had relocated there in 1968 to play in a house band Walden was putting together for a new studio endeavor—emulating the model employed in studios in Memphis at Stax and in Muscle Shoals at FAME. He had ventured to the middle Georgia town at the behest of Twiggs Lyndon, who had been working for Walden's rhythm and blues acts (including, at one time, Otis Redding). In a letter to Lyndon in April 1968 Johanson wrote, "Dig man about that studio gig, I am very grateful for your consideration toward me but as I told you on the phone, I've surpassed what I was doing and to prove it I will gladly pay back anybody who wants me to audition for them."[30] Walden was seeking top-notch players from the bands of the rhythm and blues touring circuit. "I think I'm the only one that went down there just for that and nothing else," he remembered.[31]

Following the Carter tour, the drummer decided "if I'm going to starve to death, at least I'm going to do it playing what I love: jazz music. I was moving to New York City."[32] Before he ventured to the Big Apple, he was presented with an opportunity to

join Duane Allman—who had just signed a contract with Walden and Atlantic Records—in Muscle Shoals. "The dollar signs went off in my head," he said, as he recalled an admonition from his mentor, drummer Charles "Honeyboy" Otis.[33] "If you want to make some money," Otis told him, "go play with them white boys. . . . I saw dollar signs in my head. Plain and simple, I went down to Muscle Shoals to make money."[34]

Upon his arrival in Muscle Shoals, his plans changed immediately. "[A]s soon as I met Duane and played with him, that all went away. It became about the music; only the music. It was the greatest music I ever played and I knew this was it. I wasn't going anywhere without him. Two days after meeting Duane, all of my dreams came true. We didn't have a nickel but we were all just as happy as could be, doing exactly what we wanted to do."[35] His time on the rhythm and blues circuit had prepared him well for the new venture. The guitarist's ability, spirit, and vision fit exactly what the drummer was seeking. "I had been preparing to play in this band without really knowing *what* I was preparing for," he recalled years later. "I think it was from playing with all those other musicians that I got all that fiery stuff that people hear in my playing."[36]

Johanson's drumming was truly unique. "Jaimoe was a powerhouse. He sounded like Elvin Jones and Zigaboo [Modeliste of the New Orleans jazz/funk band The Meters] all at once. He had a richness in his playing that impressed me more than any drummer I had ever heard," fellow Atlanta-based musician Col. Bruce Hampton (of the Hampton Grease Band) noted. "I could tell that there was something that Jaimoe had that no one

else did."[37] So did Allman, who shared how Walden introduced to the drummer. "'I've got this drummer here in Macon, who plays so weird nobody knows if he's any good or not.' . . . It was Jai Johanny and when he came over here I said, 'You're kidding. This cat's burnin'!'"[38]

What made Johanson unique was his jazz-like approach to the drums. "When I was in bands with Otis Redding, Joe Tex, and Percy Sledge," he said, "I was always playing this bebop stuff on my bass drum, rather than playing a steady pattern that kind of floats along with what the bass player is doing. If you listen to jazz players, they don't necessarily play the bass drum along with the bass player. They just punctuate here and there, and just do it different things with it."[39] It translated brilliantly in tandem with Duane Allman.

In Johanson, Allman found his first fulltime bandmate. "After we started rehearsing, things just sounded so good and loud," Johanson recalled. "I forgot all about the star trip." Allman's next recruit was bass player Berry Oakley. "Man, wait till you hear this bass player," Allman told his new drummer. "This cat's bad, man. We're going to have a hell of a band."[40] If Johanson wasn't fully convinced to join Allman's new band after their jam sessions together, Oakley's arrival sealed the deal. The virtuosity of the two white musicians surprised and impressed the drummer. "Honestly, at that time there were only a few white people I thought could play music: guys like Stan Getz and Buddy Rich. The biggest problem white musicians had was that they were trying to imitate this

or that person instead of letting themselves come out."[41] What he heard from Allman and Oakley was an original approach, heavily inspired by black musical forms and tradition. "When Berry got there," he noted. "I realized that my trip to New York to play in a jazz band and starve to death . . . that I was already doing it. Duane and Berry were that connection that made me realize a whole lot of things."[42] Together with the guitarist and bass player, Johanson discovered a new way to approach jazz. "Jazz is American music," he declared. "And I learned [American music] in search of jazz."[43] He did so as a member of the Allman Brothers Band.

In a somewhat still unique arrangement for the time, a black and white southerner sharing lodging in the small town South, Johanson relocated to Muscle Shoals and moved in with Allman. The guitarist was on staff at FAME and while he recorded, Johanson rehearsed to records in FAME's unused studio. During breaks, Allman rolled his amp out of one room and into the other studio to play with Johanson (and later Oakley).[44] FAME's other musicians—including guitarist Jimmy Johnson, bassist David Hood, keyboardist Barry Beckett, and drummer Roger Hawkins—were all first-call session players and incredible musicians in their own right. But they were both baffled and intimidated by what they heard. "They'd just come in, sit around the wall and look at us," the drummer remembered. "You'd try to get them to jam and they'd say, 'No, not with you.' Man, the three of us used to play and we scared the hell out of people."[45] The more free-form studio environment of Muscle Shoals was still highly structured around songs,

and what the three played together was markedly different. "They played the kind of stuff that they played and they didn't dare venture from that," Johanson recalled. [46] "Nobody would touch a goddamned instrument."[47] With Berry Oakley's appearance and "fit" with Allman and Johanson, the next part of the Polaroid developed.

Allman had bigger ideas in mind than the trio. "It's been said that Duane was at first going to put together a power trio like [the] Jimi Hendrix [Experience] or Cream," Johanson shared, "but I would never have been the right guy for that—I was never a power drummer, that's not what Duane was thinking." Allman's ideas built on some of the concepts he'd witnessed while in California and the heavily improvisational music he heard from bands like Cream. "He was talking about two guitars and two drummers from the start," Johanson recalled. "It was just finding the right guys."[48] "Duane was all about two lead guitars," his brother Gregg remembered. "He . . . wanted the bass, keyboards, and second guitar to form patterns behind the solo rather than just comping."[49] Both ideas, two lead guitar players and two drummers, was virtually unheard of in rock music at the time.[50] (According to Johanson, Allman's idea for two drummers came from Otis Redding and James Brown, though neither used two drummers simultaneously.) However, once Allman assembled all of the pieces of the Allman Brothers Band, it became a necessity.

Once Johanson signed on, Oakley was the guitarist's next recruit. The bassist first came into Allman's orbit in 1968, when his wife Linda brought him to see Hour Glass in

Jacksonville. Linda and Duane Allman had previously crossed paths in 1966, when the Allman Joys played a show at the Beachcomber in Jacksonville.[51] "I talked Berry into going," she remembered. "He went not expecting too much." Oakley's reaction of Allman was like many others: he was highly impressed. Following the show, Allman and Oakley made common cause and engaged in deep discussions into the wee hours about their shared musical influences and vision.[52]

A native of Park Forest, Illinois, near Chicago, Oakley first took up a guitar at age fourteen. He soon began forming, and leading, his own bands. "Just looking for something to do," he said.[53] "He did all the organizing himself, finding places to play, being the roadie, and playing lead guitar," his sister Candace Oakley recalled.[54] His band, the Shaynes, became part of the youth music scene in the Chicago suburbs. The band played in and won a talent show at St. Lawrence O'Toole Catholic Church in nearby Matteson, Illinois, and also played dates at Park Forest's senior teen canteen—chosen by the venue's teenage steering committee.[55]

"Berry was one of the original hot licks lead guitar players in the Chicago area back in the 60s," Chicago native Brian Paul remembered.[56] "By the time he was seventeen," Oakley's sister Candace recalled, "he was playing guitar on Rush Street. It was the beginning of his senior year in high school, and he was playing in the city at night and getting home at the crack of dawn."[57] Oakley's appearances on Rush Street, the center of Chicago's nightlife, highlight a quick ascent to renown. As the Shaynes gained

popularity, they opened shows for bigger-named acts that came through Chicago, including the Byrds and the Roemans, backup band for Atlanta native Tommy Roe.

Roe had scored a number one hit in 1962 with "Sheila" and had recorded several other hit singles in the intervening years. During a 1963 tour of England that included the Beatles, Roe determined that the future for popular music was in bands. Roe found a backing band in Florida, the Tampa-based band called the Romans—who added an "e" to their name after joining forces with Roe.[58] The Roemans were a seasoned live band that played a similar circuit of venues as the Allman Joys, Hour Glass, 31st of February, and other regional touring bands of that era: teen clubs, National Guard armories, and teen dances in Midwest ballrooms.[59] Their live shows set them apart, Roe recalled. "They were the kind of band you had to see."[60]

The Roemans gave Oakley his break. When the Shaynes opened them in fall 1965, Oakley discovered that Joe Pappalardo, the band's bass player, was about to be drafted.[61] Though he was not a bass player, Oakley volunteered to take Pappalardo's place. "Mainly just to get out on the road," he said.[62] "My brother felt he'd gone as far as he possibly could in Chicago," Candace Oakley remembered. "He was eager to move; he was very fiery, aggressive. He said, 'Hell, I'll play bass, and he got a bass and he learned how to play it.'"[63] "I wanted to get away," Oakley recalled, "and this band from down South [the Roemans], they were touring up there and I liked them. One of the cats got drafted so I wanted to sit in with them. I said, 'You need another guitar player? I'd like to do it,' And

they said okay, and they were leaving to go the next couple of days so I just split."[64] Oakley dropped out of high school and went on tour with Tommy Roe and the Roemans.[65]

The band was based in Roe's hometown of Atlanta, and the Chicago native relocated there as well. Though he left the Roemans after only a few months, he remained in Georgia. Of Oakley's short tenure in his band, Roe remembers him as "a hell of a musician all around [who] really took to the South."[66] Oakley put it more succinctly. He moved South "as soon as he had enough sense."[67] "I've been down South ever since and I really dig it," he said. "A lot more than I did up there [in Chicago]."[68]

Oakley eventually migrated to southwest Florida, where his parents had relocated to from Chicago. He joined a band, the Bittersweet, and soon came into contact with guitarist Dickey Betts, then in the Soul Children.[69] Betts's band had gained some success following the same formula as the Allman Joys, playing Top 40 covers, with the occasional original song peppered in. The arrangement paid well. "You could make $300 a week," Betts recalled, "and that was a lot of money. But you weren't getting anywhere."[70]

But Oakley sought something more than life in a cover band, and he implored Betts to join him. "Berry was pretty hip," Betts remembered. "He knew how to get out of clubs, which was to quit playing Top 40 shit. Berry was trying to get me into playing all originals, quit the club scene and do concerts—even if it had to be free concerts. He had all these great ideas to make us poor!"[71] Oakley convinced the guitar player to join forces

and pursue a collective musical vision. "We were the only [guys] in town with long hair," Betts said. "People would throw shit at us."[72] "We did that for about a year, and, man, it was tough," the guitarist remembered.[73] The band, now called the Blues Messengers, was not able to garner the economic success Betts had enjoyed in the Soul Children. But Betts saw in Oakley something many of Duane Allman's peers saw in him. Oakley "had so much insight and vision. . . . He was the real visionary in the band."[74] Oakley's vision was of a band unconstrained by playing rote cover versions. He believed there was an audience for an expansion of blues-based music into something that reflected the freer-form sounds emanating from San Francisco, with a southern flair.

Atlanta native John Meeks eventually became the band's drummer. Meeks's story reflects a relatively fluid musical scene that had developed in the South, with many musicians meeting each other along the touring circuit and later joining forces.[75] At the Scene, a rock club in Atlanta, Meeks had a regular engagement playing drums along with a deejay spinning records. There he met Oakley and Betts's future wife Dale, who bragged of her then-boyfriend Dickey's guitar playing prowess. After relocating to Sarasota, Meeks reacquainted with Dale Betts and Oakley when the two showed up at his door with Dickey Betts in tow—and asked him to join their band, then called the Blues Messengers.[76]

Tampa, about sixty miles north of Sarasota, was home base for the Blues Messengers, who had a regular engagement at Dino's, a local blues club.[77] Eventually, the

owners of The Scene (where Meeks had played in Atlanta) recruited the group as the house band at a new version of the club they were opening in Jacksonville. Seeing the long-haired, bearded Oakley's resemblance to popular images of Jesus Christ, they asked the band to change its name to the Second Coming.[78]

In Jacksonville the band began to find some success in pursuit of Oakley's musical vision of originality. "We found a club that allowed us to do our own music and hone a lot of our skills," Betts remembered.[79] The Second Coming played six nights a week at The Scene. The band didn't play original compositions as much as they developed original, improvisational arrangements of the electric blues and rock of the era. This was inspired by the psychedelic rock emanating from San Francisco and the West Coast.

The music was focused on Betts's lead guitar and its repertoire leaned heavily on the electric blues. Betts sang the Paul Butterfield Blues Band's "Born in Chicago" and Albert King's "Born Under a Bad Sign." Oakley handled vocals on Albert King's "Oh Pretty Woman" and on Muddy Waters's "Hoochie Coochie Man"—a version heavier and considerably more up-tempo than the original. Guitarist Larry Reinhardt took the lead on Jimi Hendrix's "Fire" and "Manic Depression." Betts's wife Dale sang Grace Slick's parts on Jefferson Airplane tunes.[80]

Linda Oakley remembered her first impression of the Second Coming. "The Second Coming held court at The Scene, and it was exactly that. There was Dickey Betts's smokin' guitar, wife Dale's voice soaring, Crazy Rhino [Larry Reinhardt] getting

psychedelic and Nasty Lord John [Meeks] partying on his drum kit. The spotlight, though, was on the bearded Christ-like figure of Berry Oakley with his Fender bass, growling 'Hoochie Coochie Man.'" Recalling the experience three decades later, she wrote, "It was spring. Peace and love were in bloom everywhere, and fortune was surely smiling on me."[81] Good favor was smiling on the musicians as well.

As Meeks recalled, the band's success in Jacksonville "surprised even us. We were like no other band at the time—we knew it and the people knew it." When the Buffalo Springfield played the Jacksonville Coliseum, Oakley invited its guitarists Stephen Stills and Neil Young to jam with the Second Coming. Stills didn't stay; Young did. "Dickey was playing at such a higher level that they just couldn't keep up," Meeks remembered. By this point, the drummer said, the Second Coming "had reached a degree of musicianship that far exceeded anything that anyone else was doing, except for the superstars like Cream, the Doors, Jimi Hendrix, Led Zeppelin, etc. But we were that good too."[82]

In 1968, the Second Coming recorded a single, a cover of Cream's "I Feel Free" backed with the Jefferson Airplane's "She Has Funny Cars."[83] While the arrangements were similar to the originals, Betts recalled, "We stretched the solos out pretty good. They were about five minutes apiece."[84] These longer, improvisational solos that the band played live, added a new element to southern rock music, one Betts and Oakley introduced. The Allman Brothers Band made it a signature.

Oakley's bass provided the foundation for these improvisational explorations: a grounding in electric blues with improvisational elements. The combination reflects Oakley's musical interests and influences. His initial musical experience was in the Chicago blues scene. But he was also inspired by the sounds of psychedelic rock from San Francisco bands such as the Grateful Dead and the Jefferson Airplane. His bass playing was of equal measure to those bands' own groundbreaking bassists Phil Lesh and Jack Casady, respectively. "Oakley was a singular bassist. Like such jazz hero-bassists as Oscar Pettiford, Jimmy Blanton, Ray Brown, or Scott LaFaro," writer Mikal Gilmore argues. "Oakley had a profound melodic sense that combined fluently with a pulsing percussive touch; and like the Dead's Phil Lesh or Jefferson Airplane's Jack Casady, he knew how to get under a band's action and lift and push its motion."[85] Bassist Joe Dan Petty, who had played with Betts in a previous band called the Jokers and later served as a roadie for the Allman Brothers Band, said of Oakley:

> Berry was probably the best rock 'n' roll bass player I've ever seen, even when he was playing in the Second Coming. Berry played a lot like a guitar player. He played a lot of notes, but he was always very precise, extremely surefooted, extremely tasteful. He had probably the best imagination I've heard in a bass player. He could really step out with those guitar players—and not stomp them, not walk all over what they were doing, but just ride underneath them. He was an extremely aware musician.[86]

"Berry Oakley and I inspired each other's improvisational creativity while we were in Second Coming," Betts recalled. "One of our favorite things to do was to jam in minor keys, experimenting freely with the sounds of different minor modes. We allowed our

ears to guide us, and this type of 'jamming' served to inspire the writing of [Allman Brothers Band] songs like 'In Memory of Elizabeth Reed' and 'Les Brers in A Minor.'"[87]

Eventually, a robust music scene began to develop around the Second Coming. The band rented a Victorian house at 2799 Riverside Avenue which they nicknamed the Green House.[88] "We started promoting our own concerts, free concerts, and aside from this, get a happening scene going," Betts recalled. "Berry had a mind for that. He was real social and political minded, knew how to make things happen. I didn't. I was more reclusive, singing and writing was it for me."[89] At Oakley's behest, the Second Coming hosted regular jam sessions with Jacksonville musicians on Sundays at Jacksonville's Willowbranch Park, a few blocks from the Green House. Other times, the players convened at the Forest Inn in Jacksonville's Lake Shore district.[90]

At this point, Betts had developed a reputation as the area's top guitar player. "Dickey was already considered one of the hottest guitar players in Florida," recalled Richard Price, a bass player in the Jacksonville band the Load. Second Coming keyboardist Reese Wynans remembered Betts as "the guy [guitarists] looked up to and wanted to emulate."[91]

It wasn't just fellow musicians who admired Betts. Audiences did as well. "Betts's guitar playing was our drug," Michael Ray FitzGerald, a Jacksonville high schooler at the time, recalled. "I would go almost anywhere to get it. We hitchhiked all over Northeast Florida . . . to hear Betts at every possible opportunity."[92] FitzGerald recalled one

particularly memorable performance, a night when Duane Allman joined the Second Coming on stage. "It was not the band's best performance. The group had a mystery guest sitting in: Betts stood by as most of the solos were taken by a diffident young man who looked like the Cowardly Lion and spent most of the show staring down at his Fender guitar, blond stringy hair draped over his face." FitzGerald wrote that he and his friend Paul Glass, "Were outraged. We had nearly risked our lives to see and hear Betts. We couldn't understand why Betts was letting this guy hog the solos. 'We came to hear Dickey!' we heckled."[93] Though he wasn't aware of it at the time, FitzGerald had witnessed an exciting new partnership in the making.

Allman was trying hard to convince Oakley to join forces with him fulltime, but Oakley had commitments with the Second Coming. The new endeavor with Allman and Johanson remained part-time for Oakley, who ventured to Muscle Shoals only when the Second Coming did not have a gig to play.[94] But more than his obligations with his band, Oakley felt a tremendous loyalty to and affinity for Betts.

Dickey Betts and Duane Allman were not strangers to one another when they crossed paths in Jacksonville in 1969. A fellow Floridian, Betts grew up in West Palm Beach before his family relocated to the Sarasota area when he was in seventh grade.[95] Betts first met Allman in the mid-1960s when the Allmans had asked to sit in with Betts's band the Jokers. Joe Dan Petty, the Joker's bass player, recalled a less-than-cordial meeting. "Right at first," Petty said, "they didn't take to one another just right."[96] "I

respected Duane a lot from the very first because of his guitar playing," Betts shared nearly two decades later, "[but] he was a bit standoffish."[97]

Like the Allman Joys, Betts's ensemble was also mostly a cover band. "We both had more or less nightclub bands, doing a lot of nightclub-type material. They were doing a lot of Ray Charles and Bobby Bland stuff, along with some Top 40 and a couple of original songs. The band I was working with or Duane's group at that time weren't in a position to do completely original material, like we were later."[98]

Betts had been playing music since a young age. "I grew up playing music with my father and uncles from as early an age as I can remember," Betts recalled. "I was probably five years old when I first joined in the weekly family musical gatherings during which the combined sounds of fiddles and guitars would fill the household." His focus then was almost exclusively on country music, an element and influence he carried with him his entire life. "We played what we called string music—in other words, country- and bluegrass-style music played on acoustic instruments. The natural beauty of this music left a deep, lasting impression on me, and has affected my overall musicianship in so many ways."[99] The Grand Ol' Opry, broadcast from Nashville's WSM radio station, had a profound influence on him as well. "I have an early recollection of a radio sitting in the kitchen window, with the curtains blowing, and Hank Williams and Lefty Frizzell and all those people. . . . When somebody said, 'What are you going to do when you grow up?' . . . I said, 'I'm gonna play on the Grand Ol' Opry.'"[100]

Betts first played ukulele and moved to mandolin and banjo before picking up a guitar. "I liked playing with my family," he said, "but when I got up around sixteen, I realized I wanted to do something a little faster. So I got my first real guitar. It was a Stella acoustic and I put a pickup on it and got a Gibson amp."[101] At this point, Betts came under the thrall of Chuck Berry—one of rock 'n' roll music's first guitar heroes. In learning and emulating Berry's solos, Betts developed his own style of lead guitar.

> I would learn . . . the lead from Chuck Berry's "Roll Over Beethoven." When I would go and play with a band they would do something like [Jerry Lee Lewis's] "Whole Lotta Shakin'" and I didn't know how to play my own stuff from inside me. I'd play the lead I had learned from 'Roll Over' to some other twelve-bar change. I had all these leads that I'd learned from different twelve-bar blues, and I'd switch them around. Then I started cutting them in half and piecing them together and then, before I knew it, I was making up stuff of my own and adding to my repertoire.[102]

Betts's musical self-education also included first-generation rock 'n' rollers Jerry Lee Lewis and Fats Domino. A blues-loving friend introduced him to John Lee Hooker and Muddy Waters, and eventually he discovered Robert Johnson, Blind Willie McTell, and the three Kings: Albert, B.B., and Freddie. However, Betts never lost his love for country music.[103]

His first experience as a professional musician was similar to most southern musicians of the era—playing in local garage bands. "I was invited to play in other people's groups. . . . The big social event was the Teen Club. Bands came there and I thought they were cool," he recalled. "Then I found out that girls liked electric guitars better—and I didn't have to dance when I was on stage! I'd play with a band for $5,

which was gas money and a trip to the root beer stand."[104] He began playing professionally at age seventeen, touring with the Bradenton-based Swinging Saints, a band that played multiple sets a day on the midway of the World of Mirth traveling circus.[105] The pay was a quite a bit better than the $5 he'd made in Florida teen clubs. "We made $125 a week," he recalled, "did twenty to thirty shows a day from 10 a.m. through midnight."[106] The experience prepared the guitarist well for the journey ahead. "I'm real thankful for having had 'road schooling' really early," he said. "I learned music has nothing to do with how you move your hands and everything to do with what's in your heart."[107] The experience primed Betts for his 1969 encounter with Duane Allman.

Touring had a similar effect on Betts as it did on Duane Allman. In addition to his skill on guitar, it was another way he separated himself from the musical pack. "I came back from the fair gig a full-blown musician and went on the road. I forged my birth certificate to play clubs, even though I promised Mama I'd go to school."[108] It was a promise he didn't keep. Betts played in a variety of bands in the early-to-mid-1960s and by 1968, he had joined forces with Berry Oakley in the Blues Messengers, which evolved into the Second Coming upon moving to Jacksonville. It was Oakley's commitment to original music that inspired Betts to make the leap from well-paying gigs as a cover band to playing original music.

As Duane Allman courted Berry Oakley for his band, Allman began to join jam sessions with the Second Coming. In turn, another element of the photograph came into

focus. As Betts recalled, "Berry told Duane the magic was happening when Betts was around, jamming."[109] The guitarists, whose styles and influences were divergent, sounded great together. "Duane's melody came more from jazz and urban blues," Betts shared, "and my melodies came more from country blues with a strong element of string-music fiddle tunes. . . . We were almost totally opposite except we both knew the importance of phrasing. We didn't just ramble about."[110]

Part of that magic was in the harmony guitar Allman and Betts played together. "From the first time playing together," Betts recalled, "Duane started picking up on things I played and offering a harmony, and we built whole jams off of that."[111] "Dickey's whole thing from the first time I met him was the harmonies," Reese Wynans remembered. "He would come up with these great melodies, and he wanted to get harmonies going for them. . . . Duane obviously got on the bus with that and took it to a new level."[112] "Berry and Duane were kind of getting used to playing with each other, getting ready to go into this new venture," Betts recounted. "As we started jamming, we all realized that Duane and I playing harmony guitars together was something that we weren't expecting to hear." The influence for this derived from western swing.[113] "Western swing bands from the [19]30s have always used the twin harmony guitars. A lot of the songs that we did were strongly influenced from that," Betts said. "And that's probably what I offered Duane . . . was that influence."[114]

Western swing evolved in the late 1920s out of the fiddle-and-guitar bands of the Southwest—bands that played a wide repertoire of "old-time hoedowns. . . ., waltzes, schottisches, polkas, ragtime, and jazz tunes." Its roots and principal influences were found in country music, but the form was also, Bill C. Malone and David Stricklin argue, "Heavily indebted to pop, blues, and jazz, as well as the folk music traditions of white southerners." Its most notable purveyor was Texan Bob Wills, whose Texas Playboys included saxophones, trumpets, clarinets, piano, steel guitar, and drums in addition to the traditional country accompaniment of guitar, banjo, and stand-up bass, with Wills and at least one other member of his band on fiddle.[115]

In addition to incorporating a wide range of musical styles, western swing also moved the guitar to a prominent position in its music, something Betts grasped immediately as he and Allman began playing together. The harmony that he and Allman engaged in was a spontaneous development, one that built off the guitarists' own musical experiences. "[W]hen we started improvising, things fit, and we didn't analyze it. Duane was more real militaristic into urban blues. And then I had a western swing lilt to my rock playing and it fit together beautifully."[116]

The Polaroid image was coming more into focus; the trio Allman had envisioned with Johanson and Oakley now included a fourth member, Dickey Betts. To Betts and his mates, the new band was something they all had long been searching for. "It was fun and exciting, and the band just sort of happened. . . . Duane had no idea that he would end up

with this very different thing, but he was open to seeing what happened," Betts shared. "I had been playing with Berry, and Duane kept coming and sitting in with us and exciting stuff started happening really quickly and naturally. We all felt like we had discovered the very thing we had been looking for, even if we didn't know it beforehand. We all knew that something very, very good was happening.[117] With Betts, the band added an element of country music to its base of blues, jazz, and psychedelia. "It was not a thought out process," Betts shared years later. "It just formed naturally, like the band. If someone fit in the pieces, they stayed."[118]

The music they were playing with Oakley and Betts led Allman and Johanson to relocate from Muscle Shoals to Jacksonville. "It was great just playing, playing free, so me and [Johanson] packed all our stuff and went down to Jacksonville," Allman shared. "Berry had a band and a big house and everything. We stayed there and we got it all together. Butch would come over from Arlington every day so we'd jam. We just all said, 'Well, sounds pretty good, let's try it out on somebody.'"[119]

Butch Trucks soon became the band's second drummer. "Jaimoe was a real good drummer," Betts recalled, "and once we all got in there, it was bigger and he wasn't really able to handle the power. It just wasn't his style. . . . We needed Butch, who had that drive and strength."[120] Richard Price agreed. "Butch was well known as a strong-in-the-pocket player, while Jaimoe was more of an embellisher. . . . [T]hings started happening with Jaimoe and Butch as soon as they played together."[121]

The two-drummer concept was a novelty in rock music then (and now). "I don't know how to explain it other than our backgrounds," Trucks shared in 1979. "We both started the same place, marching band in high school. Jaimoe went into jazz and I'm more into rock . . . folk rock, very simple patterns." Trucks remarked that Johanson's "patterns are more syncopated than mine." Most importantly, he claimed, "[W]e both listen, that's the key word. He listens to what's going on in the band and so do I."[122] Of the two drummers Duane Allman remarked, "We've had them from the first because we knew we was going to be playing loud, and both cats can play everything they need to play if there's two of them instead of one cat having to flog his ass off the whole night."[123]

The musical and drumming influences of Claude "Butch" Trucks reflect a wide musical vocabulary. A Jacksonville native, Trucks was the only original member of the Allman Brothers Band with extensive formal musical training. It began when he was in grade school. "I had a very good boy soprano voice," he recalled, "and our church's minister of music took me under his wing."[124] After several years of learning music theory, he took up piano at age twelve. He migrated to drums in marching band by eighth grade. "The band director gave us sticks and said, 'Play me something.' Everybody else got trombones and trumpets and stuff like that," he remembered. "I just kind of played a long roll. He said, 'Whoa, you ever played, boy?' I said, 'No,' and he said, ''Well, *you're* playing drums!'"[125]

Trucks's early musical interests veered away from the youth-oriented popular music of the era. "I didn't listen to rock 'n' roll that much when I was growing up," he recalled. "I did listen to rhythm and blues on WLAC out of Nashville, but when I listened to music it was mainly classical."[126] Classical music remained one of the drummer's deepest roots. "As far as people other than drummers influencing my music, I'd have to say that Beethoven, Dvorak, Ravel, Debussey, and Gershwin would come long before guitar players. I grew up listening to this music and my approach to music is derived from them and the music I learned in church."[127] He played in the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra and an offshoot called the Jacksonville Symphonette, in which he played tympani. Trucks continued in the symphony, the orchestra, and the concert band and marching band through high school.[128] As his musicianship grew, he drew inspiration from diverse sources: jazz bandleader Dave Brubeck's drummer Joe Morello; Mike Clarke of the Byrds; the song "Wipe Out" by the Sufaris for its bass drum syncopation; and Cream's Ginger Baker.[129]

His migration to rock music was simple. "I played drums in high school," he remembered, "that's what you do in high school—play in a rock band."[130] Trucks's parents, scions of the North Jacksonville Baptist Church, did not endorse their son's interest in rock music, but they finally relented and bought him a drum set, he noted, "As long as I promised never to play in a place where they served liquor" (a promise he did not keep). He joined his first band, the Vikings, around 1964. The next year he joined the

Echoes, a Beatles-inspired cover band.[131] While attending Florida State University in 1966, he teamed with fellow Jacksonville natives David Brown (bass) and Scott Boyer (guitar) to form the Bitter Ind. Heavily influenced by the folk rock sounds emanating from California—"the Byrds' first album [*Mr. Tambourine Man*] changed our lives," he noted—the band changed its name to the Tiffany System in 1967 and the 31st of February one year later.[132] In 1968, Vanguard Records released the band's sole album, *The 31st of February*. Following the label's rejection of the band's next recording effort—a collaboration with Duane and Gregg Allman—the band broke up.

Trucks remained in Jacksonville, eventually migrating to the community jam sessions Oakley had been organizing. It was at these sessions that Allman's new band truly coalesced. "We had these big jams with a lot of drummers coming and going, but things started happening with Jaimoe and Butch as soon as they play together" Richard Price remembered. "They formed this strange symbiotic thing and melded into a terrific unit. Over a series of nights you could see something very substantial developing. The musical explorations, unfettered by the commercial forces of the music industry, invigorated the developing band."[133] "The jams in the park and free music helped the band come together," Betts recalled.[134] Soon, the guitarist remembered, "The trio had five pieces. We were all smart enough to say 'this guy's special' about one another."[135] Johanson had long since forgotten his original reason for seeking out Duane Allman:

making money. "The whole thing was just about playing music—no agenda, no egos–and it was good."[136]

The two lead guitar players, Allman and Betts, were the central focus of the band. It was a terrific combination of two virtuosos with similar roots but completely different musical styles. The guitarists, Reese Wynans recalled, "Complemented each other—they didn't try to outgun one another—and the chemistry was obvious right away. It was just amazing that the two best lead guitarists around were teaming up. They were both willing to take chances rather than returning to parts they knew they could nail, and everything they tried worked."[137] Betts and Allman were able to develop their twin guitar sound because of the proficiency of the rhythm section. "The reason that Duane and Dickey played the way they did was because of who they had playing behind them, which was Butch and me," Johanson reflected. "We did things differently than anyone else—and then you had Berry, who was a guitar player who started playing bass because he had a chance to get a gig and get out of Chicago and on the road. Nobody played bass like Berry."[138]

Like Cream before it, the new band included virtuosos who could, and would, solo at any point in a song. The group was also deeply rooted in the blues. But where it differed from Allman, Johanson, and Trucks's previous musical explorations when the music veered from the standard blues form. This initially came from Oakley, whose deep knowledge of and skill in blues guitar and predilection for psychedelic jamming served as

the glue between the various musical elements. As Wynans recalled, "Berry was very dedicated to jamming and deeply into the Dead and the Airplane and the psychedelic approaches and always playing that music for us—it was pretty exotic stuff to our ears, because there were no similar bands in the area. Dickey was a great blues player with the rock edge. . . . And then Duane arrived and he was just on another planet. The power of all combined was immediately obvious."[139]

It was a nearly perfect melding of styles and inspiration. Betts cites the influence of urban blues on Duane and Gregg Allman. "Their thing was like a real honest, truthful, chilling delivery of that music, whereas Oakley and I may have been influenced by the blues and were students of it, but we were more innovative. We would try to take a blues tune and, instead of respecting the sacredness of it, we would go sideways with it."[140] The Allman Brothers Band's reworking of the Muddy Waters classic "Hoochie Coochie Man" is based on the Second Coming's arrangement of the song. While the band didn't record it formally until 1970, this amped-up version appeared in its earliest setlists. Another example is a reimagined take of "Don't Want You No More," an obscure song by the Spencer Davis Group that spent one week (at number 100) on the charts in 1967. The Allmans' instrumental version of the latter—with Allman and Betts playing the vocal melody on harmony guitars, kicked off the Allman Brothers Band's first album. Yet despite the success the Second Coming had with these new arrangements, Betts recalled, "Berry and I were always missing something—a certain foundation—while Duane and

Gregg didn't quite have the adventurous kind of thing. So when we all came together, we gave each other a new foundation."[141]

On March 23, 1969, after several months of playing together in various iterations in and around Jacksonville, Duane Allman, Johanson, Berry Oakley, Dickey Betts, Butch Trucks, and Reese Wynans convened at Trucks's house to play. It was a jam session that has since entered Allman Brothers Band lore as the "Jacksonville Jam." "We just set up the equipment and whipped into a little jam," Allman said. "And the jam lasted two and a half hours. When we finally quit, nobody even said a word, man, everybody was speechless. Nobody'd ever done anything like that before—it really frightened the hell out of everybody. Right then I *knew*, I said 'Man, here it is, here it is!'"[142] Butch Trucks ascribed to the event a spiritual element. "It was like being born again, a revival meeting. We got saved that day."[143] "I think by that time we kind of had a feeling of where it was going. It was pretty obvious what was working. Dickey and Duane were really having a good time with each other. We tended to get very introverted and experimental and jazzy . . . but very much pull into ourselves rather that put on a show," Trucks shared. "[W]e were making music. And it was this particular group of people who all had the same philosophy. Different musical backgrounds, but what we were looking for at that time was that note. . . . And frankly . . . I had felt that before playing symphonic music, but this was the first time I'd ever really felt it playing a set of drums, playing rock 'n' roll.[144]

However powerful the experience was for the five musicians, they all knew it lacked an element of power: vocals. Accounts differ slightly about how Allman came to bring his brother Gregg into the fold. The guitarist seems to have always intended for his brother to join the new band, but may have been too stubborn to call him right away. Johanson has always maintained that Allman had Gregg in mind from the very beginning. "Some people have said over the years that Duane was trying to do something different. Maybe they were fighting, but it's not true," he shared. "There was never a doubt that he would be the singer. He was just waiting until he had all the other pieces in place before he called Gregory, who was in L.A."[145] Betts remembered the decision wasn't as cut-and-dried. "We'd been rehearsing those five pieces and Oakley and I kept working on Duane to call his brother because we knew that the band was something special but nobody really sang as good as the band could play." The brothers, Betts shared, "Weren't speaking to each other. So we talked Duane into calling Gregg and asking him to come down."[146] Linda Oakley remembered Allman remarking to her, "We've got to get my brother here, out of that bad situation. He's a great singer and songwriter and he's the guy who can finish this thing."[147]

Whatever the story, Allman indeed called his brother Gregg, who then was in Los Angeles fulfilling Hour Glass's Liberty Records contract. "The cats love to play," Allman said to his younger brother. "They're all really into their instruments, they sing a little bit but there's not a whole lot of writing going on so I need you to come and sing and write

and round it all up and send it in some sort of direction."[148] Gregg Allman has since called it "the finest compliment I've ever had."[149]

Liberty Records had indeed recorded and released a single under Gregg Allman's name. On July 13, 1968, *Billboard* magazine featured the single, by "Greg Allman & The Hour Glass" (misspelling Gregg's first name), in its "Special Merit Spotlight" section. *Billboard* wrote of the single—a cover of "D-I-V-O-R-C-E" (a version of which by Tammy Wynette had reached number one on the country charts in 1968)—"The country chart smash by Tammy Wynette takes on a solid blues feel via this soulful and dynamic treatment. Much pop and R&B appeal."[150] The record was another in a series of Allman-related flops on Liberty Records. Gregg was anxious to join his brother in Florida.

Upon arriving in Jacksonville, Gregg Allman provided two key elements to the band's sound: high-caliber vocals and songwriting. The former was a well-known element in his arsenal. The latter was relatively new, but something Duane always believed his brother had within him. "Duane could see Gregg's talent long before he saw it in himself," the boys' mother Geraldine shared years later.[151]

Vocally, Gregg Allman's greatest influences were blues and rhythm and blues stars. One of his favorites was Bobby "Blue" Bland. "Man, he was a crooner. . . . Bland's stuff really just touched me," he wrote. Ray Charles, Stevie Wonder, Muddy Waters, and James "Little Milton" Campbell were other inspirations.[152] Two live records had a particular impact: B.B. King's *Live at the Regal* (from which Hour Glass had derived its

"B.B. King Medley") and James Brown's *Live at the Apollo*. "Those records are what got me into being real meticulous about the way things are arranged in the order of the songs," he shared, "not having too much time between songs."[153] This study served the band well as it began a relentless touring schedule that culminated in the recording of a groundbreaking live album in 1971.

The younger Allman's ability to channel gifted African American vocalists immediately impressed Johanson, the band's sole black member. "I played with Otis Redding and Percy Sledge and saw Ray Charles and B.B. King and every other great and I'll tell you this: there's not anybody I ever heard who sang with more truth and passion than Gregory. He was at the very top of whatever what was going on with singers. And that shit about him being 'one of the great white blues singers' is straight bullshit. He's a great blues singer. A great singer, period."[154]

The younger Allman had also honed his songwriting chops while in Los Angeles—something the new band sorely needed. "Gregg stayed out in L.A. and was writing songs and trying to put them together," the John McEuen reflected. McEuen recorded one of those, a blues called "It's Not My Cross to Bear." This initial version of the song was much slower than the version that appeared on the Allman Brothers Band's first album, but "you could hear the voice there, you could hear the power of the song," McEuen noted.[155] "It was his first truly original direction," McEuen continued. "I had never heard a song like that, a very adult-sounding song from such a young person. It was as good as

something you'd hear from Scrapper Blackwell or Robert Johnson. The lyrics were incredible, and that voice! . . . It was the sound of Gregg really finding himself."[156]

The younger Allman had long struggled with songwriting and this was a breakthrough. "I didn't want to be a jukebox anymore, so I kept writing, even though I didn't have much to show for it at this time. I was sick of learning parts and making sure they were right."[157] In Los Angeles, he had had tapped a measure of originality theretofore unavailable to him.

Gregg Allman's development as a songwriter while in Los Angeles, was greatly influenced by the musicians around him: Tim Buckley, Stephen Stills, and one-time roommate Jackson Browne. These folk and folk rock singer-songwriters revealed possibilities the budding songwriter had yet to explore. "A certain side of me has always viewed myself as a folksinger with a rock 'n' roll band," he recounted. "All I had known was R&B and blues and these guys turned me on to a more folk-oriented approach and it's always stuck with me. . . . I developed my style from combining these things together—folky songs with soulful vocals."[158] Johanson agreed with this assessment. "Gregory's music and singing were based on rhythm and blues and blues, but his songwriting was so influenced by people like Bob Dylan and Jackson Browne and other people who wrote poem songs. What made him so unique is the way he combined those things."[159] Gregg Allman's originals spurred the propelled the band forward, just as Duane Allman had said it would. "You had no choice but to be very good at what you

were doing," Johanson maintained, "because it was a reflection of what you were hearing and everyone around us was so good! His voice and his lyrics were like two more instruments, which had a huge impact on what we played."[160]

The proficiency of his five white bandmates also changed Johanson's own feelings about race and music. To Johanson, what set the Allman Brothers Band apart from previous efforts is the originality with which they approached the music. They were no longer just mimicking their African American influences, they created something new. "At that time, I really thought that there were only a few special gifted white people that could play music," the drummer recalled. "I was soon to discover the reason for a lot of that was simply the fact that they were so busy imitating that they never walked out of it and into themselves. It was sitting there waiting and Gregg and Duane did that right away. . . . The first song he sang was Muddy Waters's 'Trouble No More' and he sounded great, but he sounded like himself. He had that right from the first day I met him. He had been working it out for years already, even though he was just maybe twenty-one.[161]

Prior to joining forces with the Allmans, Oakley, Betts, and Trucks, Johanson believed "only people like Stan Getz, Gene Krupa, and Elvis were special—other white people couldn't play music."[162] Until the band's founding, he felt that white musicians—including his bandmates—merely "mimicked everyone they thought was so great but never allowed themselves to come through."[27]

It is no surprise that the diversity of rhythms the band members wrote and played in also drew the drummer in. Johanson heard a melding of African rhythms in the music of his new bandmates. "Caucasian people just didn't understand what African people were doing, so they took the music and systematized it into American music which is standard 4/4 time. Other cultures is in 1/2, 2/2, 4/4, 6/8. This is the gift that Dickey [Betts] has—when he writes something, he plays what he hears," Johanson reflected. "That is a great gift because music is something that is chaotic and becomes harmonious."[163] Ultimately, the Allman Brothers Band, the drummer argued, gave "Caucasian musicians in this country the boost to go out and play—'Hey, if those guys can do it, we can do it.'"[164]

Johanson did encounter some resistance from his African American peers to his playing with the Allman Brothers. "'Jai Johanny,'" he recalled them saying. "what are you doing with these white boys? Why are you in a rock 'n' roll band?'" The drummer's retort was simple. "Hey man, those motherfuckers can play!"[165]

Play they could. On March 26, 1969, Gregg Allman, just off the plane from Los Angeles, stepped into his first band rehearsal. He immediately noticed the band's power. "Gregg was floored when he heard us," Betts recalled.[166] "They started playing and I mean it just knocked me out," Gregg stated. "He went back against the wall," Betts said, "and he said, 'Jesus Christ, what a band!'"[167]

With the younger Allman's arrival, the band's Polaroid was fully developed. "In the beginning it was so amazing I don't even know how to put it into words," said Betts.[168] "We all knew we were on to something special because we'd been putting bands together for . . . years at that point."[169] The band was the perfect foil for Duane Allman and the fulfillment of a long quest. "I can't imagine any player they had in that first band that didn't belong there. I don't know how it could have been any better or anybody else they could have chosen that could've done a better job," the Allmans' former bandmate Paul Hornsby recalled. "You had six people that were just out there just slaying it. Duane is part of it and it's a unit. It's not just a lead guitar player out front it's not just a lead singer. This whole thing was just one big glob of power."[170]

"When the six of us got together," Johanson recalled, "we became what we were looking for and who we were looking for and it was clear as a bell. It was just a great bunch of guys playing and it was just so natural. We never talked about what we were doing or told each other what to do. Everyone just played."[171]

The new band played a mélange of southern musical flavors with a contemporary rock music flair. Nearly every element of the band's influence was southern in origin. Duane and Gregg Allman, Dickey Betts, and Berry Oakley had heavy blues influences. Johanson and the brothers Allman were seasoned rhythm and blues musicians. Betts had grown up playing and listening to country music. Trucks and Gregg Allman both played folk and folk rock. Johanson was steeped in the music and rhythms of jazz. Trucks

brought to the band a classical influence. Oakley, and to a lesser extent Betts, brought with them elements of the San Francisco psychedelic scene. "We wanted to play American music," Johanson recalled.[172] And that was exactly what the Allman Brothers Band did.

The band was, however, a decidedly uncommercial venture. "The band was so good we thought we'd never make it," Betts reflected.[173] After several failed attempts at grabbing the brass ring of traditional success in the music business, Duane Allman and his bandmates specifically created a sound and musical construct that impacted them first and foremost. If the music industry was less than interested in the results, so be it.

From the beginning the band discussed a unique approach to the music business. "We were all getting together and jamming, and saying, 'Before we start anything, let's just say to hell with it, man! Let's don't get that same shit started up,'" Allman shared. "The more we jammed, it got a little bit better. I knew these people at Atlantic Records, and I talked to them about trying to get something for real, something that we could do that would just sound like us, instead, of something that they would just try to get to sell. We're proud of this — it's probably the best thing that ever happened to any of us."[174] "[We] did everything possible against being commercial," Betts recalled, "which is not really the thing to do if you're trying to have a successful album. Luckily we got away with it."[175]

The band got away with it because of the patronage of Atlantic Records and its partnership with Phil Walden. "All of us were playing in good little bands," Betts noted, "but Duane was the guy who had Phil Walden . . . And Duane was hip enough to say, 'Hey Phil, instead of a three-piece, I have a six piece, and we need $100,000 for equipment.' And Phil was hip enough to have faith in this guy. If there was no Phil Walden and no Duane Allman there would have been no Allman Brothers Band."[176]

With the formation of the Allman Brothers Band, Duane Allman had earned a hard-fought victory to pursue his own musical vision. He had graduated from the leader of cover bands playing in small-town nightclubs and bars, to failed attempts in the music industry towns of Nashville and Los Angeles, to life as an A-list session musician, to leading his own band of musical equals. Most importantly, the band played original music in his brother Gregg's songs or through unique, original arrangements of cover songs such as Muddy Waters's "Trouble No More" or the Spencer Davis Group's "Don't Want You No More."

The only battle Allman lost was in the naming of the band. "He really had a lot of problems with the name the Allman Brothers Band," Trucks remembered. "He didn't want to call it that. He really wanted to find a name for the band that didn't call attention to himself, and we couldn't come up with anything. That was really an idea from [Phil Walden]. Duane was going to call us Beelzebub, but we all agreed that it would not be good to name a band like ours after the right-hand man of Satan."[177] Trucks recalled that

the band played one show in Jacksonville under the Beelzebub moniker, and soon decamped to Macon where Walden was setting up his new record label and studio. It is from Macon that the Allman Brothers Band launched.

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[1] Ted Drozdowski, "Gibson Legend Dickey Betts Talks about Duane Allman and Southern Rock," *Gibson.Com* (blog), May 21, 2014, accessed November 27, 2016, http://www.gibson.com/News-Lifestyle/Features/en-us/Gibson-Legend-Dickey-Betts.aspx; Paul, *One Way Out*, 25.

[2] How bands come together and the music they make are unique moments in time. In addition to Tom Nolan, Scott Freeman, and Alan Paul, whose work has focused on the Allman Brothers Band, authors have addressed stories from this era in a variety of ways. See Alice Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin* (New York: Macmillan, 2000); Dennis McNally, *A Long Strange Trip: The Inside History of the Grateful Dead* (New York: Bantam, 2002); Peter Richardson, *No Simple Highway: A Cultural History of the Grateful Dead*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2015); Jonathan Gould, *Can't Buy Me Love: The Beatles, Britain, and America* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2008); Bob Spitz, *The Beatles: The Biography* (New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 2005).

[3] Crowe, "The Allman Brothers Story," 50.

[4] Palmer, *Rock 'n' Roll*, 114-115.

[5] Shane and Duane Allman; Gregg Allman, *Cross to Bear*, 63; Hoskyns, "Interview with Gregg Allman."

[6] Jas Obrecht, "Duane Allman: The Complete 1981 Dickey Betts Interview," July 16, 1981, accessed August 13, 2013, http://jasobrecht.com/duane-allman-1981-dickey-betts-interview/.

[7] Jas Obrecht, "Dickey Betts 1989," *Guitar Player*, August 1989.

[8] "A Moment Captured in Time: The *Crawdaddy* Interview with Duane Allman," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 26 (n.d.), 15.

[9] "A Moment Captured in Time," 16.

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[10] Palmer, *Rock 'n' Roll*, 121.

[11] Eric Clapton, interview by Robert Palmer, n.d. Robert Palmer Papers, Tulane University Hogan Jazz Archive, New Orleans, Louisiana.

[12] Crowe, "The Allman Brothers Story," 50.

[13] John Lynskey, Kirk West, and Glenn White, "Reflections: The World According to Jaimoe," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 21 (1998): 25.

[14] Lynne Bernabei, "Mother to an Allman Brother," *South Mississippi Sun*, June 4, 1974. In November 1971, Jaimoe sat stage right as the Allman Brothers Band played Carnegie Hall.

[15] McClain Johnson, "Interview: Jaimoe," *Bandsthatjam.Com* (blog), November 12, 2014, http://www.bandsthatjam.com/bands-that-jam-jam-bands/allman-brothers-band/interview-jaimoe/.

[16] Lynskey, et al., "Reflections: The World According to Jaimoe," 26.

[17] Lynskey, et al., "Reflections: The World According to Jaimoe," 26.

[18] Jaimoe, "Jaimoe Johanson Interview," YouTube video, 2:26, posted [February 2009], https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wo-qqND1t5U.

[19] Lynskey, et al., "Reflections: The World According to Jaimoe," 26.

[20] Robin Tolleson, "Jaimoe," *Modern Drummer* (blog), January 2018, accessed December 7, 2017, https://www.moderndrummer.com/article/january-2018-jaimoe/.

[21] John Lynskey, "Lamar Williams: Out of the Shadows," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 17 (n.d.), 21.

[22] Lynskey, et al., "Reflections: The World According to Jaimoe," 25.

[23] Freeman, 34.

[24] Gavin Edwards, "The Allman Brothers Band: 30 Years of Ups and Downs: The Music Got Them, and After Three Decades They're Still Going Wherever It Takes to Play," *Rolling Stone*, November 25, 1999.

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[25] Robert Palmer, "Allman Brothers Band," 1979, Robert Palmer Papers, Tulane University Hogan Jazz Archive, New Orleans, Louisiana.

[26] Paul, *One Way Out*, 13.

[27] Jim Beaugez, "Jaimoe Johnson Marches to His Own Beat," *Mississippi Today*, February 17, 2017.

[28] Landau, Untitled Essay. Landau goes on to write, "The musicians become dependent on drugs. The most common type is the 'robo head,' or Robitussin head. Robo is a cough medicine which contains codeine derivatives and is readily available." One of Jaimoe's nicknames in the early Allman Brothers Band era was "Frown," after the face he would make when high on Robitussin.

[29] Beaugez.

[30] Jai Johanny "Jaimoe" Johanson letter to Twiggs Lyndon, April 28, 1968, the Allman Brothers Band Museum at the Big House, Macon, Georgia.

[31] Brian Whitley, "Jaimoe—Founding Member of the Allman Brothers Band," *The 11th Hour Online*, March 21, 2016, accessed November 25, 2016, http://11thhouronline.com/2016/03/21/jaimo-founding-member-of-the-allman-brothers-band/.

[32] Paul, *One Way Out,* 13.

[33] Edwards.

[34] Lynskey, et al., "Reflections: The World According to Jaimoe," 27.

[35] Paul, "Allman Brothers Drummer Jaimoe Remembers Gregg Allman."

[36] Gilmore, 120.

[37] Kirk West, "Col. Bruce Reflects on Jaimoe," *Hittin' the Note*, 1998, 31.

[38] Mandel.

[39] Lynskey, "Lamar Williams," 21.

[40] Freeman, 35.

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[41] Paul, *One Way Out*, 15.

[42] Jaimoe, "Jaimoe's Memories with Duane Allman," YouTube video, 1:57, Posted [November 19, 2016], https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=erniVAmFZA4.

[43] Beaugez.

[44] Paul, *One Way Out*, 13-15.

[45] Freeman, 35-36.

[46] Kevin Spangler and Ron Currens, "Jaimoe on Butch . . . and a Whole Lot More," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 15 (Fall 1996): 15.

[47] Lynskey, et al., "Reflections: The World According to Jaimoe," 27.

[48] Paul, *One Way Out*, 15.

[49] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 61.

[50] The only two-drummer rock band that had achieved any measure of success at the time was the Grateful Dead. Some bands employed one drummer on a traditional trap set and another on percussion, most notably Santana.

[51] Somewhat serendipitously, the Beachcomber was also the same venue where Butch Trucks had first joined the Allman Joys on drums.

[52] Galadrielle Allman, 84; Poe, 72.

[53] Scoppa, 62.

[54] Nolan, 18

[55] "Parish Talent Show," Unknown publication, n.d., accessed December 18, 2015, http://www.duaneallman.info/images/familytreetheshaynes2.jpg; " . . . To Play for Canteen," Unknown publication, n.d., accessed December 18, 2015, http://www.duane allman.info/images/familytreetheshaynes1.jpg.

[56] Dave Kyle, "Berry Oakley," *Vintage Guitar Magazine*, December 1996, accessed December 8, 2015, http://www.duaneallman.info/berryoakley.htm.

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[57] Freeman, 36.

[58] Roe, *From Cabbagetown to Tinseltown*, 100-103.

[59] Bo Glover and Mike Dugo, "The Roemans," Beyond the Beat Generation (blog), n.d., accessed December 8, 2015, http://home.unet.nl/kesteloo/roemans.html.

[60] Tommy Roe, interview by author, phone, April 14, 2017.

[61] The November date is confirmed by this clipping, "The Roemans," *Tampa Times*, April 27, 1966.

[62] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

[63] Nolan, 18.

[64] Scoppa, 62.

[65] Kyle, "Berry Oakley."

[66] Roe, interview by author.

[67] Joel Selvin, "What Southern Boys Can Do With Rock," *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 14, 1971.

[68] Scoppa, *The Rock People*, 62.

[69] Poe, 70.

[70] Lana Michelizzi, "Dickey Betts at the Hall of Fame." Allmanbrothersband.com, 1996, accessed June 1, 2017, http://www.allmanbrothersband.com/gallery/abb/onstage/dickey/hallfame.html.

[71] Michelizzi.

[72] FitzGerald, Michael Ray. "Guitar Town: Jacksonville in the Late 1960," author's personal collection.

[73] Freeman, *Midnight Riders*, 42.

[74] Michael Buffalo Smith, *Capricorn Rising*, 10.

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[75] Such as Betts and Oakley or Duane and Gregg Allman with Johnny Sandlin and Paul Hornsby.

[76] John Meeks, "A Tale of the Second Coming," *Hittin' the Note*, n.d. (21), 34-36.

[77] Michael Buffalo Smith, *Capricorn Rising*, 10.

[78] Meeks, 36.

[79] "Dickey Betts at the Hall of Fame."

[80] Poe, *Skydog*, 72.

[81] "Reflections on the Allman Brothers Band," macon.com, April 5, 2009, accessed July 31, 2017, https://www.duaneallman.info/reflectionsontheabb.htm.

[82] Meeks, 36.

[83] FitzGerald, "Guitar Town."

[84] Michael Watts, "The Allmans Are to America Now What the Grateful Dead Were in '67," *Melody Maker*, August 25, 1973. Of the single, Betts remembered, "*Billboard* picked it up as a possible hit or something. . . . Right in the middle of the process of that, we had disbanded and started the Allman Brothers Band, so here Duane and Gregg and Berry and me and all of us were sitting in Macon, and we're supposed to be rock stars, and we're hearing the Second Coming's record over the radio and everybody's wondering what it is…. I don't think it even had a label. It didn't really do anything. It looked like it might, but it didn't really deserve a hit."

[85] Gilmore, *Night Beat*, 127.

[86] Nolan, *The Allman Brothers Band*, 18.

[87] Andy Aledort, Alan Paul, and Jimmy Brown, "The Allman Brothers Band's 25 All-Time Greatest Songs," *Guitar World*, July 28, 2017, accessed July 29, 2017, http://www.guitarworld.com/artist-lists/allman-brothers-bands-25-all-time-greatest-songs/31477.

[88] FitzGerald, "Guitar Town."

[89] Michelizzi.

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[90] FitzGerald, "Guitar Town."

[91] FitzGerald, "Guitar Town."

[92] FitzGerald, "Guitar Town."

[93] FitzGerald, "Guitar Town."

[94] Jaimoe, "Jaimoe's Memories with Duane Allman."

[95] Scott Bernarde, "Rock's Ramblin' Man," *Palm Beach Post*, January 12, 1995.

[96] Nolan, 22.

[97] Pete Fornatale, "Dickey Betts & Butch Trucks - Interview - 11/4/1984 - Rock Influence (Official)," Filmed [November 1984], YouTube video, 18:43, Posted [September 2014], https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rDDkDhCnh7E.

[98] Obrecht, "Duane Allman: The Complete 1981 Dickey Betts Interview."

[99] Andy Aledort, "Dickey Betts on Writing the Timeless Classic, 'Jessica,'" *Music Aficionado* (blog), July 12, 2016, accessed February 27, 2018, https://web.music aficionado.com/main.html#!/article/Dickey_Betts_on_Writing_Jessica.

[100] Poe, 69.

[101] Freeman, 41.

[102] Brooks.

[103] Brooks; Watts; Aledort, et al.

[104] Michelizzi.

[105] Edwards; "Two Passings: Fred Milano and Larry Reinhardt," post to *Spectacular! Retro! Pop!*, February 8, 2012, https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/ spectropop/conversations/messages/48226.

[106] Michael Buffalo Smith, *Capricorn Rising*, 6.

[107] Michelizzi.

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[108] Michelizzi.

[109] Drozdowski.

[110] Paul, *One Way Out*, 70.

[111] Drozdowski.

[112] Paul, *One Way Out*, 67-68.

[113] For a more thorough discussion of western swing, see Michael H. Price, "Jazz Guitar and Western Swing," in *The Guitar in Jazz: An Anthology*, James Sallis, ed. (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 81-88 and Charles R. Townsend "Western Swing," in *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture: Music,* Bill C. Malone, ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 148-152.

[114] Obrecht, "Duane Allman: The Complete 1981 Dickey Betts Interview."

[115] Malone and Stricklin, 95-97.

[116] Drozdowski.

[117] Paul, *One Way Out*, 17-18.

[118] Michelizzi.

[119] "A Moment Captured in Time," 10.

[120] Paul, *One Way Out*, 19.

[121] Paul, *One Way Out*, 19-20.

[122] Palmer, "Allman Brothers Band."

[123] Jon Tiven, "Interview with Duane Allman and Berry Oakley," *New Haven Rock Press*, December 10, 1970, accessed December 18, 2015. http://www.duaneallman.info/newhavenrockpress.htm.

[124] Freeman, 39.

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[125] Spangler and Currens, "Butch Trucks," 5; Janet Gibson, "Butch Trucks," *The Gamecock*, September 29, 1978.

[126] Marty Racine, "The Allman Brothers: The Road Back was no Paved Interstate," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, June 15, 1979.

[127] Butch Trucks, "Who Influenced Butch?," *Hittin' The Web with the Allman Brothers Band Forum*, March 5, 2005, accessed June 16, 2017, http://www.allmanbrothersband.com/modules.php?op=modload&name=XForum&file=viewthread&fid=4&tid=20992&page=1&orderdate=.

[128] Spangler and Currens, "Butch Trucks," 5.

[129] Spangler and Currens, "Butch Trucks," 5.

[130] Racine.

[131] Spangler and Currens, "Butch Trucks," 5.

[132] Spangler and Currens, "Butch Trucks," 6.

[133] Paul, *One Way Out*, 20.

[134] Michelizzi.

[135] Paul, *One Way Out*, 20.

[136] Paul, *One Way Out*, 16-17.

[137] Paul, *One Way Out*, 22.

[138] Paul, *One Way Out*, 44.

[139] Paul, *One Way Out*, 23.

[140] Gilmore, 126.

[141] Gilmore, 126.

[142] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

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[143] Robert Palmer, "Allman Brothers Band."

[144] Spangler and Currens, "Butch Trucks," 8.

[145] Paul, "Allman Brothers Drummer Jaimoe Remembers Gregg Allman."

[146] Jim Dorman, "Dickey Betts Describes How It All Began," Filmed [2003], YouTube video, 2:55, Posted [May 2013], https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= pXJqr8yKWDE.

[147] Paul, *One Way Out*, 24-25.

[148] Gregg Allman, "Inner-view: Gregg Allman," Recorded [1977], YouTube video, 46:57, Posted [November 2014], https://youtu.be/DUDux025Qro.

[149] Ken Hey, *Southern Voices, American Dream*, DVD, 1976.

[150] "Special Merit Spotlight: Spotlighting New Singles Deserving Special Attention of Programmers and Dealers," *Billboard*, July 13, 1968, 70.

[151] Galadrielle Allman, *Please Be With Me*, 75.

[152] Alan Paul, "Complete 2015 Interview with Gregg Allman," Alanpaul.net (Blog), June 5, 2017, accessed June 10, 2017, http://alanpaul.net/2017/06/complete-2015-interview-with-gregg-allman/.

[153] Paul, "Lowdown and Dirty," 53.

[154] Paul, "Allman Brothers Drummer Jaimoe Remembers Gregg Allman."

[155] Halsey.

[156] Paul, *One Way Out*, 42.

[157] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 74-75.

[158] Paul, *One Way Out*, 76-79.

[159] Alan Paul, "Gregg Allman 1947–2017: Bidding Farewell to a Southern Rock Legend," Guitarworld.com, *Guitar World*, July 25, 2017, accessed July 31, 2017,

https://www.guitarworld.com/artists/gregg-allman-1947-2017-bidding-farewell-southern-rock-legend.

[160] Paul, "Allman Brothers Drummer Jaimoe Remembers Gregg Allman."

[161] Paul, "Allman Brothers Drummer Jaimoe Remembers Gregg Allman."

[162] Lynskey, et al., "Reflections: The World According to Jaimoe," 26.

[163] Jaimoe and John Lynskey, "Reflections 2: The World According to Jaimoe," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 22 (n.d.), 25.

[164] Lynskey, et al., "Reflections: The World According to Jaimoe," 27.

[165] Lynskey, et al., "Reflections: The World According to Jaimoe," 27.

[166] Paul, *One Way Out*, 28.

[167] *American Revolutions: Southern Rock*.

[168] Drozdowski.

[169] Dorman.

[170] *Song of the South.*

[171] Paul, "Allman Brothers Drummer Jaimoe Remembers Gregg Allman."

[172] Lynskey, et al., "Reflections: The World According to Jaimoe," 16.

[173] Drozdowski.

[174] Shane and Duane Allman.

[175] Ertegun, 239.

[176] Paul, *One Way Out*, 23-24.

[177] Malcolm X. Abram, "30 Years Down The Road," *Macon Telegraph*, October 21, 2001, accessed August 6, 2013, http://www.duaneallman.info/macontelegraph10212001.htm#top.

# Chapter 5

## "Strive to Play a Pure Form of Music; A Kind of Music that's Honest to Yourself": The Development of the Allman Brothers Band

In late April 1969, after about a month rehearsing in Jacksonville, the Allman Brothers Band packed up and moved to Macon, which was home base for their manager, Phil Walden. A veteran of more than a decade in the music business, Walden, twenty nine, had founded a booking and promotion company—Phil Walden Artists & Promotions—in high school. His organization booked concerts for rhythm and blues artists throughout the southeastern United States. By 1959, one of those artists, Otis Redding, emerged as a star. Walden managed him until the singer's death in December 1967.[1]

Redding's death came as his career had reached new heights. One year prior, at the behest of artists such as Paul Butterfield, Mike Bloomfield, and Jerry Garcia, promoter Bill Graham booked Redding at the Fillmore Auditorium in San Francisco.[2] On June 17, 1967, Redding performed a star-making set at the Monterey International Pop Festival. The performance had followed a successful spring run through Europe touring with other artists from the Stax record label. Redding's single "Sittin' on the Dock of the Bay," released posthumously, was his only song to reach number one on the *Billboard* Hot 100.

The singer's death had a profound effect on Walden. The two had been close personally and professionally, and Walden vowed to never again get that close to an

artist.[3] Then, in 1969, he came in contact with Duane Allman. "I was looking for a rock artist to record," he said, "then I heard the guitar playing on Wilson Pickett's 'Hey Jude' and when Atlantic's Jerry Wexler told me the musician concerned was a young white cat named Allman, I thought: 'That's the guy I want.' So I flew down to Muscle Shoals to sign him."[4] With a loan from Wexler, Walden purchased the guitarist's contract from Rick Hall. "[Walden] was a very charismatic guy who just had it," Hall remembered. "He wanted to be big in the pop rock world, and he saw Duane as the means to do that."[5] Walden's support was critical to Allman's fledgling band. "Without Phil Walden, there'd be no Allman Brothers," Allman shared. "He believed in us and helped us in every possible way."[6]

What had impressed Walden was the originality he heard in Allman's playing on the single. Wilson Pickett's version of the tune was markedly different from the Beatles' own. First, Allman's arrangement of the song was distinctive. As was typical of soul covers of popular music in this era, the tune focuses more on Pickett's solo vocals than the Beatles' ensemble performance. Pickett carries the first two-thirds of the song, with the Muscle Shoals rhythm section providing a solid groove—with horns and Allman's guitar flourishes replacing the Fab Four's vocal harmonies. More importantly, the single prominently features Allman's guitar solo. Hall mixed the vocals and guitar at nearly equal volume as Pickett and Allman engaged in a call-and-response during the song's coda. With "Hey Jude," Allman's originality as an artist finally broke through. "Rick," Atlantic's Jerry Wexler said to Hall after hearing the finished tune, "an absolute stroke of genius."[7]

Allman’s solo on "Hey Jude" secured the patronage of the recording industry and ultimately allowed him to follow through on his vision of creating a new sound of American music, one that combined his blues and rhythm and blues roots with the contemporary music of the era. Walden believed in Allman's talent as a bandleader; Hall, who sought hit singles (and did not hear them in Allman's solo efforts), did not. Walden told Hall, "This guy is going to make you $1 million and you can just go in there turn on the machine for eight hours, smoke a cigarette, drink a Pepsi, and when you get done, you'll have $1 million. This guy's going to be a superstar."[8] This is the exact tack Walden took, although it took more than two years to bear fruit.

Despite multiple years on the road as professional musicians, the band that Allman relocated to Macon was remarkably young. At twenty-five, Dickey Betts was the senior member of the group; Johanson was just shy of the same age. Butch Trucks and Duane Allman were both twenty-two-years-old, a year older than Gregg Allman and Berry Oakley.[9] Their youth belied the fact that the band members were, to a man, road-hardened veterans. "For such young cats that band was really mature," Betts recalled. "Duane and Oakley had incredible leadership qualities, but it's really amazing the guys at twenty-two, twenty-three had that much seasoning and were such good players. One reason is that we weren't a garage band. We were a nightclub band. We had brought ourselves up in the professional world by actually playing in bars, and that really gives you a lot more depth. We all had a lot of miles under our wheels when we first met, despite our ages."[10] The music they made flowed from this well. "Each man in the group has been

a musician for years, working in bar bands, country and jazz groups, the whole route," Oakley shared. "Our music just sort of evolved out of that mixture. It was a sound that was truly unique to the band.[11]

As the band settled into Macon in the apartment of Walden employee Twiggs Lyndon (Lyndon had worked for Walden in the past and would take up the mantle of road manager for the Allman Brothers Band), it began an intense regime of rehearsals, developing a repertoire that included Gregg Allman-penned originals and new arrangements of blues songs. Exploration of sound and influence was key, as was a communal camaraderie that reflected the tenor of the late 1960s. To a person, band members recollect a music-first mentality, one where each player leveraged his individual talents with the others to create a cohesive sound that appealed first to them, rather than an external audience. Johanson recalled that this emerged when he and Duane Allman first played together in Muscle Shoals—and again when Oakley joined them. Others felt likewise, including Gregg Allman, who'd given up a promising solo career to pursue this new endeavor. "The music was so important to us that there wasn't any time for chatter," he shared. "We wanted to play, we just played and played all day. The only thing we wanted to do was get our sound tighter and tighter, get it better and better. We played for each other, we played to each other, and we played off each other, which is what the Allman Brothers is all about."[12] As they devoted their efforts in this direction, the Allman Brothers Band began to create their own distinctive sound.

While it is easy to dismiss a musician's claim that he was unconcerned with the commercial aspect of his music, it was definitely the case with the Allman Brothers Band. It helped, certainly, to have Walden's financial support. It is also true that recollections postdating the band's success might be influenced by those achievements. Each also had ability to return to the road to make a living. But based on their earliest interviews and continuing through the band's forty-five-year career, more than financial and chart success was on the band’s collective mind from the very beginning.

When asked about how his group avoided the ego clashes that had already destroyed bands such as Cream and the Beatles, Duane Allman stressed this point. "These six guys have always worked for one sound, one direction. But everyone plays like he wants to play. He just keeps that goal in mind. If you know what you can do and you're satisfied in your heart that you're doing it, you ain't gonna have no problems."[13] He put it more directly to Tony Glover in 1971. "We're all together, man, we all found our place. Ain't nobody going nowhere, ain't nobody firing nobody." Oakley concurred, "We're doing what we want to do more than anything else, and if we can make a living at it too, that's just beautiful."[14]

Nearly forty years later, Trucks recalled that, "The band came together and this magic happened. We started playing this music that none of us had ever experienced before. For the first time in our lives, music became something other than a career. We were all out to be rock stars, that's what everybody wanted to do, and once we played that music, then music became something else. It was more of a religion than it was a

way to make money.[15] "We're just working our way up, trying to perfect what we think is right," Duane Allman said. "We're studying our particular method of communication and trying to iron it out to where there can be no doubt in anybody's mind as to what we're trying to do. To portray our lives and main success through music which I think is a fairly good calling. It's enough for me man, and I love it."[16] After failed attempts at success with AM radio hits, the band had determined to forge its own path, regardless of the financial consequences.

Atlantic's Wexler attributes the band's eventual success to this musical integrity. "They were concerned only with music, and not with the promulgation of a rock 'n' roll appearance, or the projection of a rock lifestyle: psychedelia, San Francisco, heavy-metal, or whatever. It was just music. They found those appurtenances laughable and absurd, all these attempts to fortify the music with some sort of visual act." Exploring the possibilities of the music was foremost. "I would discuss with Duane the so-called entertainment factor that seemed to be a requirement in rock," Wexler continued. "We both agreed that the entertainment was the music. If the music didn't entertain us, there was nothing else we were interested in." The Allman Brothers Band, Wexler concluded, didn't need "feedback, distortion, heavy equalization. . . . It was just *music*. Of course the band had dynamics. They could play quietly and still floor you. Which his antithetical to what people usually think of as rock: louder, louder, loudest-no soft. They had the soft."[17]

In addition to their southern musical roots of blues, rhythm and blues, jazz, country, and western swing, folk, among others, contemporary rock and jazz impacted

the band's sound as well. Cream, which by that time had already broken up tumultuously, was the most notable of the latter. Like the Allman Brothers Band, Cream was heavily influenced by the blues. The band also comprised three virtuosos in Clapton, bassist Jack Bruce, and drummer Ginger Baker. But most importantly, Trucks recalled, "They were the first [rock] band to really get into improvisation. They were an absolute necessity to what came later. Without them, you don't get us."[18]

What the Allman Brothers added to Cream's formula, which leaned heavily on the blues, was elements of jazz. This introduction came primarily from Johanson, who introduced his bandmates to John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Charlie Parker, Cannonball Adderley, and the like. "Once we started listening to them," Trucks recalled, "We said, 'My God, you can do THAT with music!"[19] The "that" that Trucks referred to, was jazz. "It was that jazz element that I think made the Allman Brothers something brand new, that no one had ever heard before," Trucks posited.[20] The band was amalgamating a number of musical sources, but its inclusion of jazz is what set it apart.

Trucks's conclusion is only partially right. Other bands of the era had incorporated jazz leanings in their playing, most notably the Grateful Dead. But while the Dead had some roots in rhythm and blues and blues, its members were not the instrumental virtuosos that the members of the Allman Brothers Band were (guitarist Jerry Garcia and bassist Phil Lesh were notable exceptions). In addition, the Dead's extended jams were much more freeform than those of the Allman Brothers, whose song explorations tended to stay within the construct of a melodic structure. While the individual soloists could

(and did) take the song wherever they wanted to go—and the other members of the band followed accordingly—the Allman Brothers Band's arrangements always had a distinct beginning and end. Nearly all of their songs—instrumental and otherwise—adhered to this precept.[21]

A spontaneous approach to music is a hallmark of the jazz form, as is music with a rhythmic "swing"—which is evident in many of the band's songs over the years. Jazz inspired the Allman Brothers Band to pursue improvisational music, and improvisation is where their blues roots and jazz intersected.[22]

Whether inspired by Cream, the Grateful Dead, Miles Davis, or John Coltrane, band members dedicated themselves to creating music unfettered by the constraints of the traditional music business. For the Allman Brothers Band, that meant both their choice of repertoire and, most notably, their song arrangements. The band that later became most famous for its live album of ten- to twenty-minute songs began as a band that practiced the habit. Spontaneity was essential. The music, Trucks stated, "was not preconceived at all. . . . The whole sound evolved and developed out of that spontaneous jamming."[23] From those jams and improvisations developed songs and arrangements. "Our rehearsals consisted of a lot of sitting around and playing, improvising," Betts remembered. "Gregg would have a song with chords. We'd forget about the song and just play off two or three chords, and just let things kind of happen. Berry would start a riff, and everybody would go to that and try to build on it. And if it didn't happen. We'd

go on to something else. As vague as it sounds, I think that's why it sounded so natural; that whole thing was a real natural process."[24]

The extended jams, then, became both a means for the band to satisfy itself musically, as well as a way to turn its back on the music business they had so desperately strived to become a part of. As Gregg Allman wrote, "[W]e didn't want to just play three minutes and it be over. We definitely didn't want to play nobody else's songs like we had to do in California. We were going to do our own tunes, which at first met mine, or else we're going to take old blue songs like 'Trouble No More' totally refurbish them to our tastes."[25]

Muddy Waters's 1955 recording "Trouble No More"—an adaptation of Sleepy John Estes's 1935 song "Someday Baby Blues"—was the first song the six band members played together when Gregg arrived in Jacksonville on March 26, 1969. Though their arrangement adheres relatively closely to Waters's, it is considerably faster, a full minute longer, and more heavily stresses the backbeat, probably due to the rhythm section of two drummers. While none of those elements were uncommon to covers of black music by white musicians, the Allman Brothers version of "Trouble No More" also features longer instrumental passages—guitar solos taken by both Dickey Betts and Duane Allman, the latter on slide guitar. The arrangement of this blues standard represented a new dimension for blues rock—and Allman's second major stamp on American popular music.[26]

The band soon incorporated Gregg Allman's "It's Not My Cross to Bear" into the Second Coming's instrumental arrangement of "Don't Want You No More." No documentation exists about where Oakley and Betts got the inspiration to cover the song, much less do so instrumentally. Their unique take on the song is first heard on a bootleg recording that circulates from a Jacksonville, Florida show in March 1969 with Betts playing the song's vocal lines on guitar. The new band adopted nearly the same arrangement as the Second Coming, with a few exceptions. First, the band shortened the song, from nearly nine minutes in March 1969, to less than three minutes on their debut album, recorded in August of that year. Second, Betts and Duane Allman played the vocal melody lines in harmony. Harmony was an important element of the band's sound, one Betts cites as a big reason Allman was attracted to him as a guitar player.[27]

Because harmony requires musicians to play notes in different intervals of a major or minor scale (typically a note that is a third and/or fifth from the melody note), most harmony parts are carefully worked out by songwriters and musicians.[28] Because the band thrived on improvisation and because neither Betts nor Allman had any appreciable formal musical training, this was not the Allmans' approach. The guitarists instead worked out their harmony arrangements by ear in rehearsals and jam sessions. "When Duane and I would work on harmonizing guitar parts, we didn't use any kind of technical approach," Betts said years later. "We didn't study the structure of the scales or spend time figuring out on paper what should work. We approached harmonizing guitar parts in the same way we approached vocal harmonies: we would try a few different ideas, and

go with the one that sounded the best to our ears. Usually, I'd have a certain sound in my mind that I was after, and we used a 'trial and error' method to find it."[29] Harmony guitars were one of the Allman Brothers Band's contribution to contemporary American rock.

In addition to reworking cover songs to include twin-guitar flourishes, Gregg Allman was in the midst of the most prolific writing period of his career. He arrived in Jacksonville with nearly two dozen songs, only two of which the band liked: "It's Not My Cross to Bear" and "Dreams." Inspired by the new environment, he quickly wrote two more staples of the Allman Brothers Band's repertoire: "Whipping Post" and "Black-Hearted Woman." "Writing those songs was a lot of work," he recounted later, "but it was so gratifying, because it was a true labor of love. Everybody had their mind so nicely open, and we worked so well together."[30]

The band worked tirelessly on Gregg Allman's songs, changing arrangements, tempos, and the like. As Johanson recalled, "Gregg's tunes were a bit more involved so we'd practice them four or five times to get the arrangement down, and then play them. After we played them on a couple of gigs, Duane would say, 'On this part here, let's do this or that instead.' What we were doing really scared the hell out of Gregg—he was used to playing R&B. . . . I was used to playing R&B, but the kind of stuff that was in my head, these guys were bringing it out."[31] "Gregg would just come in with completed songs and we would work them up at rehearsal," Trucks shared, "and sometimes add whole instrumental sections."[32] The band reworked the songs in rehearsal and on stage.

"A lot of the ideas for the arrangements for the songs would come together through jamming," Betts recalled. "Like in 'Whipping Post,' for instance. When Gregg brought the song to present to the band, he just strummed it on acoustic guitar and sang it. So all the parts and the arrangement and all that was just taken from just jamming together a lot. You know, like, 'Hey, let's put this part of that jam we was doing the other night in this song'– that sort of thing.'"[33] However, before the band developed the song's expanded arrangement (one that topped twenty minutes within a year), bassist Berry Oakley reworked it from a ballad into a driving blues tour de force in 11/4 time.[34] "'Whipping Post' was a ballad when Gregg brought it to us," Betts remembered. "It was a real melancholy, slow minor blues," he said. "Oakley came up with the heavy bass line starts off the track along with the 6/8 to 5/8 shifting time signature."[35]

Oakley's influence on the band's development cannot be overstated. His talents and approach were particularly well-suited for the group. As its bassist, he was the glue that held the rhythm section together. But the bass is also a melodic instrument, and Oakley was one in a long line of rock bassists who were taking the instrument in new directions.

In addition to helping with song arrangements, Oakley's approach to the bass provided an ideal counterpoint and a solid foundation for the guitars of Betts and Allman. He was the perfect bass player for Duane Allman's guitar playing. "The first thing I noticed was that my brother and Berry Oakley were locked," Gregg Allman observed. "Berry was the bass player my brother had always been looking for. . . . They were so tight—

spiritually, musically, brotherly—they really had a thing going. . . . Oakley was a very instinctive bass player, because he knew when to just sink into the repetition of a song, so the bottom was there for the rest of the band."[36]

Oakley's experience as a lead guitar player carried over into his bass playing. His "lead" bass was a major element of the band's sound. It provided a melodic counterpoint to the two guitarists' lead forays, while staying grounded rhythmically with the organ and two drummers. Not only that, but the bassist's melodies often laid a foundation for the band's improvisational explorations. As Betts recalled, "There were times when Berry would be playing a line or phrase, and Duane would catch it, then jump on it and start playing harmony. Then maybe I'd lock into the melodic line that Duane was playing, and we would all three be off. That kind of thing was absolutely unheard of from a rock bassist. I mean, Berry would take over and give us the melody."[37] "As much as Duane," Trucks said, "Berry was responsible for what this band had become."[38] "Oakley was the first cat who allowed me to relax and enjoy his playing," Johanson shared. "Berry essentially played lead bass, but it had such a beautiful melodic quality to it that I just loved. He was powerful man," he remembered. "Berry was an experimentalist, many times he would be playing lead right along with Duane and Dickey."[39]

To sharpen its sound, the band rehearsed incessantly. "There were lots of instrumentals and jams, and in the vocal songs that was a lot of jamming between the verses," Gregg Allman recalled. "It just kind of happened that way because we liked playing together so much, and someone would always come up with a new idea and keep

a song alive. Some songs were regular length, but some were real, real long."[40] While somewhat influenced by the Grateful Dead—the acknowledged progenitors of the jamming form in rock music—very few of the Allmans' musical excursions were of that unbridled, freeform style. The difference can be traced to influence. The Allman Brothers' music reflected its southern bearing. "The Dead's philosophy was always very similar to ours," Dickey Betts said. "We sound very different because we're from different roots. They're from a folk music, jug band, and country thing. We're from an urban blues/jazz bag. We don't wait for it to happen; we make it happen."[41] The Allman Brothers Band did so with more tightly controlled arrangements that leaned heavily on the blues. "We owe a lot to the blues man," Duane Allman shared, "A lot of background and stuff. But we got a lot of our own stuff in there too."[42] Improvisation within the song structure or form was key. "Structurally," Allman continued, "you don't even have to stay within the framework to convey the blues idea or feeling. You really can't explain it, it's not something you can hear. You just have to feel it deep down inside. And let it all come out naturally."[43]

The band practiced not only to tighten its sound, but also because they truly loved playing together. Like Duane Allman, they all finally felt they had met their musical brethren. "The kind of stuff that was in all our heads," Johanson remembered, "we were bringing it out of each other's heads."[44] Betts called it musical telepathy. "We were into individual expression. We were also lucky the time was right for free thinkers. It was a free period."[45]

In addition to learning "Trouble No More" and Gregg Allman's newly penned tunes, the band worked up versions of the Second Coming's covers of the Willie Dixon-penned, Muddy Waters-recorded "Hoochie Coochie Man" and the blues standard "Sweet Home Chicago," which Oakley sang. Gregg Allman recalled the band playing standards from the era: Cream's "Crossroads" (which the Allman Joys had covered in 1966) and B.B. King's "Rock Me Baby" (which Jimi Hendrix famously opened his set with at the 1967 Monterey Pop Festival). The band also worked up a cover of Ray Charles's version of "I'm Gonna Move to the Outskirts of Town" and Bobby "Blue" Bland's "Stormy Monday," both at more than double the length of the original.[46]

There is no clear mention of where "Mountain Jam," the band's greatest jam vehicle and only truly 100 percent improvisational piece, originated. The Allman Brothers song is based on a relatively simple melody from "There is a Mountain," a 1967 single by British folk artist Donovan Leitch that reached number eleven on the *Billboard* chart. The Grateful Dead had incorporated elements of the melody in their song "Alligator," played live beginning in 1967 and recorded on their second album, *Anthem of the Sun*, released the next year.[47] Johanson found jazz in the composition's development. "What [multi-instrumentalist] Ornette Coleman was doing in 1959 with [drummer] Ed Blackwell was basically what we were doing," he noted. "A good example is, Twiggs came up with this thing, a Donovan song, 'There is a Mountain.' Twiggs and Duane played it, then Dickey and Duane played it." He then described how the band combined the melody of the popular song with a common southern folk song. "[Duane] took the melody to 'Mama's

Little Baby Loves Shortnin' Bread,' and Dickey's melody answered and made statements to Duane's melody."[48] Gregg Allman says it was his brother Duane who brought the idea to the band. "'Mountain Jam' was my brother's thing," he wrote. "We just started playing it one day. It's not that he had a thing for Donovan time—it's just a happy little melody and it makes for a really nice jam."[49] "It was literally a jam that turned into a song," remembered Betts.[50] A twelve-minute snippet of the song is featured on a show recorded at Macon's Central City Park on May 4, 1969—a little more than a month after their arrival from Jacksonville.[51] Within less than a year, the band would stretch out the song beyond thirty minutes, including multiple movements and solos from all six members.

The Central City Park show is the only surviving live recording of the Allman Brothers Band in 1969. The setlist is short, including Gregg Allman originals "Black Hearted Woman," "Dreams," and "It's Not My Cross to Bear." In addition to "Mountain Jam," the covers include "Don't Want You No More," spliced on to "It's Not My Cross to Bear;" the blues standard "I'm Gonna Move to the Outskirts of Town;" and John Lee Hooker’s "Dimples," a twin-guitar riff that the Allmans had been playing since the days of Hour Glass.

While virtually no audio recordings exist from the band's first nine months together, sessions for its first album provide some documentation of their repertoire. By August 1969, when the band went into the studio to record its first album, it had added at least three more songs to setlists: Gregg Allman's "Every Hungry Woman" and

"Whipping Post," and "Statesboro Blues," the Taj Mahal cover of the Blind Willie McTell song that inspired Duane Allman to pick up slide guitar.[52]

"Dreams" is an interesting part of the Allman Brothers Band canon. Of their early compositions, it is the one that is most clearly jazz-influenced. Johanson dubbed it "'My Favorite Things' with lyrics," referencing the Rogers and Hammerstein tune from *The Sound of Music* that saxophonist John Coltrane had released in 1961. The waltz-time "Dreams" also closely mirrors "All Blues" from Miles Davis's groundbreaking album *Kind of Blue*, from which Johanson derived his drum part.[53] The tune reflects this in several ways, particularly in its gentle 6/8 rhythm and a long, improvised solo over a two-chord vamp.[54] "Dreams," Duane Allman opined, "is the effect that good jazz has had on us."[55]

"We all really got in the Coltrane together," Gregg Allman noted, "which became a big influence, and that was because of Jaimoe."[56] "When we were first putting a group together," Duane Allman shared, "We were listening to Jefferson Airplane and the Dead's records. We were all kicking around down South, buying records out of the Kmart and taking them home and digging them. And [Johanson] comes along and says, 'Well that's cool—good, but check out what I got over here, this collection.' They just turned us all around. We heard with them cats were doing. Knocked us out."[57] Davis's *Kind of Blue* and Coltrane's *My Favorite Things* were both band favorites.[58] "It's like the blues background was right in there," Betts shared, "and then like Roland Kirk, Pharoah Saunders, and John Coltrane kind of gave my music that far-out effect, and then adding that blues thing makes it a little more soulful than your jazz music."[59] Jazz became the bar for the band's

musical aspirations. "Those [jazz] cats catch the flow, so it's on a level man that—like if you can ever achieve, you'll never be satisfied with nothing else," Duane Allman said. "If you can get the music flowing out there, where you don't have to listen to it, it just takes you away. That's the way we try to do it. It's what we want to get out of it."[60]

The band members' other listening habits also influenced them, as reflected in the band's repertoire, songwriting, and performances. Each member continued to mine his own influences and introduce them to each other. "We all dug this different stuff," Gregg Allman remembered, "but then we all started listening to the other guys' music. What came out was a mixture of all of it."[61] "Everybody had their records that they listened to and we just shared them," Johanson recalled. "I had no idea who the Grateful Dead or the Rolling Stones were, though I had heard some of their songs on the jukebox. Butch turned me on to all that stuff. Dickey was into country and Chuck Berry. Duane, Gregory, Berry, and myself were the rhythm and bluesers."[62] B.B. King, Allman's guitar playing inspiration for many years, remained in rotation, as did electric bluesmen Albert King, Junior Wells, and Elmore James; acoustic bluesmen Lightnin' Hopkins, Blind Willie McTell, and Robert Johnson; rhythm and blues singers such as Ray Charles; and contemporaries like Eric Clapton.[63]

Soon after relocating to Macon, the band began life as a touring ensemble. Time on the road touring would consume the better part of the band's next two-plus years. It was a life the band members were already well familiar with throughout their previous

bar-band careers. Touring was how the band built a reputation, secured a loyal following, and ultimately achieved renown.

The band's first show in Macon was at the College Discotheque. A flyer for the show features hand-drawn graphics of a vine with flowers surrounding typewritten text (presumably drafted by Phil Walden or someone from his company), marketing the Allman Brothers as part of the Age of Aquarius and highlighting the band’s unique approach:

> A newly formed underground blues-rock group from Florida is now working out of Macon, Georgia. The six-member male group consists of two guitars, two drummers, a bassist, and an organist.
>
> DUANE ALLMAN, lead guitarist and vocalist, was formerly a member of a San Francisco rock group THE HOUR GLASS. He was nicknamed "SKYMAN" by WILSON PICKETT for his unusual style as he played guitar on "Hey Jude." When Atlantic Records heard his performance on "Hey Jude" he was immediately requested to do recording sessions for some of their other artists. Included in his credits are "The Weight" by ARETHA FRANKLIN, "Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da" by ARTHUR CONLEY, and "The Road of Love" by CLARENCE CARTER. DUANE'S brother GREGG is the featured vocalist and organist with the group. GREGG was also formerly with THE HOUR GLASS. BUTCH TRUCKS and JAI JOHNNY JOHNSON [*sic*] are the drummers. JAI JOHNNY formerly performed with OTIS REDDING, PERCY SLEDGE, and JOE TEX.
>
> DICKY [*sic*] BETTS, the second lead guitarist and BERRY OAKLEY, the bassist were members of THE SECOND COMING who presently have a record on the charts entitled "I Feel Free."
>
> These six members comprise the most inventive experimental blues rock group in existence today. Prepare your mind to be musically educated as you experience THE ALLMAN BROTHERS.

At the top of the flyer, hand-written in bubble letters, was the band's name: The Allman Bros. At the bottom, also hand-written in bubble letters was the phrase "Experimental

Blues Rock Music Feast." Admission for the concert, advertised to run from 8:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. on May 2 and 3, was $1.50.[64]

Several things stand out about the flyer. First was the prominence of Duane Allman in the promotion of the show and in the band. Typically, bands were known by their front men, and they were rarely guitarists who did not sing. Allman's reputation on "Hey Jude" and other FAME tracks preceded him. (A local radio promotion highlighted his slide guitar: "Skyman will be playing slide guitar using the neck from a wine bottle!"[65]) Second was how the flyer marketed Hour Glass, a failed band out of Los Angeles, as part of the San Francisco sound. Clearly, the band and its management saw an affinity between the Allman Brothers Band and the improvisational music emanating from Northern California. It's also evident that Walden believed the Second Coming's popularity might heighten interest in Betts and Oakley's affiliation with the band. Finally, the language used to promote the show reflects the band's roots and originality of its approach: blues, rock, experimental. The same radio promotion added a special invitation to hip youth: "Heads welcome."[66]

Reaction to the show was muted at best. As Trucks recalled, "This Top 40 disc jockey said, 'I don't know if that was good, but it sure was loud.'" Twiggs Lyndon remembered that the show drew thirty-seven paying attendees.[67] Following the two shows, the band played a free concert at Macon Central City Park. A week later, May 11, 1969, the band ventured ninety miles north to Atlanta to do the same at Piedmont Park.

It has never been entirely clear why the band chose Piedmont Park, but the grounds had been a regular gathering spot for Atlanta's hippie community.[68] John Meeks, drummer for the Second Coming, had lived near there before decamping to Florida.[69] Oakley had also lived in Atlanta prior to moving to the Sunshine State and was surely aware of the gatherings. Whatever the reason, the band made a lasting impression on those who were there—both the band and, particularly, the audience.

In what might be described as a reaction to the "Experimental Blues Rock Feast" he had just heard, E. Bommba Jr. wrote in a letter to the editor of Atlanta's independent newspaper *The Great Speckled Bird*: "For the rest of us there is, was, and shall remain Music. . . . Sunday it was the ALLMAN BROTHERS, an aggregation soon to be too important to play Piedmont Park . . . their music is compulsion and became at our reception propulsion. . . . music is the greatest radicalizing force in our culture. It cannot be used as a tool . . . for other methods . . . as happened in our little park, it overwhelms verbal communication."[70] Atlanta-area promoter Alex Cooley, who staged the Atlanta Pop Festival in 1969 and again in 1970, was also in attendance. "One of the things about the Allman Brothers that always impressed me, and this was from the first time I saw them," he recalled, "[is] the feeling of one instrument. It's a group of people so in tune with each other that when they are playing together so perfectly, that they all know what each of the others are doing. . . . It's something that's really rare, even amongst the best of musicians. . . . I remember being on stage and seeing it and marveling at it."[71]

The performance made a tremendous impression on others as well. An unnamed correspondent wrote *The Great Speckled Bird* the following week:

> Dear *Bird*, In case you haven't been hipped to the fact, I would like to report that a fantastic new rock group played for the Sunday afternoon gathering at Piedmont Park. They were called The Allman Brothers and are out of Macon, Georgia. Well, they set up about 2 o'clock and proceeded to blow everybody's mind within eye and ear range for the next several hours. The general opinion going through the crowd was that these guys could stand up against the best-Hendrix, Cream, etc. I am not alone in the opinion that they may be one of the great pop music discoveries of 1969.[72]

The paper's answer was to point the letter writer and its readers to an article by Miller Francis Jr. that it had published the previous week. Francis's review highlighted how truly original the band had become in less than two months together. It also underscored the clear African American influences on the band and its repertoire. The cover of the May 19, 1969, edition of *The Great Speckled Bird* (misdated as April 19, 1969) featured a photograph of Duane Allman at Piedmont Park. The caption read, "There are times when it's easy to think that the rock and roll musician is the most militant, subversive, effective, whole, together, powerful force for radical change on this planet; other times you know it's true."[73]

"The Allman Brothers," Francis wrote, "play a form of what some might want to call 'hard blues' but that term merely relates their music to what we already recognize and accept as valid; it says nothing of their real achievements." Francis highlighted the band's originality. "What informs their creation is not black music but the experience of young white tribesmen in experiencing black music. After all, Ray Charles, and what he

means, is a crucial part of the lives of this new generation of non-blacks."[74] The band recognized this freshness as well. "What made that band so good," drummer Jai Johanny Johanson remembered, "is we did less copying people. We were more inspired by people. A lot of our inspiration was within ourselves and in each other. The first lineup of the band was inspired by other artists, but we brought our own thing to it."[75] The six musicians seamlessly incorporated their influences into a sound unique to them. Francis found it authentic. "Thus," he continued, "black music can be approached creatively by our musicians if the jumping-off place is our experience of that music rather than the music itself." The Allman Brothers Band, he wrote, "Are a fantastically together group of young rock and roll musicians whose music draws as heavily from the blues as the experience of young white tribesmen can without exploiting its source."[76] Bruce Hampton, lead singer of the Atlanta-based Hampton Grease Band, was in attendance and remembered likewise. "To me they were as good then as they ever got. They were on fire. The intent of the essence were there. It was just pure as hell. You could feel the purity in the fire in the intensity: nobody was playing checkers or talking business. This was music for music's sake. The chemistry of putting all those guys together took them to a different level."[77]

Working from Macon, the Allman Brothers Band began a relentless touring schedule that kept them on the road for an average of 250 days a year for the next two and a half years. Their first stop outside the South was at a May 1969 record industry

showcase in Boston hosted by promoter Don Law at The Boston Tea Party. In a bizarre pairing, the Allman Brothers Band opened for the Velvet Underground.

As manager Phil Walden remembered, "I got all the major agents to come up and they all had a little critique afterwards. Most of the agents, I think, didn't really understand what the band was trying to do musically. Most of those guys, at the time, were into bands like the Who or other English groups."[78] Jon Landau was also there. "The band was not yet all that together and after their performance everyone present had all manner of suggestions to make to both their manager and to them personally, yours truly included," he reported. "One individual suggested that 'the good looking boy' (Gregg) get out from behind the organ and do the lead singer thing. I agreed with that and also suggested that they needed more of a stage act, in general. Someone else chimed in with the thought that they should turn down the volume."[79] "The comments I heard that night," Walden recalled, "were things like, 'You know, you ought to dress up those guys a bit.' And I remember Duane made one of his classic remarks, which was, 'You know, if you wanna go to a fashion show I suggest you go to the garment district. But if you want to hear rock 'n' roll music, you shouldn't be too concerned about what we're wearing.'"[80]

The showcase failed to generate any interest in the band except from Don Law. The promoter, who ran the Boston Tea Party and hosted the showcase, heard tremendous promise in the band's new sound. "I feel privileged to have them there in that room. It was exciting and exhilarating. They were something magical happening."[81]

"We were elated with our sound," Betts remembered, "but every record company in the country turned us down. 'All the songs sound the same.' 'They don't have a front man' . . . all this corny junk. So we just started to travel around the country playing for free. In Boston, I remember we moved into a condemned building and ran an extension cord from the next building. We played in the park there—we'd get some hippies together and build a stage."[82]

At Oakley's urging, free shows became a hallmark of the Allman Brothers Band's first year. As Betts recalled, "Berry wanted to bring all the people together and show that there were a lot of us that thought a certain way. His sense of the big picture was very sharp." "We created a movement in that town," he continued. "Berry was really aware of what was going on at the time—bringing people together to where we could say, 'Gee, there's a lot of us!' . . . Berry had a sense that it was more than music."[83]

By bringing the concept of free concerts to the band, Oakley also asserted a leadership role, one that is often overlooked when talking about the band's history and its founder, Duane Allman. "Berry was as much the leader of this band as Duane was," Johanson said. "In fact, the brains behind the Allman Brothers Band was Berry. He knew enough about how to do business, and he knew how to deal with people."[84] Oakley, Betts said, "was also a huge personality. He was the social dynamics guy. He wanted our band to relate to the people honestly. He was always making sure that the merchandise was worth what they were charging, and he was always going in and arguing about not letting the ticket prices get too high, so that our people can still afford to come see us."[85]

Free shows reflected both the hippie aesthetic Oakley brought to the band (they had been a hallmark of San Francisco's early rock scene) and a way to expose listeners to the band's music. Most free shows coincided the band's paying engagements. "That's the secret of their success: working. We worked the hell out of the states. This band played in almost every town that had a hall," recalled Bunky Odom, of Capricorn Records. "They'd play anywhere, and if they were passing through a town on a Sunday, their day off, they'd play in a park if they could get electricity."[86]

Though it is impossible to know how many free shows the Allman Brothers Band played in its early years, several specific instances stand out. The band continued to frequent Piedmont Park through at least September 1970, playing multiple shows that *The Great Speckled Bird* documented.[87] Photographs and a partial recording exist of a free January 1970 show on the campus of the University of California-Riverside. A list of important dates in the school's history records the date as January 24, 1970. "The Allman Brothers Band spend the afternoon playing soulful rock on the grassy knoll near the bell tower. Crowd size varies all day."[88] Bruce Harvie shared a reminiscence of the show, which he said was attended by (at most) three dozen people. "I'm DJ'ing at our local college radio station (KUCR—Riverside, California), and above the console is a freshly minted copy of the ABB's first LP with a note saying, 'These guys are playing for free at the plaza at noon—please plug it!,'" he remembered. "[T]he band sets up, and proceeds to blow for 3 hours or so."[89] The *New Orleans Express* documented a free concert the

band played on August 23, 1970, at a regular Sunday gathering of youth in the city's Audubon Park.[90]

Initial paid engagements were held at places where Hour Glass or the Second Coming had previously played. As Twiggs Lyndon recalled, "Berry and I would sit down and call these people up, ask to work for 50, 80 percent of the door, no guarantees. We worked a job in Cocoa Beach, Florida; we had a 60/40 deal, and our 60 percent of the door was $52.50."[91] Atlanta-based promoter Alex Cooley remembered that he booked the band "in real small places like Statesboro College and gymnasiums in Valdosta. . . . They used to play Florida, just any wide spot in the road. . . . tent shows in Memphis, Chattanooga, Jacksonville. I remember playing Daytona Beach at an armory. It was depressing."[92]

Despite the challenges, the band remembers these early days fondly, mainly because they associate these memories with the quality of the music. "We were having too much fun for it to be hard," Trucks shared. "We did a lot of playing; we worked our butts off. . . . We didn't want to be nowhere else. It was the only place to be. It didn't matter whether or not people liked it; we liked it. That's all we wanted to do."

"Constant touring fueled the band's growing popularity," Willie Perkins, the band's road manager from May 1970 through 1976, wrote. "When we weren't playing for pay, the band would jam for free. If there weren't any gigs, Duane would fly to New York or Miami for outside sessions." The band toured nonstop through fall 1970 playing mostly at smaller clubs and colleges. "Occasionally there were opening or 'special guest

star' slots on major shows," Perkins recalled, "We also played what would turn out to be the last free concert at Piedmont Park in Atlanta. The park could no longer handle the crowds, and we were unable to get the newly required permits without a hassle."[93] As Odom noted, "All the traveling proved indispensable in gradually building a following. It all comes back to going out there, having the will to do it, and going forward. Playing for the American public. This was a real, true people's band."[94] The term "The People's Band" became somewhat of a mantra for Walden in 1971.

The band believed it had nothing to lose in following this path. "The truth is," Betts shared in 1991, "not one of us in the band really thought we would be that ultra-successful, because we were not commercial at all. We were purposely trying not to be commercial; we were just saying, 'We're gonna play music, and we're gonna play for our people here, that we can look in the face and see, and we're not gonna play for record executives and people that sell things."[95] Live performances ultimately proved to be a winning strategy.

Exact documentation of the group's early touring schedule is somewhat spotty. In the late 1990s, Kirk West, long the band's unofficial archivist, created a list that has circulated as "ABB Song Lists 1969-1999." While the concert list from May 1969 through about 1970 is incomplete, it does report many shows from 1969 held on the band's home turf of Florida and Georgia, with scattered shows in South Carolina and Alabama.[96]

One such show was an appearance at a battle of the bands organized by Buster Lipham, a Gainesville music store owner who developed a rapport with the Allmans,

Betts, and Oakley when they were in Florida-based bands. Unsigned when they agreed to appear in the contest, the Allman Brothers Band had a record contract in hand by Labor Day weekend 1969, when Lipham staged the final show. They were therefore disqualified from the competition. According to Marty Jourard, historian of the Gainesville-area music scene, "They played the contest most likely as a favor to Buster, [who] had advanced the band $13,000 worth of instruments, guitar amplifiers, and accessories. Secured by nothing more than a handshake, the loan was repaid through weekly checks written to Lipham Music by various band members a couple hundred dollars at a time."[97]

As a veteran of a robust Gainesville music scene that had birthed such luminaries as Rock and Roll Hall of Fame members Stephen Stills, Tom Petty, Bernie Leadon, and Don Felder, Jourard recalls his amazement at the band Duane Allman had assembled. "When the Allman Brothers took the stage as the last act to perform," he wrote, "it was immediately apparent this was not just another rock band. (I was present and will attest that the performance embodied a level of musicianship far above that of any other group.) The overall effect of the six-member band was that of a single musical entity performing songs that combine two-guitar interplay with passages of a free-flowing jazz-like improvisation over a rhythm section of organ, two drummers, and a bassist."[98] The band's performance that day "set a standard for local musical excellence." Jourard heard what Don Law and Miller Francis Jr. had already noticed. "What the Allman Brothers Band brought to the ears of Gainesville musicians was not necessarily their specific approach to

playing, which was a jazz-like style of rock and blues guitar improvisation at virtuoso level; it was more about the power, precision, and unity of their overall sound."[99]

The Allman Brothers Band gradually began to play more shows outside of the South. Undeterred by the group's inauspicious first foray at the music industry showcase he hosted in May 1969, Don Law continued to book the band at the Boston Tea Party, including shows in June, October, and December of that year. In August, the band played its first shows in New York City at a midtown venue called Ugano's. They returned to the club that December as well. Later that same month, the band played two shows at Ludlow Garage in Cincinnati, Ohio. The venue, advertised as "Cincinnati's new total environment center," included space for community workshops, a snack bar (that didn't serve alcohol), and an upper level for music and dancing.[100] According to the liner notes of an officially released Allman Brothers Band concert recorded there in April 1970, Ludlow Garage was managed by "a communal group devoted to the new 'underground' music which had blossomed during 1967's summer of love." Its grand opening featured Grand Funk Railroad. The venue "soon attracted virtually every major rock/eclectic/underground act en route through the Midwest. Visiting luminaries included Santana, Spirit, Dr. John, B.B. King, Neil Young, Ry Cooder, Captain Beefheart, and the Incredible String Band. But amidst all of this major talent, perhaps the best rapport and working relationship was that between the garage and the Allman Brothers."[101]

Betts called Ludlow "one of our favorite roadhouse gigs back then. It was a real dungeon but a great place to play. Just a great crowd, and the manager of the place, was always a great guy. We just always had a good gig there."[102] The show, Betts recalled, was recorded "way before we started getting anywhere. We were still underground at that point. We had a private, almost cult-like following."[103]

It was a following they earned through relentless touring as well as establishing, believing in, and sticking to a singular vision. As Duane Allman told an interviewer in 1970:

> Before this group, no one was laying it down as hard as we could do it. When we heard it together for the first time, that's when we knew it. As the music got freer, we were able to get into it more. It grew rather than being built. It just kinda came out. We decided when we started that every set we ever played was going to be the best set we ever did, and when you go on stage with that in mind, you can do some incredible things. You can get everything out when you play anything you want. It's the greatest communication in the world. Better than talking, writing, anything. It's all there . . . it's so close. The group's like a one-piece unit with six parts.[104]

In August 1969, with the Capricorn studio still under construction, the band headed north to the Atlantic Records studio in New York City to record its debut album. Released as *The Allman Brothers Band* in November 1969, the record included seven songs. Only two, "Don't Want You No More" and "Trouble No More," were covers. Neither, however, was a close approximation of the original. The other five songs were Gregg Allman originals. Two he had written before joining the band: "It's Not My Cross To Bear" and "Dreams." He penned the other three within the band's first weeks together: "Black Hearted Woman," "Every Hungry Woman," and "Whipping Post."

Recorded from August 3-12, 1969, the sessions proved to be a tense experience for the band, as it was away from its natural element, the stage.[105] As Duane Allman said after the release of the band's second album, "We play live, and making records, you can't just do it over and over and over if somebody makes a mistake. Plus, the pressure of the machines and stuff in the studio makes you kind of nervous."[106] This experience was particularly true for guitarist Dickey Betts. Soon after the band set up in the studio, Gregg Allman wrote, "Dickey set his guitar down and said 'Man, there ain't no windows in this place—it's like a padded cell.'" Betts, Gregg wrote, "packed up his guitar, didn't say a thing, and walked out."[107] The guitarist carried a discomfort and disdain for studio recording for years thereafter. The environment, he said, "Seemed like a prostitution of music. You been out playing in bars, then you go into concerts, and it's always the raw communication between people. But here you are in this tin can with a bunch of machines all round you, and you're expected to produce." He concluded, "It takes a long time to get used to it, you know?"[108]

Reflecting the band's primary means of working, the debut album "was basically a live album done in the studio," Duane Allman noted. "There were very little overdubs on it," he continued. "But all the solos and that sort of thing was done right when the track was being played."[109] In November 1969, Atlantic released *The Allman Brothers Band*. Butch Trucks recalled, "Phil Walden had a thermometer on the back of his door. He just thought that this music was so good that everybody would immediately figure that out and it was just going to go through the roof." Walden picked up the story. "To fill up the

bottom would be like 100,000 [copies], then it went 200, 300, 400, 500,000. The red part ended up at 32,000 so it was not a whole lot of red in the thermometer. It was recommended by Atlantic after the first album that we break the band up because nothing was ever going to emerge from the South."[110] Gregg Allman was not surprised at the poor sales. "We didn't spend enough time on it, we didn't refine it enough, and we were better than that," he said. The record came out at the end of 1969 and, he said, "just barely grazed the charts—No. 188 with an anchor."[111]

Despite the setback, the band continued its relentless touring schedule. "At the time," Don Law recounted, "the most valuable piece of promotion available was word of mouth. That was true of everyone, but especially for a band as strong as the Allman Brothers. It was obvious to anyone who saw them that they were fantastic."[112] One person who gained an affinity for the band in this period was promoter Bill Graham, who had been involved in the early days of music promotion in San Francisco. It was Graham who opened one of rock's earliest music venues, the Fillmore Auditorium, in December 1965. In March 1968, Graham unveiled the Fillmore East in an old Vaudeville-era theatre in Manhattan's Lower East Side. In 1967 and 1968, Hour Glass had played seven shows opening for other bands at Graham's San Francisco club. Their appearance as the Allman Brothers Band at Fillmore East on December 29, 1969, permanently altered the band's trajectory.

The band made a tepid first impression on the venue's staff. "We didn't know anything about the Allman Brothers," Alan Arkush, one of Graham's employees, recalled.

"No one had ever heard of them. The album wasn't out yet. But the album cover was up in the lobby of Fillmore East. It had a picture of these guys standing naked in a stream, and we thought, 'What a bunch of redneck yo-yos,' our cynical New York attitude." The band arrived late for their sound check, a cardinal sin in the fast-paced, well-oiled machinery of Graham's operation. "We didn't realize they were driving up from Georgia," Arkush continued. "This van pulled up, and they piled out of it with all their amps. Must've been the first time in New York. These rednecks with their crummy, beat-up Marshall amps. We were going, 'These guys are going to be something else. Hope they don't get naked.'" The staff's reaction changed quickly from jeers to cheers as the band began its sound check. "People came out of their offices. Everyone stopped working and just start of stood there and went, '*Oh*. These guys are for real.'" The band made an even bigger impression once they performed in front of an audience. "They played four, forty-five minutes sets and that weekend we couldn't get enough of them. We thought they were fabulous," Arkush said. "The crew all voted to have the Allmans back."[113]

The audience was decidedly less interested in the band than the Fillmore East staff. Following an ill-fitting opening for the Velvet Underground seven months earlier in Boston, the Allman Brothers Band opened for Blood, Sweat, and Tears in their first Fillmore East appearance. "Their music was very different from ours," Gregg Allman recalled, "and some of the people there weren't ready for blues like we played, so it was all together brand-new to their ears, but Bill [Graham] loved us."[114]

The Fillmore East's manager apologized to the band's road manager, Twiggs Lyndon, for the odd pairing. "After the show, Kip Cohen apologized to me, and while we were making small talk, [he] asked who did the band like," Lyndon recalled. "Who were their influences, who would they themselves buy a ticket to see? I named off some people, 'B.B. King, the Grateful Dead, Roland Kirk in that order.'"[115]

Lyndon thought little of the conversation and the band headed to Philadelphia for several shows at the Electric Factory on January 9 and 10, 1970. While there, the band learned they were booked to play the Fillmore West January 15 through 18, on a bill that included Buddy Guy and B.B. King. Following a show, Lyndon recounted, "I went to the office to get paid, and Bill Graham was there to see me. He said, 'I love your band; how did they enjoy playing here?' I said 'They never thought they'd be able to play with B.B. King; that was heaven for them.' He says to me, 'He was y'all's first choice, wasn't he? I felt so bad, having put you on that bill in New York, I wanted to make it up to you. . . . Now you've got two weeks to get back to the Fillmore East because I've got you booked in there with the Dead.'"[116] Graham understood the Allman Brothers Band in ways others didn't. The music wasn't inaccessible so much as it needed presentation in tandem with similar sounds. This insight created a symbiotic relationship with the band that lasted through Graham's sudden death in 1991.

The band treasured its relationship with the notoriously cantankerous promoter. Gregg Allman wrote glowingly about Graham and what he meant to the band's career. "Sometimes it ain't what somebody does for you," he reflected. "It's just the fact that

they remember you." He acknowledged the band's debt to Graham. "Here we were, out on the road, working our asses off, and the competition looked so tough. . . . [H]ere we were, with one record that had just come out, and it was going nowhere. . . . What Bill Graham really gave us—and so many other bands—were places to play where you didn't need to know Top 40 hits or Beatles songs. You could play your own tunes and that's what we needed."[117] Allman and his band had already found originality in their music. In Graham, they had also had found a major promoter who appreciated it.

Though the Grateful Dead and the Allman Brothers Band had crossed paths briefly in July 1969, when the former played a show at Piedmont Park in Atlanta, the Dead—at that point a major band in the American rock music scene—was relatively unfamiliar with its southern counterparts. In liner notes for a release of his soundboard recordings of portions of the Allman Brothers Band's sets that weekend, the Dead's soundman Owsley Stanley wrote his impression of the band:

> In the summer of 1969 we played at a "pop" festival in a park in Atlanta, Georgia. We had been hearing about a local band from Macon called the Allman Brothers, and someone brought members of the band over to meet us. As I recall they didn't play at that time, so we didn't hear their music until their first record came out that fall.
>
> So when we were booked into the Fillmore East on a triple bill with the Allman Brothers (and a band called Love), I was very pleased, and looked forward to the shows with anticipation, as I had heard their record and liked the band. On seeing their setup, I was surprised to note that they, like the Grateful Dead had two trap sets. You can't tell what sort of a concert set-up a band has from a record, since the art of overdubbing produces all sorts of sound combinations. There is a lot of percussion in the Allman's music, like the Dead, and so the two bands were really close in many ways.[118]

Stanley's recording, an amalgam of the six sets the Allman Brothers Band played that weekend, reflects additions to the band's setlist since the recording of their first album. In addition to "Trouble No More," "I'm Gonna Move to the Outskirts of Town," and "Mountain Jam;" the band played Gregg Allman's "Whipping Post" from their first album (at 8:12, nearly three minutes longer than the original); reintroduced to the setlist its revved up version of "Hoochie Coochie Man" with Oakley on vocals; and performed their cover of "Statesboro Blues." But what truly sets the shows apart at this juncture is Betts's instrumental "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed." The tune, at that point about nine minutes in length, began the set. It is a truly original work, one that demonstrates Betts's tremendous talent as a musician and composer, particularly because it represents his first songwriting effort for the band.

While Betts introduced "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed" in a mostly fully formed state, his bandmates surely knew the guitarist had this ability within him before he brought the song to the band. "Dickey had a lot of ideas," Johanson recalled. "[He] was a little hesitant to share them—he wasn't secure enough about what he was doing, which I think worked to his advantage, because he'd have something almost perfect before he'd bring it in."[119]

"In Memory of Elizabeth Reed" reflects the influence of Miles Davis and John Coltrane on the guitarist and the band. The song's arrangement on the *Fillmore East Feb. 70* recording is similar to the studio version the band recorded later that year and released on *Idlewild South* and, more famously, on 1971's *At Fillmore East* live recording.

It begins as Betts and Allman play in harmony on the instrumental's as the band lays down a solid foundation behind them. The song has several movements and tempo changes, and features solos by Betts, Gregg Allman on organ, Duane Allman, and a brief passage where the drummers play alone. Throughout it all, Oakley plays lead bass, complementing the soloist while keeping a solid rhythmic foundation. As Allman Brothers Band biographer Scott Freeman noted, "'In Memory of Elizabeth Reed' is stunning in its originality and imagination, a sophisticated blend of intricate melodies and furious jamming."[120]

Betts has never publicly shared his process for creating the song, though he noted the influence of jazz bandleader Benny Goodman. The tune's distinctly Latin feel, he shared, resulted from its inspiration: a woman of Italian descent. She was also singer Boz Scaggs's girlfriend, with whom Betts was having an affair. To keep the affair secret, he named the instrumental after a grave in Macon's Rose Hill cemetery, where in its early days the band would often congregate to draw inspiration.[121] Though instrumentals were not new to the Allman Brothers Band's repertoire—it had been playing "Don't Want You No More" and "Mountain Jam" since its earliest days—"In Memory of Elizabeth Reed" was its first original, fully formed instrumental. It remained in the band's setlist for the next forty years.

In 1976, Betts described the song. In it, he highlights the elusive source of the creative process:

> When I write something that I'm proud of, like "Elizabeth Reed," where does that melody come from? Do you think I write one note after another saying, "'Oh boy, this is catchy?" No, that melody is *given* to me because I've dedicated myself so much to that guitar. Where it comes from I *do* know, although I will not say.
>
> Whatever you can see or hear, that's yours, man. You don't have to buy it. It's yours. . . . All you got to do is look at it, quit analyzing. . . . There's a bunch of us saying the same thing I'm saying when I play my guitar. Jerry Garcia says it. Bob Dylan. Bob says it his way, I see it my way, another dude says it another way. . . . There's only one (truth). It's this: I don't care how you cut the corners, just as long as you get *here*. And that everybody knows and nobody getting nowhere by stepping on each other. Then we just *need* to . . . look each other in the eye and say, "I'm honest, you are too. And I can see you, and I love you, man." And that's it. That's music.[122]

The band continued touring despite weak sales of their debut album and the lone single released from the record—"Black Hearted Woman" backed with "Every Hungry Woman." After a West Coast swing in January 1970, the Allman Brothers Band played dates in Chicago, Minneapolis, and Dayton, Ohio, on their way back to the Fillmore East for the shows with the Grateful Dead. A run of concerts in Georgia and Florida, including their earliest documented appearances on college campuses (a mainstay of their touring itinerary in 1970 and 1971) followed that spring: Mercer University in Macon; Athens (GA) College; Dekalb (GA) College; Dade Junior College in Miami; the University of Florida; Florida Presbyterian College; University of Massachusetts-Amherst; Sullivan County (NY) Community College; State University of New York Stony Brook; Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania; State University of New York New Paltz; Georgia Tech; the University of South Carolina; among others. On March 13, 1970, the band opened for bluesman Albert

King—its first appearance at the famed Warehouse in New Orleans—a venue it frequented over the next several years.[123]

While the records were not selling, the band was definitely garnering attention. As Joseph "Red Dog" Campbell, the band's infamous roadie, recalled, "Every time we played someplace, when we came back, there was a bigger crowd, just from word of mouth; the band sold itself." Despite his frustration with the lack of record sales, Gregg Allman understood the importance of touring. "I felt pretty bad and it started dawning on me that the more we got around and got seen, it was worth ten times anything else we could do. The key was not to worry about the record sales, and trust that shit will take care of itself. What we had to do was keep getting out there and letting people know that we're there."[124]

The band remained determined to present its music on its own terms. Lengthy jams continued to be a staple. Though the band's proclivities for playing long shows was a boon to its popularity, the practice could sometimes be costly. "There was one occasion in Birmingham where they brought the police and dogs on the stage and this guy was at the power switch and it looked like it was going to get real nasty," road manager Willie Perkins recalled. "There was a lot of madness involved with that. Because when they wanted to play, that was it."[125]

The issues Perkins encountered in Birmingham reflected an additional complication for the Allman Brothers Band: the social and cultural dynamics of the times

and within the South. Not only did the band comprise five white men with long hair, but it also had an African American member. The combination sometimes led to trouble.

Interestingly, this issue seems not to have affected the band much in Macon, at least according to the recollections of the band and its peers. The band and its entourage seemed to be more of a curiosity than anything else. As Phil Walden's younger brother Alan, who later went on to steer the career of Lynyrd Skynyrd, remembered, "In the late 60s and early 70s when they arrived in Macon, it was a major shock to our quiet little town. The boys and girls and women loved the band while the men did not know how to react to these long-haired hippies."[126] Phil Walden agreed. "They were the first long-hairs anybody had ever seen in Macon. Sometimes they would just sit out in front [of their first communal home on College Street] playing guitars and cars would literally screech to a stop and break their necks looking and staring at them."[127]

The fact that the band was integrated, however, was probably a bigger problem than anyone has shared. “Mama” Louise Hudson, proprietor of the H&H, the Macon soul food restaurant, remembered that "Macon was just barely integrated. We didn't really have any white customers. And nobody around here had seen guys who looked like them. I had not. A lot of white folk around here did not approve of them long-haired boys, or of them always having a black guy with them." Twiggs Lyndon's brother A.J. recalled a visit to the band's first home together at 309 College Street (dubbed the "Hippie Crash Pad" by the band), "I was just a kid in high school and I would go over there

at lunchtime and they'd all be sleeping. I remember seeing a little blonde head on Jaimoe's chest and thinking, 'Well, this is different.'"[128]

The arrangement was indeed different, but it seemed Macon accepted the band with few overt hassles. In pondering why things went as smoothly as they did, Butch Trucks posited that "maybe the only thing that saved us was, everybody was scared of us. They didn't know what we'd do! I'm really surprised we got away with all like that. Macon's been good to us in ways like that."[129] Betts was more reflective. "We were a little apprehensive about going to a real small Southern town. I mean, we were some pretty off-the-wall characters," he said. "We'd go to places like the Waffle House and you'd think, 'Oh man, we've only been in town for a week, what's going to happen?' But people realized we were there for the music and not for any underground kind of reason."[130] To Betts, the band's focus on its music allowed it to get a "pass" from the Macon community for being a hippies in a band that included a black man.[131]

Things on the road were more harried. Touring as hippies had complications, Bruce Hampton remembered. "It was a different world. It was life or death. You'd stop at a gas station and you'd wonder if you were going to die. That's no joke. If you had long hair, you were a target."[132] "There were times," Betts recalled, "when you would go out for breakfast after you finish playing a club and just have to accept the chances of getting in a damn fist fight with somebody. But what are you gonna do: sneak home? I mean, you'd just go out and somebody starts calling you some kind of faggot or something

about your long hair. I guess we were shocking in those days, and some of those damn cowboys are pretty quick to show their feelings."[133]

Sometimes the harassment resulted in violence. Harmonica player Thom Doucette, a semi-regular performer with the band, revealed one specific incident. "We played a gig in Ohio, when we were waiting for a puddle jumper airplane at a little sandwich shop in a podunk airport. These guys were messing with us, making fun of our long hair and flipping Dickey's hair. I'm watching him wondering what's going to happen." Then the harassment turned to Johanson. "The guy starts messing with Jaimoe and Dickey just puts his fork down and goes, 'Come on.'" Doucette remembered that "it was like a movie. The other guy was standing next to Berry, who goes, 'You're about to watch your buddy get his ass kicked.' The guy looks at Berry like he's nuts but then bing, bing, bing, done. The guy's on the floor bleeding and Dickey's sitting back down." When the police arrive and begin to harass the band, Doucette said the restaurant owner responded, "'Nope. This is his party – the guy laying on the ground bleeding. You know him. He tried to push these boys around and they pushed back. Boys, your bill's on me.'"[134]

Touring with Johanson was challenging, and while he has never spoken of the indignities he experienced on the road as an African American, his bandmates have shared additional stories. "We got into some close ones," Gregg Allman wrote. "There were places we'd get turned away from eating, 'What're you guys doing' with a n----r in the band?'"[135] As "Red Dog" Campbell recalled, "Jaimoe was the only black brother in the

band. We saw no color, but we sure knew that other people outside of the family didn't look at it that way. We were always a little on guard for someone to mess with him, and we got messed with a lot."[136] "A few times in some real ignorant little towns where we'd have trouble going into a restaurant with Jaimoe," Betts recalled. "Those were isolated incidents, but they stick out in my mind. I was horrified at that kind of thing."[137]

One such incident happened in June 1969 a few months after the band formed. Richard Price, who had replaced Oakley in the Second Coming, shared a story of a show in Merritt Island, Florida:

> We got there in the late afternoon to set up for a multiband setup and sound check. . . . Jaimoe was there setting up too, and all of a sudden the promoter comes up and says, "Hey, you guys can play but the black guy can't." Needless to say we were shocked and pissed because we were all set up and loved Jaimoe. He went through this quite a bit. Prejudice was still rampant in some areas against blacks and long hairs.
>
> We gathered around the guy and said, "If he ain't playing, we ain't playing." The tickets were already sold. He would have to have given a lot of or all of them back. He told us that the parents around there wouldn't put up with white girls being near or around a black man. He got pissed but backed down concerning the tickets.
>
> Then to top it all off, after the gig Twiggs told us the guy was saying he wasn't going to pay us and that he didn't make enough money. So all of us went in his office and formed a c-shaped arc around the desk. . . . It got heated and he said the headline act cost him too much. Twiggs said, "Too bad but you are going to pay us," and he jumped over the desk and grabbed him like he was gonna kill him. It turned into a scuffle and all of us had to drag Twiggs off of him. Needless to say he paid.
>
> Jaimoe was surrounded by eleven white peers, most that were southern and we protected him.[138]

By mid-1970, the band included a standard rider in their contracts regarding such exclusion. The contract for a show on November 25, 1970 at the Oporto Armory in Birmingham reads, "Employer agrees that admission to the engagement shall be open to all, regardless of race, color, or creed and that there shall be no segregated seating facilities based on race, color, or creed. . . . Artists shall be free to engage the services of supporting musicians of their choice without regard to race, color, or creed. Noncompliance by the employer with the provisions of this paragraph shall give artist the right to cancel."[139] According to Willie Perkins, language became standard in the band's performance contracts, and the band would back out of shows if they discovered a segregated audience.[140]

The inclusion of this contract language reflects a changing racial dynamic for southern youth. While the four white southerners in the band may not have overtly campaigned for the Civil Rights Movement, their support and inclusion of their African American bandmate is nonetheless significant. As Gregg Allman remembered, the band ran into "perennial redneck questions: 'Who them hippie boys and who's the n----r in the band?' We dealt with that second question quite a bit. Keep in mind, this was the 1960s, we were in the deep South, so having a black guy in the group came up a lot. But Jaimoe was one of us and we weren't going to change that for nobody. Whenever some asshole came around, all of us, together, would do something about it. Any kind of problem that came from the outside, we met head-on."[141] Johanson eschewed the activist label. "I never really considered myself some kind of civil rights crusader or

anything, because there were people who were already doing that. Jimi Hendrix went to England and came back with [white musicians] Mitch [Mitchell] and Noel [Redding], and they really changed things."[142]

Johanson understates how truly significant the integrated Allman Brothers Band was. By living and working with an African American musician, the Allman Brothers and their entourage flouted the racial conventions of the time, both in the North and the South. In doing so, the band began to not only break down barriers in the South, but also the perception of white southerners in other parts of the country. Dismantling racial boundaries was never a political act for the band. Instead, the group sent a more subliminal message. Its musical and cultural roots included not only African American music, but also a kinship with southerners of both races—which led to their inclusion of Johanson in the band, and his acceptance of them as musical peers. As Jon Landau said:

> Macon was not the hub of the music world, and they were working against some kind of odds. Ultimately, it was one of the things people found so attractive about them. They conveyed a sense of roots, a sense of stability, a sense of realism. And that became very, very important. They were authentic. As someone who came from the North, Duane Allman represented something that was going on in the South that most people where I live didn't know anything about. I saw young people asserting themselves in the South the same way young people had in Boston and San Francisco and New York, which came as quite a surprise to people with too many preconceptions about the South.[143]

In February 1970, the band returned to Macon to rehearse for the follow-up to their debut album. They began by recording two songs that had been in rotation from the group's inception: "Hoochie Coochie Man" and "Statesboro Blues," as well as a new original by Gregg Allman, "Midnight Rider."[144] Soon afterwards, Atlantic producer Tom

Dowd heard the band rehearsing. "I was in Macon on business when I passed the Capricorn studio. I heard this music coming out, and it was swinging," he recalled. "They were blues they were hard driving, they were everything, all in one. I said, 'I have to record these guys. Send them to me in Miami as quickly as you can, they're ready now. Just the way they are.'"[145] By March 1970, they began to record at the Atlantic-owned Criteria Studios. Dowd, who had produced such luminaries as Ray Charles and John Coltrane (among many others), served as producer.

In Miami, the band rerecorded "Midnight Rider," a bluesy ballad with a country-inflected lead guitar solo by Betts.[146] Over the course of the next several months, the band returned to Criteria to record the rest of the album between its live dates. In addition to "Hoochie Coochie Man," "Midnight Rider," and "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed," the band recorded four more originals with Dowd. Gregg Allman wrote three of them—a contemplative ballad "Please Call Home," a slide guitar blues "Don't Keep Me Wonderin'," and "Leave My Blues at Home," whose twin-guitar attack favored Allman's "Black Hearted Woman" and "Every Hungry Woman" from the first record.

Betts also contributed "Revival" to *Idlewild South*, released on September 23, 1970. "Revival" began as an instrumental. "In fact," he recalled, "we would refer to that first instrumental section of the song as 'The Gypsy Dance.' When I wrote it, I had the image of gypsies dancing around a fire in my mind, and I tried to conjure that spirit in the music." The song, which kicks off the album, opens with Duane on acoustic guitar followed by the band's signature harmonized guitar lines. Johanson plays congas on the

track, which, like "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed," has a decidedly Latin feel to it. Betts attributed this inspiration to Latin jazz and the Latin flavors he was hearing from musicians like Tampa guitarist Mike Pinera of Blues Image.[147] With "Revival," Betts intentionally sought to balance Gregg Allman's heavy blues songwriting with a more upbeat tone and lyrics. "I was in a band with Gregg Allman, who is basically a melancholy kind of writer, the beautiful melancholy that Gregg would come with," he shared. "So, I'm looking at what we have here and I'm thinking how do you balance this out? I don't want to write a song that makes you want to go hang yourself in the bathroom. So, I would really make an effort to write more up songs, to balance the band out."[148] Ironically, though Betts wrote the song, Gregg sang it on the album.

"Revival" is unique to the Allman Brothers' repertoire in that it is only one of two songs whose lyrics overtly address the youth culture at the time.[149] Betts's lyrics hearken the counterculture era, specifically mentioning a revolution of the youth based on the principles of love. In many ways, the lyrics mirror the Youngbloods' 1967 hit "Get Together":

> People can you feel it?
> Love is everywhere
> People can you hear it?
> The song is in the air
> We're in a revolution
> Don't you know we're right
> Everyone is singing, yeah
> There'll be no one to fight[150]

While "Revival" was as close to a public political statement as the band would make during Duane Allman's lifetime, the group was not immune to the situations surrounding them. When queried in 1970 about his involvement with politics, Allman answered, "Inadvertently, I suppose everyone is [involved in politics]. You have to be a little bit. I'm not personally involved in any kind of political crap or anything. But I watch it and I like to see things right. So far as who is running and stuff, it makes it a lot easier on everyone if someone with some sense is in a position to make laws and set things up for a change. . . . I'd like to see a liberal democratic president and I think we'll get it too." Of politics, Allman concluded, "People are sick of it, man it's just jive man." He quickly redirected the interview. "But let's not talk about politics, man, let's talk about music."[151] Allman's response is reflective of the band's connection to the social upheaval occurring around them. "We were aware of what was going on in society at that time," his brother Gregg remembered, "and we cared about what was happening with the war in Vietnam and what happened at Kent State. . . . [But] in truth, though, we were sheltered by the music and the traveling."[152]

The music and traveling continued apace, and the band further developed its audience. It played to several hundred thousand people in opening and closing sets at the second annual Atlanta Pop Festival, held in nearby Byron on July 4 weekend 1970. Several weeks later, they headlined a festival in Love Valley, North Carolina. Recordings from the Atlanta Pop Festival show the inclusion of some of the band's new original songs—"In Memory of Elizabeth Reed," and "Don't Keep Me Wonderin'"—into the setlist.

The blues cover "Stormy Monday"—at nine minutes more than twice the length of Bobby "Blue" Bland's version on which it was based—replaced "I'm Gonna Move to the Outskirts of Town" in the setlist. The band also played staples "Mountain Jam," "Dreams," and "Hoochie Coochie Man." Further honing their repertoire and song structures, the July 5, 1970 Atlanta Pop Festival set shows how the band had expanded Gregg Allman's "Whipping Post" to nearly three times its studio length of five minutes. It would top twenty minutes on the band's next record.[153]

Live playing remained central to the band's approach as it recorded their second album. "They didn't record an album at one sitting," producer Dowd recounted. "They would record maybe five songs. Then they might say, 'I don't think that song was good enough,' or, 'I don't think that song was ready to record.' Then among them, Duane being the leader, he would say, 'OK, we'll work on it,'" Dowd noted. "They would have to go back out and then rehearse. . . . [T]hey played the songs into shape." While in the studio, the band sought a "live sound," Allman remarked to Atlanta deejay Ed Shane in an interview shortly after its release, "like we sound when we play."[154] Even in the studio, the band cut everything live. "There were at least five or six people playing simultaneously," Dowd recalled. "And a full set up like a live show. The idea is that part of the thing of the Allman Brothers is the spontaneity—the elasticity. The parts and the tempos vary in a way that only they are sensitive to."[155]

Released on September 23, 1970, *Idlewild South* performed better than its predecessor, but was not the breakout hit that Walden or the band had hoped for. That

December, the record peaked at number 38 on the *Billboard* albums chart.[156] Duane Allman recognized this meant the band's hard work on the road was starting to pay off. "Our record nationally did like up in the thirty's on the charts so somebody bought it somewhere, you just can't do that in one town."[157] However, by January 9, 1971, the record was nearly off the charts, falling to number 81. And although it was the band's first single to make the charts, "Revival," backed with "Leave My Blues at Home," made even less of an impact. It topped out at number 92 on the *Billboard* Hot 100 on January 9, 1971.[158]

The failure of *Idlewild South* to sell was a source of frustration for the band, the record label, and its manager. "I doubted myself," Walden remembered. "It seemed like I had just been wrong and that they were never going to catch on. People just didn't grasp what the Allmans were all about—musically or any other way. But they kept touring, going across the country, establishing themselves city by city as the best live band around and building a base."[159] "Following Walden's formula of non-stop roadwork," Ben Edmonds wrote in 1972, "the Allmans developed a loyal grassroots audience. They were their own best advertisement. Each gig added a few more destroyed heads to their following. A second album, *Idlewild South* revealed the band's expanding musical identity and a corresponding increase in sales. They weren't yet rolling in royalties or fan mail, but everybody seemed to agree that they were on the verge of becoming something big."[160]

Despite the lack of chart success, the Allman Brothers were making an impact on college campuses. In late 1970/early 1971, *Billboard's* "Campus News" and "Campus

Programming Aids" reported *Idlewild South* in rotation at college radio stations at Georgia Tech University, Franklin Pierce University (Rindge, New Hampshire), Florida Presbyterian College (St. Petersburg), Northeastern University, Louisiana State University, and Michigan State University.[161] As a single, "Revival" received airplay at American University, Brooklyn College, Cal State Los Angeles, and Sir George Williams University in Montreal, Quebec.[162] Presaging the band's later breakthrough on the more album-oriented FM radio frequency, Brooklyn College reported playing the album track "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed."[163]

*Idlewild South,* Tony Glover wrote in a 1971 feature, "firmly established the groove set by the first [album], featuring some fine instrumental work on flowing rock numbers and old back alley blues." He found one flaw, however. "This was the Allmans in a studio, and live shows of theirs often turn into a whole other trip, with long extended instrumental jams that shift through all kinds of moods."[164] Glover highlighted what the band and Walden had already begun to realize: the studio environment was too constraining for the Allman Brothers Band.

The band was pleased with *Idlewild South* and, with Dowd, had sought to capture their live sound on the record. But while they successfully harnessed their instrumental prowess on the album, it missed the spark and spontaneity of the live dynamic that for Duane Allman and his bandmates was the truest measure of the band's approach. "There's rough arrangements, rough layouts of the songs, and then the solos are entirely up to each member of the band. So some nights are really good, and some nights ain't

too hot. But the naturalness of a spur-of-the-moment type of thing is what I consider the valuablest asset of our band."[165] Playing live was essential to a band's development and Studio recording frustrated them. "When bands start to play, they play live," Allman continued. "We haven't got a lot of experience in making records. I do, a little bit, from doing sessions and stuff, but not like a polished session man or anything."[166] In response, Allman declared, "Our next album will be for the most part a live recording, to get some of that natural fire on it." [167]

While in hindsight it seems Bill Graham's Fillmore East was the only place the band would even consider recording live, the band gave serious consideration to recording at the Warehouse in New Orleans, where it had played several times in 1970. At the Warehouse on New Year's Eve 1970, Allman mentioned the band had hoped to record that night's show. "We're going to do a live album here the next time we play we're going to record it. We were supposed to do it tonight but our producer got hung up and couldn't get down. Man that would have been really nice. I really wish we could have done it tonight, it's gonna be good"[168] Allman also mentioned the venue in an interview several days earlier. Their next record would be recorded "partly live at the Warehouse, part in the studio in Miami," Allman noted. The band, he said, was "going to the mountains for two weeks to write, bringing an eight-track with us up there and do some of it there. . . . We've got some tapes already from the Atlanta Pop Festival and Love Valley which was all recorded and if that's any good we'll use that."[169]

The band had made a mark, but had not yet achieved any appreciable success for their efforts. Around the time *Idlewild South* was released, interviewer June Harris asked Allman about his definition of success. "I guess success depends on how many people dig you," he responded. "There are always people to slam you, but you have to lay down things you can live with. There are people who put you down, but those are the ones who have already made it. You play what you feel and hope you're doing the right thing. You've got to do whatever you believe in. If you're wrong, you change and keep making changes till you make it—or till you're happy with the whole thing."[170] The Allman Brothers Band was not yet happy with what they had achieved. That would change in 1971 with the release of their double live album *At Fillmore East.*

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[1] Michael Buffalo Smith, *Capricorn Rising*, 114-115.

[2] Bill Graham and Robert Greenfield, *Bill Graham Presents: My Life Inside Rock and Out* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 172.

[3] In his biography of Redding, Jonathan Gould refutes this traditional understanding of Pickett's relationship with Walden. See Jonathan Gould, *Otis Redding: An Unfinished Life* (New York: Crown Archetype, 2017), 344-353.

[4] Roger St. Pierre, "The Allman Brothers: A Rock Tragedy," *New Musical Express*, December 9, 1972, accessed July 13, 2015, http://www.rocksbackpages.com/Library/Article/theallmanbrothersarocktragedy. Members of the band eventually successfully sued Walden for a variety of financial conflicts he had as the band's manager, booking agent, publisher, and record label owner. See Freeman, 137-138, 263-268; Paul, 262-263; and Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 285-286, 291.

[5] Paul, *One Way Out*, 11.

[6] Glover, "In This Band You Better Come to Pick."

[7] Rick Hall and Pace, 281-282.

[8] Paul, *One Way Out*, 10.

[9] Trucks turned twenty-two in May 1969.

[10] Paul, *One Way Out*, 57.

[11] "Allman Brothers Sounding Better All the Time to an Ex-Skeptic," Unknown publication, February 19, 1971.

[12] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 122.

[13] Dann.

[14] Tony Glover, "In This Band You Better Come to Pick."

[15] Jon Dale, "Butch Trucks on the Allman's Wild Times at the Fillmore East," *Uncut*, September 14, 2014, accessed September 27, 2017, https://www.uncut.co.uk/reviews/album/the-allman-brothers-band-the-1971-fillmore-east-recordings.

[16] "An Interview with Duane Allman of the Allman Brothers Band."

[17] Nolan, 34.

[18] Barry Kerzner, "Butch Trucks Proud of Allman Brothers Legacy and His Freight Train," January 26, 2017, accessed March 16, 2017, https://www.americanbluesscene.com/2017/01/butch-trucks-proud-allman-brothers-legacy-freight-train/.

[19] Jim Clash, "Interview: Allman Brothers Butch Trucks On Closing Fillmore East, Favorite ABB Tunes," Forbes.com, April 9, 2016, accessed September 28, 2017, https://www.forbes.com/sites/jimclash/ 2016/04/09/interview-allman-brothers-butch-trucks-on-closing-fillmore-east-favorite-abb-tunes/#38561ae82849. Trucks's assessment overlooks the improvisations of the Grateful Dead.

[20] Kerzner.

[21] Only "Mountain Jam," based on the melody of Donovan's "There is a Mountain," was a fully improvisational piece.

[22] Michael Stephans, *Experiencing Jazz: A Listener's Companion*, Listener's Companion (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2013), 4-6; Burton W. Peretti, *Jazz in*

*American Culture* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1997), 5. Both Stephans and Peretti's books offer insight on jazz historically, culturally, socially, politically, and musically. For other more in-depth discussions of jazz, see William J. Shafer, "Jazz," in Bill C. Malone, ed. *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture: Music* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 83-88 and Bill C. Malone and David Stricklin, *Southern Music/American Music* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2003). In his master's thesis, musicologist Christopher M. Reali specifically addresses the Allman Brothers Band as a jazz ensemble, see Christopher M. Reali, "Blues-Rock, Progressive: A Style Analysis of the Allman Brothers Band," (Master's thesis, Hunter College of the City University of New York, 2008), 44-45.

[23] Fornatale.

[24] Freeman, 49.

[25] Paul, "Lowdown and Dirty," 51.

[26] For more detail, see Katherine Charlton, *Rock Music Styles: A History* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2003), 142.

[27] Aledort, et al.

[28] For a more in-depth discussion of harmony as it pertains to popular music, see David Nicholls, ed., *The Cambridge History of American Music*, The Cambridge History of Music (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 314-315.

[29] Aledort, et al.

[30] Paul, *One Way Out*, 41; Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 114.

[31] John Lynskey, "Reflections 2: The World According to Jaimoe," 29.

[32] Paul, *One Way Out*, 42.

[33] Obrecht, "Duane Allman: The Complete 1981 Dickey Betts Interview."

[34] Edwards.

[35] Paul, *One Way Out*, 53.

[36] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 107, 166.

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[37] Gilmore, 127.

[38] Gilmore, 133.

[39] Lynskey, "Lamar Williams," 23-24.

[40] Paul, "Lowdown and Dirty," 51.

[41] Alan Paul, "Watkins Glen Summer Jam: The Story Behind the Largest Rock Festival," Alanpaul.net (blog), August 1, 2017, accessed August 1, 2017, http://alanpaul.net/2017/08/9390/.

[42] "An Interview with Duane Allman of the Allman Brothers Band."

[43] "The Allman Brothers," *Circus*, March 1970, The Allman Brothers Band Museum at the Big House.

[44] Lynskey, "Reflections 2: The World According to Jaimoe," 29.

[45] "Southern Rock - It Was an Era More than a Sound," Swampland.com (blog), n.d., accessed August 24, 2017, http://swampland.com/articles/view/title:southern_rock__it_was_an_era_more_than_a_sound.

[46] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 114. Essentially the same song, "Stormy Monday" replaced "Outskirts of Town" for good in the band's setlist in early 1971.

[47] There is no mention if this provided inspiration to the Allman Brothers or not.

[48] Galadrielle Allman, *Please Be With Me*, 300-301.

[49] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 114.

[50] Michelizzi.

[51] See Allman Brothers Band, Central City Park, Macon, Georgia, May 4, 1969. The song is longer than twelve minutes as it appears the tape ran out in the middle of the recording.

[52] Atlantic Records Recording Ledgers, 1969, collection of Hans Van Ryswyk.

[53] Paul, *One Way Out*, 56.

[54] See Stephans, 170-171 for an explanation of modal jazz in relation to Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue*. See also Geoffrey Jacques, "Listening to Jazz," in *American Popular Music: New Approaches to the Twentieth Century*, eds. Rachel Rubin and Jeffrey Paul Melnick, (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 87-90.

[55] "A Moment Captured in Time," 10.

[56] Paul, "Lowdown and Dirty," 51.

[57] "A Moment Captured in Time," 10.

[58] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 150; Robert Palmer, "Allman Brothers Band: A Great Southern Revival."

[59] Brooks, 24.

[60] "A Moment Captured in Time," 10.

[61] Paul, "Lowdown and Dirty," 51.

[62] Paul, *One Way Out*, 60.

[63] Ertegun, 239; Lewis, 53; "An Interview with Duane Allman of the Allman Brothers Band"; Tiven.

[64] Flyer: College Discotheque May 2-3, 1969, The Allman Brothers Band Museum at the Big House. This quote includes capitalization and spelling as on the original.

[65] Galadrielle Allman, *Please Be With Me*, 167.

[66] Galadrielle Allman, *Please Be With Me*, 167.

[67] Nolan, 22.

[68] Patrick Edmondson, ""A Bus Stops in Piedmont Park July 7, 1969," The Strip Project (blog), February 20, 2014, accessed September 12, 2016, http://www.thestripproject.com/a-bus-stops-in-piedmont-park-july-7-1969/; John Ogden, "First There Is a Mountain," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 22 (n.d.), 10; Patrick Edmondson, "May 11 Be-In in Piedmont – Meet The Allman Brothers Atlanta!" The Strip Project (blog), February 27, 2014, accessed September 12, 2016, http://www.thestripproject.com/may-11-be-in-in-piedmont-meet-the-allman-brothers-atlanta-2/.

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[69] Meeks, 34-36.

[70] E. Bommba, Jr., "'Prepared, Rehearsed, or Repeated,' Letter to the Editor," *The Great Speckled Bird*, May 19, 1969, 6. All spelling, capitalization, and punctuation appear as in the original.

[71] Kirk Anderson, "*Hittin' the Note* Presents: Alex Cooley," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 12 (June 1995), 21.

[72] A Friend and Reader, "Letter to the Editor," *The Great Speckled Bird*, May 26, 1969, 4.

[73] Miller Francis Jr., "The Allman Brothers Band," *The Great Speckled Bird*, May 19, 1969, cover.

[74] Francis Jr., "The Allman Brothers Band," 10.

[75] Ken Sharp, "Allman Joy: Jai Johanny 'Jaimoe' Johanson on The Allman Brothers Band's Legacy," *Rock Cellar Magazine*, December 10, 2014, accessed December 10, 2014, http://www.rockcellarmagazine.com/2014/12/10/allman-brothers-band-interview-jaimoe-fillmore-east/#sthash.LeQsIMAt.dpbs.

[76] Francis Jr., "The Allman Brothers Band," 10.

[77] Paul, *One Way Out*, 40-41.

[78] Russell Hall, "Capricorn Records."

[79] Landau, "Allman Brothers Band: Homage to the King," 16.

[80] Russell Hall, "Capricorn Records."

[81] Paul, *One Way Out*, 48-49.

[82] Drozdowski.

[83] John Ogden, "Berry Oakley: The Hoochie Coochie Man," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 22 (n.d.), 31-33.

[84] Lynskey, "Lamar Williams," 21.

[85] Paul, *One Way Out*, 130.

[86] Nolan, 25.

[87] Patrick Edmondson has collected many of these memories at his website *The Strip Project*, http://www.thestripproject.com/.

[88] University of California-Riverside, "50th Anniversary Timeline," n.d., accessed April 1, 2018, https://web.archive.org/web/20050311091252/http://newsroom.ucr.edu/timeline.html

[89] Bruce Harvie, "I just read this on the Telecaster board . . . ," Allmanbrothers.com (forum), June 17, 2008, accessed October 1, 2016, http://www.theallmanbrothers.com/ modules.php?op=modload&name=XForum&file=viewthread&tid=76567.

[90] John DuBois, "The Allman Brothers Band Free Concert at The 'Butterfly' Audubon Park, New Orleans, La. Sunday, August 23, 1970, Blackstrat.net, n.d., accessed November 25, 2015, http://www.blackstrat.net/Allman-Audubon/Allman-Audubon.htm.

[91] Nolan, 25.

[92] Anderson, 22.

[93] Perkins, *No Saints, No Saviors*, 25, 28.

[94] Nolan, 25.

[95] Steve Newton, "Dickey Betts Figures Duane Allman Is Playing 'Dreams' in Heaven With Hendrix," Ear of Newt (blog), April 12, 2014, accessed February 2, 2017, https://earofnewt.com/2014/04/12/dickey-betts-figures-duane-allman-is-playing-dreams-in-heaven-with-hendrix/.

[96] "ABB Song Lists 1969-1999," author's personal collection.

[97] Jourard, 79-80.

[98] Jourard, 79-80.

[99] Jourard, 80.

[100] "So-o-o-o Big . . . ," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, n.d, author's personal collection.

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[101] Ben Sandmel, "Liner Notes," *Live at Ludlow Garage: 1970,* Allman Brothers Band, Polydor Records, 843 260-2, 1990.

[102] Obrecht, "Dickey Betts 1989."

[103] Gilmore, 125.

[104] Harris.

[105] Atlantic Records Recording Ledgers.

[106] Shane and Duane Allman.

[107] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 140.

[108] Watts.

[109] Betts and Obrecht.

[110] *American Revolutions: Southern Rock*.

[111] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 141.

[112] Paul, *One Way Out*, 94-95.

[113] Graham and Greenfield, 306-307.

[114] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 142.

[115] Nolan, 28.

[116] Nolan, 28.

[117] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 142.

[118] Owsley Stanley, "Liner Notes," *The Allman Brothers Band, Fillmore East, February 1970,* Allman Brothers Band, Grateful Dead Records #4063, CD, 1997.

[119] John Lynskey, "Reflections 2: The World According to Jaimoe," 24.

[120] Freeman, 73.

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[121] Wade Tatangelo, "Dickey Betts on His Most Famous Allman Brothers Songs," *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, October 30, 2014, accessed November 25, 2015, http://ticket.heraldtribune.com/2014/10/30/dickey-betts-on-his-most-famous-allman-brothers-songs-interview/.

[122] Nolan 48.

[123] "ABB Song Lists 1969-1999," author's personal collection.

[124] Paul, *One Way Out*, 94-95. Campbell gained renown in two *Rolling Stone* articles on the band, including those by Grover Lewis in 1971 "Hitting the Note with the Allman Brothers Band," and Cameron Crowe in 1973 "The Allman Brothers Story." Crowe also named a roadie character Red Dog in his 2000 movie *Almost Famous.*

[125] Perkins interview.

[126] "Reflections on the Allman Brothers Band."

[127] *American Revolutions, Southern Rock.*

[128] Paul, *One Way Out,* 33-35.

[129] Nolan, 22.

[130] Freeman 47.

[131] See Andrew Michael Manis, *Macon Black and White: An Unutterable Separation in the American Century* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2004) for more information on Macon in this era. Of note, Manis makes no mention of the Allman Brothers Band nor Capricorn Records in his book.

[132] Paul, *One Way Out,* 35.

[133] Gilmore, 128.

[134] Paul, *One Way Out*, 114-115.

[135] Hoskyns, "Southern Men."

[136] Joseph L. "Red Dog" Campbell, *The Legendary Red Dog: A Book of Tails* (Self Published, 2001), 75.

[137] Gilmore, 128. The most infamous incident the band had was an arrest for drugs in rural Alabama in 1971. See Freeman, 95-96; Paul, *One Way Out*, 130-133; Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 174-177.

[138] Richard Price, "Richard 'Hombre' Price July 11, 2017," *Duane Allman ~ Skydog Fan Page (Facebook group),* July 11, 2017, accessed July 11, 2017, https://www.facebook.com/groups/Skydog/permalink/1145030282265653/. In less than a year, Lyndon stabbed to death Angelo Aliotta, the owner of a Buffalo, New York, venue, in a dispute over the band's pay. Lyndon eventually was eventually found not guilty by reason of insanity. For more details see Freeman, 70-71, Poe, 143, and Alan Paul, *One Way Out*, 102-105, 139-142.

[139] "Contract Paperwork," November 23, 1970, accessed August 21, 2017, http://www.al.com/entertainment/index.ssf/2017/08/lynyrd_skynyrd_emmylou_harris.html.

[140] Willie Perkins, Facebook message with author, March 16, 2018. Perkins could recall plenty of harassment, but no violations of this clause when he was road manager from 1970 through 1976.

[141] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 128.

[142] Lynskey, et al., "Reflections: The World According to Jaimoe," 24.

[143] Freeman, 69.

[144] *Skydog: The Duane Allman Retrospective*.

[145] Dave Hogerty, "Eulogy to a Friend: Tom Dowd, The Language of Music," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 43 (2004), 36.

[146] Liner Notes, *Idlewild South - Super Deluxe Edition*, Allman Brothers Band, Mercury Records, 602547346476, 2015.

[147] Aledort, et al.

[148] Tatangelo.

[149] The second is "Ain't Wastin' Time No More," released in 1972.

[150] Dickey Betts, "Revival," on *Idlewild South*, Allman Brothers Band, original release Atco SD-33-342, 1970.

[151] "An Interview with Duane Allman of the Allman Brothers Band."

[152] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 173.

[153] The sets were released on CD in 2003. Allman Brothers Band, *Live at the Atlanta International Pop Festival*, Epic / Legacy, E2K 86909, 2003, CD.

[154] Shane and Duane Allman.

[155] Poe, 143-144.

[156] "Top Tape Cartridges (Based on Best-Selling LP's)," *Billboard*, December 19, 1970, 18.

[157] "An Interview with Duane Allman of the Allman Brothers Band."

[158] "The Allman Brothers Band Chart History: 'Revival (Love is Everywhere)," Billboard.com, accessed March 19, 2018, https://www.billboard.com/music/the-allman-brothers-band/chart-history/hot-100/song/575827.

[159] Paul, *One Way Out*, 94.

[160] Ben Edmonds, "Snapshots of the South: The Allman Brothers and Capricorn Records," *Creem*, November 1972, accessed February 1, 2016, https://www-rocksbackpages-com.ezproxy.mtsu.edu/Library/Article/snapshots-of-the-south-the-allman-brothers-and-capricorn-records.

[161] "Campus Programming Aids," *Billboard*, October 31, 1970, 43; "Campus News," *Billboard*, November 7, 1970, 30; "Campus News," *Billboard*, November 14, 1970, 29; "Campus Programming Aids," *Billboard*, November 14, 1970, 31; Bob Glassenberg, "Campus Programming Aids," *Billboard*, January 23, 1971, 38; "Campus Programming Aids," *Billboard*, February 20, 1971, 36.

[162] "Campus Programming Aids," *Billboard*, October 31, 1970, 43; "Campus News," *Billboard*, December 5, 1970, 39; "Campus Programming Aids," *Billboard*, January 16, 1971, 35; "Campus Programming Aids," *Billboard*, February 6, 1971, 43.

[163] "Campus Programming Aids," *Billboard*, October 31, 1970, 43.

[164] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

[165] Shane and Duane Allman.

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[166] Shane and Duane Allman.

[167] Shane and Duane Allman.

[168] "An Interview with Duane Allman of the Allman Brothers Band." A partial audience recording of the show circulates.

[169] Tiven.

[170] Harris.

# Chapter 6

## "I Mortgaged Everything for this Thing. I Believed in it that Much": Phil Walden and Capricorn Records

Without Phil Walden's backing and encouragement, the Allman Brothers Band would never have achieved renown beyond the small cadre of fans it had reached through touring. The band would record its third album live, with Walden's full endorsement. Their manager not only encouraged the idea, he marshalled the entire process through with a somewhat-dubious Atlantic Records. The success of the resulting album, the groundbreaking *At Fillmore East*, was the culmination of Walden's belief in and support Duane Allman's vision. The record became the band's commercial breakthrough.

Walden was a music industry veteran of more than a decade when he signed Allman in 1969. Along with, among others, Jim Stewart and Estelle Axton of Stax Records and studio in Memphis, and Rick Hall, Walden was one of a cadre of white southerners deeply involved in the southern African American music business. Together with Jerry Wexler, Walden founded Capricorn Records as a subsidiary of Atlantic Records.

As the label of John Coltrane, Ray Charles, the Coasters, and Ruth Brown (among many others), Atlantic initially made its name and fortunes with African American music. By 1969, it had become a premier rock music label as well. Buffalo Springfield, Cream, Led Zeppelin, and the Springfield offshoot Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young were all signed

to the label. In 1969 and 1970, respectively, Atlantic released the Allman Brothers Band's first two records. Its in-house producer Tom Dowd had recorded the second, *Idlewild South*.

For his part, Walden had already managed the career of one star, fellow Macon native Otis Redding. He had also managed and/or promoted other African American artists on the soul circuit including Arthur Conley and Clarence Carter.[1] Wexler and the southern music industry veteran were a good fit.

Redding, Conley, and Carter recorded at either Stax in Memphis (Redding) and FAME in Muscle Shoals (Conley and Carter). These southern studios were where musicians, predominantly white, backed black soul and rhythm and blues stars. While interracial musical collaborations were not necessarily unique, white musicians providing deeply soulful and funky backing tracks for rhythm and blues hits initially surprised those who expected to find African Americans manning the instruments. "These players in Muscle Shoals were all Caucasians," Wexler recalled. "How could authentic soul music and blues come out of a situation like this? I don't know how it did. But it did."[2]

It did because the arrangement was part of a long tradition of racial congruence in music, not just with the intermixing of musical styles, but also with the musicians themselves. In 1930, Jimmie Rodgers, one of the first major country music stars, recorded in Los Angeles with black jazzman Louis Armstrong. In the early 1930s, Jimmie Davis, eventually governor of Louisiana and author of "You Are My Sunshine," recorded risqué blues backed by black blues guitarists. Benny Goodman, whose music had inspired

the Dickey Betts instrumental "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed," brought these collaborations from the studio to the bandstand, when he hired Teddy Wilson and Lionel Hampton to play in his band.[3] Decades later, the trend continued in reverse, as black stars such as Rufus Thomas, William Bell, and Otis Redding recorded with the backing of the half-white, half-black Booker T. and the MGs at Stax in Memphis and Carter, Conley, Aretha Franklin, and Wilson Pickett, among many others, recorded with the all-white backing band at FAME.[4]

While some, particularly the white musicians, remember these as halcyon days sans racial conflict, this was decidedly not the case. African Americans navigated race in studios nearly just as they to in the world outside of studios.[5] Jon Landau documented of some of these challenges as they related to the music industry:

> The producers and record companies . . . have done more for soul music than any others. Regrettably, the combination of occasional slipshod merchandising, repulsive packaging, and general carelessness has hurt soul artists in a mass media system that is heavily weighted against them to begin with.
>
> [Atlantic will engage in] a consistent effort to present these artists to sympathetic white audiences. Soul music is changing and Atlantic and other soul labels are aware of this and are changing with the music. Policies and prejudices adequate for the fifties are proving restrictive in the sixties. The purely ethnic soul market is shrinking. . . . Artists surely want to reach those non-black listeners because it will greatly enhance their incomes. . . . The music has to grow if the audience is to grow with it.[6]

With the Allman Brothers Band, Atlantic Records was again at the forefront of this discussion.

Brothers Ahmet and Nesuhi Ertegun, sons of the Turkish ambassador to the United States, founded Atlantic in 1947. Like many of the labels that recorded rhythm and blues and early rock 'n' roll records, Atlantic was an independent, or unaffiliated with America's major record labels of the time: Columbia, RCA Victor, Decca, Capitol, and Mercury. As such, it successfully pursued the African American market the majors were ignoring. "In the late 1940s and early 1950s," historian Michael T. Bertrand argues, "independents were left virtually alone to advance and exploit the tastes of commonly disregarded segments of the population. They furnished the infrastructure from which rock 'n' roll would emerge."[7] As Atlantic gained commercial success with black artists such as Ray Charles, Ruth Brown, and Big Joe Turner, it made acquisitions of smaller labels or make distribution arrangements with them. Thus, historian Robert Gordon writes, "Atlantic became an indie that functioned on a national scale."[8]

At first, Phil Walden was a relatively small part of the equation. Walden initially sought to create a studio environment like those in Memphis and Muscle Shoals. He would recruit a house band, at that time the heart of the southern soul recording industry. (This possibility is what brought Jai Johanny Johanson to Macon.) What resulted was vastly different than what Walden initially envisioned, demonstrating Walden's sagacity and foresight. Despite Duane Allman's limitations as a singer and songwriter, Walden heard something special in Allman's music. Walden changed course, and built a business around Allman. It was one that later brought to him the talent of dozens of white southern rock musicians who followed in his wake. "Phil had real good insight

about a whole lot of shit man," Johanson recalled. "He was looking for what we got into and eventually became at that point."[9]

Soon after he completed his new studio, Wexler suggested Walden start a record label. The southerner was reluctant to do so. "I was basically a production company," Walden recalled in 1979. "I was not sure whether I could afford or was willing to make a commitment to make albums for people. Initially I had organized it to make R&B singles." However, the Allman Brothers Band "changed the nature of the label. And the direction."[10] Wexler fronted the money and co-founded the label with Walden. In a nod to the times, the pair dubbed the venture Capricorn Records after their shared astrological sign.[11]

The arrangement reflected how Wexler and Atlantic approached the music business through affiliations with subsidiary labels (such as Dial, Fame, Dade, Alston, Stax, Volt, and Capricorn). This tactic diverged from the majors. Wexler expressed the difference in approach. The CBS credo, he said, was, "It's gonna come out on our label and we won't pay you more than 5 percent." Atlantic's position was, "We'll put your record out on any damn label you choose and we'll pay 10 percent." This wasn't just altruistic on Wexler's part, it made financial sense too. "It didn't cost a zloty and was an easy way to pacify an artist or a heavyweight manager," he noted. "While the majors were sleeping on this issue, we mopped up."[12]

The Allman Brothers altered Walden's pursuit of a rhythm and blues singles label. Sensing something bigger was happening with rock music in the South, the impresario

soon brought Frank Fenter, then running Atlantic operations in Europe, into the fold.[13] Fenter is an unsung hero in the Allman Brothers Band/Capricorn Records saga. Before joining Capricorn in 1969, the South African native had secured for Atlantic some of the major British rock bands of the era, most notably Cream and Led Zeppelin. Fenter's expertise with the music business, particularly record companies, was particularly helpful to Walden (who had theretofore only worked in artist management and promotion). "Phil was the one that first put the label together but I think he needed somebody who really understood the record business, and that's Frank Fenter," Ahmet Ertegun remembered. "Phil was the one who had the relationship with the artists, and Frank was the one who knew the day-to-day business. Whatever success they gained they gained because of the efforts that each put in."[14]

Capricorn's independence from Atlantic was important to Walden and Fenter. "We don't want to be just another distributed label," Walden said several years after Capricorn's founding. "We want to be autonomous from the standpoint we create, produce, and figure the exploitation of our own records. We want Capricorn to be a company, not a label."[15] "It was our objective from the very beginning," Fenter said in 1974, "to have jazz, country, comedy, and blues artists as well as rock. You can be a record label and produce one type of music, but you can't be a record *company*. We've always anticipated being a thoroughly involved *company.*" Fenter and Walden believed they had to take a different tack. "We were convinced that we would do something new in this business. *Our* way. We've always agreed on how to run a record company and how

you should treat artists. I believe that a record company should make money along with the artists. It's not a one-way street. I don't think the artist should screw the record company once he gets big, and I don't think the record company should shaft the artist once it gets big."[16]

Developing Capricorn as a more artist-friendly collaborative was an imperative. "When I learned how it was to deal with a big company, trying to get the attention required" Walden maintained, "we decided we would put together a very artist-oriented label." This was a necessity because, he said, "I couldn't promise an artist certain things and then have the big company let him down. We've done a lot of thing that we've paid for out of our own pockets, and all our profits went right back into the artists."[17]

The affiliation with Atlantic was fruitful for the company and its artists alike. As an independent, Atlantic functioned differently than the majors. It took more chances and sometimes absorbed losses in the short term, with developing artists—the Allman Brothers Band included. When asked to identify his first major break in the music business, Duane Allman did not mention "Hey Jude." "Getting with Atlantic Records," he answered. "Atlantic, man, they dig our music. And Ahmet, the president, he loves to listen to good sides, man. You go right to him and bang on his door, 'Ahmet, Ahmet, something's screwed.' And he says 'What?' You say 'This.' And he says 'We'll change it.'" Then, Allman concluded, "[I]t's done, you don't have to fool around. There ain't none of that crap, he's solid and it's a good label.[18]

Allman felt similarly about Wexler. He valued Atlantic's remove from the creative process. Wexler, the guitarist said, "He's the solidest cat with the clearest eye. A good old mind. When you got cats like him who say 'You write the ticket, you're the player,' that's when the good stuff starts coming out."[19] "We've got similar tastes in music," Allman continued, "I'm a freak for that old New Orleans stuff. And he is too." Ertegun and Wexler were "smart man. They're going to make plenty of bread from anything that they do. But they don't do it at the expense of the music. They know what it means and they know what it's worth." Ultimately, Allman concluded, "They're satisfying everybody that they got, whatever you want to happen to you, if you want to make a lot of bread, they'll make you a fucking fortune. Want to be a rock 'n' roll star? They'll make you a rock 'n' roll star. Want to play music? They'll make sure people hear your music."[20] It was a refreshing attitude for Allman after his experience with Liberty Records.

While Atlantic was supportive of Allman and his band as artists, the label was displeased with the band's poor record sales. After eighteen months, and two records, the Allman Brothers Band had yet to have any appreciable commercial success. Atlantic wasn't happy, but Walden was undeterred. His unflagging support was therefore more essential than ever. Though the middling success of the first two Allman Brothers records was disconcerting, Walden remained undeterred.

"As we traveled around," Betts recalled, "everybody else started getting it except the record company." "Phil said, 'I believe in these guys,'" Trucks remembered. "And [Atlantic] said, 'Then you pay for it.'" Pay for it is exactly what Walden did. "I mortgaged

everything for this thing," he said. "I believed in it that much. They never would have spent the money I spent on that next two years. I had several hundred thousand dollars in it. . . . It was unheard of."[21] Bunky Odom, the day-to-day contact between Walden and the Allman Brothers Band, agreed. "We had a lot of money sunk into the band. When you're in the management business, you're in it to develop and that's what we were doing." The economics did not work in favor of Walden. "When you have a band making $1,000 to $2,000 a night, you can't reach out and take a 15 percent commission, but you can put it on the book and that's what we did. A lot of the money invested was just keeping them alive and on the road. In the course of a year, $100 here and $300 there adds up with the band and crew."[22]

Walden's largess was only part of the equation. He also continually fought attempts to move the band to more music business-friendly environs of New York or Los Angeles. With Walden's blessing, the band maintained its southern roots geographically as well as musically. "We held fast and we didn't want to leave our roots and where we felt comfortable," Betts told documentarian Ken Hey in the mid-1970s.[23] Thus, the Allman Brothers Band became the first major rock band to emerge from the South. The significance of this to the band was not lost. "It's true that we were the first band to sound like we were from the South," Betts said. "We fought tooth and nail to prevent Atlantic from moving us out of the South, when they said we'd never make it living in Macon, Georgia, and playing that type of music. Insisted we should go to New York or

L.A. and they'd break us out of there. Thank God we, along with Phil Walden . . . were smart enough to know that that would ruin the band."[24]

The band made its home in Macon with Walden's full endorsement and support. Trucks, speaking before lawsuits permanently soured the relationship between the band and Walden, said, "Phil Walden had complete faith in us, and I'll respect him forever for that. I think he sunk about $150,000 in us. He was close to bankruptcy a lot of the time and Atlantic kept telling him we didn't have a chance. But during that first three years, Phil never once tried to change us."[25] Walden "went out on a limb for them," said Johnny Sandlin. "I had the greatest respect for Atlantic Records, but they didn't think they could sell this band. And Phil pushed it through."[26] "We stuck with it," Betts said, "We kept touring. . . . We developed a strong grassroots support system that finally impressed the label."[27] Walden had an intuitive understanding of the band's unique blend of sounds and influences. "If the Allman Brothers played an hour set," the manager remembered of the band's earliest days, "probably forty minutes of it would be instrumental. For a lot of people the vocals were afterthoughts, to break up all that music. I thought they sounded spectacular."[28] The Allman Brothers Band, he recalled, "Weren't trendy, there was never any attempt by the Allmans to be a show band. They played music. On occasion, when they were allowed to, for hours."[29] If the band believed it needed to stay in Macon in order to make its music, Walden was 100 percent supportive.

All was not rosy however. Some band members had misgivings about Walden from the beginning of the relationship. Drummer Johanson initially did not sign a

management contract with Walden because of the preference he had seen him give to the rhythm and blues stars he had backed on tour.[30] Gregg Allman observed a similar conflict in the band's first meeting with Walden after moving to in Macon. Walden approached the Allman Brothers Band as he had the bands of his rhythm and blues clients:

> [W]e went over to Phil Walden's office for our first meeting. . . . The whole time he's talking, he only looked at Duane. He was used to dealing with people like Percy Sledge, and then they dealt with their bands—and I can see his point in doing it that way, because he had signed Duane not the band. That didn't last, though, because Duane went in there and told him, "Hold it. My little brother is in this goddamn organization, you will treat us all the same or you won't treat us at all. So what's it going to be?"[31]

Years later, Gregg Allman expressed his initial unease with Walden's practices. His brother Duane's trust in Walden, however, eclipsed his discomfort. "My brother trusted Phil, and when I started asking questions about my publishing, he would just poke me and say, 'Hey man, be fucking thankful that we got enough to eat. Just sign the fucking agreement so we can get going'. . . . So that's how I signed all my publishing rights away." His reluctance proved prophetic. "Being the writer of the songs, I really disagreed with him and it hurt me that Duane didn't stand up for me more. I realize that he was looking out for the whole band and its betterment, but . . . I think he could have done more, and it ended up costing all of us a shitload of money down the line."[32]

With this in mind, and with the benefit of hindsight, Gregg Allman understood the importance of his brother's relationship to Walden and the latter's patronage of the band in its early days. "I loved the way my brother would deal with Phil Walden," he said. "He

would never be ungracious or anything, because we were fixing to cut a record and have a career together. He would just go in there and say, 'We need this, this, and this.' He wore Walden down so much that Phil eventually stopped asking why and gave us what Duane asked him for."[33]

By late 1970, Duane Allman asked Walden for a different kind of support. "'We need the freedom of a live album," Walden recalled Allman saying to him. "'That'll get people that don't see us in person an opportunity to really hear what the Allman Brothers are all about.' It was a brilliant idea."[34]

It was a brilliant idea for a number of reasons. First, the band was truly at its best live and its first two records had not captured the live energy the band was most famous for. As John Carter, Atlantic's West Coast promotion man said, "No one wanted to work on those first two Allman Brothers records. There was no emphasis on those records at the time."[35] Second, and more importantly, the band had steadily built a devoted live following through relentless touring. "They did what they did on their own," Carter recalled.[36] He remembered fondly the band's impact on its audiences and how it helped cultivate a following.

> I was raving at the time that you had to come and see them because, unlike anything else I'd ever seen, every night was different. It was the same set list, but I've never seen a band that was so spontaneous and reacted so well to each other. They would let a song stretch because it "just felt good tonight."
>
> Some nights "'Whipping Post"' would be six minutes and some nights [it] would be fifteen minutes, and sometimes it'd be twenty minutes. It was all about "How we're feeling tonight."

> I'd never experienced that in show business before. . . . Even in that area [the West Coast], a forty-five-minute set was forty-six-minutes tops—except for the Allman Brothers.
>
> It was absolutely real and spontaneous and driven by greatness. . . . To this day I have never been so blown away by an act."[37]

The band's live performance had a similar impact on Philip Rauls, Atlantic's promotions man in Oklahoma, Arkansas, Memphis, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas. "The Allman Brothers did it all for me. On stage they were giants."[38]

Yet live albums were a relative rarity at the time, particularly for a band that had not yet broken through commercially. In addition, the genre was nearly exclusively the purview of jazz, classical, and rhythm and blues/soul stars.[39] Atlantic had released *Ray Charles in Person* in 1959 at Wexler's behest. In 1963, James Brown released *Live at the Apollo*, whose recording he funded out of his own pocket because his record label would not support it. The record reached as high as number two on the *Billboard* pop charts, an extraordinary accomplishment for a rhythm and blues record.[40] Though popular documents of an artist's career, most live albums, such as B.B. King's *Live at the Regal* that had influenced the brothers Allman so much in their early days, failed to reach the charts altogether.

Because the band made its living on live performance, a live record the logical course of action. Promotions at the time focused on the Allman Brothers Band as a superlative live act, a group of "individual superstars."[41] A feature in the College Entertainment Associates newsletter showed why:

> Talented musicians all over are tackling their professional frustrations by coming out from behind the scenes to form groups with a more clearly defined musical eloquence. Such a group is the Allman Brothers Band, a six-piece, essentially experimental blues-rock band.
>
> "They are not content with their style of playing and are constantly improving themselves," Ted Borek Jr., a student at Mercer University wrote after seeing the group at the Second International Atlanta Pop Festival. "Receiving standing ovations for songs such as Whipping Post and Black Hearted Woman from their first album, they also did some nice country funkey [*sic*], complete with sliding guitar and gospel-influenced harmonies.
>
> Atlanta's underground newspaper praises [Gregg] for his restraint and dignity . . . watching him sing is quite a cultural shock experience. He "sounds" of raw pain and gutsy lifestyles while he face looks like a figure from Renaissance paining.
>
> Second lead guitarist Dick[ey] Betts is a superlative instrumentalist in his own right, and his inclusion reinforces the *group* orientation for these super-musicians. Berry Oakely is without question one of the heaviest and most swinging bassists in the music. Two drummers (one black, one white) provide adequate rhythmic punctuation and flow for the riffs and improvisations of the Allman Brothers Band.[42]

Descriptions like these prevailed. A preview for an October 1971 show at New Mexico State University noted, "By exploring the combination of and elasticity of their own abilities as individuals within a group they have formed the embryo of a tribal symphonic form covering a wide musical spectrum, but at the same time retaining the classic influences of rock and blues within their musical structure." Adapting language used to promote the band's first shows in Macon in May 1969, the feature calls the band "an experimental group" that recoiled "from the hard scene and emerged with a clearly defined musical eloquence." The Allman Brothers, the article concluded, "removed the

premise of playing for commercial gain [and has] been able to explore beyond the boundaries of manicured music."[43]

The downplaying of the monetary aspect of the equation became part of a campaign to dub the Allman Brothers Band "The People's Band," remembered Jonny Podell, who booked the band in the northeast from its earliest days.[44] "The Allman Brothers taught me everything I know about music," Podell recalled. When he began promoting the band, "I was probably the kind of fan that they hated. I knew pop music, bubblegum music, and I didn't get this—I learned representing them."[45] From Podell's perspective, *Idlewild South* was key to the band's development as a revenue-generating act. Despite its lack of chart success, "The word had got out. The tastemakers—Bill Graham and *Rolling Stone*—had come out forcefully in favor of the Allman brothers. The network of underground clubs, from Boston Tea Party to the Fillmore West, clearly supported the Allman Brothers, and would play them five times a year if they could."[46] The band was best live, and its relentless touring schedule had garnered a significant following.

Podell's mention of Graham as a tastemaker is somewhat interesting, but not altogether surprising. Bill Graham began as a promoter in the early days of the San Francisco rock music scene. He had admittedly scant connection to the cultural sounds happening around him. "From the very beginning," he wrote, "I accepted the fact that I had no real personal knowledge of the rock scene of that era." Because he did not listen to radio, "I didn't really know what was going on. Even If I had, I wouldn't have heard the

music that was being played at the Fillmore then."[47] Despite his considerable influence, Graham did not impose himself as an arbiter of talent. Instead, he did as Tom Parker had taught John D. Loudermilk. He watched closely what his crowds responded to. "Early on, I don't think Bill noticed our music much," Grateful Dead guitarist Jerry Garcia recalled. "He always loves it when the crowd gets off even if he doesn't personally understand or personally dig the music."[48]

Graham also queried the artists' own likes and influences. Thus, he became exposed to, and hosted at his venues, African American performers such as the Staple Singers, Bobby "Blue" Bland, James Brown, Chuck Berry, and, most notably for Graham, Otis Redding. "There was an *ultimate* musician everyone wanted to see. Everybody said, '*This* is the guy.' *Otis*. Otis Redding. He was *it.* For everybody that talked to me."[49] Because of the segregated nature of the music touring business, it was a bit of a coup for Graham to secure Redding to perform in San Francisco. By in December 1966, when Redding appeared at Graham's Fillmore, the artist had yet to truly break through to the national white market. "Otis had worked to white audiences but at white colleges in the South because it was a tradition," Phil Walden recalled. "Black people *always* entertained white people down there." The result was career changing for Redding and had a major impact on Graham as well. "By *far*," he wrote, "Otis Redding was *the* single most extraordinary talent I had ever seen. There was no comparison."[50] Redding's Fillmore shows in that year were also the first time Graham and Walden came into contact. It was not the last.

The Fillmore East and West concert halls are remembered fondly as places that nurtured the talent of countless bands throughout the entire rock era. Paul Baratta, who managed the Fillmore West, recollected how the venues dissolved the line between musician and audience: the "performer on stage interacting with the audience to form a unit. Not just somebody performing at an audience." Graham encouraged this arrangement. Eric Clapton, who first played Graham's Fillmore in 1967 while touring with Cream, remembered how seriously the people he encountered—musicians and audiences alike—took their craft. "The first time I went to San Francisco," he stated, "I experienced the kind of more introverted or serious or introspective attitude toward our music. . . . I was encouraged really to get outside of the format. I was encouraged to experiment."[51]

Cream brought an improvisational focus with them from the U.K., and they inspired and gained inspiration from the American music scene. "There was a lot of bravery back then. There were a lot more risks taken and people out on a limb." Clapton credited Graham for creating an atmosphere that encouraged the musicians to explore and experiment creatively. "Bill's great point was that he had deep-seated feelings for what was right in the music," Clapton concluded. Joshua Smith, who ran the light show at the Fillmore East, agreed. "Bill never made the mistake that I saw so many people make. Bill never thought he was the music. Bill was always the scene." Ultimately, Smith concluded, Graham "never stopped loving the artists."[52]

One of the artists Graham grew to love was the Allman Brothers Band. "I played them because I thought they were really good and I thought the public would think so as well. I wanted to build them into a headliner, and I thought they should have turned the corner sooner," he said. "I used the Allman Brothers as much as I could, if it fit in musically." The promoter enjoyed the band's music more than anything. "The Allman Brothers made me feel good, in that particularly physical way. You may not move, but it affects your body as well as your emotions," he remembered. "Less than ten bands, in all of rock, have that potential, for me, to get out there and make me feel really good; to put out the good spirit within you. The Allman Brothers have that ability."[53]

The affinity was mutual. Years later, Betts called Fillmore East "the Carnegie Hall of rock 'n' roll. . . . The best rock 'n' roll showcase you could play." He particularly remembered Graham's professionalism. "Bill Graham made a great presentation of rock 'n' roll with light shows and curtains and presentations of the bands and the set changes."[54] In addition, "It was a great-sounding room. It was fun to play," Betts added. "He made sure that the P.A. system was set up correctly. It wasn't too loud, it wasn't too soft, and everyone in the room could hear and see."[55]

While the Warehouse in New Orleans had been under consideration for the Allmans' live recording, the band eventually chose the Fillmore East, which he had opened in the East Village of New York City in March 1968. Graham booked the band for six shows over three nights: March 11 through 13, 1971.

The Allman Brothers were not the scheduled headliner the weekend they recorded the album for which they are most famous. They were instead the middle band on a bill that included Johnny Winter and the Elvin Bishop Group. The arrangement changed after the Allman Brothers' first set of the weekend. "After we played our first set on Thursday night," Butch Trucks recalled, "half the audience got up and walked out. Steve Paul, who was Johnny Winter's manager, said, 'Well, I guess Johnny is gonna be opening for the Allman Brothers from now on because we can't have that happen again.'"[56] Alan Arkush also remembered Winter's reluctance to follow the Allman Brothers. "I was a member of the light show by then and we weren't book to work that weekend because Johnny Winter was the headliner and Johnny Winter didn't like a light show. We didn't perform, we just came to see the shows." He ran into Duane Allman and the guitarist asked about the absence of the light show. "They were one of the few bands he would ask that the stage lights to be lowered so people could really see the light show," Arkush remembered. "So Duane called Bill and Bill said, 'Yeah, hire the light show. Will bring them on for you. If you guys want the light show, we'll do it.' They were so hot that they tore into the early show like it was Friday night late show Johnny wanted to reverse the order. He said he had to catch an airplane. But I'll tell you. He just couldn't top them."[57]

The new arrangement ended up being fortuitous, particularly for the liberty it provided the band to improvise and stretch songs to whatever length they desired. "If that hadn't happened," Trucks said, "we absolutely wouldn't have had all that time to do

all the stretching out that led to *At Fillmore East*. We only had ninety minutes and had some songs that lasted longer than that!"[58] While this is hyperbole, the band topped a combined seventy minutes with three of the songs that made it to album: "You Don't Love Me" (at 19:15) and "Whipping Post" (23:03) on *At Fillmore East* and "Mountain Jam" (33:41) on *Eat a Peach.* As Arkush remembered, "The Saturday night shows, early and late we're probably the greatest I ever saw the Allman Brothers play. Also, one of the greatest live performances I've ever witnessed."[59] Given the Fillmore East's prominence in the era, it is high praise indeed.

To the band, the recordings captured the band at its absolute peak. "What made that weekend special is that we had been out on the road, we'd been playing these songs, and you know how sometimes, everything comes together at the right time? When you have the right people in the right place doing the right thing?," Trucks reflected. "We were really comfortable with these songs that we were playing. Songs like 'Whipping Post' and 'Mountain Jam,' these were jams. We had really learned to talk to each other. By the time that weekend came along, we were really communicating."[60] Johanson concurred. "We knew those shows were special but when you're doing it and you're in the middle of it, you're not thinking like that. Great stuff was going on. I didn't want to get hung up over knowing the shows were being recorded. That would not be good, you need to get your mind off of that so you can you don't get hung up and forget what you're supposed to be doing, which is playing music and connecting with an audience."[61] "We were just at the peak of reaching the point where we knew each other

well enough, we knew the material well enough to where we didn't have to think about it and could let it all flow so naturally," Trucks recalled. "We knew what each other was going to do—yet we were constantly wide open to letting it go and taking a dive and seeing what would happen."[62]

As is his wont, Johanson highlighted the connection to jazz. "To me, our songs were stretched out in the studio and we were able to do more of that when playing live. You think about the records that King Curtis did or maybe back to the Woody Herman Band or Duke Ellington's band; in those bands, various people took solos and the energy directed them to do so; it's the same way with us in a live setting."[63] While recording *At Fillmore East*, he shared, "You went by what the song was dictating as opposed to thinking it out—'We're gonna do two verses of this and then we're gonna do an eight-bar or sixteen-bar solo.'"[64] The band's jams, Betts remembered, followed a jazz formula. They were "structured to the point where we'd know who went first. But what was going to happen in the middle of it, we never knew."[65] The songs morphed accordingly, stretching timewise to whatever limits the band and soloist felt in the moment. When queried about song length, Johanson quoted John Coltrane. "With whatever amount of space you have to do something," the saxophonist said, "that's what you have and the ability to do that just shows the mastery of knowing what you're doing, how to develop it and how to play a song."[66] It is the formula the Allman Brothers Band followed in 1971 at Fillmore East.

"We knew it'd be a good show," Betts said, reflecting on the decision to record at the Fillmore. The venue's typical audience was an important consideration. "[The audience] would kind of play along with us. We'd go from two decibels to a hundred," Gregg Allman remembered. "But when we shut down, they'd shut down. They'd go from screaming and yelling to absolute silence. They were right on top of every single vibration coming from the stage." Audience reception was vital to the band. "Our music was always about playing," Betts said, "getting to know the audience to the point that we're communicating. I'm sure that's what everybody tries to do. But with us, it was our whole thing, identifying with the people that came to see us. And in doing so much roadwork, we did exactly that. We found out who they were, and we found out who we were."[67]

Recordings exist of four shows used for *At Fillmore East*: the early and late shows on March 12 and 13. For the shows on March 11, Duane Allman had invited a horn section, including Johanson's old friend Juicy Carter, to join the band onstage. Dowd convinced Allman to cancel the experiment. "Duane," he said, "this isn't the time to try this out." Allman reluctantly agreed and none of the horn section's appearances made the final album.[68]

The Allman Brothers Band played a tight setlist the weekend of March 11, 1971. The band had formalized its sets to the extent that its shows began with the songs Duane Allman played on slide guitar. Thus, the first three shows began with the same four short blues songs: "Statesboro Blues," "Trouble No More," "Don't Keep Me Wonderin'," and "Done Somebody Wrong." Only "Don't Keep Me Wonderin'" was an original.[69] The band

had recorded it for *Idlewild South* the previous year. "Trouble No More" had appeared on the band's debut album. "Statesboro Blues" and Elmore James's "Don't Somebody Wrong" had yet to appear on an Allman Brothers release (though the band had attempted to record the former several times in the studio to no avail). By the last show of the weekend, Allman Brothers dropped all but "Statesboro Blues" from the setlist, satisfied that they'd already captured great versions for the album. In their place was a version of harmonica player Sonny Boy Williamson's "One Way Out"—a somewhat sloppy take that the band did not release until 2014.[70]

The band performed Dickey Betts's "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed" three times during the weekend, twice with Carter playing a slightly out-of-tune saxophone. The third version, recorded at the early show on Saturday, March 13, clocks in at thirteen minutes, nearly twice the length of the studio version. Allman and Betts's solos reflect two guitarists in seeming complete command of their instruments, confidently channeling their jazz influences as much as their blues roots in extended solos. The entire instrumental is a tour-de-force, with the six band members in sync with each other through the complex song's multiple melodic and tempo changes. The band performed another instrumental twice, the up-tempo, jazzy "Hot 'Lanta," collectively credited to the entire band.

Three longer blues songs appeared as well. "Stormy Monday" and "You Don't Love Me," were covers. The third was Gregg Allman's "Whipping Post." The band played the former only once, in an extended take that captured a tremendous performance. The

group played "You Don't Love Me," which it had picked up from harmonica player Junior Wells, three times in a format greatly expanded from the versions the band played in summer 1970: from five minutes in 1970 to nearly twenty minutes at Fillmore East. It also extended "Whipping Post," also performed three times. The song, which was 5:17 long on the band's debut album, clocked in 22:53, 17:15, and 22:00.

The last song the full Allman Brothers Band played that weekend was "Mountain Jam." It was a fitting end to a triumphant weekend. After the 33:51 jam, featuring solos from all band members, including a three-minute dual drum jam, an appreciative Duane Allman exclaimed, "Thank you! Thank you very much! Sure has been a fine weekend."[71] His words were an understatement. The music that weekend at Fillmore East captured Allman and his band in their element and truly playing at their peak. The band knew it, as Berry Oakley and Allman told the Warehouse crowd later that week. "Last weekend we played a concert in New York," he announced from the stage. "We recorded four different shows and we got enough material that sounds a lot like the really spaced out stuff that we do when we get down here and we're gonna put it out on record in about six weeks." "Buy it," Allman answered. "If you wanna stay up all night," Oakley retorted, "you can stay up every night with us. We'll be right there on your record player."[72]

Next up for the band was distilling the music onto an album. Recording notes from the Fillmore East run note how the band selected which versions of songs to include on the final album:

Statesboro Blues - 4th show <u>Positively</u>

> Done Somebody Wrong 2nd take - best feel, but Dickey very unhappy with his solo, MUST be redone. 3rd take solos all okay, but feel not as good as 2nd take
>
> One Way Out - Only 1 take of this. Dickey feels solo is unsatisfactory, but track is basically good. Possibly repair this, otherwise scrap entire thing. Exclude 2nd 12 bars of Dick's solo
>
> Elizabeth Reed - PERFECT (hand-drawn flower) 3rd show. xoxoxo. Please pay special attention to bass clarity
>
> Hot Lanta[73]

Of the songs above, only "One Way Out" did not make the album. The band had multiple shows and multiple versions to work with.

The limitations of vinyl meant the Allman Brothers Band's longer songs such as "You Don't Love Me" and "Whipping Post"—each twenty minutes or longer—would consume the entire side of an album. Walden's solution was to press Atlantic to release the recording as a double album. "When I told Wexler that our Fillmore East live album would have to be two LPs and contain at least one sixteen-minute song, he resisted," Walden recalled. "'Not every note,' [Wexler] argued, 'is vital to our heritage.' I said, 'Jerry, the boys are pure artists and that's what it's got to be.' Jerry agreed, he understood." "What I understood," Wexler said, "was that I had never heard a guitarist I found as satisfying as Duane."[74] Wexler relented, and agreed to release the record as a double set.

Walden next presented Wexler with an additional demand. "Now let me tell you the other part of this thing," he told his counterpart. "Our image is that this is the people's band. Music is for the people and therefore we want to make this specially priced," Walden said. "We want to sell it for $6.98."[75] The price point was important to

Walden. "We wanted the album to carry a price tag everyone could afford."[76] Wexler answered it was economically impossible to do so.[77] Walden was unbowed, and Wexler agreed if Walden would cut a deal on song publishing. Since Walden managed the publishing rights for the three original Allman Brothers Band songs on the record—"In Memory of Elizabeth Reed," "Hot 'Lanta," and "Whipping Post"—he had the authority to do so. And he did.[78]

Walden's gamble paid off and *At Fillmore East* became the breakthrough that the band, its manager, and Atlantic had long sought. "I don't think anyone could've predicted the extent of [the] album's success but we were counting heavily on it," Walden said years later.[79] Trucks agreed, "Two years of playing every city in the country, we built a following and we worked very hard for two years and built our following when that live album came out that's what everybody was waiting for."[80] The album was as near a representation of the band live as possible. "There were no overdubs whatsoever on the *Fillmore*," Betts recalled. "No vocal overdubs, no repair work. There was some edits in some of the jams. You know, they had to edit it to try to get it on the record, but other than that, there was nothing done to that. It's just a pure performance."[81] Critics and consumers agreed.

In June 1971, as Capricorn was about to release *At Fillmore East*, music writer Tony Glover highlighted the significance of the impending album, "The one problem was the Allmans in a studio, and live shows of theirs often turn into a whole other trip, with long extended instrumental jams that shift through all kinds of moods." Phil Walden

agreed with Glover. "The band had not really found themselves in the studio at that time; but they had in front of live audiences. They had more freedom there, they opened up. They weren't a three-minute-cut band."[82] On *At Fillmore East*, Glover noted, "The Allmans get the opportunity to stretch out some." Although, he acknowledged, "no record is as good as hearing the band live, this comes close to capturing the feelings they generate—and it is another good example of the group's attitude towards their music."[83] As Walden argued, "The live album gave them an opportunity to play on record as they played in person; and people reacted to that. That was really the turning point."[84]

Released on July 6, 1971, *At Fillmore East* featured only seven cuts, only two of which—"In Memory of Elizabeth Reed" and "Whipping Post"—had previously appeared on Allman Brothers Band studio releases, albeit in much-truncated form. Two were instrumentals, "Elizabeth Reed" and "Hot 'Lanta." Two were stretched out blues, "Whipping Post" and "You Don't Love Me." Only two of the songs were even of remotely the appropriate length to be released as singles: "Statesboro Blues" (4:17) and "Done Somebody Wrong" (4:33), though neither was. The record was made for the serious music listener, and ultimately found a home on the more freeform FM radio format.

By summer 1971, FM was still a relatively new radio format. While the frequency had been in existence since the 1930s, AM had long been predominated. The band was the bastion of mainstream programming. FM's growth had been stymied as radio stations simulcast their AM programming on the FM dial. That changed in 1965 when the Federal Communications Commission issued a non-duplication rule prohibiting AM stations from

merely retransmitting their programming on their FM sister stations. The rule forced hundreds of FM stations to develop new formats nearly overnight.[85] Many turned to the freeform format gaining widespread acceptance nationwide.

Freeform was exactly that: a format untethered by the bland, homogenous radio show structure of the AM dial. In 1949, Berkeley, California's KPFA became the first to broadcast in freeform. At its launch, Jesse Walker writes, "No station like KPFA existed anywhere else in America."[86] The music it played ranged from contemporary sounds to opera, jazz, and what today is called "world music." The station didn't only broadcast music. Over the years it featured political commentary, film and literary critics, public intellectuals, and poets, among many others. Eschewing corporate and government sponsorship, KPFA instead turned to its listeners for financial support. Initially, the station proved unable to sustain itself. It folded briefly in August 1950, and reopened due to an outpouring of listener support. It remains in operation today.[87]

Following the FCC's 1965 ruling, other stations followed KPFA's model. In 1966 in New York City, the FM sister station to the popular WOR-AM, experimented with freeform, becoming the first commercial rock station on FM. In a report for the *Village Voice* in December 1966, Richard Goldstein wrote of how the station differed from its competitors:

> WOR-FM makes the rest of the pop radio scene look like a teabag on its third cup of water. Its staff of disc jockeys, veterans of the AM frenzy are quieter and oddly, less formal than the good guys, who pour a puddle of forced cheer into their microphones.

> The new station programs for an audience which doesn't regard the big beat as an impediment to pleasure or to sanity. WOR is rock without the AM shlock. Says program director Tommy Reynolds: "We're selling quality music. We don't shout, we don't ring bells, we don't intrude over our vocals or talk down to our listeners."[88]

WOR, according to Goldstein, was "the first station in New York to cover the pop scene before it fossilizes. And it makes WOR this radio market's first authentic breakout station." The station was the only place focused on songs such as "I Can't Control Myself" by the Troggs, "Bend It" (a hit in the U.K. but not in the U.S. because of its alleged sexual innuendo), and the Byrds's "Eight Miles High" after many had stopped playing it because of its connotations with drugs.[89] A fall 1967 advertisement for the station quoted the *Saturday Evening Post* that WOR "is threatening to revolutionize radio by playing pop music for adults in the same dignified format that FM usually reserves for classical music."[90] Despite these accolades, WOR abandoned the format soon after the advertisement ran. It wasn't the end to freeform in New York City, however, as WOR deejays soon took up residence at WNEW.[91]

Though he's sometimes given credit for creation of commercial freeform radio, KMPX-FM deejay Tom "Big Daddy" Donahue from Rockville, Maryland, and Philadelphia, had surely heard WOR before he migrated to the west coast. His famous recollection, bemoaning why no radio station was playing the eleven-plus-minute song "The End" by the Doors, is therefore probably apocryphal. But his time at KMPX in San Francisco was significant for the rise of FM. By the time Donahue joined the station in April 1967, fellow deejay Larry Miller had already been hosting a successful show on the station since that

February. Miller's playlists of folk, classical, jazz, and rock, found an appreciative audience. Donahue built on that audience, and within three weeks, Jesse Walker reports, "listeners were sending him beads and posters to decorate the studio." "Gradually," Walker concludes, "the hippies took over KPMX."[92]

KMPX epitomized the ideal of the underground FM station, one that built on the model WOR had employed a year before. Its deejays, Todd Coffin argues, "played extended experimental and psychedelic music that addressed the culture of sex and drugs more openly than any previous San Francisco station. [They] also personified the mellow, often stoned, attitudes of listeners who believed there was a fun and festive side to the political and social upheavals of the times." According to scholar Michael C. Keith, the raison d'être of the underground radio movement (of which KMPX was such a large part) "was in step with that of the growing counterculture. It resented the mainstream gestalt of the day regarding social issues (war, drugs, race), but most of all it detested formula radio."[93] It was the perfect medium for the music of the Allman Brothers Band.

Breaking the formula meant playing songs that had not been released as singles. "All of a sudden, people were hearing albums that they'd never heard on the radio before," former KPMX deejay Bob McClay recalled. "It was astounding to be able to hear that kind of music and it was so important."[94] FM stations that followed the KPMX formula focused on album cuts, and therefore made space for songs longer than the tight, two- to three-minute formats of AM radio. Albums, deejay Allen Shaw noted while working in AM radio in Chicago, had taken over the radio industry. "The single most

important and long-lasting aspect of what was happening," Shaw believed, was "the music, album rock, played in stereo high fidelity on FM."[95]

FM radio's predilection for album cuts was critical to the breakthrough success of *At Fillmore East.* The album arrived as the singles market, so critical to AM's dominance of the music industry, was on the wane. As Ritchie Yorke reported for *Billboard* in November 1971:

> Singles have sunk to less than a 10th of the total music volume, most strictly singles artists are treated with disdain by the rock print media, and most significantly, the local Top 40 radio station bears very little resemblance to what is currently happening in rock music.
>
> A revolution has taken place before our ears, and the Top 40 station is on the way to becoming just an oldie-but-goodie from the past. Top 40 may not yet be dead, but it's certainly down on its knees.
>
> By imposing preconceived format standards on record makers (i.e., length of song, lyric content, basic sound, length of intro, et al.), Top 40 programmers have managed to kick the truly creative producers into working for other media. Many record makers became film producers, and the ones who chose to remain in music now produce for the album market.[96]

FM, which focused on harder rock and album tracks was both the present and future of the music business. Yorke cited "highly prominent U.S. rock acts"—including the Allman Brothers Band, Grand Funk Railroad, the Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead, the James Gang, Steppenwolf, and the Mothers of Invention—that, while popular, were "relatively unknown to the AM audience." "The groups which you don't hear on AM radio are actually the headliners of the rock scene," he concluded. "They may not have AM hit singles but they command huge audiences which transcend the need for AM and FM

exposure. In short, the record buying audience has shown a tendency to make its own decision on what to buy without referring to the playlists of local stations."[97]

In addition to larger commercial radio stations, the FM stations of colleges and universities adopted the freeform format. As colleges were one of the major touring outlets for the band throughout 1970 and 1971, it proved a boon to the Allman Brothers Band. Prior to the release of *At Fillmore East*, the band had already begun to gain traction on college radio. The playlists of Brooklyn College's WBCR, Georgia Tech's WREK, Franklin Pierce University's (New Hampshire) WFPC, WTCC at Springfield (MA) Technical Community College, Northeastern University's WRBB, WAMU at American University, KBLA (AM) at California State at Los Angeles, Louisiana State University's WLSU, all reported including *Idlewild South* (or two selections from the album: "Revival," "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed") and even "Black Hearted Woman" from the band's debut album.[98]

Closer to Macon, deejay Ed Shane had built an audience for Atlanta's WPLO-FM, which was originally a pilot project at Georgia State in 1968. Shane regularly spun *Idlewild South* and other contemporary music, John Ogden noted, "playing favorite cuts off long-playing albums and keeping a music/commercials ratio of 8 to 1."[99] "Ed Shane had a great ear. . . . [And] that really started allowing me to bring these groups to Atlanta," promoter Alex Cooley recollected. "Atlanta was *the* most important market in the southeast," Cooley said, "And WPLO was a step towards making it so."[100]

As stations like WPLO, KPMX, WNEW, and those at colleges and universities began focusing on album cuts, the FM dial became the place where true music aficionados tuned in. In New Orleans, the Warehouse, the concert venue that had become somewhat of a second home to the Allman Brothers Band in 1970 and 1971 urged patrons to support local FM radio:

> We strongly encourage the switch from AM bubblegum music to New Orleans's two FM stations: WJMR and WRNO. Richard Shanks with some help from his friends, Larry Klein and Mike Roach have put together one of the nation's finest shows: KALEIDOSCOPE on WJMR 7pm-midnight. Joe Costello, owner and general manager of WRNO, along with his staff . . . have been quite helpful in getting the Warehouse off the ground. WJMR-FM, WRNO-FM and the Warehouse are all trying to bring nice music to this city. Join us in our fight against AM-bugglegum music--switch to FM[101]

FM would prove crucial to the commercial breakthrough of *At Fillmore East.* "The Allman Brothers were an FM radio band," stated Philip Rauls, "and rock music dominated that market."[102] "The West Coast was one of the main areas where those FM stations were," recalled John Carter. "Needless to say, in L.A. and San Francisco they were strong. So it was my job to have [radio station personnel] at shows, to get those records played that weren't going to get played on pop stations. And things were working great. People couldn't believe the number of records the Allman Brothers were selling on what appeared—to the old school—as no airplay. But I knew that the small audience that was listening to those FM stations was religious about it."[103] "Those long instrumentals and drawn-out pieces were not really commercial at the time," Dickey Betts reflected. "In

fact, if it hadn't been for FM radio, which was like a real underground radio system that would play these extended pieces of music, we would never have been successful."[104]

Released on July 6, 1971, *At Fillmore East* stormed up the *Billboard* charts. Before the month was out, *Billboard* identified *At Fillmore East* as one of its "National Breakouts," as the record jumped to number 82 on its albums chart within its first three weeks of release.[105] Walden did what he could to encourage the success, personally calling *Billboard's* Claude Hall to say the "Allman Brothers album is doing great."[106] By September 4, 1971, *At Fillmore East* reached its highest chart position, number 13. By October 25, 1971, the album earned a gold certification from the Recording Industry Association of America for selling more than 500,00 copies. It ultimately spent forty eight weeks on the *Billboard* 200 chart, a mammoth achievement for a band with no hit singles and no discernable success to date.[107] With *At Fillmore East,* the reception the band had received from its live shows finally translated into record sales.[108]

The success had been long in coming. "I guess it went along so slow for so long," Butch Trucks noted, "none of us really expected a whole lot to happen. When we got that gold record, we realized we were doing something." The band thought their music was just too unique for audiences. "We knew we were playing music nobody else had played before," Trucks said, "but none of us had thought about it in commercial terms." Success, then, had become a new challenge for the band. "That was probably one of the roughest spots," the drummer continued, "realizing we were commercially successful; that people

were starting to listen to us; that we had to keep that from influencing our music, keep the music still the six of us having fun."[109]

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[1] Allman Brothers drummer Jai Johanny Johanson toured and Duane Allman recorded with both.

[2] Palmer, *Rock 'n' Roll: An Unruly History*, 80

[3] Palmer, *Rock 'n' Roll: An Unruly History*, 80-81.

[4] See Guralnick, *Sweet Soul Music*; Gordon, *Respect Yourself*; Hughes, C*ountry Soul*.

[5] Hughes's *Country Soul* provides the most insight. Other recent books that examine the dynamic of black and white in studios and the music business include: Joel Selvin, *Here Comes the Night: The Dark Soul of Bert Berns and the Dirty Business of Rhythm & Blues* (Berkeley: Counterpoint Press, 2014); John Capouya, *Florida Soul: From Ray Charles to KC and the Sunshine Band* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2017). See also Gordon, *Respect Yourself*; Fletcher, *In the Midnight Hour*; Ward, *Just My Soul Responding*; Ward, *Radio and the Struggle for Civil Rights*; Guralnick, *Sweet Soul Music*; Miller, *Segregating Sound*.

[6] Landau, Untitled Essay.

[7] Bertrand, 64.

[8] Gordon, 36.

[9] Whitley.

[10] Palmer, "Allman Brothers Band."

[11] Edmonds, "Snapshots of the South."

[12] Wexler and Ritz, 256.

[13] Edmonds, "Snapshots of the South." Fenter is one of the true unsung heroes of the Capricorn Records/Allman Brothers story. He died of a heart attack on July 21, 1983, at the nadir of Capricorn Records's bankruptcy case.

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[14] Kirk West, "Ahmet Ertegun: A Six-Point Perspective," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 50 (2006), 24.

[15] Bob Hamilton, *Operating Manual for Starship Radio '73* (Los Angeles: Bob D. Hamilton, 1973), accessed March 30, 2018, http://www.americanradiohistory.com/hd2/IDX-Business/Music/Archive-Tip-Sheets/IDX/Hamilton/Starship-Radio-1973-Full-OCR-Page-0369.pdf#search=%22allman%22, 367. The term "exploitation" is curious but is probably referring to *how* records are promoted and marketed.

[16] Cameron Crowe, "The Sound of the South Sounds Fine," *Circular*, August 12, 1974, 26.

[17] Edmonds, "Snapshots of the South." In the mid-to-late 1970s, this became a major issue of contention with the surviving members of the Allman Brothers Band, who successfully sued Walden and Capricorn. See Freeman, 137-138, 147-148, 197-198, 217-218, 240-242, 248-250, 257-268; Paul, *One Way Out*, 262-263; and Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 285-286, 291.

[18] Tiven.

[19] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

[20] "A Moment Captured in Time," 16.

[21] *American Revolutions, Southern Rock.*

[22] Paul, *One Way Out*, 100-102.

[23] *Southern Voices, American Dream*.

[24] Alan Paul, "Low Down and Dirty: Shades of Dickey Betts," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 22 (n.d.), 51.

[25] Crowe, "The Allman Brothers Story," 52.

[26] Hoskyns, "Southern Men."

[27] Paul, "Low Down and Dirty: Shades of Dickey Betts," 51.

[28] Russell Hall, "How the Allman Brothers Band Launched Southern Rock," *Gibson.com* (blog), June 11, 2013, accessed November 27, 2015, http://www.gibson.com/news-lifestyle/features/en-us/allman-brothers-band-launched-southern-rock.aspx.

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[29] Steve Dollar, "Duane Allman Left Tragic but Lasting Musical Legacy," *Wilmington Star-News*, November 17, 1996.

[30] Freeman, 53.

[31] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 116.

[32] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 117.

[33] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 129.

[34] *American Revolutions: Southern Rock*.

[35] Poe, 198.

[36] Poe, 198.

[37] Poe, 198.

[38] Philip Rauls, interview by author, phone, October 7, 2016. Incidentally, Rauls is responsible for introducing Bill Johnston of the Warehouse in New Orleans to the Allman Brothers Band.

[39] Sam Sutherland, "Remotes on Rise - Cite Acceptance," *Billboard*, September 1, 1973, 1.

[40] Guralinick, *Sweet Soul Music*, 234-238.

[41] "Advertisement: September 24, 1971," collection of Mark Tucci.

[42] College Entertainment Associates, Inc., "Allman Brothers," *CEA Newsletter*, January 1971, collection of Craig Ruskey. The "underground newspaper" referred to here is *The Great Speckled Bird*.

[43] "Allman Brothers Concert to Feature Blues-Rock Band," *Round Up*, September 29, 1971, 1.

[44] Ray Waddell, "An American Classic: The Allman Brothers Band *Billboard* Salute," *Billboard*, December 18, 1999, 20.

[45] Kirk West, "Jon Podell: Booking the Best Band in the Land," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 25 (n.d.), 31-32.

[46] Kirk West, "Jon Podell," 35.

[47] Graham and Greenfield, 172.

[48] Graham and Greenfield, 202.

[49] Graham and Greenfield, 172-173. All emphasis is from the original source.

[50] Graham and Greenfield, 173-175.

[51] Graham and Greenfield, 206, 214, 217. Clapton credits some of this audience introspection to hallucinogenic drugs.

[52] Graham and Greenfield, 206, 214, 217. Cream's first experience in the U.S. was as part of a package show in New York City, where the band played nine dates at the bottom of a bill featuring Mitch Ryder, Smokey Robinson, Wilson Pickett, the Blues Project, and the Who. Cream was initially relegated to three songs per show, five times a day, before winnowing their set down to a single song. See Alan Bershaw, "Liner notes, March 10, 1968 Early Show," *Wolfgang's Vault* at ConcertVault.com, accessed April 2, 2018http://www.concertvault.com/cream/winterland-march-10-1968-early.html.

[53] Nolan, 28.

[54] Redbeard, "In the Studio with Redbeard: The Allman Brothers Band Live at Fillmore East: Gregg Allman, Dickey Betts," *In the Studio with Redbeard*, n.d., accessed June 14, 2017, http://www.inthestudio.net/online-on-demand/allman-brothers-band-live-fillmore-east-gregg-allman-dickey-betts/.

[55] Corbin Reiff, "Allman Brothers Band's Legendary 1971 Fillmore East Run: An Oral History," Rolling Stone, March 11, 2016, accessed July 16, 2016, http://www.rolling stone.com/music/news/allman-brothers-bands-legendary-1971-fillmore-east-run-an-oral-history-20160311?page=8.

[56] Dale.

[57] Graham Greenfield, 307.

[58] Reiff.

[59] Graham Greenfield, 307.

[60] Dale.

[61] Sharp.

[62] Reiff.

[63] Sharp.

[64] Sharp.

[65] "The Allman Brothers Band: The Fillmore East, New York City, March 11th-13th, 1971," *Rolling Stone*, June 4, 1987, 79-80.

[66] Sharp.

[67] "The Allman Brothers Band: The Fillmore East, New York City," 79-80.

[68] See Paul, *One Way Out*, 116-124. In 2014, Mercury Records released all six sets, and the band's set at the closing of the Fillmore East, on a six-cd set called *The 1971 Fillmore East Recordings*. It includes the appearances by the full horn section on the March 12 early show and by just Carter on soprano saxophone on the March 12 late show. Johnny Winter's drummer Bobby Caldwell joined on percussion for several of the shows as well.

[69] Because Allman played slide predominantly in open-E tuning, this shortened the transition in the set. Once the band had played the songs Allman played on slide, he switched to a standard tuned guitar. Allman only played slide in standard tuning on two songs, "Mountain Jam" and "Dreams."

[70] The version that appears on *Eat a Peach* is from the last night at the Fillmore East on June 27, 1971.

[71] Duane Allman in "Mountain Jam," *Eat a Peach*, the Allman Brothers Band, PolyGram, 314 517 292-2, CD, 1992.

[72] Berry Oakley and Duane Allman, Concert at the Warehouse, New Orleans, LA, March 20, 1971, author's personal collection.

[73] "ABB 3rd Album Notes," 1971. The Allman Brothers Band Museum at the Big House.

[74] Wexler and Ritz, 256-257.

[75] *American Revolutions: Southern Rock*.

[76] Russell Hall, "How the Allman Brothers Band Launched Southern Rock."

[77] Ertegun, 240.

[78] Ertegun, 240; Hall, "Capricorn Records."

[79] Russell Hall, "How the Allman Brothers Band Launched Southern Rock."

[80] Fornatale.

[81] Obrecht, "Duane Allman: The Complete 1981 Dickey Betts Interview." The edits Betts referred to are a splicing of two versions of "You Don't Love Me" into one and cutting out a Thom Doucette harmonica solo in "Stormy Monday." In 2014, Betts told *Rolling Stone's* Corbin Reiff, "There was kind of a running joke in the music business. Nobody said it in public in an interview or anything, but people would say, 'The only thing live on such-and-such record was the audience.' . . . [A] lot of times they would go back into the studio and redo things; redo vocals and stuff. The Fillmore East album is absolutely live. We didn't go back and re-record one guitar solo; we didn't add anything to it." See Reiff, "Allman Brothers Band's Legendary 1971 Fillmore East Run."

[82] Nolan, 32.

[83] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

[84] Nolan, 32.

[85] See WFMU, "A Brief History of Freeform Radio," 1998, accessed July 1, 2016, http://www.wfmu.org/LCD/21/freeform.html. For more comprehensive histories of FM radio. See also Rick Sklar, *Rocking America: An Insider's Story—How the All-Hit Radio Stations Took Over* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984); Michael C. Keith, *Voices in the Purple Haze: Underground Radio and the Sixties* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997); Richard Neer, *FM: The Rise and Fall of Rock Radio* (New York: Villard, 2001); Jesse Walker, *Rebels on the Air: An Alternative History of Radio in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2001); Michael C. Keith, *Sounds in the Dark: All-Night Radio in American Life* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 2001); Christopher H. Sterling and Michael C. Keith, *Sounds of Change: A History of FM Broadcasting in America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Dave Pierce, *Riding on the Ether Express: A Memoir of 1960s Los Angeles, the Rise of Freeform Underground Radio, and the Legendary KPPC-FM* (Lafayette, LA: Center for Louisiana Studies University of Louisiana at Lafayette, 2008).

[86] Walker, 48.

[87] Walker, 48-51.

[88] Richard Goldstein, "Pop Eye: 69 with a Bullet, Part II," New York Radio Archive, December 1, 1966, accessed March 31, 2018, http://www.nyradioarchive.com/images/radioscans/WORFM_VV_19661201.pdf.

[89] Goldstein.

[90] WOR-FM Advertisement, *FM Guide*, 1967, accessed March 31, 2018, http://www.nyradioarchive.com/images/radioscans/WORFM_RatingsAd.jpg.

[91] David Hinkley, "WOR-FM: First to Span the Spectrum," *New York Daily News*, October 29, 2007, accessed March 31, 2018, http://www.nydailynews.com/entertainment/tv-movies/wor-fm-span-spectrum-article-1.232150.

[92] Walker, 92-93.

[93] Keith, 94.

[94] Todd Coffin, "Birth of Community Rock Radio: A Brief History of KMPX and KSAN-FM: Historical Essay," *Found SF* (blog), January 21, 2010, accessed July 1, 2016, http://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=Birth_of_Community_Rock_Radio:_A_brief_history_of_KMPX_and_KSAN-FM.

[95] Walker, 106-107. Ironically, Shaw's response was to create a prefabricated, nationally syndicated radio program called LOVE. The first FM station to report playing the Allman Brothers Band was WHFS in Washington, D.C. "All Cuts," from *The Allman Brothers Band*, it stated in *Billboard* in December 1969.

[96] Ritchie Yorke, "Top 40 Radio May Be Rocking, but Is It Relating to What's Happening Today?," *Billboard*, November 6, 1971, RN-26, RN-40.

[97] Yorke, RN-26, RN-40. The playlists Yorke referred to were those of AM radio.

[98] "Special Merit Picks, Programming Aids: Progressive Rock," *Billboard*, December 20, 1969, 39; "Campus Programming Aids," *Billboard*, October 31, 1970, 43; "Campus News," *Billboard*, November 7, 1970, 28; "Campus Programming Aids," *Billboard*, November 7, 1970, 30; "Campus News," *Billboard*, November 14, 1970, 29; "Campus Programming Aids," *Billboard*, November 14, 1970, 31; "Campus News," *Billboard*, December 5, 1970, 39; "Campus Programming Aids," *Billboard*, January 16, 1971, 35; Bob Glassenberg, "Campus Programming Aids," *Billboard*, January 23, 1971, 38; "Campus Programming Aids," *Billboard*, February 6, 1971, 43; "Campus Programming Aids,"

*Billboard*, February 20, 1971, 36. The band's follow-up to *At Fillmore East*, *Eat a Peach*, continued to garner FM attention in *Billboard:* "FM Action," *Billboard*, March 11, 1972, 90; "What's Happening," *Billboard*, March 25, 1972, 27; "What's Happening," *Billboard*, April 8, 1972, 27.

[99] Ogden, "First There Is a Mountain," 13-14.

[100] Kirk Anderson, "Hittin' the Note Presents: Alex Cooley," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 12 (June 1995), 22. Along with Dave Hermann of WPLJ in New York, Shane is also one of only two to broadcast an interview with Duane Allman. The Shane interview is featured on the Capricorn records *The Duane Allman Dialogs*, Capricorn PRO-545, 1972.

[101] Untitled newspaper clipping, July 28, 2013, accessed March 29, 2018, www.blackstrat.net/warehouse/70-04-bb-an.jpg.

[102] Rauls interview by author.

[103] Poe, 197.

[104] Ertegun, 239.

[105] "Action Records: National Breakouts," *Billboard*, July 24, 1971, 50; "Top LP's A-Z (Listed by Artist)," *Billboard*, July 24, 1971, 60.

[106] Claude Hall, "Vox Jox," *Billboard*, August 7, 1971, 27.

[107] "The Allman Brothers Band Chart History," Billboard.com, accessed March 31, 2018, https://www.billboard.com/music/the-allman-brothers-band/chart-history/billboard-200/song/828886. Paul, *One Way Out*, 143.

[108] The album also reflected some changes in the music industry as well, in a turn toward double albums. See Paul Ackerman, "Output of 2-LP Sets Up; Spurs Multiple Pricing," *Billboard*, October 16, 1971, 1, 62.

[109] Nolan, 34, 38.

# Chapter 7

## "After Listening to Your Beautiful Music, the Rest of My Records Seem Irrelevant": Audience Reception of the Allman Brothers Band

On November 10, 1971, M. Skryp of Gagnon, Quebec, Canada wrote the following letter to the Allman Brothers Band, care of Atlantic Records in New York City, about *At Fillmore East*.

> Dear Sirs. Please view this letter of complaint. After spending a small fortune in hard-earned money in amassing a very fine record collection, I recently purchased your new live double LP album. After smoking up some excellent home-grown marijuana (one joint only), I then played your album. My complaint is this. After listening to your beautiful music, the best of my records seem irrelevant. Thank you very much for a wonderful performance. Hope to see you "live." Your dedicated fan, M. Skryp.[1]

Skryp's enthusiastic letter is a view into the mind and taste of a single consumer of the band's music. Since *At Fillmore East* reached gold record status within a matter of months, others obviously felt likewise. This chapter will examine reception of the Allman Brothers Band.[2]

First, the audience experience was important to the band from the beginning. Interaction with an audience one of the reasons Duane Allman left studio work and formed the band in the first place. "After six or eight months of [studio work]," he said, "I got really tired of it and bored. I wanted to get to playing in joints again, which is what I did before I did anything else, play for people. And I seen this big concert thing going on

and I said, 'Fuck, that's the place to be playing.' It's where somebody would be listening to you and you wouldn't just be selling records where you can't tell who's playing what."[3]

The starting point for the band's interaction with its listeners was playing music they themselves enjoyed. The Allman Brothers Band unapologetically followed their own direction. As Butch Trucks recalled four decades later, "We learned very early on that playing music is a very selfish thing. We're up there playing for ourselves first and foremost. If I'm not getting myself off, how can I expect anyone else to get off on it? I start with myself then move out to the guys in the band, and then we start communicating. We kick it into overdrive and go into places that we can't go by ourselves."[4]

The Allman Brothers Band dubbed this phenomena "Hittin' the Note." In 1971, Dickey Betts defined the phrase: "It's like getting down past all the bullshit, all the put-on, all the acting that goes along with just being human. Getting right down to the roots, the source, the truth of the music. Letting it happen, letting that feeling come out."[5] To Drummer Jai Johanny Johanson, the experience was spiritual. "I can remember several times when I was so at peace with what I was playing, that my spirit left my body, right on stage. This is a fact."[6] Berry Oakley shared how the audience factored in. "All of us like to play to an audience and get response back. That's what we call Hittin' the Note. How should I say it?," he asked himself:

> Hittin' the Note is hitting your peak, let's say. Hitting the place where we all like to be at, you know? When you're really feeling at your best, that's what you describe

> as your note. When you're really able to put all of you into it and get that much out of it. We just found it out along as we did it. We learned some from the audience, and they learned some from us, and things came together that way. It happens, I'd say, 75 percent of the time. There's some special places we play where we've done it before, and every time we go back, the vibes are there and it ends up happening again. We'll end up playing three or four hours, and when we finish, I'll be so high I can hardly talk. When you start hitting like that, the communication between the members of the band gets wide open. Stuff just starts coming out everywhere.[7]

Duane Allman referenced the term when talking about the moderate success the band had achieved by the end of 1970. "Whatever you're doing, if you get a little encouragement, you're going to do it better. You're gonna think 'I'm Hittin' a Note' and you're gonna try and perfect it, work it on out. So when we started getting a little response, it regenerated itself back around again. When you feel you're doing right you got plenty of power you have people behind you, you can do whatever you want."[8] "Being on the road can be a depressing proposition for some people," Oakley offered, "but for us, nothing will ever replace playing for people. We're just doing what we like best, man—and making a pretty good living at it as well. That's it right there."[9] After a concert at Clemson University on September 11, 1971, Oakley said, "Tell the people we enjoyed it. I mean, that's what we do it for, you know." [10]

The Allman Brothers Band broke boundaries with and for its audience. "They had a very strong groove, with jazz permutations and elements of blues, and then they could rock," producer Tom Dowd said. "Nobody represented this type of dynamic change, and the audience was ready for it. There were groups that could play the blues, jazz, and hard

rock, but none could put all these elements together in one song."[11] "The Allman Brothers band was to the younger set, the so-called rock 'n' roll set, what Coltrane was to the . . . jazz world," Jai Johanny Johanson argued. "Coltrane didn't only influence people and jazz; Coltrane reached everyone associated with music, whether they knew it or not."[12] The band reached people playing its unique musical hybrid, one that was rooted in southern musical traditions, with the addition of jazz improvisation.

"The Allman Brothers Band would never had made it," Betts said, "without that particular attitude of the audience who wanted to hear the improvisation and the individual expression of each different band member."[13] The band and its audience shared a bond because Betts and his bandmates represented the latter onstage. "We just made rock 'n' roll music, music for working people," the guitarist said in 1976, "for people who live in the United States, people that's got a baby, that's in love with each other, that's got a job in the drugstore. Common people, like me, man. It ain't no star shit, or any kind of intellectual shit. We weren't any different from the people we played for except we were a band, and there was a bond between us."[14]

Audience response was a sign the band achieved something significant. Betts recalled that as the band relentlessly toured the country from 1969 through 1971, "We could see that the audience was taken by what we were playing—singing along and getting way into it, and telling us they hadn't heard anything like what we were

playing."[15] It was a new music, as-yet undefined by the music industry, but it was something audiences responded affirmatively to.[16]

The audience that had the earliest and most frequent contact with the Allman Brothers Band was that from within the band's own circles—its road crew, its record company, fellow musicians, concert promoters, and the like. Duane Allman's music inspired from his first collaborations with his Allman Brothers' bandmates. Twiggs Lyndon recalled his first impression of the Allman/Berry Oakley combo he encountered in Muscle Shoals:

> I went with [Walden] to Muscle Shoals studio in 1969 to meet Duane. . . . There was Duane playing, and Berry Oakley on bass; Paul Hornsby was playing guitar, and Johnny Sandlin was playing drums. They jammed for what was probably ten or fifteen minutes, but it seemed longer.
>
> I had been in the music business for five years and I'd heard some fine music. I'd heard Jimi Hendrix playing with Little Richard, and Hendrix was almost as good then as he was later. And while I sat in that studio in Muscle Shoals I thought to myself, "If all the headaches and all the problems I had to go through as a road manager with all those bands for five years were the dues I had to pay to bring me into that studio for that moment in time, to hear this fellow Duane Allman play guitar for this one jam, it would have been worth it."
>
> And that if Phil Walden walked in right then, as a spokesman for Fate, and said, "Okay Twiggs, back on the road for another five years with Percy Sledge and Little Richard, and after that I'll let you come back and you can hear him play again," I would have gone right out that studio and done another five years. That was the thought that went through my mind.[17]

Lyndon's experience happened in early 1969. Several months later, Willie Perkins had his initial Allman Brothers Band experience. The band made an impression that day that remained with him decades later. "In [May] 1969, I saw and heard them at Piedmont Park

in Atlanta for the first time. I had never heard anything like them in my life, and more than thirty years later, I still have not heard anything that matches the emotion, the excitement, and the sheer joy of their music."[18]

To roadie and musician Joe Dan Petty, the original lineup of the Allman Brothers one of the most unique bands in the history of rock music. "They were experimental, always improvising, and learning new ways to play all the time. Their music was progressive and innovative—that band was extremely special."[19] Younger musicians, such as guitarist and country music star Leroy Parnell were similarly inspired. "The first time I heard the Allman Brothers, it scared me," he reported. "I was playing guitar, and I didn't know what to think. I couldn't comprehend it." When he first heard the Allman Brothers, Parnell continued, "There was nothing like it. It had jazz in the country swing in the guitar harmony from the Bob Wills days—but it was rock roll. It somehow made total musical sense."[20] It translated well. As Michael Brooks wrote in *Guitar Player* magazine, "This Macon, Georgia-based six-piece band bridged the gap between musicians' musicians and popular recognition with their music rooted in old-timey blues, branching into an innocent, yet complex progressive blues/rock, laced with basic jazz. This and more made the band one of the most extemporized, clean cooking, small orchestras in music."[21] Promoter Alex Cooley agreed. "Without a doubt they were unique. I never heard anything like them. [It] was a unique blending of talents and creativity and people who. . . . could be on the stage and relate to each other and create something."[22]

Eric Clapton witnessed this element first-hand in Miami on August 26, 1970. The British guitar hero was in Florida to record with Derek and the Dominos, his post-Cream (and post-Blind Faith) band at Criteria Studios. Producer Tom Dowd, who knew of the mutual admiration Duane Allman and Clapton had for each other, brought Clapton and his band to see the Allman Brothers.[23] Clapton was duly impressed.

> All of us went off to see the Allman Brothers play. In this open air setting—it was unbelievable. We were shown a place to sit on the grass right in front of the stage and, apparently he spotted me.
>
> It was just really magical, you know. There was like the perfect kind of weather—it was dark, it was balmy and hot and there was a strong breeze. They all had really, really long hair. . . . It was blowing back in the wind, and it was so picturesque. The music was unbelievable, because they were doing all that harmony playing. . . . Duane and Dickey Betts—and everything seemed to be, even if they played solos, they were all in harmony. It was fantastically worked out. . . .
>
> The impression that I got was how much hard work they'd put into their presentation, and the fact that it wasn't really blasted all over the airwaves, you know? They had just quietly gone about doing a fantastic job of making really, really good music that was really well thought out—and not left too much to chance.[24]

What Clapton observed that day the uniqueness of the Allman Brothers as a live entity. Duane Allman thus influenced one of his key influencers. "[T]hey influenced my music at the time. And I think they influenced all the concepts of a live band," Clapton noted. "They made it okay for a band to be live all the time."[25] He also understood how the Allman Brothers Band had built upon the foundation Cream had provided. "My problem with Cream," he recalled, "was that we were really limited on stage. We could go into the

studio and make great records by overdubbing—I would play a rhythm part, and then play a lead part with a harmony to it, so you're really talking about three guitar players [in a band that only had one]." With two lead guitar players onstage, the Allman Brothers Band were able to do things Clapton was unable to do in Cream.

Bill Graham summed up many insiders' thoughts in his introduction of the band for the final performance at Fillmore East. Speaking on June 27, 1971, less than two weeks before the Allman Brothers' *At Fillmore East* was to be released, and the night after the band played a historic four-plus-hour show, Graham said,

> Over the years that we've been doing this, the introductions are usually very short, and this one's going to be short, but a little longer than usual.
>
> The last few days, we have had the privilege of working with this particular group, and over the past year or so, we've had them on both coasts a number of times. In all that time, I've never heard the kind of music that this group plays.
>
> And last night, we had the good fortune of having them get on stage about 2:30, 3:00 o'clock, and they walked out of here at 7:00 in the morning. And it's not just that they played quantity, and for my amateur ears, in all my life, I've never heard the kind of music that this group plays. The finest contemporary music.
>
> We're going to round it off with the best of them all, the Allman Brothers.[26]

While Graham's words reflected the feeling of many of the band's closest associates, and it's clear the band understood the importance of its rapport with the audience in real time as well, the final part of the equation is to explore how audiences themselves responded. This includes fans, youth, critics, and the burgeoning field of professional rock criticism.

From its first show together in Jacksonville, the band noticed how vociferously audiences expressed their enjoyment of its live performance. Gregg Allman recalled how the positive response the band received at a Second Coming show in March 1969 in Jacksonville, impacted him and his new bandmates. "Toward the end of the gig, Oakley said, 'We got a little surprise for you,' and my brother and I join them on stage. We played a few songs including 'Trouble No More,'" he remembered. "That place went berserk. I had heard a crowd before but I never heard nothing like that. Those people were howling—that night changed them. It was clear; this was fucking working." Driving home that night, he remembered, "All we did was talk about this or that, and this part right here going over there—it was just lined up. . . . We could see our destiny, and we set out to get it."[27]

The band fulfilled that destiny. Patrick Snyder-Scumpy, wrote in *Crawdaddy* in 1973, "Since its formation in 1969, the ABB has possessed that intangible spirit, that magic, which sets a group of musicians above and beyond the more mundane practitioners of their art. They exist to this day in their own self-defined and unchallengeable musical niche just as the Who, the Band, the Grateful Dead, and the Rolling Stones exist in theirs."[28] Many who saw the Allman Brothers Band live, and/or critiqued their records, shared Allman's and Snyder-Scumpy's reflections.

Since Snyder-Scumpy mentioned the Grateful Dead, a quick comparison is in order. From the Allman Brothers' earliest days, people compared the bands. As Larry

Eagen, who saw the band multiple times at the Warehouse in New Orleans, recalled years later, "Maybe their approach was a little more southern and earthy, but it represented the same experiment as the Dead—plenty of space for improvisation and open-ended jamming."[29] In a review of a December 1970 Fillmore East show, a concertgoer only identified as Jeff, compared the Allman Brothers to the sound and approach of the Grateful Dead and their northern California contemporaries. "Although the Allmans are based in Georgia," he wrote, "they play an improvisational type of rock that's similar in approach to that of many San Francisco Groups."[30] Marshall Fine compared the two bands in a 1971 review of *At Fillmore East*. The record, he wrote, "Captures the sound, the energy, and the excitement of a live performance as none have since the Grateful Dead two years past."[31] Rich Aregood concurred. "Now that the Grateful Dead's playing country music," he wrote, "it's good, to find a band that can sustain the Dead's kind of excitement on a rock record."[32] George Kimball, eschewed the comparison in his appraisal of *At Fillmore East*. "The range of [the Allman's] material and the more tenuous fact that they also use two drummers have led to what I suppose are inevitable comparisons to the Dead in its better days. Any comparison to anybody is fatuous."[33] No less an authority than Dickey Betts related the same in the late 1990s, "Our music is very different, but we do have a lot in common with the Dead in the way our music relates to our values. I always viewed the Dead as a phenomenon. . . . They're just a special thing all of their own—hardly anything relates to them."[34]

Most observers of the Allman Brothers Band shared the opinion that the band was *sui generis*. Reflecting on Allman Brothers concerts in 1970 and 1971, Eagen recounted, "It wasn't just the technique of the playing, but also the spiritual space that it created, sometimes scary as hell, sometimes beautiful as heaven."[35] Bud Scoppa agreed. They were "the tightest instrumental group I'd ever heard," he wrote about first seeing the band live in 1970. "Unbelievably when I saw them again a year later, they were even better." The "impossibly good Allman Brothers Band," he wrote, "is just entering its prime as a performing unit."[36]

As early as March 1971, Scoppa called the band one of the great bands of the 1970s. "Who else," he asked, "could combine Muddy Waters and Miles Davis and make it all come out sounding like powerhouse rock 'n' roll?" The Allman Brothers "play better than most," he wrote. "Even on a bad night there's hardly anybody that could cut them." The band, "Duane Allman's band," Scoppa observed, "have put out a reminder that rock 'n' roll didn't start out to be a mean but ambiguous kind of music played by fey and mannered young Britishers. The real rock 'n' roll was hard, blues-rich, powerful, and overtly *virile* stuff. Go to an Allman Brothers Band show and *that's* what you'll hear." What stood out was how the band functioned as a unit. "It's the force of the whole band playing with that incredible single-mindedness that gets people on their feet after practically every number."[37]

*Rolling Stone*'s Alex Dubro found jazz in the band's amalgam. "Within their idiom which is kind of a mélange of everything on the heavy R&B/soul side of rock, they are incredibly versatile and highly musical," he wrote. "Where many bands use the term 'jazz-rock' as an excuse for hopeless befuddlement, they grab the latitude allowed by jazz changes and add power to it. They played for a good hour and a half without making the same pass twice."[38]

George Kimball, also of *Rolling Stone*, highlighted the band's ability as musicians. "The Allmans have come," he wrote, "to be known as musicians' musicians, a band's band. In fact, the only criticism I've heard from other musicians seemed quite frankly to have its roots very firmly in the time-honored practice of hollering sour grapes—over the last year the Allman Band played the Fillmores so frequently that some people were calling them Bill Graham's House Band. Whatever else one may have to say about Graham, though, his taste in music has been largely unassailable."[39] "I believe it was in 1969 that Miles Davis brought his Bitches Brew band to the Fillmore East," Scoppa reflected years later. "The exotic nature of Miles's band on stage at the Fillmore, given that context, was. . . . like music from another planet. There were also, at the very other extreme, horn bands like Pacific Gas & Electric and Chicago Transit Authority. . . . that were bringing elements of jazz into this rock framework. That stuff seemed as safe as Miles seemed wild and crazy. And the Allmans slid into this area between those two extremes, it was easy to like them live and that was really what did it for the Allmans."[40]

Yet some did not hear the same magic. Gregg Allman recalled a negative review he and the band received while on a January 1970 tour of California. "'Although he sounded somewhat like a black man, but he only had a four-note range,'" it read. "I was so upset that I called back home to my family, because I had never had any bad press before, and I didn't know what it felt like. They told me, 'Son, bad press is better than no press at all—at least they mentioned your name.'"[41] As George Klink wrote in 1972, "The fact is that certain the Allman's songs were set and seemingly lacking in interpretation or improvisation, but in fact this is/was endemic to the nature of their music. . . . The band never was a real performing band." (Klink did, however, acknowledge the band "never failed to excite, get you up, move you, make you want to dance, etc.")[42] While Klink found the band's longer improvisations less-than-stellar, others, like Lee Moore, preferred this aspect of the band to its shorter blues interpretations—which he found derivative.

> At their best they are excellent and at their worst they are a depressing mélange of overworked white "blues" clichés. . . . The Allman Brothers Band. . . . is really two different creatures. One gets down to the ol' homestyle blues, as dishonestly as the rest of the white "blues" bands. It plays set, lackluster arrangements, every song boiled down to a neat, predictable formula. The other band is one of truly cosmic proportions, playing space music that approaches the Grateful Dead in its brilliance.
>
> Why, I wonder, does this band waste its time imitating the blues? Why rip off Blind Willie McTell with their frankly derivative version of "Statesboro Blues" when they are capable of (and do) more honest music. Sure they do a mellow version of Stormy Monday but is it valid? Is it honest?

> The ABB are masters when it comes to free-form improvisation. I hope they continue in that direction[43]

These reviews are outliers.[44] A vast majority of those who came in contact with the original Allman Brothers Band shared enthusiastic recollections about the band and its music. Some were succinct. "As brother Dave Gardner used to say, 'All them other cats is searching for it, but they've flat got it,'" Steve Wise wrote of a June 1973 Allman Brothers concert. "I truly believe them to be the best fucking rock band in the country."[45] In a review of *Eat a Peach*, the group's follow-up to *At Fillmore East,* critic and rock writer Tony Glover concluded, "The Allman Brothers are still the best goddamned band in the land. . . . I hope the band keeps playing forever—how many groups can you think of who really make you believe they're playing for the joy of it?"[46] Of a March 1973 concert, an unnamed reviewer contended, "The Allman Brothers never let us down. They are a rarity in contemporary music—a group whose success is directly and rightfully upon their music, which is still the best around."[47] Dave Hickey, was even more effusive in a piece reflecting on the Allman Brothers Band's 1976 breakup. "But you shouldn't forget that the Allman Brothers Band gave popular music back to American people," he declared.

> That needs saying. . . . I won't forget that the Allman Brothers Band was the best live rock 'n' roll band I ever expect to hear, but even now. . . . it's hard to remember how directly they came into your life: a chance concert, a borrowed record, a band your friends told you about.
>
> I don't remember, for instance, reading a line of print about the Allman Brothers before I wandered into Fillmore East in the winter of 70-71. . . . and confronted the real thing: guys on stage playing better than anybody else.

> Even when you saw them, it was hard to believe they really existed, that that much energy, intensity, and innocence still existed in the ultrasleek, theatrical dying fall of the 60s. They came into an industry obsessed with image, demographics, demagoguery, packaging, and production, and while everyone else was busy understanding media, the Allman Brothers Band and Phil Walden simply ignored it.
>
> They took their music to the people in concert and made it available on albums—no radio, no TV, no movies, no teen-zines, no advertising blitz, and very little press. Against all industry wisdom and expectation, they acquired an enormous following simply by playing good music about ordinary American experience with genuine passion. You weren't supposed to be able to do that, but they did. And what's more, they knew what they were doing.[48]

While each of these responses reflects the insights of those who had seen the ultimate result of the band that Duane Allman brought to Macon, Georgia, in April 1969, they also are nearly identical to the language of people evaluating concerts in real time.

Miller Francis Jr. of *The Great Speckled Bird* was the first to document the Allman Brothers Band in concert. Francis was ebullient writing about the band's initial Piedmont Park appearance on May 11, 1969. "You don't, can't, 'listen' to the Allman Brothers; you *feel it, hear it, move with it, absorb it, you 'let it out and let it in' (the Beatles)* and enter into an experience through which you are changed," he wrote. "You catch a glimpse of the kind of world we are becoming and you know more than ever the horrendous load of bullshit we'll have to drop off on the way in order to give birth to that kind of world." He reviewer heard in purity in the band's music and an authenticity in their approach to the blues. "The Allman Brothers . . . are a fantastically together group of young rock and roll

musicians whose music draws as heavily from the blues as the experience of young white tribesmen can without exploiting its source." He continued:

> Art is not a product, it is a process: the blues—whether country or urban, acoustic or electric, raw or commercial—cannot be copied from records or concerts or books on black culture.
>
> The musical language of the black man cannot be coopted simply because it happens to be powerful and sings of things we are just now recognizing as more valid than what we have been hung up in for centuries.
>
> Our music must develop its own power, its own forms, its own patterns of relationship with our tribal roots and our space-age technology in an unbroken line all the way down into our preliterate origins and all the way out into unknown galaxies.

"The Allman Brothers know all this, and a lot more," Francis concluded.[49]

Other reports from the same concert are similar. "I went over to Piedmont Park where the Allman Brothers were playing," Steve Wise wrote. "Got completely zonked. Incredible music. Showed how irrelevant, silly most verbiage is. Including this."[50] "It was at once a physical and spiritual experience," Philip Lane recalled more than four decades later. "I had never seen a group like this before—six guys all playing as one giant organism."[51] Patrick Edmondson remembered the band appeared to be "just another group of longhaired hippie musicians, but they had two drummers and one was black. That was unusual in 1969 Atlanta." From the moment they began to play, he wrote, "Two more things became obvious. Two guitars were playing leads that intertwined around each other seductively, and these guys were so much better than anything we'd ever heard live."[52]

From their first appearance in Atlanta, the Atlanta counterculture found a voice in the music of the Allman Brothers Band. Edmondson recalled the uniqueness of the band's repertoire as altogether different and familiar at the same time. "The songs were old blues and originals, but all were like nothing we had heard before."[53] Writing six months after the May 11, 1969 performance, Miller Francis went even further, "The day in the park the Allman Brothers wiped us out, taught us that a white group of musicians in love with the blues, devoid of hype, overproduction, and a record company breathing down our necks, could shed the skills of the blackface make-up artist and play brilliant, contemporary music of young white America."[54] Years later, Bill Mankin placed the importance of music to the overall zeitgeist of the Atlanta/southern youth scene that the Allman Brothers were a key part of, highlighting, in particular, the economic aspect of the music business:

> The "draw" for those gatherings in the park was always music. From the beginning, music—especially the newest and most groundbreaking music—was the most fluid, subversive and powerfully influential catalyst helping the counterculture to spread and coalesce. It alone seemed to have the power to act as a common, galvanizing thread, weaving together disparate individuals, groups, interests and intentions. It was still a considerable challenge for new music to break through the tight barriers of Top-40 AM radio "pop charts," and hip young listeners who craved a broader sonic spectrum often had to search hard for what they wanted.[55]

Commerce eventually sullied the musical experience for Mankin. "Nevertheless, the commercial drive to sell more products to the large baby-boomer generation eventually convinced even conservative businesses and radio programmers to provide

young Americans with more opportunities to hear and buy at least some new music," he wrote. "Progressive and 'underground' FM radio stations (often on college campuses), record stores with younger staffs, and adventurous local cover bands helped to fill in the still-considerable gaps."[56] Miller Francis Jr. wrote of these trends in his review of the Cosmic Carnival, a June 13, 1970 concert at Atlanta Fulton County Stadium that included It's a Beautiful Day, Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention, and Traffic, as well as the Allman Brothers Band. Francis lamented the event's overt commercialism. "The Rock music scene in Atlanta is really fucked up. It may be dying," he wrote. "But remember that Rock music has always been defined as an industry, subject to all the forms and limitations of capitalism—promoters, middle men, expensive tickets, deals with the city, etc. It's becoming increasingly obvious that this capitalist base has to go, or the music has to go." "I don't know about you," Francis concluded, "but I'm not ready to give up my music. Let's have it because we demand it, not because the city lets us have it. It isn't theirs to give."[57] To Mankin, Francis, and the Allman Brothers Band itself, the machinations of the music industry was not nearly as important as the purity of the music itself.

While the band toured extensively throughout 1969, scant documentation exists. Francis's observation of the band's first appearance at Piedmont Park was the earliest account. A second is from Elizabeth LaGrua, writing in the early twenty-first century about the band's ill-fated appearance opening for Blood, Sweat, and Tears at the Fillmore

East in December 1969. Like the Fillmore East staff, LaGrua was enthralled. "In December 1969, I was seated sixth row left to see Blood, Sweat, and Tears headline the Fillmore East," she recalled. "One of the opening acts was the Allman Brothers Band. I'd never heard of them, but I remember how they looked and what they sounded like—almost exactly." The band had a profound effect on LaGrua. "For the next two years, I bought the group's albums and attended their shows as much as I could. I researched their roots and influences and discovered Bobby 'Blue' Bland, T-Bone Walker, and Robert Johnson, among others. I bought all of Duane session work with people like Aretha Franklin, Wilson Pickett, and John Hammond, Jr."[58]

Francis recorded reaction to another 1969 show, at the Piedmont Music Festival on September 27, 1969. "The Allman Brothers appeared on stage," he reported, "and began their set—a familiar set of blues pieces, long, hard improvisations worked on a tight rhythmic foundation." Songs included "I'm Gonna Move to the Outskirts of Town," "Statesboro Blues," "Mountain Jam," as well as, Francis wrote, "One from their new album on Atco which might be called 'I Feel Like I'm Dyin'!'" (actually "Whipping Post"). Francis remained impressed. "One of the best exponents of where young pop music is at today, the Allman Brothers got the audience moving and initiated the festival atmosphere that had been absent up until that time."[59]

On November 4, 1969, Capricorn/Atlantic released the Allman Brothers Band's self-titled debut album. While the album did not sell well, it garnered some critical

attention. In its Special Merit Picks—"albums with sales potential that are deserving of special consideration at both the dealer and radio level"—published December 6, 1969, *Billboard* magazine wrote, "Word is out on the Allman Brothers' hot brand of blues and the group's debut features not only their own material but Muddy Waters's 'Trouble No More' and Spencer Davis's 'Don't Want You No More'" The six-man blues ensemble stars Duane Allman on lead, slide, and acoustic guitars, Gregory Allman, organ & vocals, and that hot Latin accent from Butch Trucks and Jai Johanny Johanson. Will score heavily in the underground."[60] Alvin Reynolds, writing for Virginia Commonwealth University's *Commonwealth Times*, compared the album favorably to the band's live experience. The album was "as terrific as the group is in person."[61]

Nearly every review of the record focused on the band's original approach to the blues. A North Carolina college newspaper highlighted the band's "heavy electric blues," another Tar Heel state college paper noted "the material is heavy, hard blues-rock, dynamic and raunchy."[62] Mainstream rock publications reported the same. In *Creem*, Ben Edmonds wrote Duane and Gregg Allman had "always worked from a solidly black base, and this album manifests their roots most clearly." But originality and authenticity had emerged as well. "Although their roots are showing," he argued, "they inject a vitality into dated riffs that puts many of the prostrate British blues groups to shame. They are extremely tight and well disciplined, flashy but solid. In a decade that has been as blandly derivative as ours has often seemed it's nice to see a fresh approach attempted."[63] An

anonymous reviewer in *Anomaly*, the newspaper of Lehigh (PA) Community College, concurred, and highlighted the band's uniqueness. "Maybe there are others who try to do it, but can't. They are perhaps as powerful as any group in the world," the reviewer wrote, "but are different. Their music is alive; every time you hear it you get more out of it."[64] John Wren of North Carolina State University wrote of the album, "This is a little more jazz-oriented than your average blues group, but they have a real feeling for what they're doing, and it comes through loud and clear."[65]

Audiences gravitated to the music's uniqueness and authenticity. Lester Bangs was the rock critic most emphatic in his praise of *The Allman Brothers Band*. In his February 21, 1970 *Rolling Stone* review, Bangs argued:

> For all the white blooze bands proliferating today, it's still inspiring when the real article comes along, a white group who've transcended their schooling to produce a volatile blues-rock sound of pure energy, inspiration and love.
>
> The Allmans have learned their lessons well, and they play with the same drive and conviction as their mentors. When I first put this album on the driving instrumental that opens it began the clean, ringing guitar riffs in "It's Not My Cross to Bear" made that battered twelve-bar blues form seem fresh again.
>
> The Allmans know what they're doing, and feel it deeply as well, and they communicate immediately.
>
> One of the virtues of a simple, standardized form like the blues is that when played right it's such a comfortable place to return to. The whole album is like that. You've been here a thousand times before, and it feels like home instead of mind-numbing banality because the Allmans have mastered the form with rare subtlety, and also because their blues keep you vibrating from one brilliant hard rock interpolation to the next.

> It might seem strange to apply the adjective "lovely" to a heavy-white-blues album, but that is what this record so paradoxically is. Sometimes it sounds like what Led Zeppelin *might* have been if they weren't hung up on gymnastics. Sometimes it sounds like the more-lyrical Louisiana cousins of Johnny Winter. But what it is consistently is subtle, and honest, and moving.[66]

In their reviews of *The Allman Brothers Band*, some highlighted Gregg Allman's original song "Dreams." The *Anomaly* reviewer called it "perhaps one of the most beautiful songs in the world," hearing two early influences of the band: the Jeff Beck Group and the Beatles. "The heavy, yet subtle organ is amazing when combined with the Rod Stewart-like vocals of Gregory Allman and produces a song which makes you think. Its impact is like that of 'Something,' the more of it, the better. The song increases in beauty with age."[67] Edmonds emphasized the song as a departure for the band from the formula it employed in the standard blues tracks "Don't Want You Know More," "Black Hearted Woman," "Trouble No More," and "Every Hungry Woman." "'Dreams' is successful," he posited, "simply because it breaks the pattern." Gregg Allman's organ, Edmonds wrote, "is heavy and shroud-like, illustrating the title very well. The guitars, up until now the front instruments, tone themselves down to fit the moody nicely."[68] Bangs called the song the pinnacle of the record. "'Dreams' [is] a beautiful, aching lament in *waltz-time.* It begins with softly pulsing organ and throaty, movingly understated vocal all about a man whose world is crumbling because 'I'm hung up/on dreams.' A familiar story, but the way it's written and delivered by the Allmans makes it poignantly realistic and universal."[69]

Several reviews highlighted something else early live observers heard: the musicians' cohesiveness as a singular unit. "The instrumental emphasis throughout the album," Edmonds wrote, "is placed on the band as a high-powered unit rather than individual talents and this gives most of the cuts an especially full sound."[70] June Harris of *Hit Parader*, agreed. "The Allman Brothers Band first album is a collection of deep influences. Hard core blues, rhythm and blues, and rock. Six people with a merging of feelings and sounds."[71] Yet while this refrain remained throughout the band's early years, Edmonds found it somewhat confusing as a listener:

> The problem that arises out of the hard unit approach of the Allman Brothers Band is that, while the band as a whole functions very tightly, the individual identities of the band members are hidden. Even in the case of the guitars, which are most often at the forefront, we have no clear picture of who the musician is, as both Duane and Dickey Betts are listed as playing lead guitar. I suspect that Duane handles the yeoman's share, but who can be sure. Perhaps with a wider range of material the identities of the band members will emerge, but on this we'll have to wait for the next Allman Brothers album.[72]

In fact, Betts and Allman played dual lead guitar on the album, something that became obvious to concert goers and observers.

Despite these positive reviews, the first album didn't sell and the live experience of the Allman Brothers Band remained supreme for critics and fans alike. Correspondents not only expressed a love of the band's music, but responded well to the band's lack of artifice. "By now, the avid concert goer is familiar with the Allmans' stage techniques, in that they have none," Jim LaLumis wrote in 1971. "The six-man ensemble," he continued, "take their positions, and work. There are no dance steps, maniac vocalists, or deafening

decibels. The Brothers merely play excellent rocking down home music, and the audience is almost always ecstatic."[73]

"I loved their albums but nothing matched seeing them live. There was music, and then there was the Allman Brothers Band," Rowland Archer recalled decades later. "No other musicians made me feel so connected to their souls as they played. Other bands seemed to be aware of the fact that they were on a stage and making music. The Allmans seemed to be living and feeling the things they were playing right there in front of us."[74] Larry Eagan recalled how this separated the Allman Brothers Band from its contemporaries recounting his initial impression from a March 13, 1970 Warehouse concert (in which the Allmans opened for bluesman Albert King). "Even though we didn't bridge totally with what they were doing that first night," Eagan noted, "we did get some kind of introduction to their music we knew that it was something out of the ordinary. . . . After a set of music, Duane sashayed up to the mic and said, 'Well, we're gonna take a short break & if there are any people left when we come back, we'll play a few more hours.' The people who were into the music stayed."[75]

College audiences soon began to take notice as the Allman Brothers played a schedule heavy with dates on college campuses throughout 1970 and 1971. In a preview for an appearance on April 28, 1970 at the State University of New York (SUNY)-Stony Brook, Hank Teich wrote, "The Allman band seems to be another white blues band that is a bit better than most for two reasons. The choice of material is such that you don't feel

that they are desperately trying to imitate black style, nor do they sound 'way off.' And Allman's slide guitar is rather distinctive and mature."[76] Joseph M. Quinn of Swarthmore College was slightly less enthused with the band's May 2, 1970 concert. "The Allman Brothers blues band attempted to fuse white southern blues, in itself contradiction of sorts, with hard rock and the results are not all together successful," he wrote. "While Allman is brilliant on lead guitar with a wailing Delta sound, it doesn't quite match with those two hulking sets of drums. Another Allman brother at the organ sings with a husky growl but is playing sometime sounds like cocktail jazz. They are at their best in long, medium-slow, rhythmically mesmerizing, journeys that gather great bluesy force and feeling."[77] Quinn's conclusion may refer to the fact that the set concluded with the band's tour de force combination of "Whipping Post" and "Mountain Jam." "They had a very physical effect on the audience," he wrote, "There was dancing in the aisles during much of their set."[78]

Ron Currens shared recollections of an Allman Brothers show at Georgia Tech Coliseum May 9, 1970. It was a show for which fans who didn't attend the university, turned out in droves. "It was the first time ever at conservative, straight-laced Tech," he wrote, "that hippies in the audience outnumbered the students. The Allmans opened the show with the faithful from [Piedmont] Park clustered tightly around the front of the stage." The Allman Brothers were contracted to open for a band called Smith, who experienced delays that allowed the Allmans to extend their set. "Three hours later, after

numerous warnings from the promoters, electricity was cut to their equipment when the Allmans and their fans refused to yield the stage," Currens recalled, "A stunned silence ensued as concert-goers, straight and hippie alike, milled about in confusion. A magical musical moment—an extraordinary rapport between long-hairs, students, and musicians—had been shattered. After a short break, Smith began their performance and the Coliseum quickly emptied."[79] The crowd, Georgia Tech students and otherwise, had a decided preference for the opening band.

Shortly after that show, the Allman Brothers Band played several shows the weekend of July 3 through 5, 1970 at the second Atlanta International Pop Festival. Promoter Alex Cooley held the event not in Atlanta, but at Middle Georgia Raceway in Byron—less than twenty-five miles from the Allman Brothers' Macon home base.

The band played multiple shows over the weekend. They opened the event at the mainstage on Friday and were its closing band on Sunday/early Monday morning. In between, they played the festival's free stage at least once. It was a successful hometown gig for the band. With crowd estimates of between 200,000-500,000, it was the largest audience the Allman Brothers Band ever performed in front of during Duane Allman's tenure in the band.[80]

In 2003, Epic/Legacy officially released the Allman Brothers Band's two mainstage sets. The introduction for the first set provides insight into the communal focus of the

youth culture of the era and how some perceived the Allman Brothers Band and its importance to its audience.

> You know, in *Life* magazine they had some pictures of the human egg being fertilized. When I was in school they used to give us this shuck that it was a big race, you know, that the sperm goes out and they race to the egg and the first one to get there goes (pttt) into the egg. That isn't the way it happens. . . . What really happens is the sperm surround the egg . . . and they twirl it with their tails at a rate of eight times per minute in this primordial dance. . . . Eight is the sign of infinity. That's where we all come from is this dance, so Life isn't a race, it's not competing with anyone it's playing together like all men play together. And these are the Allman Brothers and they play together. Allman Brothers. ALL MEN![81]

An unnamed correspondent's response was similarly worded. Duane Allman was "electrical, high-strung, and wired out," the writer observed. "Every one of his synapses in neurons woven into the fabric of his music, embedded into his amps." Allman's band was a "mean heavy rush, driving wall of sound. The crowd is ecstatic crying for 'Whipping Post' or 'Black Hearted Woman.'" The reviewer turned his attention to the rhythm section. "The two (two? too!) drummers are both wired into the same cosmic energy sources and synchronized everything. Inverse images of each other, a negative double image, except the one on the left [Johanson] sometimes shoots out into a lead drum riff, does it and zips back into sync with the other."[82] Sharing thoughts nearly four decades later (perhaps after hearing the officially released version of the shows) Bill Barnes wrote of his impression of the band at Atlanta Pop:

> Their opening number was typical blues, but what followed was fresh, bold and genre-busting. When the band broke into "Every Hungry Woman," I was intrigued. It was still recognizable as blues-rock, but with grittier funk intensity

> and the liberal usage of augmented 9th chords, clearly a deviation from the typical rock structure . . . .
>
> However, it was "Dreams," Gregg Allman's mystical, languid 6/8 piece, that convinced me something new was happening here beyond the limits of blues and rock. This was bordering on modal jazz. While "Dreams" wasn't exactly on the same level as "A Love Supreme," Duane Allman's solo danced freely between the ionic and mixolydian [modes], even as he switched to his trademark bottleneck midway . . . .[83]
>
> It was the introspective, tortured guitar work of Duane Allman that elevated this number beyond the boundaries of blues and rock. His phrasing was thoughtful, structurally simply, but harmonic complex cliché-free and powerful.[84]

Barnes's impression of "Dreams" is remarkably similar to the reviews of Ben Edmonds and Lester Bangs of the Allman Brothers Band's debut album; it reflects the song's importance to audiences. The quality of the band's music deeply impacted its audience.

Two weeks after Atlanta Pop, on July 17 through 19, the Allman Brothers played another large festival, this time in North Carolina. Called "That Love Valley Thing," the festival was the brainchild of Andy Barker, the founder (in 1954) of Love Valley, North Carolina. (Love Valley was a small town Barker had created and built in the style of the Wild West communities featured in movies and television of the time.) Barker who put on the show for his daughter whom he did not allow to attend Woodstock in 1969. Just like Atlanta Pop, no one knows how many truly attended Love Valley. Although he reported facilities for parking, camping, and eating for 100,000 to 150,000 people, Barker expected a crowd of about 50,000. Attendance estimates range from 75,000 to 200,000. Like the Atlanta Pop Festival (and the first Atlanta Pop Festival, Woodstock, and the

Rolling Stones's ill-fated free concert at Altamont Speedway in California the year before), a majority of those in attendance did so for free. Barker only collected money for 25,000 tickets at five dollars each.[85]

The Allman Brothers were remembered as one of the main attractions at Love Valley. Duane Allman said later in 1970 that the band had recorded its set for a possible live album, and it is one of only four times the Allman Brothers Band were filmed during Allman's lifetime.[86] Of Love Valley, Roger Withhelp wrote, "The Allman Brothers were the heroes, playing two really fine long sets."[87] Attendee Norman Zamcheck wrote of the band's set, "Duane Allman's wild guitar went off like fireworks over the hills, in a performance that ran nonstop for more than two hours."[88]

Fred Bowman, who first saw the Allman Brothers Band at both of the two large summer rock festivals in July 1970 (Atlanta Pop and Love Valley), remembered the band's impact at a smaller festival held in August 1970 in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Canned Heat, who had played the year before at Woodstock, was the headliner. According to Bowman, "The Brothers stole the show (got three encores as the fans literally wouldn't let them off stage) and by the time a very shaken Canned Heat came on stage they played about three songs before calling it a night as most of the crowd was already leaving."[89]

Zamcheck also noted something else about the band: its significance to the southern rock music scene. "The Allman Brothers were the main attraction at Love

Valley, having emerged months earlier as the major group below the Mason-Dixon line, and the talk was that they were about to emerge nationally," he reported. "Rock is very much alive in the South, thought dying off in the rest of the country, and the Georgia-based Allman Brothers Band are probably the best loud group going. Centered on Duane Allman's impressive guitar (he resembles Hendrix in power, reeling off explosive riffs), the group performs an intricate, tightly synchronized blues.[90]

The festivals were manifestations of the youth culture that had emerged in America. Some, such as Lisa Chartell, a self-described "nineteen-year-old Russian River, Calif., freak," said of Atlanta Pop, "There's a better feeling at this festival than any of them I've been to," she said. "That includes Woodstock**.** Everyone here is just great, the locals, the cops. Nobody's giving anybody a hard time." Some, however, objected to gate crashers who attended the show without paying. "Making it a free festival ruined it for some of us," said one Atlanta Pop attendee from Florida. "We paid to see the show and now we've got to push our way through thousands didn't really come to hear the music. All they care about is blowing their minds on those damn psychedelics." Promoter Alex Cooley objected to the lost revenue as well. Of the Atlanta Pop Festival, he reported, "This will be the last one I'll ever do. You keep on losing money on these festivals, and we've lost plenty!"[91]

Adults, too, objected to festivals. Andy Barker received a bevy of national correspondence about his Love Valley festival, which commentator Norman Cousins had

featured positively in the August 6, 1970 issue of *The Saturday Review*. Letters to Barker reflect a disdain for youth culture. Jay Bee wrote, "How can you even think that drug using young people are 'wonderful people?'" Mrs. Theron E. Gulledge of Rome, Georgia, wrote of cancelling a planned visit to Love Valley because, "I do not want my teen Agnes visiting a 'Hippy town.'" Someone who signed his typewritten letter "A Real Patriot," expressed displeasure with Barker for allowing, "a dirty bunch of Anti-Americans" into Love Valley. "They are a useless, no-good bunch of unwashed pigs."[92]

Though many associate the Rolling Stones' December 6, 1969 debacle at Altmont Speedway as the end of the era of the rock festival, the trend actually continued throughout the following year. Summer 1970 was a busy year for festivals. It was, however, the last summer of large-scale rock festivals for a few years.

"The mood across the country is becoming more and more anti-festival, anti-youth," the authors of "Last of the Big Festivals" reported. "In New York after Woodstock, the state legislature passed a law greatly limiting such gatherings; tacking on restrictions which would make it financially impossible for most sponsors to meet the requirements of the law. The same thing happened in Pennsylvania and other states including supposedly liberated California, are known to be considering legislations which would spell death for large pop festivals."[93]

This was indeed the case. By 1971, the flood of rock festivals had dried to a trickle. In July 1971, the Allman Brothers were to have played Newport Jazz Festival.

Before the band could play its set, the festival was cancelled due to gate crashers. As promoter George Wein recalled:

> The Allman Brothers became the biggest thing between January and July [1971]. There were no rock festivals that year because . . . no community would allow a rock festival.
>
> And the kids descended upon Newport. It was still "the music should be free" era and they were breaking the fences down and I had to tell 20,000 people . . . they had to leave. The kids broke the fence down they got on the stage. . . . They were sleeping on the hillside.
>
> The Monday concert never got on. . . . It was all because the Allman Brothers were too popular.[94]

After Love Valley, the Allman Brothers Band continued its backbreaking touring schedule.[95] The itinerary included an August 22, 1970 concert at the Warehouse in New Orleans. "The energy was unbelievable and just plain knocked out and haunting," Larry Eagen remembered. "The music coming from the stage was powerful. Everybody in the Warehouse found themselves wrapped up in something they couldn't explain, but they couldn't leave it alone either. Of course the Allman Brothers used to play off the energy of the people and apparently the concert this evening was a most definite medium for whatever it was that was happening."[96] Bruce Ammons recollected an encore performance from the group that night, as the Allmans, who had opened for Procol Harum, played an additional set joined by British guitar great Peter Green of Fleetwood Mac. He estimated the band played for three more hours "when the drummers all collapsed on their kits Duane turned around and looked, turned back to the mic and said,

'We would like to keep playing, but we don't have any drummers!'"[97] The *New Orleans Express* reported on a free show the band played the following day in Crescent City's Audubon Park (which Johanson sat out). The Allman Brothers are, the report said, "[A] tight, very together group. For the last two, three [*sic*] years, they've played the Atlanta scene. They were among the first bands to develop out of the growing freak movement and, in their turn to develop the consciousness of that movement."[98]

A review of a September 18, 1970 show in Raleigh, North Carolina, underscores both the musicians' virtuosity and the cohesiveness of the band's approach to music. As in many reviews, each band member is mentioned by name, reflecting the audience's understanding of the band as more than just its charismatic lead guitarist Duane Allman (or its good-looking singer and organist Gregg Allman).

> The night then turned into a mind-bending orgy of sound as The Allman Brothers completely wiped-out all of those who came to be entertained. It was not entertainment; it was pure ecstasy.
>
> Duane Allman, the lead guitarist, drew everyone into his magical, musical aura from which there was no escape. Synchronized and intermeshed with Duane's piercing guitar work was Dickey Betts, who played second lead with innovative and dazzling finger work.
>
> Rising hauntingly from behind and out into the open, Gregg Allman on vocals and organ added an extra dimension of softness and mellowness. Jai Johanny Johanson and Butch Trucks on drums pounded and drove away in a display of rhythm which was coordinated and climatic. The bassist, Berry Oakley, played solidly all through the night creating bass runs which were keystone for the arch of music.
>
> The range of the songs fluctuated between the eerie to the powerful, many of them taken from their new album. People began dancing in the aisles when The

> Allman Brothers tore off with "Trouble No More," and softly swayed to "Dreams" as the band ventured into the surreal.
>
> The finale came with the group jamming for about thirty minutes which included a drum solo by Johanson. The solo was perhaps one of the best ever performed for it varied consistently with Trucks on tympani building the song into a spectacular climax.
>
> The Allman Brothers created an evening of musical happiness which will be remembered for quite a while. In the wake of this fantastic hundreds of exhausted gratified people for whom the Allman Brothers spell a good time.[99]

Hank Teich also named two-thirds of the band in his review of a concert on October 23, 1970 during the band's third trip to SUNY-Stony Brook. "A band that keeps on pushing is headed up by Gregg and Duane Allman. They've got two real drummers playing different things at the same time—not just for the sake of loudness. They are Jai Johanny Johanson (never smiles) and Butch Trucks (nice backbeat). Together they give the band a rocking, stepping sound that's never boring. Quick licks on Allman's guitar—competent slide, too—ensure a long evening of sparkling and bright sounds, and you can stay up all night listening to them without ever losing the beat."[100]

While the band had mostly graduated from clubs to colleges in 1970, it continued to frequent played smaller venues. Such was the case on October 10, 1970, when the band played at the Miami Jai Alai Fronton. Despite challenges with the sound system, the reviewer wrote that the Allman Brothers "were super, and their sound was perfect mellow. They were tight, together, high. They were into a blues-rock trip, and they have never been better. You could see their energy and feel their drive."[101]

Not every reviewer was as enthusiastic. Cee Howe reported the band's November 17, 1970 show at the University of Georgia. "At the beginning of their set, the Allman Brothers Band played short three- to four-minute numbers. These were good on the whole, but they sounded as if they would be better if they were longer. They ended their act with longer numbers. Except for an excellent guitar solo and a short, but good drum solo, the songs seemed that they should be shorter."[102] Few shared Howe's view.

On September 23, 1970, the band released its second studio album, *Idlewild South* to glowing reviews, many in comparison to its debut. Stuart Stevens, writing in the student paper of Colorado State University, said the songs "represent a new direction for the Allman Brothers as they break from their previous hard-driving blues sound." Stevens discerned the band's southern influences—"musical roots so present in their native culture evolving now to a new, enjoyably creative plateau." The album, he concluded, "Reveals many new abilities of the band. Guitarist Dickey Betts has emerged as a fine composer with two of the album's best songs, 'Revival' and 'In Memory of Elizabeth Reed.'"[103] *The Gryphon*, the newspaper for Rocky Mount (NC) High School, called *Idlewild South* "a masterpiece in a time of so-so blues. It has just the right combination of blues and rock . . . not too heavy but not too straight."[104] The record did not receive universal acclaim. "The Allman Brother's second is a disappointment," reviewer Butch Ochsenreiter wrote. "Somewhere they lost something, and this one just does not match their first."[105]

Oschenreiter's review was an outlier. Many listeners enjoyed the more restrained sound of the band's second album. *Rolling Stone*'s Ed Leimbacher called it "a big step forward from the Allmans' first," which was a "combination of Santana and Led Zeppelin, with the Led finally weighing everything down."[106] The reviewer found in *Idlewild South* a transition to "briefer, tighter, less 'heavy' numbers"—such as "Revival," "Don't Keep Me Wonderin'," and "Midnight Rider." "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed," he wrote, "Resounds like Santana with guts."[107] Rory O'Conner of the *Tampa Tribune* agreed. "'Conservative' is not a word that could be likely used in connection with the Allman Brothers until this LP." O'Conner had also heard strains of the heavier blues of Led Zeppelin in the band's debut. But, "looking above and behind the Led Zeppelinish appeal of the Allman Brothers first album, it was pretty apparent that something very mellow, soothing, almost ethereal was going on." *Idlewild South*, he continued, "Brings this quality to the very front of the Brothers' music, without ever, for a moment, losing the basic rock 'n' roll/blues feel. [It] is about ten times as funky and swinging as the first album. But a gliding, flowing motion drifts in and around the funk and swing."[108] The British publication *Melody Maker* also highlighted the rhythm section. "Like most U.S. bands, they fall into a funky beat and straight ahead riffs without too much of a problem, concentrating on the rhythm section and letting the steel guitar find its own way to the end of the chorus," wrote reviewer Chris Welch.[109]

Countering these claims of the more careful band Leimbacher and O'Conner heard, Atlanta's Miller Francis Jr. found the opposite. *Idlewild South*, he wrote, was "a fine presentation of Allman Brothers music." The band, he continued, "Takes a few chances and moves on beyond the territory in which these musicians feel at home. Every achievement of the first album is maintained, and some new elements are introduced, all of them successful."[110] Although Francis enjoyed the album, he took issue with two songs: "Hoochie Coochie Man" and "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed." "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed," Francis wrote, was the track that "most marks the spot where the Allman Brothers should fear to tread. Not that it isn't good; in fact it's excellently done. But the next time the Allman Brothers Band takes us here, we may not want to go." The song, he continued, "is a lovely, Santana-ish blues ballad that escalates into a strong, but belabored explication of 'white blues' riff on top of riff on top of riff. As usual, the solos are good, but they don't really catch on fire. It's almost exasperating to hear musicians like the Allman Brothers lavish such expertise on musical ideas that they themselves have already exhausted."[111]

While Francis didn't care for "Elizabeth Reed," Leimbacher found two-thirds of the album's second side disappointing. After Berry Oakley sings "'Hoochie Coochie Man' with a vengeance," he wrote, "the rest is silence—or should be. 'Please Call Home' and 'Leave My Blues at Home' add nothing, sounding respectively like a Buddy Miles parody and an Allman Brothers first album reject. Let the first five suffice."[112] *The Gryphon*'s reviewer

disagreed with Leimbacher's assessment of about "Please Call Home." He called it "another outstanding blues/rock number."[113]

Despite some misgivings, reviewers from across the spectrum approved of the record. "It's good to have another album by the Allman Brothers Band," Francis ultimately concluded.[114] Chris Welch of found it "pleasant, unpretentious."[115] The Allman Brothers "have a very unique, beautiful band," wrote Rory O'Conner. "*Idlewild South* augurs well for the Allmans' future," Leimbacher concluded.[116] "Whatever their next step is," Stuart Stevens remarked, "we can expect some good music from two real, down-home boys, Duane and Gregg Allman."[117]

The band's popularity continued to rise, albeit slowly, following *Idlewild South*. Observers continued to comment on the band's cohesion as a unit, with each member, Duane Allman included, contributing to making the whole greater than the sum of its parts. "Any doubts about their togetherness were pretty well squished right into the cracks in the floor," Tony Glover wrote of a December 1970 appearance at Fillmore East. "Duane (also known as Skydog) takes his share of solos, but everybody cooks together, from brother Gregg on organ and vocals, to Dickey Betts on lead guitar, Berry Oakley on bass and occasional vocals, and Butch Trucks and Jai Johanny Johanson on double drum sets."

The musical dynamics reviewers heard in *Idlewild South* were apparent on stage too. "On stage the Brothers can go from powerhouse soaring stomp rock, to fluid and

flowing tone poems in sound just like southern mountain water running rough over rocks and smooth on sand," Glover wrote. "They're into each other's heads, they make a total music that has little to do with ego or flash." "The Allman Brothers are a group that loves to play, and it shows," he continued. "Some groups come off like they can't wait for the set to end so they can get to the party; with the Allmans, the set is the party. (The late show at the Fillmore on Saturday ran almost twice as long as it was supposed to, they didn't want to quit and the audience wouldn't let them.)"[118] Tom Priddy, in his assessment of a show on September 11, 1971 at Clemson University, agreed. "There is hardly a group in existence that can play music that feels as good to the head as it does to the critical ear," he wrote, "There is no group in existence now that so well represents the highly polished feel of the music and the well-honed state of the art."[119] Reviewing a February 1971 concert in Los Angeles, George Knemeyer wrote that the Allman Brothers Band was "one of those bands that, when they are on musically, they are like something no one has heard before. . . . The results left some people stunned." Presaging *At Fillmore East*, Knemeyer concluded, "The band should be recorded live to get the full effect on an album."[120]

Mike McHugh had a similar impression of a performance January 7, 1971 at Georgia Southern University's Hanner Fieldhouse:

> The Allman Brothers came on, and for the next two hours slammed out tightly executed and vital music. They were hard-hitting, emotional, earthy, and piercing. The interplay between members, especially slide and lead guitarist Duane Allman and Dickey Betts was stunning. This, combined with the solid (should I say

> extremely solid) bass lines of Berry Oakley, the organ riffs brother Greg Allman and the tasteful subtle (yet, at times frantic) percussion work of Butch Trucks and Jai Johanny Johanson, made for a very solid evening.[121]

Altogether, McHugh concluded, "The Allman Brothers have a unique sound, composed of a delicate yet and durable mixture of jazz, blues, and rock. It's an experimental and progressive style. Their music never stopped being exciting and a few times during the concert their music slipped beyond simply excitement into the incredible and perhaps even cosmic."[122] Writing more than eight months later, Priddy observed how the musicians understood their individual roles and played them to perfection. "Both onstage and off, the Allman Brothers are role players," he noted. "While it seems almost contrived, it's precisely this role playing and controlled musicianship that makes the Allman Brothers the performers they are, with Johanson and Trucks keeping rhythm, Gregg Allman contributing the words, music, vocals, and background shading, and Oakley keeping everyone sane."[123] George Knemeyer also mentioned the drummers' contributions. "The rhythm generated is one of the keys to the success of the Allman Brothers Band," he wrote. "If the rhythm creates the right waves, whether on a slow blues or a funky tune, the rest of the band, spearheaded by Duane Allman and Dickey Betts on guitars, just rides the crest, building a wall of sound that first surrounds you, then closes in, and finally gets inside you, driving out all the ills of the day. The two drummers for the band, Jai Johnny Johnson and Butch Trucks, create the rhythm that

Greg Allman on organ weaves in and out of, with Berry Oakley on bass trucking right on."[124]

Like Knemeyer, Burt Gossoo also credited each band member in reviewing a February 4, 1971 concert at Ohio Wesleyan University. "The use of two lead guitarists, Allman and Dickey Betts, combined with the use of two drummers, Butch Trucks and Jai Johanny Johanson, enabled the band to employ counter-themes and intertwined melodies as few other groups can. Younger sibling Gregg Allman, organist and vocalist, and Berry Oakley, bass guitarist and vocalist, provided the depth necessary to attain their well-diversified sound."[125] Priddy observed that while the band was guitar-driven—"Allman and Betts are from the start two of the finest and most original guitarists to emerge in the last five years"—the collective whole was what that allowed the guitarists to experiment. "Duane Allman and Dickey Betts," he wrote, "can afford to experiment confidentially as far and as wildly as the others will let them go."[126] A reviewer named Fink was even more succinct. "Music-wise the Allman Bros. cooked, they really freaked me out."[127]

Some, such as Phil Thomas, were less enthralled. "The show was good," Thomas wrote of a March 25, 1971 show at the O'Shaughnessey Theatre of St. Catherine's College, "with many more high points than low ones." But though he enjoyed Betts's playing on "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed"—"He played beautifully, certainly the best solo of the night—even Allman couldn't match it"—he was unimpressed overall. "I predicted

every note in several of Dickey Betts's solos. . . . Betts was also responsible for the low point of the concert with an extended open guitar solo." Despite this, the show had a positive overall impression on him. "The concert had its dull moments, but the band's good feeling and drive made it worthwhile. Not worthwhile enough to deserve an immediate, unrestrained standing ovation, however."[128] Mike Diana was even less impacted by a January 24, 1971 show in Hampton, Virginia. "The Allman Brothers was the last group to perform. Its music just did not have the power and the drive needed to really get the crowd on its feet."[129] Of an August 1971 show in Boston, Nathan Cobb wrote, "The music headlined by the ABB was competent, although a bit restrained."[130]

The band converted others by virtue of their live performance. Such was the case of an unnamed reviewer of a February 5, 1971 concert at the Philadelphia Spectrum. "The Allman Brothers first album had not seen especially impressive, the guitar work of much-hyped Duane Allman wasn't even that exceptional." The reviewer mentioned the band had "passed through town about eight months ago, and event that attracted almost as much attention as the 6 a.m. news. Everybody stayed home." Those who did attend shared "tales of an incredible group from Macon, Georgia, that had boggled minds beyond control. These fellas weren't just 'another blues band,' claimed converts. They were something extra special and totally rewarding." However, he noted, "I was skeptical." (One reason might have been the reviewer's prejudice against the South. The band's most fervent proponent in Philadelphia was a North Carolina native whose "roots

might be twisting his values just a hair. You know, kindred spirits in a foreign land, that whole number.") Of the band, the reviewer wrote, "Two guitars, two drum sets, organ, and bass comprise the instrumentation. And out of the speakers comes the sweetest swell this side of nirvana. Blues in a blender, mix to a sophisticated tea with jazz and rock, with Chicago and Memphis and Muscle Shoals. A rich 'get it on' sound, complex and extended and yet surprisingly light." The review also named each band member individually, highlighting that audiences understood how well the "whole" fit together:

> The Allmans let the fingers do the talking, more often than not, and the vocabulary is extensive. Duane Allman's guitar soars knowingly through uncharted Regions nestled in the slipstream a brother Grady (Gregg's) organ , voice and compositions. Dickey Betts's second guitar, Berry Oakley's bass, and the drums of Buddy (Butch) trucks and "Frown" [Jai Johanny Johanson] in large the dimensions, yet hold close to the course. Up, up, and away. Convoluted messages that reach their mark. Grateful grits.[131]

Most reviewers expressed a similarly high opinion. "Where do they want to go from here?" *Rolling Stone*'s Alex Dubro asked after a run of California shows in January 1971. "Mostly they all seemed to want to do what they're doing. It didn't seem like they wanted to be stars, just musicians."[132] Anne Cottrell and Jane Barrios noted that those who missed a poorly attended show at the University of Southwestern Louisiana on March 21, 1971, "did not appreciate good musicianship and heavy rock originality."[133] Of a Lehigh University show on April 3, 1971, Rich Meslin revealed:

> The Allman Brothers. . . . put on one of the best shows seen in the Lehigh Valley this year; their presentation was true magic. Much of their strength comes from individual yet synchronized presentation. Each sound can be heard by itself and all fit together into one fantastic whole. . . . .

> Emotion exploded at the end of almost every number as the audience rose to its feet and gave repeated standing ovations. . . . produced amazing treats for their audience, including a twenty-minute instrumental—which practically sent listeners through the roof of Grace Hall.
>
> The performance ranged from slow blues to driving rock, all handled with extreme skill. . . . The concert's effect on the audience was obvious: When it was over, all one could hear as stunned concert-goers herded through the exits were comments the order of "wow."[134]

Reception of a July 15, 1971 show at Fort Homer Hesterly Armory was comparable. "They wowed the audience with the wall of guitars and the pounding rhythm of two drummers," Patti Preston wrote. "Duane Allman pulled sounds from his guitar as orgasmic and sensuous as humanly possible from an instrument of wood and metal. The end of each set was followed by a deafening roar of applause and screams. The Allman Brothers had mastered the crowd. They deserved all the frenzy the audience so willingly gave."[135]

Michael Smith inadvertently compared the Allman Brothers to one of the bands it opened for at its initial appearance at Fillmore East. "The Allmans," Smith wrote, "play with a solid blues base (and bias), but they are also remarkably jazz-oriented. Their complex, progressive style is nothing like the less demanding, blaring jazz orientation of Blood, Sweat, and Tears or Chicago." Smith underscored the band's virtuosity. "Improvisations are the rule in the long jams and the Allmans have the musical talent aboard to make it work in concert. The two other guitarists, Dickey Betts and the bassist Berry Oakley, are strong musicians. Betts provides solid counterpoint to Duane Allman's

slide work and, when both are playing lead, complement, intimidate, support, and overwhelm each other."[136] In a review of a show on September 30, 1971, Jim Gillespie confessed to regularly overlooking the significance of Oakley's contributions. "Dear Berry Oakley, please accept my apologies," he began.

> Usually when I write rave reviews of the Allman Brothers Band in concert, I tell how utterly fantastic Duane Allman and Dickey Betts are on guitar, how out-of-sight the mind-bending rhythms Jai Johanny Johanson and Butch Trucks are on drums and percussion and what a wizard brother Gregg Allman is on vocals and keyboards. Tacked at the end of the review, if at all: "Berry Oakley was adequate on electric bass."
>
> Well B. Oakley is more than adequate on electric bass. In fact, within the confines of the group he is a master of said instrument and either I missed it before or he has improved tremendously.[137]

Turning to the guitarists, Gillespie wrote, "It is virtually impossible to say that one player is superior to the other. Their styles are so different and yet they complement each other's playing beautifully." Of Allman and Betts, he noted, "Duane plays slide guitar with a feeling that would have had the immortal Robert Johnson watching every move his fingers made. Betts rips off single-string runs and jazz chords that put him in the company of anybody you would want to name."[138] In his conclusion, the reviewer compared the Allmans to two of music's most popular bands. "If the Beatles and the Rolling Stones were doing a battle of the bands across the street," Gillespie wrote, "I might be coaxed out of an Allman concert but that is about the only thing that would do it. It was the third time I have heard the Allman Brothers. They were better each time. Number four coming up. The mind still trembles."[139]

Gillespie published his review several months after the Allman Brothers Band released *At Fillmore East*, the band's commercial and critical breakthrough. Recorded in March 1971, Capricorn released the album that July. The delay was intentional and audience-focused, producer Tom Dowd recalled. "The reason for that long a period of time between recording and releasing the album was pretty simple. Looking at it from the record company side, the Allman Brothers never . . . concentrated on single records. So the album came out when they started their tour in July." The timing was important. "You didn't want somebody going out there and after they come off the road you put their album out," Dowd noted. "Put it out when they were going out and get some attention."[140] It definitely garnered the attention the band and record company sought.

For Gary Wishik, *At Fillmore East* was a close approximation of seeing the band live. "For those out there who may never have heard the Allmans Brothers let me recommend the Allman Bros. Live [*sic*] as an excellent introduction to this Macon, Georgia, band. It is a four-sided album featuring their best material and is the next best thing to actually seeing them if you turn it up loud." The record, he joked, had only one flaw: "The only thing missing from the album is the possibility of an encore that quite possibly could last till dawn."[141] George Kimball's review called out all six band members by name. "In my opinion," he wrote in *Rolling Stone*, "the fact of the matter is that guitarists Duane Allman and Dickey Betts, organist-vocalist Gregg Allman, Berry Oakley on bass, and drummers J.J. Johanson and Butch Trucks comprise the best damn rock and roll

band this country has produced in the past five years. And if you think I'm dog-shittin' you, listen to this album." His assessment concurred with Wishik's. "If you've been so unfortunate as to never have caught the Allman Brothers Band live, this recording is certainly the next best thing. Turn the volume up all the way and sit through the concert; by the time it's over you can almost imagine the Allman Band getting high and heading back to Macon," he wrote. "They're one of the nicest things that ever happened to any of us."[142]

Marshall Fine called the album "the best live recording of the year" and noted that it "captures the sound, the energy, and the excitement of a live performance as none have since the Grateful Dead two years past." With *At Fillmore East,* he maintained, the Allman Brothers Band "established themselves as one of the most consistent and musically adept bands around. Their music is driving and energetic—beautiful, electric magic."[143] Jon Landau waxed even more poetically about the record and how it fit into the larger rock scene of the time.

> As I come to expect less from rock in a broad sense, I find myself responding to it in a more purely musical and aesthetic way. That response may be, in some sense, more detached, but it also enables me to enjoy the music in a deeper and more natural way than ever before. Those tired of rock but who take the time to search out the fine music being made today may find themselves pleasantly surprised with what they learn: not only about the music but about their capacity to respond to it.

Landau found what he was searching for in *At Fillmore East.* "The Allman Brothers Band as a whole," he wrote, "is making some of the best rock band music anywhere these

days. They do what the Dead are supposed to do. They are a multilevel band that can reach you on any level you care to receive them. Their music is filled with a seemingly endless subtlety and inspiration." The record, Landau concluded, "is their best so far."[144] A reviewer in the *Corpus Christi Times* called the band "a funky bunch of Southern blues rockers" and called *At Fillmore East* "the clincher that the group is growing and improving." The record "sounds more like a studio album than the two earlier ones because much of the material is soaring and free, not rave-up audience pleasers." The unnamed critic closed his take with a specific nod to the band's leader Duane Allman. "The bankrupt school of guitar-solo freakouts is given a fresh funding by Duane Allman's sizzling runs. He sounds as if he's gone beyond the guitar strings to play the electricity itself."[145]

Writing in the *Boston Globe*, Ernie Santosuosso noted, "The Allman Brothers Band has been demonstrating quite successfully that blues when spiced with dashes of rocks and jazz will not only prevent yawns but even stimulate 'oohs!'" The quality of music on the album warranted the quantity of a two-record set. "If this were merely a recording of a jam session," Santosuosso wrote, "then one side would have mercifully sufficed. The Allmans really stretch out but the 'winging' is done with a sure purpose." Duane Allman's solos, he suggested, "avoid the vapid, repetitive runs which exhausts the artist's tricks after two choruses. Duane, instead, constantly builds both in fabric and intensity, often working in mutual conversation with Dickey Betts, the band's other lead guitar." Turning

to the rest of the band, he wrote, "The two drum chairs, manned by Jai Johanson and Butch Trucks, are no gimmick or eyewash. They contribute with dynamism along with organist Gregg and the guitars. They shift tempo several times within a selection, but the individual disciplines unerringly keep them operating on course."[146]

Many reviews detected a sense of urgency in the record's shorter blues numbers "Statesboro Blues" and "Done Somebody Wrong" in comparison to the improvisation-heavy longer blues tracks "You Don't Love Me" and "Whipping Post." Others drew attention to original instrumentals "Hot 'Lanta" and "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed." Several specifically mentioned "Stormy Monday" as a somewhat unique entry in the band's repertory. Santosuosso wrote, "T-Bone Walker's classic, is as good as anything else on the album, a sort of tonic in its decelerated, relaxed manner."[147] Wishik said the song "shows the soft and gentle side of the group. Duane is picking the most fragile notes he can find while Dicky Betts (on second guitar) is softly sliding in and out, over and behind him and Greg Allman is lifting the whole thing very gently with a beautiful rhythm pattern from the mighty Hammond B-3 organ." "Stormy Monday," he concluded, "Climbs slowly until suddenly they reach the peak and everything starts boiling and cooking."[148] "Of the new numbers, T. Bone Walker's 'Stormy Monday' seems most likely to become a permanent addition to the group's repertoire," Jim LaLumis correctly predicted.[149]

While many were ecstatic in their support of *At Fillmore East*, and nearly all paid homage to the band's uniqueness in their reviews, some were less enthused. Michael

Smith of the *Chicago Tribune* called the record a pale comparison of the band's live experience. "The Allmans can't do it themselves on records," Smith wrote. "Their new album, reviewed here last Sunday, is a dull facsimile of the Allmans in concert. Tip: The only way to make the album work at all is earphones as high as you can take it. And it's still not right."[150] Charlie Frick of the *East Village Other,* noted, "It's said they're the hottest attraction on the circuit today. In many ways, I agree totally." He was even less interested than Smith in the record and of the band overall. "There's a new album simply called the Allman Brothers *At Fillmore East* on Capricorn Records." The album contained "nothing much new, some reworked, re-orchestrated versions of their earlier studio stuff," he concluded. "Yes, they are a good American rock band, as for the best, well, I just don't think they take the cake."[151] Writing in *Melody Maker*, Roy Hollingworth emphatically disagreed with both Frick and Smith. "If you're into the fact that the Allmans are one of the better variety of rock 'n' roll bands, or you're willing to be swayed, then I can tell you that this very live package is a nourishing, and extremely juicy way to laze away one-nineteenth of a day," . He took umbrage only with the length of a single song. "Willie Cobbs's 'You Don't Love Me' takes up side two," he noted, "and is maybe the one track that doesn't justify such lavish treatment by Father Time (19 mins.)." Yet, he noted, "There's such delightful six string repartee between Duane and Dicky Betts that it's worth tolerating the one or two slack moments. It's really smart playing between both these guitarists, complementing each other's differing styles so much, and climaxing in wild

ascending scales." Hollingworth concludes, "The mammoth version of Gregg's 'Whipping Post' (22 mins.) is the complete Allman showcase, rapping into everything except wah-wah kitchen sink. Seventy-six mins., twenty-six sec., well spent."[152]

Despite these relatively minor critiques, *At Fillmore East* was well-received across the board. "If you know of a better blues rock band, tell me about it," Jim Conley of the *El Paso Prospector* demanded. On *At Fillmore East,* he wrote, "the band carefully explores every song, molding it to fit their own style. You won't be bored, even those there are only seven cuts on the four sides." "From soft mellow blues to cooking rock," Conley concluded, "they just do it all right."[153] Rich Aregood concurred. "The Allman Brothers, after two less-successful attempts, have put out an album that's excellent from beginning to end. The Allman Brothers Band *At Fillmore East* (Capricorn) is at least the best rock record of the first half of 1971. The excitement they generate in live performance manages, to leak through on the recording."[154] *The Tiger* of Clemson University, was more succinct. "Very simply, the Allman Brothers are musicians' musicians, and this is one long, very fine set by one of the best instrumental groups in the country."[155]

Tony Glover agreed with all of these assessments, and more. "In these days of so many groups who are merely competent, and ritualized sets which mostly bore your ass off," he wrote just as *At Fillmore East* was about to be released. "It's a real joy to hear a group that loves to play and can communicate their enthusiasm." The Allman Brothers Band, he argued, "demonstrated that not only have they got their chops together—but

that they know how to use them to create thick smoking tapestries of blues and rock, tempered with a lyrical aching beauty reminiscent of the best of the early San Francisco sounds." To Glover, Duane Allman loomed large. "If you were looking for a single standout musician, you'd probably pick Duane (Skydog) Allman; leaning over his guitar, sliding out sinuous solos that coo, with southern soul—but he's only part of the web," he wrote.

> Brother Gregg sits high atop his organ, throbbing out long lines of swirling sounds, doing most of the vocal work with a mellow rasp while Dickey Betts plays alternate lead guitar, often in rippling counterpoint to Duane's loping runs. The rhythm section of double drummers Butch Trucks and Jai Johanny Johanson, bottomed by cooking bassist Berry Oakley are always right there, driving it all along with power and a fine sense of dynamics. Nobody is into aerobatics or sex shows—they just stand there and play their heads off.

Glover then referenced a December 1970 opening set at the Fillmore East. The Allman Brothers' set, he wrote, "Went long over the scheduled time—they didn't want to quit and the audience wouldn't let them—the headliners, Canned Heat had to try to follow that at 3:30 A.M."[156]

What Glover concluded is what nearly everyone who encountered the Allman Brothers Band from 1969 to 1971 found: "The Allmans are just natural, no bullshit people." This aura emanated directly from the band's founder and leader Duane Allman. Of the attention he received for his work at Muscle Shoals or with Eric Clapton on *Layla*, Allman said to Glover, "I don't think anybody who's really ever heard our band would get into that trip much—'cause we're a *band* man, a band that works like a band."[157] Allman

was disinterested in assuming the role of superstar, Glover concluded, and noted that when approached to discuss the band, Allman sought out his bandmates: "Okay man," the guitarist responded, "just let me get a couple more of the cats man, get a little rounder viewpoint here."[158] "When talking is necessary," Bud Scoppa wrote about Allman, "he doesn't make sentences as much as he *plays* language: Duane's words, inflection, and rhythm are as natural and fluid as his slide guitar playing." "If we could just get people to come out and see us I *know* they'd like what they heard," he told Scoppa as his band was recording *At Fillmore East*. "His complete confidence—like the complete confidence of his band—is right out there," Scoppa wrote. "[There is] no nonsense about him—he heads straight for whatever he's after."[159]

Sadly, Duane Allman was dead six short months later. On October 29, 1971, he died in a motorcycle crash in Macon just four days after *At Fillmore East* was certified gold. Thus, Allman missed out on much of the success and widespread acclaim the band he had founded was to eventually achieve.

At the time of his death, the Allman Brothers Band were on their first break from touring since the band's founding in 1969. They were also in the middle of recording the follow-up to *At Fillmore East*, having completed three studio tracks with Allman, Dickey Betts's country-inflected, western swing influenced "Blue Sky," Gregg Allman's gritty blues, "Stand Back," and Allman's sole writing credit, the acoustic instrumental "Little Martha." The album, *Eat a Peach*, was released on February 12, 1972 and serves as an

epilogue to Duane Allman's brief career. It contained four sides of music; three included Allman—with the studio tracks and two other live recordings "One Way Out" and "Trouble No More" on one, two sides of the thirty-minute-plus "Mountain Jam." Side one contained three tracks by the band *sans* Allman: Gregg Allman's blues "Ain't Wastin' Time No More" and his ballad "Melissa," and "Les Brers in A Minor" a Dickey Betts-penned instrumental. *Eat a Peach* reached number four on the *Billboard* charts on April 29 of that year, spending a total of forty-eight weeks on the charts.[160]

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[1] M. Skryp, letter sent to the Allman Brothers Band, c/o Atlantic Recording Corp., November 10, 1971. The Allman Brothers Band Museum at the Big House, Macon, Georgia.

[2] This is called "Reception Theory," a term that emerged in the 1960s, which social scientists and theorists have applied to literary texts. The term has spread to include nearly any "text," including music. See Jennifer M. Silva "Reception Theory," *Encyclopedia of Consumer Culture*, Dale Southerton, ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2011), 1202-1205. The first major work on Reception Theory is Stuart Hall, "Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse," Paper for the Council of Europe Colloquy on Training in the Critical Reading of Televisual Language, Leicester, U.K., September 1973. See also Robert C. Holub, *Reception Theory: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 1984); Robert C. Holub, *Crossing Borders: Reception Theory, Poststructuralism, Deconstruction* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992); Susan Bennett, *Theatre Audiences: A Theory of Production and Reception* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997).

[3] Snyder-Scumpy.

[4] Reiff.

[5] Grover Lewis, "Hitting the Note with the Allman Brothers Band," *Rolling Stone*, November 25, 1971, 53. Lewis's *Rolling Stone* feature, which appeared in the same issue that announced Duane Allman's death was unanimously decried by the band as unfairly painting the band as uneducated southern rubes. Although I've left the phrase "Hittin' the Note" intact, out of respect for the band, who always saw Lewis's piece as

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intentionally demeaning to them because they were southerners, I have changed Lewis's transcription from phrases like "gettin' down," "all the actin'," "lettin' it," etc.

[6] Nolan, 47.

[7] Lewis, 54.

[8] "An Interview with Duane Allman of the Allman Brothers Band."

[9] Edmonds, "Snapshots of the South."

[10] Tom Priddy, "Witnosh: That's What the Allmans Do It For," *The Tiger*, September 17, 1971, 16.

[11] Waddell, "An American Classic," 20.

[12] Nolan, 47.

[13] Ertegun, 239.

[14] Dave Hickey, "Why the Allmans Died Young," *Village Voice*, October 11, 1976, 14.

[15] Drozdowski.

[16] The music-business term Southern Rock came to the fore around 1973, as country music began to move to the forefront of the music of the Allman Brothers and other rock bands from the South. The music the Allman Brothers Band played from 1969 through 1971 was not reflective of this trends. As Gregg Allman remembered, "Our kind of music was so new that eventually they started calling it a whole different genre of music. I always thought we were just playing some blues with some jazz mixed in, and with Dickey we had a country boy in the band," which accounted for the band's country roots (and from 1973 forward, a more country-influenced sound). See Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 181.

[17] Nolan, 14-18.

[18] Perkins, *No Saints, No Saviors*, 9-10. Perkins replaced Lyndon as road manager after Lydon's arrest for the murder of a club owner in Buffalo, New York, in May 1970.

[19] Nolan, 37

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[20] Kirk West, "Lee Roy Parnell: Slide Guitar, Country Style," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 20 (n.d.), 34.

[21] Brooks, 20.

[22]Anderson, 22.

[23] Each of the Allman Brothers Band biographies mentions a variation of this story: that Dowd took a call from Clapton when he was with Allman, who proceeded to play a Clapton solo note-for-note in response, the same happened when Allman called Dowd who was with Clapton. See Nolan, 32; Freeman, 76-85 ; Paul, *One Way Out*, 84-89; Galadrielle Allman, 265-272.

[24] Sam Hare, "Slowhand Remembers Skydog," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 26 (n.d.), 19-23.

[25] Hare, 19-23.

[26] Bill Graham, "Bill Graham Introduction / Statesboro Blues (Live At The Fillmore East/1971/Closing Show)," *The 1971 Fillmore East Recordings*, The Allman Brothers Band, Mercury / Universal 3773697, Bluray audio, 2014.

[27] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear,* 111.

[28] Snyder-Scumpy.

[29] Larry Eagen, "Larry's Warehouse Blog." n.d., accessed November 15, 2015, http://www.blackstrat.net/warehouse/LWB.htm. Many of Eagen's recollections are pulled from a journal he kept at the time.

[30] Jeff, "Canned Heat, Allman Bros. Band, Dreams," December 12, 1970, accessed April 6, 2017, http://www.duaneallman.info/images/articleabb12121970.jpg. Collection of Hans Van Ryswyk.

[31] Marshall Fine, "Allman Live Recording Best," *The Minneapolis Star*, August 3, 1971.

[32] Rich Aregood, "*At Fillmore East* Review," *Philadelphia Daily News*, July 30, 1971, Collection of Walter Vanderbeken.

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[33] George Kimball, "The Allman Brothers Band: *At Fillmore East*," *Rolling Stone*, August 19, 1971, accessed October 15, 2015, http://www.rollingstone.com/music/albumreviews/at-fillmore-east-19710819.

[34] Paul, "Low Down and Dirty: Shades of Dickey Betts," 49-50.

[35] Eagen.

[36] Scoppa, 58, 66-67.

[37] Scoppa, 58, 66-67.

[38] Alex Dubro, "Them Vino-Lovin' Allman Brothers," *Rolling Stone*, March 4, 1971.

[39] Kimball.

[40] *Song of the South.*

[41] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 145.

[42] George Klink, "Allman's Untimely Death," *Beetle*, June 22, 1972, The Allman Brothers Band Museum at the Big House.

[43] Lee Moore, "Lee Moore's Rock 'n' Roll," *Mobile Press Register*, April 9, 1972.

[44] Perhaps the worst review of the Allman Brothers Band came from Grover Lewis. The writer joined the band on a series of dates in the West in October 1971, catching the group at a time when it was apparent that they were burned out from the road and struggling mightily with drugs. Lewis's story was also dismissive of the band as people and seemed to make fun of the band and crew's southern accents. That the story came out in the same issue announcing Duane Allman's death was something the band members never forgave. See Grover Lewis, "Hitting the Note with the Allman Brothers Band."

[45] Steve Wise, "Local Boys Make Good," *The Great Speckled Bird*, June 11, 1973, 24.

[46] Tony Glover, "The Allman Brothers Band: Eat A Peach," April 13, 1972, accessed December 18, 2015, http://www.rollingstone.com/music/albumreviews/eat-a-peach-19720413.

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[47] "Allman Brothers Perform," *Yale Daily News*, March 6, 1973, 5.

[48] Hickey, 13.

[49] Francis Jr., "The Allman Brothers Band," 10.

[50] Steve Wise, "Non-Event," *The Great Speckled Bird*, May 19, 1969, 3.

[51] Philip Lane, "Piedmont Park Recollections," *Friends and Not Necessarily Stoned, but Beautiful: Hippies of the 60s and Beyond*, July 25, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/hippiesofthe60sandbeyond/posts/729683123836256:0 1/, accessed September 7, 2016.

[52] Edmondson, "May 11 Be-In in Piedmont."

[53] Edmondson, "May 11 Be-In in Piedmont."

[54] Miller Francis Jr., "Our Park," *The Great Speckled Bird*, September 22, 1969, 9.

[55] Bill Mankin, "We Can All Join In: How Rock Festivals Helped Change America," *Like the Dew* (blog), 2011, accessed August 13, 2013, http://likethedew.com/2012/03/04/we-can-all-join-in-how-rock-festivals-helped-change-america/.

[56] Mankin.

[57] Miller Francis Jr., "Cosmic Ripoff," *The Great Speckled Bird*, June 22, 1970, 12. Capitalization reflects original document.

[58] Elizabeth LaGrua, "Forward," in Willie Perkins, *No Saints, No Saviors: My Years with the Allman Brothers Band*, ix-xi. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2005.

[59] Miller Francis Jr., "Allman Brothers Band, Joe South, Mother Earth: Piedmont Music Festival, Atlanta," *The Great Speckled Bird*, October 27, 1969, 7, 22.

[60] "Special Merit Spotlight: Spotlighting New Singles Deserving Special Attention of Programmers and Dealers," *Billboard*, December 6, 1969, 64.

[61] Alvin Reynolds, "Records in Review: Allman Brothers: The Best on Record," *Commonwealth Times*, April 10, 1970, 2.

[62] Eugene Oschsenreiter, "New Albums Mini-Reviewed," *The Ridgerunner*, December 5, 1969, 3; John Wren, "Records," *The Technician*, January 14, 1970, 3, 8.

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[63] Ben Edmonds, "The Allman Brothers Band: *The Allman Brothers Band*," *Fusion*, February 20, 1970, accessed July 13, 2015, https://www-rocksbackpages-com.ezproxy. mtsu. edu/Library/Article/the-allman-brothers-band-ithe-allman-brothers-bandi.

[64] "New LP: The Allman Brothers Band," *Anomaly*, April 9, 1970.

[65] John Wren, "Records," *The Technician*, January 14, 1970, 3, 8.

[66] Lester Bangs, "The Allman Brothers Band: The Allman Brothers Band," *Rolling Stone*, February 21, 1970, accessed December 18, 2015, http://www.rollingstone.com/ music/albumreviews/the-allman-brothers-band-19700221#ixzz3uhZKVus7. All italics reflect Bangs's original review.

[67] "New LP: The Allman Brothers Band."

[68] Edmonds, "The Allman Brothers Band." Edmonds did note that "Dreams, "is dragged out a bit too long perhaps (7:18)."

[69] Bangs, "The Allman Brothers Band."

[70] Edmonds, "The Allman Brothers Band."

[71] Harris.

[72] Edmonds, "The Allman Brothers Band."

[73] Jim LaLumis, "With Youth In Mind," *Long Island Advance*, n.d., collection of Walter Vanderbeken.

[74] Rowland Archer, "The Night They Closed the Fillmore Down," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 12 (June 1995), 11-14.

[75] Eagen.

[76] Hank Teich, "Concert Preview: Coming to the Fillmore North," *Statesman*, April 24, 1970, 8. SUNY-Stony Brook eventually hosted the band five times over 1970 and 1971.

[77] Since a recording of the show circulates, one can assume these languid songs Quinn referred to are "Dreams," "I'm Gonna Move to the Outskirts of Town," "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed," and/or "Stormy Monday."

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[78] Joseph M. Quinn, Jr., "Swarthmore College Slates Rock Music Friday, Saturday," *Delaware County (PA) Daily Times*, n.d., collection of Walter Vanderbeken.

[79] Ogden, "First There Is a Mountain," 16.

[80] Exact numbers for the event are unverified. Promoter Alex Cooley said he estimated a crowd of 100,000 as he planned the event, but shortly after it began, tens of thousands crashed the gates and attended for free. Cooley's website estimates around 200,000 ultimately attended but that the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* estimated between 350,000 and 500,000 attendees at the time. See "The 2nd Atlanta International Pop Festival," Alexcooley.com, n.d., accessed April 5, 2018, http://www.alexcooley.com/fest-atlpop2.html; Richard L. Eldredge, "What a Splash: Recalling Georgia's 'Woodstock,'" *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, July 4, 1995, E-7; Ben Standifer, "Top 5 Facts about Byron Music Festival," *Gateway Macon*, n.d., accessed April 5, 2018, https://www.gateway macon.org/live-music-macon-ga/top-5-facts-byron-music-f.cms; Christina M. Wright, "Historical Marker to Recognize 1970 Byron Pop Festival," *Macon Telegraph*, September 11, 2012, accessed April 5, 2018, http://www.macon.com/news/article30112317.html.

[81] Allman Brothers Band, *The Allman Brothers Band Live at the Atlanta International Pop Festival, July 3 & 5 1970*, Epic/Legacy E2K 86909, 2003, CD. An entire website devoted to remembrances of the Atlanta Pop Festival highlight the importance of the event to youth culture, particularly in the South. See Carter Tomassi, "2nd Atlanta Pop Festival," Messyoptics, 2004, accessed October 17, 2016, http://www.messyoptics. com/festtxt/popfest-12.html.

[82] "Festival!," *Inquisition*, July 17, 1970.

[83] Barnes's recollection may be tempered by the knowledge that the band acknowledged its debt to Miles Davis's modal-jazz masterpiece *Kind of Blue* for its impact on the song "Dreams."

[84] Bill Barnes, "Duane Allman: A Rock Visionary on the Cusp of Jazz," *Jazz.Com* (blog), September 2, 2009, accessed December 2, 2015, http://www.jazz.com/jazzblog/ 2009/9/2/allmanbarnes.

[85] "Love Valley Rock Festival July 17," *N.C. Anvil*, July 4, 1970; James Neal, "47 Years Ago This Weekend, Love Valley Hosted Its Version of Woodstock. This Is What It Looked Like," *Statesville Record & Landmark*, July 15, 2017, accessed July 17, 2017, http://www.statesville. com/news/years-ago-this-weekend-love-valley-hosted-its-

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version-of/article_5fa95a36-695f-11e7-8de2-ab37751ac63f.html; Henry Porter, "First There Is a Mountain," *Creative Loafing*, December 28, 1981.

[86] Tiven. The film was recorded without sound, however, some audio is synced up to parts of the band's set and circulates on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= joafeJQ890A.

[87] Roger Withhelp, "Parts 3 & 4," *The Great Speckled Bird*, July 27, 1970, 3.

[88] Norman Zamcheck, "The Allman Brothers Appear in Concert Tonight in Lowell," *Lowell Sun*, June 24, 1971.

[89] Fred Bowman, Comments on "First There Is a Mountain . . . Creative Loafing on The Allman Brothers Band," The Strip Project (blog), February 13, 2014, accessed June 12, 2017, http://www.thestripproject.com/creative-loafing-on-the-allman-brothers-band/.

[90] Zamcheck.

[91] "Last of the Big Festivals," *Fest on the Fourth: The Pictorial Story of the 2nd Annual Atlanta International Pop Festival*, n.d.

[92] Letters from the Allman Brothers Band Museum at the Big House.

[93] "Last of the Big Festivals," *Fest on the Fourth: The Pictorial Story of the 2nd Annual Atlanta International Pop Festival*, n.d.

[94] George Wein, Derek Trucks, and Susan Tedeschi. "The Allman Brothers and the 1971 Riot: George Wein: Tedeschi Trucks Interview." Filmed [2012]. YouTube video, 3:49. Posted [July 15, 2012], https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mm53Z5BVmSg. Atlanta Pop and Love Valley were the last two major festivals the Allman Brothers Band would play before the July 27 through 28, 1973 Summer Jam with the Band and the Grateful Dead in Watkins Glen, New York. More than 600,000 people attended the show.

[95] Perkins, *No Saints, No Saviors*.

[96] Eagen.

[97] DuBois.

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[98] "Live at Audubon Park," *New Orleans Express*, September 4, 1970, Tulane University Special Collections.

[99] Marty Pate, "Allman Brothers Head Up Blues Festival," *The Technician*, September 23, 1970, 5.

[100] Hank Teich, "Delaney, Bonnie & the Allmans," *The Statesman*, October 23, 1970, 11.

[101] "[Title Missing]," *Miami News*, October 12, 1970, collection of Walter Vanderbeken.

[102] Cee Howe, "Concert Lacks Sound Quality; University System to Blame," *The Red and Black*, n.d.

[103] Stuart Stevens, "Allman Brothers Introduce New Abilities in Idlewild South," *The Catalyst*, October 23, 1970, collection of Walter Vanderbeken.

[104] "The Record Review," *The Gryphon*, April 7, 1971, 6.

[105] Butch Ochsenreiter, "Plastic Rap," *The Ridgerunner*, November 4, 1970, 11.

[106] Ed Leimbacher, "Review: Idlewild South," *Rolling Stone*, December 24, 1970, http://www.rollingstone.com/music/albumreviews/idlewild-south-19701224#ixzz3kk AnnGPm .

[107] Leimbacher.

[108] Rory O'Conner, "Idlewild South Is a Hit," *Tampa Tribune*, October 31, 1970, Collection of Walter Vanderbeken.

[109] Chris Welch, "Allman Brothers Band: Idlewild South (Atco)," *Melody Maker*, January 30, 1971, accessed July 13, 2015, http://www.rocksbackpages.com/Library/ Article/allman-brothers-band-iidlewild-southi-atco-.

[110] Miller Francis Jr., "Records: The Allman Brothers Band: *Idlewild South* (Atco Capricorn SD 33-342)," *The Great Speckled Bird*, November 9, 1970, 8.

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[111] Francis Jr., "Records: The Allman Brothers Band: *Idlewild South*," 8. Given that "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed" has since become one of the band's most beloved songs, Francis's impression is somewhat surprising.

[112] Leimbacher.

[113] "The Record Review," 6.

[114] Francis Jr., "Records: The Allman Brothers Band: *Idlewild South*." 8.

[115] Welch.

[116] O'Conner.

[117] Stevens.

[118] Glover, "In This Band You Better Come to Pick."

[119] Priddy.

[120] George Knemeyer, "Allman Bros. Band Whisky a Go Go, Los Angeles," *Billboard*, February 20, 1971, 22.

[121] Mike McHugh, "The Statesboro Blues," *The George-Anne*, January 12, 1971, 65.

[122] McHugh.

[123] Priddy.

[124] Knemeyer, 22.

[125] Burt Gossoo, "Allman Brothers Best since Dixieland Jazz," *Ohio Wesleyan Transcript*, February 11, 1971, 3.

[126] Priddy.

[127] Fink, "Winter's End," *Gimme Shelter*, February 1971, 11.

[128] Phil Thomas, "Review," *Connie's Insider*, n.d.

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[129] Mike Diana, "Evening of Rock Sparked by Appearance of Cactus," *Daily Press*, January 31, 1971. In a separate review, Chip Anderson noted the show was plagued by sound problems, see http://www.duaneallman.info/images/articleabb01241971.jpg.

[130] Nathan Cobb, "Good Vibes Prevail at Allman Concert," *Boston Globe*, August 18, 1971, 26.

[131] "Allman Brothers Sounding Better All the Time to an Ex-Skeptic." It is interesting that after the band had been on the road for nearly two years and recorded two albums, the reviewer got the names wrong for both Gregg Allman and Butch Trucks, and only referred to Johanson by his nickname.

[132] Dubro.

[133] Anne Cottrell and Jane Barrios, eds., *L'Acadien,* vol. 53. (Lafayette, LA: University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1972), 48–49.

[134] Rich Meislin, "Allman Win," *The Morning Call*, April 10, 1971, collection of Walter Vanderbeken. The twenty-minute instrumental was most likely "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed."

[135] Patti Preston, "Allman All Right Despite," *The Evening Independent*, July 22, 1971.

[136] Michael Smith, "Jamming with Allman."

[137] Jim Gillespie, "Bassist Paces Allman Brothers Before Appreciative Audience," *The Minneapolis Star*, October 1, 1971, 14A.

[138] Gillespie.

[139] Gillespie.

[140] Poe, 187.

[141] Gary Wishik, "S.B. 'House' Band Rivaled by Live Album," *Statesman*, September 17, 1971.

[142] Kimball.

[143] Fine.

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[144] Jon Landau, "Performance: But I Was so Much Older Then," *Rolling Stone*, September 30, 1971, 42.

[145] "*At Fillmore East* Review," *Corpus Christi Times*, September 25, 1971, collection of Walter Vanderbeken.

[146] Ernie Santosuosso, "Allman Blues Superior Stuff," *Boston Globe*, August 15, 1971.

[147] Santosuosso.

[148] Wishik.

[149] Jim LaLumis, "With Youth In Mind," *Long Island Advance*, n.d., collection of Walter Vanderbeken.

[150] Michael Smith, "Jamming with Allman."

[151] Charlie Frick, "The Allman Brothers Band *At Fillmore East*," *East Village Other*, August 24, 1971, 19. Frick believed Canned Heat, "America's greatest boogie band," superior to the Allmans.

[152] Roy Hollingworth, "The Allman Brothers Band: Allman Brothers at the Fillmore East (Atlantic)," *Melody Maker*, September 9, 1971, accessed September 13, 2015, https://www-rocksbackpages-com.ezproxy.mtsu.edu/Library/Article/the-allman-brothers-band-iallman-brothers-at-the-fillmore-easti-atlantic.

[153] Jim Conley, "Platter Chatter: Allmans, Canned Heat Cut Great New Albums," *El Paso Prospector*, July 1971, collection of Walter Vanderbeken.

[154] Aregood.

[155] "Review: *At Fillmore East*," *The Tiger*, September 17, 1971, 14.

[156] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

[157] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

[158] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

[159] Scoppa, 66.

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[160] "The Allman Brothers Band Chart History."

# Chapter 8

## "Don't Be Afraid to Share What's Inside of You with Other People": The Ethos and Legacy of Duane Allman

In 2014, Duane Allman's daughter Galadrielle published *Please Be with Me: A Song for My Father, Duane Allman.* The book was part biography of her parents Duane and Donna Allman (who split up in 1970) and part personal memoir about a woman striving to understand a father she never knew. "My father is killed in the first paragraph of every article ever written about him," she begins. "His life story is told backward, always beginning at the end: in the road, his motorcycle down, his body broken. People linger over the wreckage as if it says something meaningful about his life." However, she argues, "Duane Allman's story is more than a tragedy; it is a true romance. He fell in love with his guitar and gave his heart away."[1]

Both points are equally true. First, nearly every story about her father begins with his tragic death. It is a relatively simplistic rhetorical conceit. It connects readers with the sensational nature of Allman's death and affords writers an opportunity to recount a meteoric career that flamed out in tragically glorious fashion. Yet, as Galadrielle Allman notes, Duane Allman's story is about much more than his tragic death at twenty-four. It is the tale of someone who is rightly revered as a guitar god and one who is remembered as the founder of the groundbreaking Allman Brothers Band, a band that ultimately begat the Southern Rock movement of the mid-1970s.

Much subtlety is found in each argument. Yes, Duane Allman was an inventive and groundbreaking guitar player. He was the founder and leader the Allman Brothers Band, a group whose success—mostly achieved after Allman's death—provided a path for rock musicians throughout the South to follow. But while he is often compared to the guitar heroes of his era—Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck, Jimi Hendrix, and Mike Bloomfield, among others—the analogy overlooks that Allman achieved most of his renown in the context of a stable band, one comprised of fellow virtuosos he assembled not as a backing band for his talents, but as additional soloists, songwriters, and arrangers.[2]

"They were a *band*," Jon Landau wrote as he reflected on the guitarist's impact after his death. "Duane did not so dominate that group that they ceased to be a band, or became a vehicle for Duane Allman." In assembling the Allman Brothers Band, Allman is therefore more akin to jazz trumpeter Miles Davis than his rock peers. This band of equals was Allman's goal from the beginning. "It was one of the things he had most in his mind when he conceived of the group," Landau shared. "He wanted a band he could play *with*, not over or against, or through. He wanted a group of partners, and that's exactly what he got."[3]

It is somewhat challenging, however, to get a true sense of Duane Allman. Because he died so young, his bandmates, colleagues, peers, and audience, as well as music writers, critics, and historians have created a mythos around Allman that in some ways subsumes the man and the musician. The story, as Galadrielle Allman notes, too often centers around the tragedy that ended her father's short life, and a career

interrupted just as Allman's vision was coming into focus. But, as Allman's daughter also argues, focusing solely on the tragic part of the story misses the mark of Duane Allman's impact. Allman forged a new version of American music based on southern musical forms and roots. In doing so, he founded a band that followed the musical path he blazed for more than four decades after his death and opened up opportunities for southern bands in the years that followed.

The esteem Allman expressed for his band collectively, his individual bandmates, and his love and pursuit of music for music's sake is well-documented. So too are his bandmates' affinity for Allman as a player—most notably his guitar partner Dickey Betts. These men repeatedly identified Allman as the band's leader, one whose artistic decisions and choices, while unorthodox on the surface, they followed. Musicians Allman encountered once he formed the Allman Brothers Band—most notably Eric Clapton and Delaney Bramlett—also spoke of Allman in reverent terms. The same is true for the music writers and critics writing after Allman's death and for his friends and acquaintances.

Most accounts heaped acclaim on Allman for his guitar playing, his band, and for how embodied an authentic love of music. Many correspondents, however, also acknowledged Allman's ego and self-destructive tendencies. The former does not seem to have impinged on his life and guitar playing except as it affected personal relationships (which are not addressed here). The latter, however, resulted in his untimely death.

Allman's tale begins with his talent as a guitar player; without it, his story is inconsequential. Rick Hall was the first music business representative who truly

harnessed his talent. Reflecting many years after working with Allman in Muscle Shoals, Hall highlighted Allman's intuition as an artist (intuition he ignored). "Duane was right about the old blues inspiring a new generation of rock and roll music. Duane brought tomorrow into my studio and into my life," Hall recalled. "'Dog' and I weren't writing the same book, but I was totally into his free spirit, never-say-die attitude, and the mind-boggling things he could do with his guitar. Duane's music and his way of thinking were much more influential on me than I ever was on him."[4]

Hall's work with Allman brought him the notice of Jerry Wexler and Atlantic Records. "There seemed to be no end to his resource, his musical roots," Wexler shared. "He had originality, taste, sensitivity. . . . [I]t's very interesting to see the scope . . . of his playing. Duane could play great acoustic, he could play bossa nova, he could play jazz, he could give you Wes Montgomery licks. He could play any kind of session."[5] Wexler utilized Allman on sessions with luminaries such as Aretha Franklin, King Curtis, and rockabilly artist Ronnie Hawkins. He greatly valued Allman's artistic contributions. "He was always more than a sideman or soloist," Wexler wrote. "He had the mind of a producer and would come up with scores of righteous suggestions."[6] Allman "was a complete guitar player, he could give you whatever you needed, he could do everything."[7]

Many heard a authenticity in the Allman's approach to guitar and to the music he played. Bill Graham found this genuineness refreshing. "I can give you some half-a-dozen guitar players that the world thinks . . . are the cat's meow," he noted. "But there's no

soul; it's dipped in water, it's not dipped in soul of any kind. They can make those riffs work—but that's all they are."[8] Wexler agreed. Allman "played no-bullshit blues, phrased like the authentic black guitarists," he noted. "His chops were huge."[9] "He really got the essence of what the black man, the black musician, gave us," Graham wrote. "That's the soulful aspect of picking, and all the technical prowess in the world doesn't give you that."[10]

Many people highlight Allman's work on electric slide guitar, an element he brought to the fore in rock music. "On the slide he had *the* touch," Wexler said.[11] "Most slide players are muddy," he recalled. "Their playing sounds sour. Duane is one of the very, very few who played clean, sweet, and to the note."[12] Cornell Dupree, a session and touring guitarist in the Atlantic orbit, concurred. "He could really play that bottleneck better than anyone since Elmore James. He sounded so lowdown greasy."[13] Allman's true innovation with the slide, Dickey Betts maintained, was that he "played slide guitar more like a harmonica than he did a guitar." Allman was influenced by James's electric slide playing, Betts said, but "he also listened to all the harp players—Sonny Boy Williamson and all that. He really played a lot of harmonica licks on slide guitar."[14]

Many observers noted a sincere spirit of generosity in Allman. Graham believed Allman to be someone "who had the technical proficiency, but never sold it. He never sold anything on his guitar . . . there was no, 'Can you top this?' He never tried to beat you. He always wanted to play with you."[15] Cowboy's Tommy Talton, Allman's Capricorn labelmate, found likewise. "You come up a lot of good guitar players, but usually they try

too hard to impress you." Allman, Talton stated, "had flames coming out of every note he played; but he didn't throw it at you. He just did what was necessary at the time."[16] "The thing I liked about Duane was the fluidity in is playing," recalled Sam "The Sham" Samudio, with whom Allman crossed paths while recording with Delaney & Bonnie in the 1970s. "With so many players, it's all about how fast they can play or how many notes they can hit," Samudio stated. "But I never did see Duane like that. He had this fluidity, like he always knew where he was going."[17]

Bassist Jerry Jemmott, who played bass with Allman on Muscle Shoals sessions, noted his "great insight into music. Call it insight, intuition—all the great players have it. They listen ahead; it's about knowing where it's going. He was one of those people who could do that."[18] "On so many of those sessions," Johnny Sandlin recalled, "Duane would do things that were not extremely difficult . . . but were so appropriate, so fitting, and so tasteful. Somebody with all that power, all that ability and technique, and he could sit there and play a simple rhythm part. . . . He was into the total concept of the song."[19] Phil Walden agreed. "He just had impeccable taste in his playing. That separated him from a lot of rock 'n' roll players that tend to be judged by the number of notes they play and how fast they play them. He only played what needed to be played. He had total and complete control of his instrument."[20]

Despite these accolades, not everyone was as universally enamored with Allman's playing. Bobby Whitlock played and recorded with Allman as a member of both Delaney & Bonnie & Friends and Eric Clapton's Derek and the Dominos. In his autobiography,

Whitlock shared impressions of Allman's two live appearances with the band on whose only studio album Allman had played. "Eric was and is a fluid player. Duane couldn't keep up no matter how he tried. . . . Duane was great for our record but he would have not been good for our band in the long run because of his approach to what a band should be." The Allman Brothers Band, Whitlock argued, was a more structured situation than Derek and the Dominos and Allman "was not used to creative flow and formless freedom." In the live environment, Whitlock concluded, Duane Allman "was not the guitar player for our band. We were not a southern rock band. We were a very sophisticated rock 'n' roll band with a lot more going on than playing the same old lick over and over in different keys."[21] Most observers—Eric Clapton included—say the exact opposite about the short-lived Derek and the Dominos project. Allman's absence on the band's subsequent tour and in the studio for its aborted attempt at a follow-up record was a major reason for Derek and the Dominos' rapid demise.

Few offer anything but praise for Allman's talent. Allman, Tony Glover told an interviewer decades later, "Was another one of those consummate musicians, totally dedicated to music and playing it right. He had a real passion for it and intensity. He could mix down-in-the-alley blues with John Coltrane space explorations shit and make it all work together."[22] "Duane had this miraculous command of his instrument," Phil Walden agreed, "great finesse—a wonderful touch and impeccable taste." It was what initially attracted Walden to Allman. "It was in the era when a lot of the real fast-speedy players were the darling of the business . . . [Duane] was the guy that refused to indulge himself

in that kind of playing. . . . It's not only important what he played, but what he didn't play. His music had just enough polish and just enough rawness—it had just the right edge on it."[23]

Critics concurred and many singled out Allman in reviews of the Allman Brothers Band's concerts and records. "For sheer musicianship," Tom Priddy wrote after a September 11, 1971 show at Clemson, "there are few who could even come close to Duane Allman."[24] *At Fillmore East*, Rich Aregood wrote, "confirms Duane Allman's position as one of the finest rock guitarists ever, no matter how many British phenoms have come along or how many recording dates he does."[25] "Allman was a guitarist of both incredible technical virtuosity and unerring taste," Charlie Allen wrote after his death.[26] "Duane was the anti-guitar god," critic Bud Scoppa reflected. "Without being flashy, he was mesmerizing. There was this look of ecstasy on his face when he was getting really into it that was so palpable that he sort of became the only thing in the room and no amount of showmanship can really compare to witnessing this moment of ecstasy on the part of an extraordinary virtuoso."[27]

Many commentaries noted how clearly Allman's personality came through in his guitar playing and his approach to music. Tom Nolan, who wrote the first biography of the Allman Brothers Band, highlighted two sides of Allman's personality. One was a "lighthearted, extroverted side he exhibited to friends and neighbors alike." The second, "a deeper, more reflective part which many sensed but which even those close to him seldom witnessed."[28] Tommy Talton shared this observation. "I would say there was a

Duane you knew, but there was a Duane that was much, much more than that one, that he didn't let it out most of the time." Talton equated the latter to Allman's hyper-focus on music. "It seemed like he was trying to keep everything on a light level, so he could just play his guitar and not be bothered with any heavy stuff," he recalled. "The sensitive, loving part of him, maybe he felt funny about letting it out in front of too many people. When he was playing, that's how he did it. That's probably one of the reasons why he played so well. He held it back all the way up until it picked up a guitar, and then that's when it came out."[29]

Music was the path Allman chose. It was a romance, Allman's daughter Galadrielle wrote. Sonny Fussell, an early Daytona Beach bandmate, claimed the guitarist established this direction at an early age. "He knew what he wanted to do. Even at that age he just walked to a different beat." Ted Petruciani, also from Daytona Beach, agreed. "For many people who didn't know him well enough would probably think that he was directionless. I don't know too many people who had more direction than he did. He just didn't waste time talking with people about trying to make his decisions, it was already made in his mind." Allman, Petruciani continued, had made up his mind to pursue music. "Duane was music, music, music. Any time he heard music, the focus, the concentration was phenomenal."[30]

People who knew Allman nearly all comment on his charisma. "[Everyone] remarks on the unique quality of his presence," Nolan wrote in 1976. "When he entered a room all eyes turned to him, naturally, expectantly."[31] "The qualities he emanated were

strong and unique," he continued, "and those who associated with him seem certain Duane would have excelled at whatever task or occupation he approached."[32] "Had he not been a famous guitar player," Paul Hornsby argued, "he'd have been something else. He would have never been ordinary."[33] Allman had a brashness that served him well, Thom Doucette contended. "He had such a tremendous attitude about whatever was going on. No matter what he was doing, he played with great attitude and put his stamp on it."[34] "Duane was a very outspoken person," drummer Jai Johanny Johanson recalled. "Duane was like this, 'I'm going to drink all this wine right now. I'm not going to save any for today, tomorrow, or the next day.' You couldn't talk Duane out of anything once he made his mind up. He was just so intense. When he decided to do something, he did it. He didn't let anyone tell him otherwise, and that is probably the thing I loved most about him."[35]

"Duane Allman pushed himself into everything he did, in his personal life, his recording, everything," Phil Walden remembered.[36] His mother Geraldine Allman put it more bluntly. "Duane would have become a killer if he hadn't found that guitar."[37] Allman agreed with his mother's assessment. The guitar, he said, "saved me from so much grief, man, 'cause like I was a hoodlum. I was running around and getting ass-beatings. And like, I was fourteen-years-old, man, crazy. . . . Then that old guitar came along and I had something to do." Allman found a sense of peace with music. "When I get pissed off I just sit down and beat the fire out of some old Jimmy Reed shit instead of going out and

drinking and fighting and falling down and going crazy. It would take me all the way, man, and put me on a good note."[38]

The guitarist is also remembered as generous to others pursuing music. While it is often natural to think kindly of those who faced untimely deaths, there is a consistency in remembrances of how charitable Allman was with other musicians. "He was one of those people that would motivate you and get the best out of you. It was always, 'You can do it, let's work on it and we can do it,'" Daytona Beach bandmate Floyd Miles recalled. "Duane was a creator and motivator. Duane stands alone for the fact that he was not only good but always trying to make it grow and innovate."[39] Another former bandmate, Johnny Sandlin, agreed, "Whenever anyone played with Duane, he would bring out the best in them. Not that it was a competition, but he was an inspiration."[40]

Atlanta-based musician Bruce Hampton experienced a similar side of Allman in the support he gave to his band, the avant-garde Hampton Grease Band. "Duane especially was supportive of many, many musicians and bands including ours."[41] Allman's support of others was unique in the cutthroat world of the music business. "He was the first person I knew, musically, who always found something good to say about fellow musicians," Joe Marshall, a friend from Allman's days touring with the Allman Joys, recalled. "Whenever he and I would hear another musician or group who maybe wasn't so great, he would always find something positive to say, even if it was just, 'Hell, Joey, at least they're trying.'"[42] Drummer Johanson remembered his bandmate "just loved to play. He used to say to me, 'Hey man, let's go cut some heads.' He didn't mean it in a bad

way—it was more like, 'Let's go play our butts off.' Duane was not the type of cat who would try to intimidate someone or whatever—he just played."[43]

It was a personality trait that was evident to John Hammond Jr., with whom Allman recorded at Muscle Shoals Sound in November 1969. Hammond remembered the sessions not going well before Allman's arrival at the studio. The musicians expected Hammond to be African American; Hammond thought the same of them. It became an issue. "They got pretty cold to me. . . . I didn't know what to do. I didn't know what to make of the scene."[44] Hammond reported he felt "very frustrated and couldn't get across some of the ideas that I had in mind."[45] The sessions languished for two days until Allman arrived.[46] Though no longer a Muscle Shoals session regular, Hammond recognized immediately the immense respect the Muscle Shoals players—Barry Beckett, Roger Hawkins, Jimmy Johnson, David Hood, and Eddie Hinton, among others—held for the guitarist. Allman, Hammond recalled, announced, "'Where is this John Hammond guy? I wanna meet this guy! I really dig him.'" Allman's validation was all the players needed, Hammond recalled. "They all looked at me with new respect." Though Hammond was unfamiliar with Allman's playing, "These guys worshipped him. As soon as Duane gave me the okay, the session went *fantastic*."[47]

Hammond and Allman remained in touch after the sessions. "It was the beginning of a long relationship I had with him," Hammond remembered. "Duane got me together with [Phil Walden's] Paragon Agency, and I worked for [Paragon] for about four years. I was on many shows with them." Music remained at the core of the relationship. The

Allman Brothers opened a show for Hamond on February 1, 1970 and afterwards, Hammond recalled, "We got together and we had a jam that night, and it was just terrific." Allman also visited Hammond in New York City on October 28, 1971, the night before he died. "We jammed all night," Hammond said. "We played records and played some guitar together."[48] This custom was indicative of Allman's offstage persona, as Denise Duncan wrote in a tribute to Allman in the house newspaper of the Warehouse in New Orleans. "Many shows lasted for hours and afterwards we would probably find Duane sitting somewhere with guitar in hand ready for more music to be played."[49]

Even when not discussing music, Allman's statements evince a somewhat carefree, friendly personality. "You can either have yourself a good time or a shitty time," he said to Glover. "Why not have a good time? Don't surround yourself with things that bring you down, don't dig nothing that brings you down. Just dig yourself for the beautiful thing you are, man."[50] He used his band's catchphrase, "Hittin' the Note," to a C*rawdaddy* interviewer who asked about his personal philosophy. "To have a good life and be on a good note, there're just a few things you have to do. You have to be right up front and be true, to yourself and other people around you, true as you can be."[51] "There are nice folks and assholes, and you have to learn to distinguish between the two in order to get by," he told Ellen Mandel. "And someone who's an asshole to somebody may be a nice folk to somebody else, so you've got to learn to be nice to everybody, and show everybody respect, that's the only way people respect you."[52]

This aspect may seem at odds with his otherwise intense, impatient personality, but he did share with Mandel a measure of charity toward others. "You've got to have mutual respect and a little bit of love, if you can round it up," he told her. "And don't be afraid to share what's inside of you with other people. That's the only way you're ever going to get free or have any fun all, either. So just rock on, and have you a good time. If I have a choice between having a good time and a shitty time, I'm going to have me a good time. I've had enough shitty times."[53]

Allman eschewed contemporary issues for the most part. In one of his most famous quotes (because it became the title of the Allmans' fourth album), he answered a reporter's question about how he was helping the youth revolution with "I'm hitting a lick for peace and every time I'm in Georgia I eat a peach for peach. But you can't help the revolution, because there's just evolution. And I'm a player, and players don't give a damn for nothing but playing and what playing entails."[54] Allman exclusively chose music as a venue for making change and did not involve himself further in contemporary issues.[55]

Despite these accolades, and they reflect most people's experiences and encounters with Allman, his ego was well-known and widely acknowledged. "Duane had a confidence in his talent and his purpose in life that struck some as blatantly conceited," Tom Nolan wrote. Nolan also somewhat tempered this observation. "Others argue that Duane's seeming arrogance was an uncontrived expression of his ability and personality."[56] "He was pretty arrogant sometimes, and I think one critic said he had 'an

ego that could fill the Grand Canyon,'" shared an unnamed observer in 1973, "but he had a talent to match."[57] Allman was not shy about his own opinion of his talent. While watching Johnny Winter at Fillmore East in January 1969, he remarked to fellow Muscle Shoals session guitarist Jimmy Johnson, "Johnny is really good, but I can cut him. Do you see that stage down there? Next year by this time, man, I'm going to be down there."[58] In May 1969 as he headed to Muscle Shoals to record with Boz Scaggs, he told Capricorn executive Bunky Odom, "I want to show him he shouldn't pick up his damn guitar case with me around."[59] Yet Allman acknowledged his limitations when others sang his praises. After opening for B.B. King at the Fillmore West in January 1970, Odom remarked to Allman, "Man, you were great! You cut B.B. King!" Duane, "No way! B.B. cut me—he opened his mouth and sang!"[60]

Allman's ego and belief in himself served him well as the leader of the Allman Brothers Band. "Duane was the Douglas MacArthur of that band," said Bruce Hampton. "He ran it like a general or an old-school football coach. It was his band and he let you know that you were in his band." Roadie Joseph "Red Dog" Campbell agreed, "There was no question that it was his band, even with Dickey, who was a pretty strong character in his own right."[61] Allman's relentless pursuit had a reluctant convert in his younger brother. "My brother, he had more faith in us than I ever did," Gregg recalled. "He would push me and push me. He would say, 'No, man! We're better than all of them!' and I would say, 'Fuck you, man! How can you sit here and say that? Every corner you turn, man, someone's gonna wipe your ass playing music.' And he didn't seem to think that

way."[62] Willie Perkins recalled differently. "I can remember him telling all of us," Perkins remembered, "'Hey, as good as you think I am there is some guy that nobody has ever heard of playing in some little club in some little nowhere town that can kick my ass.' I'm sure Duane was flattered by the compliments. He knew he was good. But he was not egotistical about it."[63]

Jim Shepley, Allman's guitar playing mentor in Daytona Beach in the mid-1960s, disagreed with Perkins's assessment. In 1981, he shared with interviewer Jas Obrecht his last encounter with his old friend.

> He had a big head—he was egotistical—and he got more egotistical. To get right down to it, he seemed to have a little bit more of a temper and was a little bit shorter with you. It was more like, "I'm a big star now."
>
> You gotta realize he had that kind of thing—not that he ever treated me badly or anything, but I could see he was under a lot of pressure. He felt he was going somewhere and was becoming a big star, and he was living a rock and roll star's life—you know, doing drugs and partying more and more.
>
> I just felt he became more arrogant and just seemed totally dedicated to one thing, which was his music. He changed for the worst, to tell you the truth, over the years that I knew him. He really did.
> I still liked the guy, and we still had times together, but he changed for the worse. You know, it takes its toll on you, man. He was twenty-four when he died, and he was burnt out. His teeth were rotten, his hair was falling out, he looked fifty. He was really wasted. Nobody probably bothered to tell you that, but he looked pretty beat.[64]

Allman's younger brother Gregg expressed similar sentiment in somewhat subdued language. "Everybody talks so highly of Duane because he's not with us anymore, and when people talk about him, all they remember's the good parts. Well there were some shit parts to my brother as well. . . . If Duane felt shitty, he wanted to make everybody

else feel shitty too." Ultimately, he concluded, "Duane lived hard, fast, and on the edge, and if you ever heard any of his interviews, you could tell he had a little taste for speed."[65]

Drug and alcohol usage underpins nearly all of Allman's musical output. Some stories are seemingly mundane, such as that of Joel Selvin following a show in southern California in December 1970. "I met Duane at his hotel room, waited in the hallway an hour . . . and was ushered in to a naked Duane, just getting out of bed at four in the afternoon," he wrote. "He comes back from the bathroom with his toothbrush, pulls a pill bottle out of the bedside table and inserts the handle of the toothbrush. Comes out with a pile of cocaine, snorts it up, repeats with other nostril. Puts away bottle and brush, pounds chest and says 'Ah, I feel like a white boy again.'"[66] To Allman, the cocaine helped him regain a sense of normalcy.

*Rolling Stone* correspondent Grover Lewis was less kind in his November 1971 profile of the band. Following a concert less than two weeks before Allman's demise, on October 6, 1971, Lewis wrote:

> Afterwards, back in the locker room, Gregg Allman morosely doles himself out another dollop of coke. "I couldn't hear shit," he snorts, and snorts.
>
> "Sounded like we was playing acoustic," Dickey Betts chimes in disgustedly.
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> "Coulda been a dynamite gig, too, man," Berry Oakley laments.
>
> "Coulda been, but it wasn't," Duane snaps. He sinks down on one of the benches, frowning. "I thank maybe it was the audience," he sighs, "but then again . . . it coulda just been too much fuckin' coke. You know what I mean?" He snuffles and reaches for the coke vial.[67]

By Lewis's reckoning, the drug greatly impinged the band's performance.

Some accounts provide specific examples of how drugs and alcohol impeded Allman's guitar playing ability. Of Allman's time in Los Angeles with the Hour Glass, John McEuen recalled, "The thing that I remember, sadly, was seeing Duane come in the studio so high that he could hardly wear his guitar. I thought, 'Oh my God, this is too bad. This is an example of Southern Comfort meeting Southern California.' He could barely open his guitar case."[68] Gregg Allman recalled Wexler lecturing him and his brother about heroin. "Do you have any fucking idea what you're messing with?" Wexler asked the brothers. "It killed Charlie Parker, it killed Billie Holiday, and it will kill you too. . . . And now it's you all—barely twenty-years-old. That doesn't give you a very long time left because no one survives the fucking shit." Producer Tom Dowd followed the same tack. "Tom shamed us, man, he did," Gregg wrote. "'You're throwing your fucking life out the window. . . . Worst of all you're fucking up your music, and you're wasting my goddamn time.' He told us, 'If you don't fucking listen and stop now, you're not going to be able to.' Little did he know, it was already too late."[69]

John Carter, who promoted the Allman Brothers on the west coast for Atlantic Records, recalled heroin's impact on the guitarist during the band's last run with Allman in October 1971. "I must admit that I thought I saw Duane declining—or at least I saw that Dickey Betts seemed to be taking over the band musically."[70] Butch Trucks confronted Allman about it on the same set of shows. "[Duane] would snort heroin a lot,"

drummer Butch Trucks said. "One night . . . Duane followed me to my hotel room and jumped in my face. He said:

> "I'm pissed off! When Dickey gets up to play, the rhythm section is pumping away and when I get up there you're laying back and not pushing at all."
>
> I looked him dead in the eye and said, "Duane, you're so fucked up on that smack that you're not giving us anything."
>
> He looked me in the eye and walked out the door. I think he knew I was telling him the truth. . . . He needed someone to tell him what he already knew.[71]

While drugs were an issue, others cite alcohol as an even larger concern for Allman. "I thought the booze affected the band a lot more than anything else we did," Thom Doucette said. Drummer Johanson blamed alcohol as well. "When Duane wasn't clear headed to me, it certainly wasn't from doing heavy drugs. Duane did not need to drink alcohol—just like Gregory, he would become a different person. . . . Duane could be so fucking nasty you wouldn't want to admit you knew him." And Johanson was one of the few who found a positive in the guitarist's use of heroin. "The other shit did not do anything like that to Duane," he said. "Duane moved five times faster than normal anyhow, [heroin] might have normalized him a little bit." But ultimately, Johanson concluded that heroin was not conducive to the band's music. "I just think about how great a band this was, how great the sound was, and it makes me think how great it could've been if we hadn't slowed ourselves down with all that shit."[72]

Allman's extreme self-confidence and self-destructive tendencies were not new to his time in the Allman Brothers Band. The former was evident upon the first encounter

Shepley and others had with Duane Allman in Daytona Beach. "When he first came into town, nobody really liked the guy. He had a cocky attitude, and he was kind of an aggressive, brazen type." Allman had a destructive side as well. "I always sensed that he was gonna have his problems. I just had a bad feeling about the outcome of his life."[73] Other Daytona Beach bandmates and friends observed these tendencies as well. "I think he was suffering from all these conflicts," Van Harrison, bass player for Allman's first band the Escorts, recounted. "Some days he was really high on doing music and then some days he get so damn depressed, he would disappear for a while and you wouldn't know where the hell he was." Sylvan Wells agreed. "He was absolutely on a self-destructive path. . . . Duane was on a destruction trip. The only question was how much life before he killed himself."[74] Yet, Wells believed this combination of supreme self-confidence, ego, and self-destruction was what helped Allman achieve the success he did. "Duane was an absolute driver, personality wise," he said. "He would go after what he wanted with a vengeance and that was always good, but he always had a self-destructive side. . . . His thing in life was, he wanted to play the guitar really well and he sure accomplished it."[75]

Duane Allman carved for himself and his band a niche that allowed pursuit of a singular musical vision, one based on his band members' abilities and an original take on their combined musical roots. The endeavor's eventual success, Allman told Laurel Dann, was because of the band's cohesion around a singular vision. "We are allies, working together," he said. "There's a mutual love we share. We was hungry together for a long

time. We may be making plenty of bread now, but it really don't make that much difference to anybody."[76] The commercial aspect left him somewhat conflicted, however. "It's hard to believe the amount of emphasis that's been put on rock music and all the money that's been made by people who really are full of shit," he shared with Ed Shane of Atlanta's WPLO-FM in November 1970. "And has squashed out a lot of people that was really good folks, kept them from making bread, And it's pathetic! It's pitiful." To Allman, money and the music industry's quest for it, was inauthentic and harmful to the music. "Like nowadays you get maybe one good record and ten really crappy ones, and they all go right up the charts together, and it doesn't make any sense. Some people that don't know where rock and roll came from will really settle for a hell of a lot less. They settle for a cheap, cruddy imitation of something that was really intense back maybe ten or fifteen years ago, like something Bo Diddley was really laying down."[77]

Prompted by Shane, and speaking while the Allmans were still only a regional touring band with only two moderately successful albums released, the guitarist spoke of his concerns about how finances affected him and affected music. Shane asked the guitarist how he felt playing for money in concert halls rather than for free parks. "Well, anytime you're getting paid for something, you feel like you're obligated to do so much," Allman answered. "That's why playing the park's such a good thing," he continued. "Because people don't even expect you to be there. And if you're there to play, that's really groovy, and so playing in the park's really a nice thing. About the nicest way you can play is just for nothing, you know. And it's not really for nothing—it's for your own

personal satisfaction and other people's, rather than for any kind of financial thing." "Bread'll stop you, too," Shane replied. "It'll keep you there to make more." "Oh, sure! Yeah, I quit doing sessions because of that. I was getting to like it too much."[78]

As Allman's mother Geraldine told Tom Nolan, musical purity was her son's goal all along. "'Mother,'" she recounted Duane telling her when he was still a teenager, "'I would go hungry to play this guitar.' I knew he was dedicated. I knew that he had picked his way." She continued:

> He said, "Mother, I never want a hit record. I do not want that wherever I go, I have to play the same song. I want to do whatever I want to do; I want to be free. I don't want fame and fortune. I just want enough money to eat regular, and to pay my bills, that's all I want out of life; and to play my guitar."
>
> He did not want the fame and fortune. He never looked for it, and that's why he attained it. . . . Duane didn't ever want nothing but to play his guitar and make enough money to keep himself clean, and fed. . . . He didn't ask too much out of life.[79]

It certainly is natural for a mother to speak of the purity of her late son's motives. But what is most telling about this sentiment is that Mrs. Allman found this authenticity at the core of her son's band's ultimate success (particularly considering that Duane Allman died just as the band was gaining financial notoriety).

Despite a supreme self-confidence and well-documented ego, Allman regularly expressed his admiration of other musicians. "Anybody that's playing good, I admire them," he said.[80] "Miles Davis, Roland Kirk, Muddy Waters, B.B. King. Those cats had a lot of influence on my music and on a lot of the music I know," Allman said in 1971. "J. Geils is our favorite band, but I can't say that they've influenced us; they're into a different

thing from us." When challenged to explain how the Allman Brothers Band sound diverged from these influences, he answered, "Being influenced shouldn't mean sounding like or copying anyone else. You gotta strive to play a pure form of music; a kind of music that's honest to yourself. If you got that attitude and feeling about what you play, you'll be a lot better off. That's the kind of attitude that makes a great performing band."[81]

Allman also expressed great disdain for musical artifice. "Nothing is worse than to see a band set up on stage and rip through five big hits and then go zipping off and kissing thank you, thank you. No, that is what it's for. We go there and we say, 'We are here to make as much music as we can and as good as we can.'"[82] He continued, "You can find out real fast who's got respect for music and who don't by just listening to them play. Like who's into it for what reason. People aren't aware that there's different motivations to making different people play. It's important to know what is the driving force behind it and what makes it happen."[83]

Allman sought his own definition of authenticity in music and he found it in multiple places. Of "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down," by the Band, he said, "That just killed me, being from down South. Really held me to it. No bullshit—just straight, up-front good stuff." He was a fan of pianist Dr. John of New Orleans and jazz musicians such as multi-instrumentalist Rahsaan Roland Kirk, John Coltrane, and Donald Byrd's were particular favorites. Asked on April 27, 1971 his ideal touring bill, Allman named his Muscle Shoals pal John Hammond and his first guitar influence B.B. King. "I'd get John

Hammond, by himself, start it. We have to have B.B. King." He quickly pivoted to mention of his rock contemporaries as well. "We played with the Dead last night. [Fleetwood Mac's] Peter Green, [Jerry] Garcia, Bob Weir—so beautiful, what it's all about. Just getting down to the good note, man just grooving in looking along on that good note."[84] When asked about another white, southern, electric blues player, Johnny Winter, Allman expressed reservation. "Good bottleneck, good player all around. I prefer his music to his show . . . I prefer music to any show."[85] While he believed Winter to be a great guitar player, Allman found too much contrivance in his performance.

Even before joining Derek and the Dominos, Allman regularly cited the influence of Eric Clapton. "We discussed Eric often," Jerry Wexler recalled, "and Duane felt that Eric was the one foreign-born player who had it all the way. No, there was one other, Robbie Robertson [of The Band]. Duane put Robbie in the top category." Wexler noted that Allman and Delaney Bramlett shared a love of acoustic bluesmen Robert Johnson and Blind Willie Johnson. "It was something incredible to hear," he shared, "when they got together and played the songs of these two great Delta artists on acoustic guitars."[86]

While Allman's heart (and bank account) were dependent upon touring with the Allman Brothers Band, he enjoyed working on others' records throughout his life. "Although he left full-time session work in March 1969 to form the Allman Brothers, he continued to play sessions. I like to work in other people's context, help them highlight their own work. But I prefer to be included in the sessions as part of the band," he remarked to *Crawdaddy.* "My favorite stuff I ever did is an album I just did with John

Hammond. He is an artist I have a lot of respect for . . . I like everything he does. And, with Boz Skaggs, a guy in the Steve Miller Band, and because I was just having good days both times, I really felt like playing and I was satisfied when I heard them."[87]

Once he founded the Allman Brothers Band, Allman's two most notable partnerships were with Delaney Bramlett and Eric Clapton. He first met Bramlett—who led Delaney & Bonnie and Friends with his wife—through Jerry Wexler. Wexler suggested Bramlett enlist Allman to play slide guitar on the band's 1970 recording, *To Delaney from Bonnie*. "They formed an instant and intense musical bond," he remembered.[88] The affinity continued until Allman's death the next year. It included Allman appearances at Delaney & Bonnie concerts and on record. "The Allman Brothers would be on tour and they'd be looking for Duane and he'd be out here on tour with me," Bramlett remembered. "He'd call me from the airport and say, 'Hey bro, can you come pick me up? I'm here.'"[89] "Delaney Bramlett is a partner of mine, and I go play with him and his band whenever I can," Allman shared.[90] "We got to be best friends," Bramlett said, "and if you saw one of us you saw the other."[91]

Listeners appreciated the partnership as well. As Ian Dove wrote in a review of an October 4, 1970 Delaney & Bonnie and Friends show:

> Guitarist Duane Allman, moving with agility, skill and taste from bottleneck to feedback, was probably the Friend who fitted best into the D&B format at their sellout concert, Oct. 4. He moved easily into and out of the blues, gospel, country, rock, and revivalist strains that the Atco Records duo mix and merge, and then tie together into a working entity.

> Other friends included King Curtis, sliding his knife-sharp tenor horn through the group, John Hammond Jr. (guitar and harmonica), Bobby Whitlock, organ, and Jim Gordon, drums (both now with the new Clapton group).
>
> The first half of the concert was an acoustic set (which does not mean unamplified) and gave opportunity to examine the subtlety of Allman's technique which seems unforced and natural, assimilated from rather than educated into. The final half was all electric—excitement building steadily from the interaction of the musicians to each other, which is as it should be. . . . The audience jumped to its feet at the end and moved unselfconsciously to a Little Richard rocker good time valid music, good times from stage to audience, from audience to stage, [92]

In May 1970, Allman provided guitar for a second Delaney & Bonnie and Friends record, *Motel Shot*. The record features a veritable who's who of southern-influenced musicians, many of whom had robust careers of their own. In addition to Allman, Leon Russell played piano on the session; Gram Parsons played guitar and sang; Joe Cocker added background vocals; Bobby Keys, who later recorded and toured with the Rolling Stones, played saxophone; and Dave Mason added guitar. The album featured the musicians on acoustic instruments, giving the record a very casual feel. *Motel Shot* included traditional spiritual tunes such as "Rock of Ages" and "Talkin' about Jesus"; the Carter Family's "Will the Circle Be Unbroken" (which Allman regularly incorporated into his solos on the Allman's "Mountain Jam"); "Goin' Down the Road Feelin' Bad," made famous by Woody Guthrie; Robert Johnson's "Come on in My Kitchen"; and several Delaney Bramlett originals, including "Never Ending Song of Love," which peaked at number thirteen on the *Billboard* chart.[93]

*Motel Shot* featured a different side of Allman's playing, reflective of both his offstage persona and his roots. The album's title is a reference to how musicians

decompressed on the road. As its liner notes stated, "Sometimes it happens in somebody's gameroom, sometimes in a backstage dressing room, sometimes on a tour bus, but the 'motel shot,' wherever it is played is always characterized by the non-electric, no strain, no pain, soft easy sound that Delaney & Bonnie—and their talented friends—bring you in this record."[94] Gary Wishik witnessed the Allman Brothers Band in this setting after a show at SUNY-Stony Brook in 1970. "I saw them do [a] 'motel shot' while I was talking to them in between shows at Stony Brook. We were sitting in the middle of their band and the Allman Brothers were jamming on piano (Gregg Allman) and guitars. Music is constantly around them and they are constantly making music. It's their life, not just their jobs and they put everything into it." Wishik was fond of Delaney & Bonnie's album *Motel Shot*. "It comes on good and it comes on strong. It's all acoustic guitar, drums, tambourine, piano, and vocals," he wrote. "The music flows spontaneously created." Wishik heard authenticity in the music, which he'd also witnessed in the Allmans' own "motel shot" months earlier. "Everyone knows that the best stuff around is what musicians do for themselves and their friends. That's what makes the Dylan bootlegs better than the Columbia albums. It's the non-commercial stuff the artists keep for themselves. . . . The excitement and the hype have died down. All that's left is good solid music."[95]

After the *Motel Shot* sessions, bassist Carl Radle and organist/vocalist Bobby Whitlock left the Bramletts to join forces with Eric Clapton in his second post-Cream project, Derek and the Dominos. Clapton had come into contact with the musicians

(including drummer Jim Gordon) when Delaney & Bonnie and Friends opened for Blind Faith, the short-lived supergroup Clapton formed in August 1969 with Steve Winwood (of the Spencer Davis Group and Traffic), Cream drummer Ginger Baker, and bassist Ric Grech. Clapton had grown uncomfortable with the Cream's fame and was soon disillusioned with Blind Faith as well. The guitarist reveled in the musical dynamic he heard with Delaney & Bonnie. "Their approach to music was so infectious. They would pull out their guitars on the bus and play songs all day as they traveled." Clapton began to travel and play regularly with the southerners rather than his own band. "I was irresistibly drawn to it," he wrote.[96] The guitarist soon recruited Whitlock, Radle, and drummer Jim Gordon for his new project: Derek and the Dominos.

Much has been written about Duane Allman's involvement with the band and the role he played on Derek and the Dominos epic *Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs*.[97] Important to this study is what Allman brought to the band, and to Clapton in particular. "I was mesmerized by him," Clapton wrote. "Duane and I became inseparable during the time we were in Florida, and between the two of us we injected the substance into the *Layla* sessions that had been missing up to that point."[98] Tom Dowd, who produced the album, remembered an immediate (and intense) mutual attraction. "They were trading licks, they were swapping guitars," he said.[99] "Eric and Duane were playing licks to each other," he continued. "All of a sudden Duane would say, 'Oh, no, that's not how I do it, I do it this way' . . . then Eric would recognize something that Duane copied and correct him, and here they are switching guitars, switching fingerings, it was like a marriage made

in heaven."[100] "This thing with Eric and Duane was such a natural," Bobby Whitlock remembered. "They had the same authority, and they dug from the same well: Robert Johnson, Elmore James, Sonny Boy Williamson, Bill Broonzy. I already knew Duane from working together with Delaney & Bonnie, so I wasn't surprised at all that they hit it off." Whitlock noticed "something deeper was happening right away with Eric and Duane, who were like too long-lost brothers. Those two guys started bouncing back-and-forth on each other and it was an amazing experience."[101]

Clapton agreed. "We fell in love. And that was it. The album took off from there," he said in 1979. "Because of Duane's input it became a double album. Because of the interest in playing between his style and my style, we could actually have played any blues or any standard and it would have taken off." The guitarists bonded over their shared blues roots, particularly Robert Johnson. "Our meeting point was Robert Johnson," Clapton recollected. "That was where we connected. . . . Once we got further than that, we didn't really talk about . . . the modern players much at all. It was really the roots that we were meeting on."[102]

When the ten-day *Layla* sessions concluded, producer Tom Dowd called Jerry Wexler and exclaimed, "This is the best damn record we've made since *The Genius of Ray Charles*." "Tom," Wexler responded, "you're making an extremely weighty statement, you know." That was indeed the case. Charles's record was an acknowledged classic. *Layla* was not nearly as well-received. "For a year, it didn't sell," Dowd noted. "One whole year. I was embarrassed. I thought this was insane—we'd spent that much money and I'd had

such a good time doing it, and the guys were playing so incredibly well—it's pitiful that with all that love and energy and everything that went into creating it, it wasn't getting the recognition it deserved."[103]

Despite its poor sales, *Layla* had garnered Allman the opportunity to play with one of his musical heroes, and he acquitted himself quite well. Johnny Sandlin remembered Allman pointing a thumb at his chest saying of the opening seven-note riff to the album's title track (which he culled from Albert King's "As the Years Go Passing By), "That's my lick." John Wyker, of the Decatur, Alabama, band Sailcat, remembered being in Macon when Allman returned from the sessions. "Duane Allman got back to Macon after he had finished working on the Derek and the Dominos album. He had a reel-to-reel copy of the album and we put it on and it played for days. I can still see Duane walking around the house in a tank top and bell bottoms and he was fired up. He was saying things like, 'I can play with the big boys now! Y'all listen to the end of *Layla*.'" Wyker said, "We were believers . . . there was no denying that Duane and Clapton and Bobby Whitlock and the others had really cooked up something special and Duane was like a proud papa . . . and nobody could blame him at all for all the chest beating he was doing after a session like that. . . . He had arrived and he knew it! We all knew it."[104]

Clapton asked Allman to join the Dominos. Butch Trucks remembered that Allman seriously considered the offer and tried to convince the guitarist to demure. "I said, 'Duane, look, what we've got going—and it's yours. Are you ready to give this up to join someone else's thing? That's what you're going to do, Duane, because it's Eric's band. Is

that what you want to do?'"[105] "I did play a few gigs with them," Allman told Tony Glover. "I was thinking about trying to make the whole tour. But it was ten weeks long and I had my own fish to fry."[106] "Duane got back," Johanson recalled. "He figured out what I already knew: 'Shit, Eric Clapton should be opening for us.' That was the kind of attitude we all had and it was probably the best thing we had going for us. I just simply thought Duane had more going playing with us than with Eric. He put together this band exactly how he wanted it and I think playing those dates with Eric helped him realize that."[107] Clapton called Allman "the musical brother I've never had but wished I did; more so than Jimi [Hendrix], who was essentially a loner, while Duane was a family man, a brother. Unfortunately for me, he already had a family."[108] That family was the Allman Brothers Band. It was where Allman's loyalties ultimately lay.

Despite these accolades, the Allman Brothers Band maintained primacy in Allman's life and career. It was his band, one he conceived of after several failures at achieving traditional music business success. Allman was, at heart, a sideman. After unsuccessful experiences in Nashville and, especially, Los Angeles, he had resolved to pursue music on his own terms. He needed two things to forge this path: Music business support and fellow virtuosos. He found both in the Allman Brothers Band.

As a sideman, Allman's talent was not as marketable as his brother Gregg's. Yet Allman was not only a skilled guitar player, he also proved an adept arranger—a skill honed as a cover musician. Based initially on his playing on Wilson Pickett's "Hey Jude," Allman secured patronage from Jerry Wexler and Phil Walden. Both, most notably

Walden, supported Allman's vision and band in its early (lean) years as a touring outfit that sold few records.

Next, Allman had to compile a band—musicians who could add more originality to the music than he could do on his own or under the guidance of a producer. Though he had been frustrated with his Hour Glass experience, it served as an important step in his journey. He understood it was not necessarily the band dynamic that did not work, but rather the combination of musicians and how satisfied he was with its material. As he said, "I thought, 'Wait a minute, man! It doesn't have to be rotten; you just have to make a good [band]. Then you don't have to sniff anybody's feet to get a break, and you just go ahead and do what you please.'" He found the right mix with Jai Johanny Johanson, Berry Oakley, Dickey Betts, Butch Trucks, and his brother Gregg Allman. "I found five of the smokin'est cats I've met in my life, and we hit the road playing," he told Mandel. "That's just what we do—play music."[109] Each brought to the new band possibilities of originality within the structure of the blues, of jazz, and of rock. Like Allman, each had had his own struggles with a music industry dynamic focused on creating AM radio hits and all expressed a desire to move beyond these constraints and try something new. Together they did just that.

Thus, despite Allman's time as a session musician and playing alongside notables such as Bramlett and Clapton, the Allman Brothers Band remained his most important musical project. Allman was very clear why it remained so: the music the band made and its place in his life and psyche. "I'd like to jam with anyone who likes to play, and anybody

who likes to can come around to our set anytime." But, he continued, "I'd rather jam with my own band than anybody alive! I've got the best players there are."[110] On New Year's Eve 1970, as he prepared to play a show at the Warehouse, an interviewer asked him to describe his band's music. The guitarist answered, "I don't know man, just part of my life. That's the only way I can describe it. It's just a reflection of what happens to us." When pressed to enunciate the messages the band tried to convey, he responded, "Wait, you'll hear it all man, in just about a half an hour. I don't want to be evasive man, but there are just no words. I don't even want to try and explain. I don't believe I could."[111]

Pete Kowalke of the band Cowboy, shared one interaction with Allman that reflects Allman's impression of his ensemble. "Once, when we were out on the road and playing lots of dates with the Allmans, they were up on stage in a theatre type place just lettin' it eat! Everyone is sitting in their theatre chairs, and I am standing about halfway down in the aisle watching." As the band took a break, Kowalke remembered, "Duane comes walking pretty briskly down the aisle. I am still standing there, just him and me in the aisle. He stops right in front of me, turns my way and says, 'Pete, this band only knows how to play one way, full tilt!' Then he turns and continues his brisk walk on down the aisle, without another word."[112] Kowalke's bandmate Tom Wynn shared likewise. "It was always mighty impressive to watch the same skinny guys you'd just been backstage with, especially Berry Oakely and Duane, and watch them totally dominate an audience of 10,000 people," he recalled. "They made a point of getting up on the tightrope every

night, and people had no choice but to watch—and try to keep breathing. It was powerful."[113]

Allman was chief among his band's biggest fans. "I feel like everybody in the band can smoke me. That's why we're in the band together—to keep each other kicking," he said.[114] "You wanna play in my band," he told Tony Glover, "You'd better come to pick, not to show off your clothes. It ain't no fashion show."[115] "They seemed to goad each other pretty aggressively," Wynn reflected, "but it always seemed good-natured and positive at its heart." "His complete confidence—like the complete confidence of his band—is right out there," Bud Scoppa observed in 1971.[116]

Though he was the Allman Brothers Band's founder, leader, and acknowledged star, Allman was highly conscious of its internal dynamic. "He really had a lot of problems with the name the Allman Brothers Band," Butch Trucks remembered. "He didn't want to call it that. He really wanted to find a name for the band that didn't call attention to himself, and we couldn't come up with anything." As Trucks recalled, "Duane was going to start a band with himself as the leader, but once we started playing this music, he said, 'This is incredible. This is a band. This is not a star with a backup group.'" [117] And though Allman's younger brother Gregg was an ideal front man, and the band was named for the two of them, the Allman Brothers Band was foremost a *band*. This was vitally important to Duane. "My brother strived to make sure there was a comfort zone and our gang at all times," Gregg Allman wrote, "and there wasn't going to be any bullshit about Duane Allman and his sidemen. We were all equal, all together. A band means a bunch of guys

working together for the same goal—that's with the word 'band' means, and we defined that."[118] Allman disdained being singled out as the band's star. "I don't think anybody who's ever heard us would get on that trip," he said in response to a question about it. "Our band is a band, and we work like a band. In a way though, I actually hope people get a delusion like that, if it'll get them down to hear us—and then we'll open up their eyes right."[119] "They were a *band*," Jon Landau noted. "Duane did not so dominate that group that they ceased to be a band, or became a vehicle for Duane Allman. It was one of the things he had most in his mind when he conceived of the group; he wanted a band he could play *with*, not over or against, or through. He wanted a group of partners, and that's exactly what he got."[120]

Guitarist Dickey Betts was foremost among Allman's partners. It is worth noting that it was somewhat unique, though not unprecedented, for a band to have two lead guitar players.[121] What was distinct to the Allman Brothers, however, was Allman's and Betts's virtuosity and equal time as soloists. Each guitarist played lead on nearly every song, often in tandem. "The level of respect and musical love between Dickey and Duane was profound," Thom Doucette remarked.[122] Yet while Betts and Allman were extremely close musically, they were not necessarily so personally. "Dickey and Duane didn't hang out a lot," Doucette remembered. "They were very tight and they had a lot of unspoken communication."[123]

It was a collaboration that sounded beautiful, one the guitarists worked out together onstage, in rehearsals, and in conversation. "What struck me when I first heard

them playing together was how they didn't try to outdo each other, but instead supported one another," Doucette recalled. "I had worked with the Butterfield Blues Band in Chicago and all Butterfield and Bloomfield thought about was wasting one another."[124] Some of their rapport, Betts shared, was built on mutual esteem, some on each guitarists' confidence in his own abilities. "Duane and I had an immense amount of respect for each other," Betts recalled. "We talked about being jealous of each other and how dangerous it was to think that way, that we had to fight that feeling when we were on stage. He'd say, 'When I listen to you play, I have to try hard to keep the jealousy thing at bay and not try to outdo you when I play my solo. But I still want to play my best!' We laughed about with a thin line that was."[125] "The jealousy thing was there," Betts told Tom Nolan, "but it was so honest that it was healthy; and it just *fired* the energies that we did have. We just *fired* each other off."[126]

Betts and Allman shared an incredibly deep relationship, one that was predicated on mutual admiration and respect. "There are very few times two musicians come together who understand each other in that fashion, the same as two people having a real conversation, and truly understanding each other, the same as a man and a woman making love," Betts said. "This is the kind of thing that me and Duane had. I *knew* the dude. I knew him all the way through. I admired him. I learned from him. He learned from me." As Betts recalled forty years later, the competition was by design and it was healthy. "[T]his isn't a contest," he remembered Allman telling him. "We can make each other better and then do something deep."[127] "To experience that with a musician the caliber

of Duane Allman," Betts told Nolan, "is one of the greatest gifts that I've received and been able to share."[128] "He was probably the most honest player I've ever played with," Betts said in 1996. "Man, he could get what was in his heart to come off the neck of his guitar."[129] Allman's playing and approach to the guitar inspired audiences, bandmates, and, particularly, Dickey Betts.

As roadie Joseph "Red Dog" Campbell recalled, "Duane played guitar better than anybody out there—except maybe Dickey Betts. Many nights Duane walked off stage and said to me, 'Goddamn, he ran me all over the stage tonight. He kicked my ass.' It's not that they were trying to outdo each other, but Dickey would come up with off-the-wall shit and Duane would . . . have to keep up."[130] Allman regularly sang the praises of his guitar partner. He often called out Betts by name as he introduced songs and publicly acknowledged Betts in an interview with Dave Herman of WABC radio in December 1970. "That's Dickey Betts. He is just as bad as there is," he told a caller asking if Allman was going to continue to play dual leads with the Allman Brothers Band. "I'm the famous one, man. He's the good player," Allman said of his partner.[131]

Allman's encouragement was critical to Betts. "Duane had a real spearhead effect in that he was a super-positive, anything-can-be-done kind of inspiration," Betts noted. "Between us, Duane was the flashier player and he'd get more attention. But he used to get mad when they'd overlook me."[132] Allman encouraged his bandmate offstage as well. "Dickey wanted Gregg to sing 'Blue Sky,'" Butch Trucks recalled of Betts's first recorded vocal with the Allman Brothers Band. "And Duane just got all over him. He said, 'Man, this

is your song and it sounds like you and you need to sing.' It was Dickey just starting to sprout his wings as a singer."[133]

Duane Allman's death appeared to have an extremely profound effect on Dickey Betts. Much has already been documented about the impact of Allman's loss on the band. In multiple interviews over the past four decades, Butch Trucks, Gregg Allman, and to a lesser extent Jai Johanny Johanson have been very open about their grief and its effect on them. Trucks, Allman, Johanson, and Betts have also shared repeatedly their thoughts on how devastating Duane Allman's loss was for bassist Berry Oakley: "It absolutely destroyed him," Trucks remembered.[134] "Berry Oakley's life ended with my brother's life," Gregg Allman wrote. "Never have I seen a man collapse like that."[135]

Betts, however, has shared very little about his own feelings of losing Allman and the intimate relationship the two shared. "Losing Duane really slammed Dickey too, but he didn't show it," Gregg Allman wrote. "We didn't see too much of Dickey after my brother died. . . . I think he really cared about my brother."[136] Betts's words in the decades following Allman's death provide great insight into Duane Allman's impact as a musician and person. "We *knew* what we had lost," Betts told Mikal Gilmore in 1990. "We even thought seriously about not going out and playing anymore."[137] "The first feeling that all of us had [was that] it's over, as far as this music is concerned. We were trying to console each other in the days preceding the services and the best way we could do it was to play music. One thing led to another and we slowly realized that the

best thing we could do was stay together . . . There was so much creative power in that group that that's the only way we were able to continue on without Duane."[138]

The band continued on, and reached its greatest heights after Allman's death, but the loss greatly affected Betts. "Like everyone else in the band," the guitarist said in 1972, "I went through a lot of heavy changes and I don't know if I've nailed them all down yet." The changes started first with how he approached the music. The band toured as a five-piece in 1972. "When we got back together I had to revert back to the way I played before I started with this band. When Duane was with the band he'd play something and I'd try to extend it. So when he split I had to put things to the fore a lot more than I originally did." In the same interview, he discussed the loss of his intimate partnership with Allman. "Communication had always been our note. We didn't tread on each other's notes. Duane and I just used to listen to each other's licks and extend them as far as possible. It almost got to the point when Duane and I were thinking as one man and believe me that's a very nice thing to get yourself into. Funny enough it wasn't very hard for us to achieve because we always played well together."[139]

It is obvious, then, why Betts took Allman's death so hard. "It took me a long time to really accept it," he said, "Your mind kinda protects you in that way."[140] "Have you ever lost somebody your own age, that close to you?" he asked. "It's a real funny thing; I mean, it was such a damn surprised that my mind never really accepted it. It was so tough that it's hard to try to explain to somebody."[141] "I used to have nightmares all the time," he told Cameron Crowe in 1973. "Usually it was the same one. In it, the Allman

Brothers Band is on the road, and we end up on a show with Delaney and Bonnie, Duane's old touring buddies. We see Duane at the show, and everything's all right. Duane says, 'Hey man, how've you been?' And we say, 'Great.' And then we all get together and play, and everything's alright again. That dream probably kept me sane," Betts said.[142] "Then you gradually begin to realize that Duane Allman is not playing with Bonnie and Delaney," he told Scott Freeman. "He's gone."[143]

Though Allman's death was sudden, as many tragic deaths are, many saw it as the culmination of his infectious energy combined with his self-destructive tendencies. It was not, then, a total surprise to Landau, the writer who was among the first to document Allman's career. "Duane's death did not surprise his friends," he wrote in a December 1971 editorial explaining what many called a callous obituary in *Rolling Stone* the previous month.

> He had literally flirted with death too often for them to be surprised. They were hurt, they were sad, they were stricken with grief, they were shocked when fantasy became reality, but they were not surprised. In many ways, Duane was not prepared for reality. He believed in himself to the point where he acted as if he was above the consequences of acts that inevitably fall upon mere mortals. He went through women, dope, guitars, shows, and people with an unquenchable thirst and a desire for more. The bigger he got the bigger became his need to increase his accomplishments. And, the vicious aspect of the star system is that when a man gets that big there is no one big enough to stop him. He either stops himself or he got stopped by some unanticipated result from the un-thought-out action.[144]

Allman may not have had a death wish in the truest sense of the term, but many around him reflected on the sense of restlessness the guitarist carried with him. "Duane had a kind of energy that left an impression on you know matter how briefly you knew him or

how little," Landau wrote. "The more you go to know him the more you realized that underneath the energy, the humor, the mock arrogance, and the real arrogance, was a troubled man who knew just how talented he was, but who didn't know how to live at peace with that talent. In some ways the world wasn't ready for him. And in others, he just wasn't ready for it."[145] "He told me on more than one occasion," Phil Walden said, "'Don't bet everything on this pony, because I'll tell you, I'm going to live on the edge. I'm going to get every damn thing I can out of life every damn day. I'm not a safe bet. I don't think I'll live a real long time.' He wasn't saying it in any morbid way. He just stating it like a fact of life."[146] When Walden praised Allman's musicianship the last time he saw him, Allman answered, "That's the scary part. I don't know if I can get any better."[147] Tommy Talton, whose band Cowboy opened for the Allman Brothers on Allman's last west coast tour in October 1971, remembered Allman's sheer exhaustion. "Tommy," Allman remarked, "I don't know how much longer I can do this."[148]

The relentless pace had finally caught up to Allman. "Old Duane was married to his music, the truth be known," Landau quoted a "close friend" after the guitarist's funeral.

> He had a wild and reckless streak in him, and apart from picking his guitar, he'd get . . . bored, I guess you could call it. On that account, he run through a lotta chicks and a lotta mean dope in his green time, and he purely loved to smoke up the highways on bikes that was too fast for him. You don't live long if you live . . . impulsive like that. Duane was basically just a good ol' country boy, but he could jump salty, too, now and again. Hell, I'll miss him, myself. I'm just sorry he had to up and leave America so early. He had a fat lot left in him to do.[149]

Ultimately, Landau concluded, "I feel the sadness in the tragedy of it but I am resolved not to glorify Duane Allman's death any more than I ever tried to glorify his or any other rock star's lifestyle." "I like music and I loved Duane's. The more I knew him, the more I liked him, as well," Landau concluded in a follow-up to his *Rolling Stone* obituary for *The Phoenix*, an alternative newspaper out of Boston. "And the more I knew him, the more I wish there were some way to reach him. The fact of the matter is that no one reached Duane Allman. And that is the tragedy of his life. Not its glory."[150]

Indicative of Allman's legacy to his bandmates, the band even performed at his memorial. "We played a gig at the funeral," Gregg Allman recalled.[151] The band played Allman Brothers repertoire such as "Statesboro Blues," "Stormy Monday," and "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed." It also played two blues songs not regularly part of their sets (and songs they rarely played again), Big Bill Broonzy's "Key to the Highway," which Allman had recorded with Derek and the Dominos, and Elmore James's "The Sky is Crying." Allman's friend Delaney Bramlett led the mourners in the Carter Family standard "Will the Circle Be Unbroken" (which Allman often teased in his solo on "Mountain Jam") and Gregg Allman debuted his ballad "Melissa," which the band recorded soon thereafter. Atlantic's Jerry Wexler gave the now-famous eulogy:

> It was at King Curtis' funeral that I last saw Duane Allman, and Duane with tears in his eyes told me that Curtis' encouragement and praise was valuable to him in the pursuit of his music and career. They were both gifted natural musicians with an unlimited ability for truly melodic improvisation. They were both born in the South and they both learned their music from great black musicians and blues singers. They were both utterly dedicated to their music, and both intolerant of the faults and the meretricious and they would never permit the incorporation of

> the commercial compromise to their music—not for love or money. . . .
>
> Those of us who were privileged to know Duane will remember him from all the studios, backstage dressing rooms, the Downtowners, the Holiday Inns, the Sheratons, the late nights, relaxing after the sessions, the whiskey and the music talk, playing back cassettes until night gave way to dawn, the meals and the pool games, and fishing in Miami and Long Island, this young beautiful man who we love so dearly but who is not lost to us, because we have his music, and the music is imperishable.[152]

Many others remembered Allman through his music as well. Some, such as Ward Silver of Cornell University, highlighted the underlying tragedy in band's emerging success. "Duane Allman was well on his way to the top. The force with which he played so clearly pointed the way. Those who have seen him know it; those who have only heard him can sense it." Silver continued:

> We of the music audience have been greatly enriched by the work of Duane Allman. It digs at us when life leaves us so quickly. . . . The names are still fresh in our heads Otis, Jimi, Janis, Al Wilson. This is as it should be. Their music is our heartbeat. You can't kill a musical revolution. It is a process that is constantly developing, constantly changing but never terminating. For this reason we will remember Duane Allman. The Allman Brothers Band are, as well, reflections of Duane's singularly profound musical ability. They were by no means a "superstar's group" but were and are in fact the epitome of a group's group. For the moment, however, let us reflect on a loss words of praise find far too difficult to express.[153]

"Although Duane Allman never gained the individual general popularity of Hendrix, Joplin or Morrison," wrote an unnamed correspondent for Memphis's *River City Review*, "he was acknowledged by critics and other musicians as among the few masters of the electric guitar world. He was just hitting his stride. . . . The Allman Brothers Band probably will continue to make its particular, special brand of progressive Rock . . . but Duane Allman, Duane Allman will be sorely missed."[154]

The band soldiered on in the immediate aftermath of Allman's death. On November 25, 1971, the group played New York's Carnegie Hall. That fall, the surviving members completed *Eat a Peach*, the follow-up to *At Fillmore East*. Capricorn released the record on February 12, 1972, less than four months after Allman's death.[155] It eventually reached number four on the *Billboard* albums chart. Three of the records' four sides included Allman. Two featured tracks the band had recorded live at the Fillmore East—one entire platter was devoted to the thirty-minute-plus improvisational instrumental "Mountain Jam."[156] Another side included live versions of "Trouble No More" and Sonny Boy Williamson's "One Way Out" and three studio tracks, "Stand Back," Dickey Bett's aforementioned country- and western swing-styled "Blue Sky," and the acoustic instrumental "Little Martha," the only sole writing credit of Allman's career. Side One featured the (now) five-piece band on three tracks: "Ain't Wastin' Time No More," Gregg Allman's ode to his brother, the Betts instrumental "Les Brers in A Minor," and Gregg Allman's ballad "Melissa."

While critics and observers lauded Allman's playing (and that of his band) on *Eat a Peach*, none could separate their observations of the album from Allman's death during its recording. Reviews were positive, both for its music and for the band's decision to forge ahead in Allman's absence. "Duane is gone—but the Allman Brothers Band are still cooking strong," Tony Glover wrote in *Circus.* "And long may they boogie."[157] "Many, this critic included, feared that perhaps the spirit and drive of the Allman Bros. had passed on with the untimely death of brother Duane," Dale Rauch wrote in Cornell's *Ithacan*. "Not

so folks. This two-record set confirms that which all Allman Brothers freaks have known all along. Dickey Betts is one fine guitarist. . . . Alone, he retains those attributes and demonstrates that he too can be outstanding. . . . Gregg's voice has never been in better blues form."[158] Not everyone agreed. "The Allman Brothers are bursting with talent and ingenuity but little of it shown here," wrote Brad Tucker in the Chowan University student newspaper."[159] Others felt the band failed to overcome Allman's absence. "Duane's magic is gone, though, and the band hasn't quite recovered it," wrote a reviewer in the *Austin Rag*. "All the more reason why the three sides with Duane are a treasure."[160] Yet a majority of reviewers shared sentiments similar to Tony Glover in his five-star review in *Rolling Stone*:

> No, the group is not the same without Duane (just as Duane was freed to soar by the group's solid support, so they leaned into his fire)—but it's still the Allman Brothers. It's not a question of being "as good" or "not as good"—rather it's just a difference, an expansion in several directions, still too early to name. . . .
>
> The Allman Brothers are still the best goddamned band in the land, and this record with three sides of "old" and one side of "new" is a simultaneous sorrowed ending and hopeful beginning. I hope the band keeps playing forever — how many groups can you think of who really make you believe they're playing for the joy of it?[161]

As they had with the band's first three albums and numerous concert reviews, critics highlighted the entire band in their evaluations of the group. For *Eat a Peach*, reviewers highlighted how well the band adapted to Allman's absence as well. "*Eat A Peach*," Hal Pratt wrote, "will reconfirm the faith of anyone who feared the Georgian rhythm-and-blues band would be mired by the loss of bandleader Duane Allman. . . . One

could not help but think the Allman Brothers Band would soon follow its chief influence." Pratt acknowledged that many expected the band to flounder. "It is not uncommon for a band to degenerate or even break up in the absence of its dominant member," he wrote. "But on *Eat a Peach* the Allman Brothers Band shows that its music is basically unscathed by Duane's death. One of the most respected R&B groups in the United States, it is as diverse, distinctive arid dynamic as ever." *Eat a Peach*, Pratt argued, "is most definitely one of the most powerful and diversified albums on today's cluttered record shelves."[162] "*Eat a Peach* again shows the tightness and versatility of the Allman Brothers Band," wrote Leslie Lickstein. "It also shows that the band is still an excellent group, even without Duane Allman."[163] "This is a great band," Dave Sitz wrote. "Through it all, tragedy and tribulation, the Allman Brothers Band has emerged unscathed and unchanged in their talent for originality—one of the most distinctive sounds American rock has ever had."[164] "It is the contention of many critics and followers of rock that the bands who are the most prolific (with quality)," wrote Stephen Lasko, "are those who form bonds as human beings before combining with one another to form a group. That is why 'supergroups' never work. But that is also why groups such as the Allman Brothers Band will always be around to provide those 'up' moments in our lives. *Eat a Peach* is living proof."[165]

*Eat a Peach* presaged a maturity and a continued originality for the Allman Brothers Band. The record's six studio tracks were all original compositions and reflect influences of country ("Blue Sky"), folk ("Melissa" and "Little Martha"), rock-inflected

blues ("Stand Back"), and jazz ("Les Brers in A Minor"). As *Billboard* magazine wrote, "*Eat a Peach* can well be considered the Allman Brothers transition album. It is in all ways a remarkably fluid cohesive musical statement."[166] Betts's work on the album gained him a measure of renown that had theretofore seemed to elud him. *Eat a Peach* provided "a true look at Betts's talent for producing some of the most refreshing material the Allmans' had done," Dave Sitz observed. "[W]e got a crucial taste of the true composing talent of Betts with 'Les Brers in A Minor' and 'Blue Sky.' The songs stand out above all the others."[167] A reviewer from the *Seattle Times* wrote of "Les Brers in A Minor," built off of a riff Betts had played during "Whipping Post" on *At Fillmore East*, "There is a more sophisticated, stylized form of guitar playing that is almost jazz."[168]

Some simply could not overlook the absence of the band's leader on the record. "I tend to react to these songs as somehow inauthentic," Andrew Elkind wrote in the *Yale Daily News.* "Not because they are inadequate but only because I can't help but think of what Duane Allman would have added to them. I find his presence on the rest of the album to be profoundly exciting." The record carried with it "an awful sense of finality. At the end of side four, the conclusion of 'Mountain Jam,' Duane introduces the band to the Fillmore audience—'Berry Oakley, Dickey Betts, Butch Trucks, Jai Johanny Johanson, Gregg Allman, and I'm Duane Allman'—and that is the end, and it really hurts."[169]

Duane Allman's legacy, however, extended well beyond the final notes of "Mountain Jam" on *Eat a Peach* and his ebullient introduction of the band.[170] The Allman Brothers Band continued without him. Betts assumed a much greater songwriting and

band leadership role after *Eat a Peach* and shepherded the direction of much of its career until 2000.[171] Prior to recording the record's follow-up, *Brothers and Sisters*, the Allman Brothers added Chuck Leavell on keyboards as a second lead instrument. Yet in the midst of recording, tragedy again struck the band when bassist Berry Oakley died in a motorcycle crash as well, only several blocks from the site of Allman's own accident.[172]

*Brothers and Sisters* was *Billboard's* number one album for five weeks in 1973 and ultimately spent fifty-six weeks on the chart. Betts's "Ramblin' Man" was released as a single and reached number two on the charts in 1973. The band replaced Oakley with Johanson's childhood friend Lamar Williams and continued to tour through 1976, including famous shows with the Grateful Dead at RFK Stadium June 9 and 10, 1973 and the famous Summer Jam at Watkins Glen, in a co-bill with the Dead and the Band.[173]

After reaching unprecedented success, the band broke up in a haze of drugs, in-fighting, a federal drug conviction for one of Gregg Allman's associates, unwise business and monetary choices, and other trappings of rock star excess in 1976. Two years later, It reformed, *sans* Williams and Leavell, with Dan Toler on second guitar (the first since Allman's death in 1971) and David Goldflies of Dickey Betts's band Great Southern on bass. In 1979, the Allman Brothers Band recorded and released *Enlightened Rogues* for Walden's Capricorn Records, and again resumed touring. The record spent twenty-four weeks on the charts, eventually reaching number nine. Controversy continued, with the band members successfully suing Walden for a variety of financial misdeeds.[174] The band recorded an album, *Reach for the Sky*, for Arista records in 1980, and fired Johanson

before recording its 1981 follow-up, *Brothers of the Road*. Once again plagued by in-fighting and a declining interest in the band's formula, the band broke up a second time in January 1982.

In 1989, in celebration of its twentieth anniversary, the Allman Brothers Band reformed. Johanson again manned the drum chair on stage right. Gone were Toler and Goldflies. Guitarist Warren Haynes of the Dickey Betts Band and bassist Allen Woody joined the fold.[175] The reconstituted band stayed together in various iterations for the next twenty-five years and released eight more albums, four were studio records—*Seven Turns* (1990), *Shades of Two Worlds* (1991), *Where It All Begins* (1994), and *Hittin' the Note* (2003).

The band's lineup continued to evolve throughout the band's second quarter-century. Percussionist Marc Quiñones joined the band in 1991. When Haynes and Woody left the band in 1997 to concentrate on their side project, Gov't Mule, guitarist Jack Pearson and bassist Oteil Burbridge signed on. Pearson left in 1999. He was replaced by Butch Trucks's nineteen-year-old nephew Derek Trucks. Betts and the three remaining original members, Allman, Trucks, and Johanson, parted acrimoniously in 2000. Haynes rejoined the band in 2001. The lineup of Gregg Allman, Jai Johanny Johanson, Butch Trucks, Warren Haynes, Marc Quiñones, Oteil Burbridge, and Derek Trucks endured until October 28, 2014, when the Allman Brothers Band played its final show.[176]

Though he only played in the Allman Brothers Band for less than three years, Allman's vision for the band outlived him by more than four decades. That fact alone

should secure his legacy, and does. Rock critic Cameron Crowe argued that the band's survival after Allman's death was Allman's greatest legacy. "That the Allman Brothers Band were able to continue after Duane, and rise to even greater success without him, is one of the modern miracles of rock," he wrote in 1989.[177]

Other observers highlight the tragedy of Allman's early death and the opportunities missed as a result. "As a rule most talented rock stars are never fully appreciated until they are gone," David Pearcy wrote in Middle Tennessee State's *Sidelines*. "Duane Allman has been no exception. As widely loved as he was, his fans and the average music lover did not begin to truly appreciate his genius until after his accident."[178] "Duane Allman had so much to give that all the clichés move their banality," Lester Bangs wrote in a review of *Duane Allman An Anthology*, "his passing was a loss to American music in a way that more 'chic' deaths can never be."[179]

Duane Allman's legacy is much greater than his tragic death. His is a story of the pursuit of musical excellence, of "Hittin' the Note." The Allman Brothers Band he founded was the first band of the rock era to fuse so eloquently multiple elements of southern music into a singular, cohesive sound. Doing so from the South, with an integrated band, following an uncompromising musical path, is what sets him apart from his contemporaries. Allman not only created a new form of music, he bridged 1960s counterculture with southern sensibilities. "When I think of the hours and days spent playing and re-playing the first four Allman albums, listening for that new interchange or feeling that rush of raw energy coming on," Ward Silver wrote in 1975, "when I think that

one of the main reasons I came south (damn Yankee) was because of the new vision of southern music wedded to the counterculture that the Allmans epitomized."[180] "Duane will always have a place in my heart—an uncompromising musician, and perhaps more importantly, person," Philip Lane, who saw Allman at Piedmont Park in Atlanta, reflected many years later. "Duane was our hero, to us young guys in the South at that time he represented everything positive about the southern countercultural experience."[181]

Allman's legacy extended beyond his role as a southern musician—and founding the band that, several years after his death, inspired the Southern Rock movement. "It's conceivable that Duane Allman will always be remembered as a self-contained stereotype—the pioneer of Southern Rock. But like John Lydon and punk rock after him, Allman encapsulated a personality as well as a genre. Duane Allman had an attitude," Crowe wrote. "Forget the South—Allman knew he was one of the hottest guitar players to come down the pike, period. Besides forming the Allman Brothers Band and guiding them to nationwide success on his own terms, Allman's confidence also helped loosen the tightest of musical fraternities, the session men."[182] Thom Doucette agreed. "If you think about what the Allman Brothers started, they call it Southern Rock, but I think that's insulting." The band uniqueness wasn't in its southern-ness as much as it was in its approach to music, an approach Allman sought in founding the band, and nurtured in the early stages of its career. "It's American organic music. I've done 400 or 500 gigs with those guys and they never do the same tune the same way twice. It's 'What do you feel now?' I mean it's the same chord changes and lyrics, obviously, but each time it will be

different." To Doucette, "the really important thing about Duane is how he was as a person and an innovator. . . . It was just mindboggling. It was just so alive. There was so much depth and respect in what he was doing, it was phenomenal."[183]

Jai Johanny Johanson, the first to join Allman in the soon-to-be Allman Brothers Band, expressed best Allman's decision to subsume his own abilities within the group context. "When you have one or more people trying to do something, you either have a team or you have nothing," he told Alan Paul. "The Allman Brothers Band was a team from the day we became a band." Duane Allman, he wrote:

> was the guy who had the vision, who saw what he wanted—two drums, two lead guitars, Gregg singing—and knew which musicians could make it happen. There's no question he was the leader, but Duane understood for it to work, everyone had to have their voice and express their personality. Duane never dictated what anyone else played. He wanted a *band*.

"Duane had the vision from the start," the drummer said. "One indisputable fact is," he acknowledged, "that whatever has happened to, and with, the Allman Brothers Band, we've persevered."[184] The band Allman formed in March 1969 persevered for forty-three years after his death, through multiple triumphs and countless tragedies. In all, the band continued to play its unique blend of played southern music, of American music. That, is Duane Allman's ultimate legacy.

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[1] Galadrielle Allman, xii.

[2] For example, Clapton started in the Yardbirds; joined John Mayall's Blues Breakers; and formed Cream, Blind Faith, and Derek and the Dominos (which included Allman) all before going out on his own as a solo musician. Beck was in the Yardbirds; founded the Jeff Beck Group; and joined up with Beck, Bogert & Appice and has recorded

since then under his own name. Hendrix fronted the Jimi Hendrix Experience and the Band of Gypsys, and recorded prodigiously with a variety of artists ranging from Stephen Stills, Jack Casady, Brian Jones, Steve Winwood, and Johnny Winter. Bloomfield played with the Paul Butterfield Blues Band from 1964-1967, played on Bob Dylan sessions and on stage at his infamous Newport Folk Festival set in 1966, founded and played in The Electric Flag from 1967-1968, before beginning a somewhat peripatetic career as a solo artist, accompanist, and session musician (a career he began while still with Butterfield).

[3] Nolan, 34.

[4] Rick Hall and Terry Pace, 287.

[5] Nolan, 14.

[6] Wexler and Ritz, 225.

[7] Ogden, 12.

[8] Porter.

[9] Wexler and Ritz, 225.

[10] Porter.

[11] Ogden, 12.

[12] Crowe, "Duane Allman - The Day the Music Died."

[13] Roger St. Pierre, "Cornell Dupree: The Boss Guitar of Cornell Dupree," *New Musical Express*, March 10, 1973.

[14] Obrecht, "Duane Allman: The Complete 1981 Dickey Betts Interview."

[15] Porter.

[16] Nolan, 10.

[17] Stuart Krause, "Sam the Sham Remembers Brother Duane Allman," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 37 (Winter 2003), 38-39.

[18] Gene Santoro, "Session Bassist—The Groovemaster: Jerry Jemmott," *Player*, May 1984, accessed February 25, 2017, https://www-rocksbackpages-com.ezproxy.mtsu.edu/Library/Article/session-bassist--the-groovemaster-jerry-jemmott.

[19] Nolan, 10.

[20] Dan Manley, "Blues for a Brother," *Macon Telegraph*, October 29, 1971, accessed August 23, 2015, http://www.duaneallman.info/ macontelegraph10291991. htm.

[21] Whitlock and Roberty, 106-107.

[22] Cindy Collins, "Tony Glover Brings It on Home," *Twin Cities Media Alliance* (blog), September 5, 2005, accessed September 13, 2017, http://www.tcdailyplanet.net/ tonygloverbringsithome/.

[23] Porter.

[24] Priddy.

[25] Aregood.

[26] Charlie Allen, "Music: Up and Down the Charts 1971: A Blue Year," *The Crimson Supplement*, January 19, 1972, accessed August 26, 2017, http://www.thecrimson.com/ article/1972/1/19/the-crimson-supplement-pbtbhe-year-1971/.

[27] *Song of the South.*

[28] Nolan, 10.

[29] Nolan, 38-39.

[30] *Song of the South.*

[31] Nolan, 10.

[32] Nolan, 10.

[33] The Big House Museum, "Paul Hornsby's Memories with Duane Allman," YouTube video, 2:29, Posted [November 19, 2016], https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= 2PMfEiCSUL4.

[34] Kyle.

[35] Lynskey, "Lamar Williams: Out of the Shadows," 21.

[36] St. Pierre, "The Allman Brothers: A Rock Tragedy."

[37] Galadrielle Allman, 71.

[38] "A Moment Captured in Time," 15.

[39] Smith, "Floyd Miles."

[40] Michael Buffalo Smith, *Capricorn Rising*, 91.

[41] Paul, *One Way Out*, 36-37.

[42] Russell Hall, "Duane Allman: Memories from His Friend, Joe Marshall," *Gibson Brands Features, Articles & Interviews* (blog), July 26, 2013, accessed September 12, 2017, http://www.gibson.com/news-lifestyle/features/en-us/duane-allman-memories-from-his-friend-joe-marshall.aspx.

[43] Lynskey, "Reflections 2: The World According to Jaimoe," 24.

[44] Jas Obrecht, "John Hammond Remembers His Friend Duane Allman," February 24, 2011, accessed April 26, 2018, http://jasobrecht.com/john-hammond-remembers-friend-duane-allman/.

[45] Michael Buffalo Smith, "John Hammond," *Swampland.Com* (blog), January 2007, accessed August 21, 2016, http://swampland.com/articles/view/title:john_hammond.

[46] Obrecht, "John Hammond."

[47] Obrecht, "John Hammond." Allman played on four tracks on Hammond's *Southern Fried* album, released in January 1970. Three were covers of Howlin' Wolf songs—the Willie Dixon-penned "Shake for Me" and "You'll Be Mine" and Howlin' Wolf's "I'm Leavin' You."

[48] Obrecht, "John Hammond."

[49] Denise Duncan, "Tribute to Duane Allman," *In Your Ear*, November 1971.

[50] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

[51] "A Moment Captured in Time," 11-12.

[52] Mandel, 107.

[53] Albero. This philosophy was evident in one fan's recollection of an Allman Brothers Band show in Warrensville, Ohio, on August 29, 1971. "After the show Duane Allman stood at the front gate and shook the hands of fans leaving the venue, thanking them for attending the show. That same hand of friendship was extended to the hundreds of fans who crashed the show by running under the tent," and thus costing the band and promoters money." From Mike Olszewski, *Radio Daze: Stories from the Front in Cleveland's FM Air Wars* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2003), 32.

[54] Mandel, 107.

[55] Though quiet publicly, Allman and his bandmates were not immune to the forces of change around them. Galadrielle Allman shares some accounts of her father's reaction to the Kent State massacre. See Galadrielle Allman, 249.

[56] Nolan, 10.

[57] Crowe, "The Allman Brothers Story," 52.

[58] Freeman, 30, 32. Allman proved prophetic and was playing shows at the venue that December, albeit as the first band on a three-band bill.

[59] Poe, 117.

[60] Galadrielle Allman, 218.

[61] Paul, *One Way Out*, 96-97.

[62] John H. Richardson, "What Gregg Allman's Learned About, Life, Music, and Women," *Esquire* (blog), October 30, 2013, accessed June 15, 2017, http://www.esquire.com/blogs/news/gregg-allman-interview-0114.

[63] Perkins interview.

[64] Shepley and Obrecht, "Young Duane Allman: The Jim Shepley Interview."

[65] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 199.

[66] Joel Selvin email to author, November 15, 2015. Selvin further wrote, "The editor had him coming out the bathroom and looking for a bottle of aspirin in the table, taking two and pounding his chest. Not quite the same thing."

[67] Lewis, 53.

[68] Poe, 42.

[69] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 189-191.

[70] Poe, 203-204

[71] Paul, *One Way Out*, 135-136.

[72] Paul, *One Way Out*, 139.

[73] Shepley and Obrecht, "Young Duane Allman: The Jim Shepley Interview."

[74] Freeman, 16-17.

[75] Kyle.

[76] Dann.

[77] Shane and Duane Allman.

[78] Shane and Duane Allman.

[79] Nolan, 7.

[80] "An Interview with Duane Allman of the Allman Brothers Band."

[81] "The Last Interview With Duane Allman."

[82] "A Moment Captured in Time," 10.

[83] "A Moment Captured in Time," 15.

[84] "A Moment Captured in Time," 10, 18.

[85] Tiven.

[86] Albero.

[87] "A Moment Captured in Time," 11.

[88] Wexler and Ritz, 253.

[89] Michael Buffalo Smith, "The Delaney Bramlett Interviews: Part Two," *Swampland.Com* (blog), 2008, accessed August 21, 2016, http://swampland.com/articles/

view/title:the_delaney_bramlett_interviews_2008_part_two_duane_janis_and_eric 8/21/16.

[90] Mandel, 49.

[91] Smith, "The Delaney Bramlett Interviews: Part Two."

[92] Ian Dove, "Talent in Action: DELANEY AND BONNIE AND FRIENDS Carnegie Hall, New York," *Billboard*, October 17, 1970, 26.

[93] In 1992, the Allman Brothers Band recorded "Come on in My Kitchen" and played the Guthrie song regularly in acoustic sets throughout the 1990s.

[94] "Liner Notes," *Motel Shot,* Delaney & Bonnie and Friends, Atco Records, Atco SD33-358 (1971).

[95] Gary Wishik, "Sweet Wine: Delaney & Bonnie *Motel Shot*," *Statesman*, April 27, 1971, 9. While Delaney & Bonnie and Friends recorded *Motel Shot* in May 1970, it was not released until the following year.

[96] Eric Clapton, *Clapton: The Autobiography* (New York: Broadway Books, 2007), 112-114.

[97] For detailed accounts of the *Layla* sessions, See Freeman, 76-85; Poe, 155-170; Paul, *One Way Out*, 81-91; and Galadrielle Allman, 262-273.

[98] Clapton, *Clapton*, 128.

[99] Phil Sutcliffe, "Derek and the Dominos: The Story of *Layla*," *Mojo*, May 2011, accessed February 25, 2017, https://www-rocksbackpages-com.ezproxy.mtsu.edu/Library/Article/derek-and-the-dominos-the-story-of-ilaylai?pfv=True.

[100] Michael Buffalo Smith, "From the Manhattan Project to the Allman Brothers Band: An Interview with Tom Dowd," *Swampland.com* (blog), Fall 2002, accessed July 1, 2016, http://swampland.com/articles/view/title:tom_dowd.

[101] Paul, *One Way Out*, 84.

[102] Clapton interview by Robert Palmer.

[103] Ertegun, 243.

[104] "John D. Wyker's Cat Tales - Macon & Capricorn Records," *Swampland.Com* (blog), n.d., accessed August 24, 2017, http://www.swampland.com/articles/view/title: john_d_wykers_cat_tales__macon__capricorn_records.

[105] Paul, *One Way Out*, 88.

[106] Glover, "The Allman Brothers: Saturday Night Fish Fry."

[107] Paul, *One Way Out*, 89

[108] Clapton, *Clapton*, 128.

[109] Mandel, 49.

[110] Mandel, 73.

[111] "An Interview with Duane Allman of the Allman Brothers Band."

[112] Michael Buffalo Smith, "Pete Kowalke of Cowboy: The GRITZ Interview," *Swampland.Com* (blog), n.d., accessed August 21, 2016, http://swampland.com/articles/view/title:pete_kowalke_of_cowboy_the_gritz_interview.

[113] Michael Buffalo Smith, "Tom Wynn of Cowboy: The GRITZ Interview," *Swampland.Com* (blog), n.d., accessed August 24, 2017, http://swampland.com/articles/view/title:tom_wynn_of_cowboy_the_gritz_interview.

[114] Mandel, 49. Scant documentation exists of other musicians joining the Allman Brothers Band onstage. Johnny Winter played with the band at the second Atlanta International Pop Festival, Traffic's Chris Wood played saxophone on at least one show in May 1970, and Juicy Carter played sax at Fillmore East in March 1971, Bobby Caldwell of Winter's band and Captain Beefheart played percussion with the band in March and October 1971, and some remember Peter Green of Fleetwood Mac joining the Allmans onstage at the Warehouse. Allman and some bandmates also played with Garcia and the Grateful Dead on April 26, 1971.

[115] Glover, "In This Band You Better Come to Pick."

[116] Scoppa, 66.

[117] Abram.

[118] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 129.

[119] Glover, "In This Band You Better Come to Pick."

[120] Nolan, 34.

[121] In most two-guitar bands, one guitarist played rhythm and the other played lead. There were several bands boasting two lead guitarists prior to the formation of Allman Brothers Band in March 1969. Two British blues bands each used the technique prior to the Allmans. In 1966, Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page played some dual leads while in the Yardbirds. In 1967, the original Fleetwood Mac included two lead players, Peter Green and Jeremy Spencer, and in 1969 the band added a third guitarist in Danny Kirwan. Stateside, Stephen Stills and Neil Young played lead together in both the Buffalo Springfield from 1966 to 1968 (and beginning in 1970 in Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young). From 1965 to 1969, John Cipollina and Gary Duncan each played lead in the Quicksilver Messenger Service.

[122] Alan Paul, "Why Duane Allman Didn't Want To Be The Next Hendrix," musicaficionado.com, November 15, 2016, accessed June 15, 2017, https://web.musicaficionado.com/main.html#!/article/duane_allmans_greatest_talent_was_his_generosity_by_alanpaul?invitedBy=concordmusicgroup&utm_source=facebook&utm_campaign=fanpage.

[123] Paul, *One Way Out*, 61-62.

[124] Paul, "Why Duane Allman Didn't Want To Be The Next Hendrix."

[125] Paul, *One Way Out*, 61-62.

[126] Nolan, 38. Emphasis is in the original document.

[127] Paul, *One Way Out*, 62.

[128] Nolan, 38.

[129] Eric Snider, "Brothers Forever," *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, January 11, 1995.

[130] Paul, *One Way Out*, 61-62.

[131] Duane Allman, interview by Dave Herman, WABC, New York, December 9, 1970, author's personal collection, CD.

[132] Eric Snider, "Brothers Forever," *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, January 11, 1995.

[133] Paul, *One Way Out*, 144.

[134] Hoskyns, "Southern Men."

[135] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 207.

[136] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 209.

[137] Gilmore, 130, 132.

[138] Fornatale.

[139] Roy Carr, "First Person Present 1972," *Hit Parader*, November 1972, 11.

[140] Fornatale.

[141] Freeman, 114.

[142] Crowe, "Duane Allman - The Day the Music Died."

[143] Freeman, 114.

[144] Jon Landau, "More on Duane Allman," *The Phoenix*, December 3, 1971, 47.

[145] Jon Landau, "Loose Ends: Duane Allman, the Sky Is Crying," *The Phoenix*, November 10, 1971, 46.

[146] Kyle.

[147] Associated Press, "Sky Man Played Last Tune 25 Years Ago for Allmans," *The Augusta Chronicle*, November 17, 1996, accessed June 2, 2017, http://chronicle.augusta.com/stories/1996/11/17/nas_200664.shtml#.WTGI9neVTYU.

[148] Tommy Talton, "Celebrating Duane Allman," YouTube video, 4:33, posted [November 16, 2016], https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWGY56E6I1c&feature=youtu.be.

[149] Landau, "Bandleader Duane Allman Dies in Bike Crash."

[150] Landau, "More on Duane Allman."

[151] Gregg Allman, "Inner-view: Gregg Allman."

[152] Landau, "Bandleader Duane Allman Dies in Bike Crash."

[153] Ward Silver, "In Memory: Duane Allman (1947-1971)," *Ithacan*, November 5, 1971.

[154] Unknown, "Duane Allman," *River City Review*, January 1972. Capitalization is reflected in the original.

[155] Atlantic Records, which had distributed the Allmans' first three records, was left out of the equation for *Eat a Peach* as Capricorn had signed a distribution deal with Warner Brothers for the record.

[156] The song's conclusion included Duane leading the band on an instrumental take on the Carter Family's "Will the Circle Be Unbroken."

[157] Tony Glover, "The Allman Brothers Band: Did They Grieve," *Circus*, May 5, 1972.

[158] Dale Rauch, "In One Ear: Review of *Eat a Peach*," *Ithacan*, April 6, 1972, 13.

[159] Brad Tucker, "The Turntable: New and Disappointing," *Smoke Signals*, May 3, 1972, 2

[160] Rockin' Raoul, "In Your Ear," *Austin Rag*, March 20, 1972, 17.

[161] Tony Glover, "The Allman Brothers Band: *Eat A Peach*," *Rolling Stone*, April 13, 1972, accessed December 18, 2015, http://www.rollingstone.com/music/albumreviews/eat-a-peach-19720413.

[162] Hal Pratt, "The Critic's Opinion: *Eat a Peach*," *Daily Illini*, April 11, 1972, 15.

[163] Leslie Lickstein, "Old Music with the New," *Weekly Gettysburgian*, April 14, 1972, 20.

[164] Dave Sitz, "Allman Brothers Overcome Tragedy," *Daily Iowan*, September 28, 1973, 7.

[165] Stephen Lasko, "Allman Brothers Rock on Without Duane," *Commonwealth Times*, April 6, 1972, 3.

[166] "Billboard Album Reviews," *Billboard*, March 18, 1972, 46, 48.

[167] Sitz. Sitz did suggest the double album might have been better if it had been half its length.

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[168] "Record Review: Peach Album Proves Rock Talent," *Seattle Times*, March 27, 1972.

[169] Andrew Elkind, "Off the Record: *Eat a Peach*," *Yale Daily News*, March 7, 1972, 2.

[170] The last studio track he recorded was actually Cowboy's "Please Be With Me."

[171] This was not without considerable tension as Scott Freeman, Alan Paul, Gregg Allman, and Willie Perkins all document in their books about the Allman Brothers Band.

[172] Prior to his passing, Oakley played on three of the new albums cuts, "Wasted Words," "Ramblin' Man," and "Come and Go Blues."

[173] With more than 600,000 attendees, Watkins Glen was the largest rock concert attendance at the time.

[174] See Freeman, 137-138, 147-148, 197-198, 217-218, 240-242, 248-250, 257-268; Paul, *One Way Out*, 262-263; and Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 285-286, 291.

[175] Keyboard player Johnny Neel also served a short stint with the band. The Allman Brothers Band toured that year behind *Dreams,* a four-disc boxset.

[176] While there had been some talk that the band might again reform with new guitar players, that possibility ended with drummer Butch Trucks's suicide on January 24, 2017. Gregg Allman, the sole Allman in the band since his brother's death, died of liver cancer later that year, on May 27, 2017.

[177] Crowe, "Duane Allman - The Day the Music Died."

[178] David Pearcy, "Duane's Fame Grows after Untimely Death," *Sidelines*, January 26, 1973, 5.

[179] Lester Bangs, "Duane Allman in Perspective: From Session Cat to Star. Review of *Duane Allman: An Anthology*," *Rolling Stone*, February 1, 1973, 43.

[180] Ward H. Silver, "*Win, Lose, or Draw*," *The Great Speckled Bird*, October 2, 1975, 12.

[181] Philip Lane, "Piedmont Park Recollections," *Not Necessarily Stoned, but Beautiful: Hippies of the 60s and Beyond* (Facebook group), July 25, 2016, accessed

September 7, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/hippiesofthe60sandbeyond/ posts/ 729683123836256.

[182] Crowe, "Duane Allman - The Day the Music Died."

[183] Kyle. Capitalization of Southern Rock is my own.

[184] Jaimoe, "Afterword," in *One Way Out: The Inside History of the Allman Brothers Band*, Alan Paul, 1st St. Martin's Griffin edition (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2015), 424-425.

# Chapter 9

## "We Came Back to the Big House and It Was Truly a Home": The Public History of the Allman Brothers Band

"Allman Brothers' House Now Empty," the January 1973 headline read. The subsequent article shared the tragedy of Duane Allman's death just as his band was gaining widespread notoriety. "Duane died when the band's fame was cresting," William Chaze reported. "The group had paid its dues and the money—lots of it—was coming in. Macon-based Capricorn Records, for whom the group recorded, says that in the year of Duane's death, the band made about $600,000."[1]

Chaze's assessment was by no means groundbreaking. Nearly every account of Allman's death reached the same conclusion, particularly as the posthumously released album *Eat a Peach* rose up the charts. What was significant, however, was the reporter's identification of the importance of a house in Macon—"the Big House," as the band dubbed it—to the band's story. While Chaze's report missed some key details (incorrectly stating that Allman, instead of bassist Berry Oakley, rented the house), the reporter brought to the fore the central role the fourteen-room communal home played in the band's initial months and years. "The Big House," he began, "where members of the Allman Brothers rock band lived with wives, children, and girlfriends, is empty now. The last of its residents moved away in mid-January. It held too many memories within its brick walls."[2]

Three months before, on November 11, 1972, Oakley had died in a motorcycle crash just blocks from the site of Allman's own fatal accident. He had struggled mightily to cope in the months after Allman's death, which, drummer Butch Trucks said, "[A]bsolutely destroyed him. The next year, for the whole year, he was just a zombie—always just completely fucked up and unable to deal with life."[3] Oakley, Capricorn executive Frank Fenter told Chaze, "was under tremendous pressure, or at least he felt he was. After Duane's death he felt like he was responsible for the band. He wasn't, really, but he felt like the mantle had fallen on him."[4] "As much as I hate to say this," Trucks concluded, "Berry's death was almost a relief, because it put him out of his pain."[5]

That the Big House was Oakley's residence meant the band dynamic that had centered around the home, was forever lost. Duane Allman moved already out of the house in the months prior to his death. Oakley, his wife Linda, and daughter Brittany remained until Oakley's own death a year later. (The bassist's sister Candace had lived there as well, with Allman Brothers roadie Kim Payne.) After Oakley's funeral in November 1972, Linda went to Florida to visit her parents. She returned in January 1973 to an eviction notice posted on the front door.[6] The Big House would not be occupied by anyone associated with the Allman Brothers for the next twenty years. In 2010, it opened as The Allman Brothers Band Museum at the Big House.

The Big House is at 2321 Vineville Avenue in Macon. It is located in the city's Vineville Historic District, about one-and-one-half miles northwest of downtown Macon. The district contains residential and commercial buildings and churches and has been a

part of the National Register of Historic Places since 1975. Historic Macon, the community's historic preservation agency, notes that the district features examples of architectural forms from the 1830s through the 1930s. "Represented in the 700 homes, churches, and businesses are Plantation Plain, Victorian, Neoclassical, and Bungalow styles. The district also features extraordinary examples of the Spanish Villa, English Tudor, Italian Renaissance, Federal Georgian and Jacobean styles."[7] Built in 1900 by Nathaniel E. Harris, the three-story house is around 6,000 square feet and sits on a little more than one-half acre today.[8] Built in the Grand Tudor style popular at the time of construction, the 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map records a house with a large wood frame porch with a wood cornice, masonry/brick framing, and a tin roof.[9]

"The house features high ceilings, intricate woodworking and wainscoting, and colorful stained glass windows on the staircase landings on all three of its floors," Willie Perkins wrote. "The first floor contains a formal foyer leading to a grand staircase, a parlor, a large living room with a fireplace, and a big screened-in sun porch." The house's second floor contains three bedrooms, a sitting room with a large shower attached, and a small storage room once used as a nursery. The third-floor attic served as a private ballroom for Harris. The band used it as a party room complete with a full-sized pool table.[10]

The house became part of the Allman Brothers Band story in late 1969, when Linda Oakley answered an advertisement in the Macon paper for the home. Prior to that, she, Oakley, and the other members of the band had lived in an apartment building on

Macon's College Street. Her sister-in-law Candace (Candy) Oakley, in a short-lived relationship with Gregg Allman, stayed on their couch in their one-bedroom apartment. Duane Allman, his common-law wife Donna Allman lived nearby with their infant daughter Galadrielle.

Linda Oakley first the property with Candy Oakley and Donna Allman. The women, Kirsten West wrote, were "enchanted by this large three-story Grand Tudor house with its double lot surrounded by gardens filled with blooming wisteria, and fountains and fishpond in the backyard. It was an elegant, majestic home with big sunny rooms filled with light, high ceilings, stained glass windows, fireplaces galore, a crystal chandelier, and French doors." The house, West noted, "Captured their imagination and the three women saw their future in this place and plotted to make it theirs. Linda said that it conjured up three princesses in a castle for them all."[11]

With three couples sharing the house, the $225 monthly rent was more than feasible. In December 1969, Linda Oakley went to Macon's Day Realty, "put on her best 'little homemaker with child' persona," and signed a lease agreement. When Day Realty discovered more than one couple was sharing the house, they eventually increased the rent by $10.[12]

The band made a permanent home on Vineville Avenue. The three families (Berry, Linda, and daughter Brittany Oakley; Duane, Donna, and daughter Galadrielle Allman; and Gregg Allman and Candy Oakley) moved into the bedrooms on the second floor. Candy moved into the biggest bedroom in the front of the house. Duane and Donna

Allman took the bedroom at the opposite end of the house with a small adjoining room serving as a nursery for Galadrielle. The Oakleys took the rooms in the back of the house with a separate room for their daughter Brittany.

The importance of the Big House the Allman Brothers Band's communal ethos and the band's development is significant. Berry Oakley was its main tenant. "The Big House," Gregg Allman noted, "was a place for all of us to hang, but it was really Oakley's place."[13] Oakley sought to make the Big House a home for the band—both for those living there and for the band's friends and associates. One of his first purchases, then, was a large dining room table to host meals. "It was important to him," Candy Oakley remembered, "to maintain some semblance of normal family life when they were not on the road. . . . He took great pleasure in supervising all the meals, including the planning and preparation. Berry was like the self-appointed master of ceremonies to everyone."[14]

The household operated under very traditional gender roles. The men worked at music; the women kept house. "The girls kept that house spotless," Gregg Allman remembered. "Linda and Candy put so much energy into going out shopping at these junk stores to find things for the house. They'd find some great stuff, like say some old tapestries, and then they'd bring it home to decorate the house with."[15] Thom Doucette said the women played a critical and unsung role in the band's dynamic. "Candy Oakley, Linda Oakley, and Donna Allman made a huge, unbelievable difference in the band's life. We came back to the Big House and it was truly a home, which contained all the heart, feeling, and togetherness of the band. I had played in a lot of bands that had hangouts,

but this was a different deal, made possible by those three women, and I was taken away by it and greatly admired it."[16] Willie Perkins agreed. "What had been built as a prim-and-proper residence for Southern elite had been transformed into an informal, comfortable, warm, and loving home for several young families and a headquarters for an up-and-coming rock 'n' roll band."[17]

In a room just off the Oakleys' bedroom, the Oakleys set up a seating area. Dubbed the "Casbah," the room was the house's official music room.[18] According to West's history of the home, "Linda and Berry designed the music room and Linda hitchhiked to Atlanta to get the stereo. She put Indian prints on the walls and made it a warm and comfortable haven."[19] The house had no television set and the Casbah became the place where people gathered and listened to music and talked. "At the Big House," Gregg Allman wrote, "we listened to music all the time."[20] Blues remained on the turntable. It was supplemented by records by Capricorn label mates Cowboy; King Curtis's *Live at Fillmore West*; and albums from artists as wide-ranging as John Hammond, the Staple Singers, Taj Mahal, Bob Dylan, and the Beatles. It was here that jazz began to seep into the band's listening and, later, its repertoire. "Jaimoe turned all of us on to so much neat stuff. He gave us a proper education about jazz and got us into Miles Davis and John Coltrane. *Kind of Blue* was always on the turntable—(Duane) really got his head around that album—and he also seriously dug Coltrane's *My Favorite Things*."[21]

The influence of Miles Davis and John Coltrane is most strongly evident in the band's album *At Fillmore East*. Robert Palmer captured best the impact of *Kind of Blue* on

Duane Allman's playing in liner notes for a 1997 reissue of the album. "[T]he one group I never missed [at Fillmore East] . . . was the Allman Brothers Band. More specifically, I went to see their guitarist." Duane Allman, Palmer wrote, was "the only 'rock' guitarist . . . who could solo on a one-chord vamp for as long as half an hour or more, and not only avoid boring you but keep you absolutely riveted. Duane was a rare melodist and a dedicated student of music who was never evasive about the sources of his inspiration." More than two decades later, Palmer remembered Allman saying, "That kind of playing comes from Miles and Coltrane, and particularly *Kind of Blue*. I've listened to that album so many times that for the past couple of years, I haven't hardly listened to anything else.'"[22]

But the Big House was more than a place for the band and its friends to listen to music, it was also a place they created music. In addition to time in the studio and playing live, the Big House is an additional location where the band's music coalesced into a cohesive sound. Duane Allman installed baffles in the sunroom on the first floor; the band used the room as a rehearsal space.[23]

The body of music created at the Big House is significant as well. The band's two primary songwriters, Gregg Allman and Dickey Betts, wrote some of their most famous songs there as well. Allman wrote the ballad "Please Call Home" specifically about his time at the Big House and the end of his relationship with Candy Oakley. He penned two other songs that appeared alongside "Please Call Home" on the band's 1970 album *Idlewild South*: "Leave My Blues at Home" and "Midnight Rider." Guitarist Betts wrote his

two most famous songs there as well: 1973's "Ramblin' Man" and 1971's "Blue Sky." The band also worked up its instrumental "Hot 'Lanta" in rehearsal there.

The Big House was a place of music, of family, and of triumph. But it was also a place of great tragedy. By January 1973, following Allman and Oakley's deaths, the Allman Brothers Band's time at 2321 Vineville Avenue ended. The house was relegated to use as a boardinghouse and as a hair salon, among other uses. In 1987, a family bought the house from foreclosure, and lived in it until 1993 when Kirk West, tour manager for the reformed Allman Brothers Band, purchased it with his wife Kirsten.[24]

The Wests initially purchased the house with the idea of renovating it as a bed and breakfast for Allman Brothers Band fans and fans of music in general. Yet the cost proved prohibitive. Instead, they opened the Big House as an informal museum and archives for pilgrims from across the globe. Kirk West had amassed an impressive collection of Allman Brothers Band memorabilia and material and the Wests adapted the first-floor sunroom, the band's old rehearsal space, for Kirk's collection of more than 300,000 Allman Brothers-related artifacts. [25]

Surviving members of the band and its extended family remained deeply moved by their connections to the place. In 1996, Kirsten West wrote:

> [T]his past six months with the visits from Linda Oakley, [roadie] Kim Payne, Jaimoe, and Gregg, the house has meant something to them too. Kim said it best. He said it was really a very remarkable and special thing to be able to return to a place that had so much meaning in your early life and not just to see it, but to stay in the very room that he had lived in. Not many people have the opportunity in their lives to go back to a place that represents so much to them. I don't think it was what we had intended when we decided to buy the house but I'm sure glad

> that we have made that possible and that it has brought so much to these people that we love so much. It is really very interesting that a single place could mean so much to so many different people.[26]

Members of later eras of the Allman Brothers Band recognized the importance of the Big House to the band's history. In 1994, Gov't Mule, a band made up of then-Allman guitarist Warren Haynes and bass player Allen Woody (who had each joined the band in 1989), moved into the house for a week. They honed their sound in the Allman Brothers Band's original rehearsal room before embarking on their first tour.[27]

In the mid-2000s, the Wests, together with a group of other interested parties, formed the nonprofit Big House Foundation, to raise funds to open a museum at the Big House. In early 2010, the Allman Brothers Band Museum at the Big House officially opened. The Wests sold the home and their collection to the foundation, the latter forming the core of the institution's collection.[28] It remains the public history centerpiece of the Allman Brothers Band's history.

The current Big House Museum occupies a half-acre lot at 2321 Vineville Avenue in Macon. It is owned and operated by the Big House Foundation. Visitors to the museum park in a parking lot to the west of the property and behind the main house. Signs direct visitors to walk behind the house toward the wraparound porch on the building's south end (front of the house). Along the way, there is an outdoor pavilion where the museum hosts concerts and jam sessions.

The pavilion actually contains lumber from the Warehouse on 1820 Tchoupitoulas Street. The hall, New Orleans's premier rock venue of the 1970s, was the site of ten

Allman Brothers Band shows in the years they occupied the Big House.[29] In late 1970, as the band made plans to record a live album, the Warehouse was under consideration as the recording location.[30]

The live album that followed, *At Fillmore East*, figures prominently in the next part of the visitor experience. As guests make their way past the pavilion and toward the house, the museum staff has created a wall of mock amplifier cases, the upper left spray-painted with the words "The Allman Brothers Band Museum at the Big House." This is a takeoff of one of the most iconic album covers of the rock era. Famed rock photographer Jim Marshall ventured to Macon in 1971 to photograph the group for the cover of the live album the band had recorded in New York. The band's roadies stacked the band's actual road cases along a wall near the Capricorn recording studio in Macon; Marshall posed the band in front of the cases. Stenciled in white paint on the upper left case was "The Allman Brothers Band at Fillmore East." (The actual case containing those words and appearing on the album cover is on display in the museum.) Fans pose in front of the interactive and take photographs, recreating for themselves the famous album cover.

The photograph of the band's road crew on the back cover of the album reflected an additional side to the band's communal ethos. According to Gregg Allman, it was his brother's idea to feature the band's road crew on the back cover of the album. "He wanted to do that because they were the unsung heroes," he wrote. "The road crew had suffered through the lean times," biographer Scott Freeman notes, "and this was the

band's way of showing its appreciation."[31] As Gregg Allman told Alan Paul, "Putting them in the damn picture was the least we could do."[32]

Visitors continue past the *At Fillmore East* cover interactive and follow a sign that reads, "Hippies Use Front Door," steering visitors onto the porch and towards the front door of the museum. The sign is a modeled on a sign that began appearing in the early 2000s, "Hippies Use Side Door" a bit of faux-nostalgia apparently inspired by a similar sign that originally appeared at the Fairview Inn in Talkeetna, Alaska. (When hippies proceeded to enter, they found the side door always locked.)[33] In this case, the institution plays on the stereotype to engage visitors towards the museum's entrance.

The museum's front door opens to a small foyer area dominated by a large grand staircase. To the left is what the museum calls the Parlor, which contains the institution's ticket counter. The room is the anteroom to the sunroom the band had set up as rehearsal space during their time in the house. It is also where guitarist Dickey Betts (never a resident of the home) would sleep on a pullout couch, sometimes with his girlfriend (later wife) Sandy Blue Sky, for whom he penned his classic "Blue Sky."

The parlor is also where the museum attempts to lay out the entire forty-five-year history of the Allman Brothers Band.[34] From 1969 to 2014, more than twenty different musicians played in the band (only Gregg Allman and Butch Trucks served as members of each lineup). The parlor contains concert posters from each of the band's lineups chronologically. While this is important in understanding the long legacy of the Allman Brothers Band, the museum does not clearly highlight this feature nor this exhibit design

technique. Instead, the posters solely represent a visual element of the band. In and of itself, this is not a bad way to display an archival collection, but the institution misses an opportunity to better tell the story of the band with the display. The room also contains gold records granted by the Recording Industry Association of America for sales of 500,000 or more of various records, objects that represent the band's popularity in the market.

Behind the parlor is what the museum calls "The Fillmore East Room." It is room Duane Allman added sound baffles to and the room where the band stored equipment and jammed and rehearsed. The Big House Museum's website notes that this room is where the band collectively wrote the instrumental "Hot 'Lanta," though there is some dispute to this fact. Drummer Butch Trucks attributes the song's origins to a jam at their Idlewild South cabin, which the band had purchased collectively on a plot of land outside of Macon.[35]

On display in this room are artifacts representing each of the original six members of the Allman Brothers Band. This includes such items as a Fillmore East t-shirt of Berry Oakley's, a Gibson Les Paul originally belonging to Dickey Betts, one of Gregg Allman's Hammond B-3 organs, an early drum kit of Jai Johanny Johanson's, and Butch Trucks's drum case featured on the front cover of *At Fillmore East*. Displays also include the original road case from the *At Fillmore East* album cover, with the words "THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND AT FILLMORE EAST" stenciled in white paint.[36]

Exhibits also include an original Allman Brothers Band t-shirt: a green shirt with a yellow screen print of the band's mushroom logo. Willie Perkins writes that the shirt "was an advertising and promotional piece issued by the band's record label, Capricorn Records, primarily to the band, their crew members, and Capricorn Records management and staff."[37]

The mushroom logo relates to the Allman Brothers Band's use of psychedelic mushrooms in its earliest days in Macon in spring 1969. "We hadn't been in Macon very long when a guy came passing through town from the University of Florida," Gregg Allman remembered. "This cat came by with a two-quart jar of these little pink pills. . . . They were pure psilocybin mushroom extract." The band would "get up in the morning, have a little breakfast, and then we each pop half a pill," Allman recalled. "Our shit would be set up, somebody would name a key, and we start jamming, and that really spurred on our creative process." The drug had a major impact on the band's development, Allman said, and believed it particularly conducive to its sense of improvisation. "There's no question that taking psilocybin helped create so many spontaneous pieces of music. That music would come oozing out of our band," he shared. "We had some jams that were out of this world, and they were so powerful that we wouldn't talk for a long time afterwards—no one would say shit. We kept doing that, learning how each other played, learning were each guy was coming from. Our musical puzzle was coming together and mushrooms certainly enhanced that whole creative experience."[38]

The band recognized the importance of the drug to its mix, Gregg Allman said,

and chose for its logo a rendering of a psychedelic mushroom. "The mushroom logo for our band came out of this early experience," he wrote.[39] Drummer Jai Johanny Johanson shared a slightly different perspective. "To me, the mushrooms didn't really play that big a part in anything. It was just a cool thing that became a logo," he told Alan Paul.[40]

No matter the origin story, the mushroom did become the band's official symbol. The logo on the shirt on display was the product of two artists from Atlanta's Wonder Graphics firm, James Flournoy Holmes and W. David Powell.[41] "I'm pretty sure that the mushroom logo was our first paying job for Capricorn," Powell remembered. The artist did not think the band directed the use of the mushroom for the logo. "They certainly didn't specifically request a mushroom," he said. "It seems as though it didn't require much of a fight to land on the subject. Drug culture was pervasive throughout the music industry and the hippie movement."[42]

And while psychedelic mushrooms were very much part of the culture of the era, Allman shared that the band's logo was not intended as an advertisement for the use of drugs. "Let me make this clear: that mushroom logo wasn't screaming, 'Hey, people, go take psilocybin.' It was screaming, 'Listen to the fucking Allman Brothers.'"[43] Eventually, every member of the Allman Brothers Band and its road crew got a tattoo of the logo on his right calf.[44]

At various times, the museum has had on loan from Berry Oakley's son Berry Duane Oakley, a blonde Fender Jazz bass, dubbed Tractor 2 (because it was ugly as a tractor)—the second of his two basses that he was constantly tweaking with different

pickups and configurations. Displays include photos of the band from 1969-1971, framed records, contracts, guitar straps, and other ephemera representing the band's original incarnation.

The room also includes some of the original Coricidin bottles that Duane Allman used to play slide guitar—the style he is probably most famous for. Though not featured prominently in the museum, the story of how Allman came to use the pill bottle instead of a regular glass or metal slide is an important part of Allman Brothers lore.

In 1967, Duane and his brother Gregg Allman moved to Los Angeles with their band Hour Glass. Duane caught a cold and his brother brought him a bottle of Coricidin and the first Taj Mahal record. Upon hearing Taj Mahal's version of "Statesboro Blues," Duane Allman discarded the pills, soaked the label off the bottle, and began his first forays into playing bottleneck guitar.[45] It was not a smooth transition. "It was just horrible," Johnny Sandlin remembered. "It didn't sound very good at all back then when he first started," he added. "It seemed to me at the time that the slide was a detour in his playing."[46]

Yet Allman persevered, and it was important that he did. "Looking back on it," brother Gregg recalled, "I think that learning to play slide was a changing moment in his life. . . . [I]t was more like going back to his first days of playing the guitar."[47] Duane Allman biographer Randy Poe uses a spiritual analogy. "Everyone who was there at the time agrees that this was the moment of the Epiphany—the Magi had come bearing the gift, and Duane was there to receive it."[48]

Outside of the house itself, probably the most significant artifact on display in the entire museum is Duane Allman's 1957 Goldtop Les Paul. Allman acquired the guitar in early 1969, from Gainesville's Lipham's Music, a family-owned business that had extended the band credit for gear in the early years of their existence. Allman used the guitar for a total of about a year-and-a-half. He played the instrument on the majority of his recorded output in his session work in Muscle Shoals; on the Allman Brothers Band's first two albums, *The Allman Brothers Band* and *Idlewild South*; and on the Derek and the Dominos' *Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs*.[49]

The story of how the guitar made it to the Big House adds to the iconic nature of the artifact. In September 1970, Allman traded the Goldtop to Rick Stine of the Stone Balloon, a band from Allman's hometown of Daytona Beach. Stine received the Goldtop in exchange for a 1959 Cherryburst Les Paul, $200 cash, and a fifty-watt Marshall amplifier head.[50]

From 1970 through 1977, three different people came to possess the guitar. It eventually ended up at a music store, where Scot LaMar purchased it for $475—a more than reasonable price for a then-twenty-year-old guitar. The iconic instrument was not in great shape when LaMar purchased it. Its gold finish was wearing out and it had teeth marks on the headstock from a previous owner's puppy. After two unsatisfactory attempts at refurbishment by luthiers, LaMar had Tom Murphy of Gibson's Historic Series restore the guitar.[51]

While LaMar retains ownership of the guitar, he has it on long-term loan to the Big House Museum. "'The guitar is where it belongs right now," LaMar said. "People need to appreciate it and see it.'" He firmly believes the guitar should be played as well as viewed. "It's a real living legend and it shouldn't exist only behind glass," he told Alan Paul. "It's a shame to me how many of our greatest guitars have become dead artifacts.'"[52] Artists such as Vince Gill, Wilco's Nils Cline, and former Allman Brothers guitar players Jack Pearson, Warren Haynes, and Derek Trucks have all taken advantage of LaMar's largess—the latter two playing the guitar during the final Allman Brothers Band shows in New York in 2014. As the item is not accessioned into the museum's permanent collection, this does not violate museum best practices and standards.

Across the foyer from the parlor is the original home's living room. Here, the museum displays more instruments and musical gear, often rotating different pieces. The artifacts are displayed in cases repurposed from exhibits at the now-closed Georgia Music Hall of Fame. The museum displays Duane Allman's blackface Fender Showman amplifier head in this room. Stenciled on top in all capital letters is the word "HEARTBREAKERS," documenting the fact that the artifact had a second life in another classic Southern-born band. It was the amp Ron Blair, bassist for Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, used as well.[53] The museum leaves this story and connection unexplored. Cases in this room also contain Berry Oakley's Fender Showman amp head as well as Dickey Betts's Fender Bassman amplifier, complete with a badge from Lipham Music.

Displayed together in the case is Lipham's original invoice to the band—debited to their account with the store.[54]

The living room is also where museum exhibits introduce other eras of the band's forty-five-year career. Freestanding cases include guitars from Warren Haynes (who played in the band from 1989 to 1997 and 2001 to 2014), a bass from Allen Woody (1989 to 1997), and percussion instruments of Marc Quiñones (1992 to 2014). Other items on display include lyrics, fan art, and ephemera.

At various times, the exhibits include a replica of another of Duane Allman's Les Paul's, a 1959 Tobaccoburst that the band's late road manager Twiggs Lyndon traded with Gregg Allman for a 1939 Ford Opera coupe. Lyndon intended to gift the guitar to Duane Allman's infant daughter Galadrielle when he believed she was old enough to appreciate it. (Lyndon died before he was able to do this, and his family later fulfilled the wish for him.) Hammered into the back of the guitar in the its original frets is "Duane," which Lyndon added when he refretted the guitar in the late 1970s. Galadrielle Allman still owns the original guitar, having loaned it to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland and the Experience Music Project in Seattle.[55]

Through the doorway beyond the living room is one of the more eclectic displays in the museum. Originally the dining room—the place where Berry Oakley organized family dinners in the early 1970s, it now houses artifacts from the band's existence from 1973 to 2014. Exhibits include the pool table from the home of Gregg Allman and his former wife, singer, actress, and celebrity Cher. Covered in glass, the pool table includes

promotional items such as stickers and pins, contracts, notes, backstage passes, and other memorabilia from the era.

Capricorn Records produced some of these promotional items while the band itself created others. As Perkins writes, "The band itself used only a few promotional items, primarily pinback buttons and peel-off stickers. . . . Legendary band roadie Red Dog was known for tossing handfuls of pinback buttons into the crowd at concerts."[56] Some of these items are on display here.

While the museum doesn't interpret this element of the story, the backstage passes are a particularly interesting aspect of 1970s rock memorabilia and demonstrate change over time. Perkins notes their importance. "Early on there was little effort . . . to control access to the concert venue or backstage area," he wrote. "The Allman Brothers Band was notorious for granting complementary admission to their fans." This arrangement later became an issue, both financially and for safety reasons. "Promoters were the first to attempt some sort of control by issuing their own simple passes," Perkins recalled. "Eventually the Allman Brothers Band began developing their own internally produced passes."[57]

Exhibits in the dining room include items from multiple eras of the Allman Brothers Band. This includes band t-shirts and jackets over the years, gold records, and many instruments: 1997 through 1999 guitarist Jack Pearson's Fender Stratocaster copy (dubbed "Mutt" because it was constructed of parts from various guitars); bassist Allen Woody's eighteen-string bass that he used to play "Whipping Post" in concert; a guitar

from guitarist Dan Toler (1979 to 1982); a Gibson SG from 1999 to 2014 guitarist Derek Trucks (Butch Trucks's nephew); a blonde Gibson SG from guitarist Warren Haynes; and various amps, cymbals, and other musical equipment.

One of the more unique artifacts the museum displays is a jacket bassist Lamar Williams (1973 through 1976) wore while performing at a November 25, 1975 benefit concert for then-Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter's presidential campaign in Providence, Rhode Island. While underplayed in the museum—and occurring several years after the band moved out of the Big House—the role the Allman Brothers Band played in Carter's election to the presidency in 1976 is an important part of their story.

The Providence benefit, at which Williams wore the jacket on display, is an indicator of the band's role in Carter's election. Carter has credited the November 1975 concert as critical to the survival of his then-long shot campaign for the presidency. With the Carter campaign, Phil Walden, the man who built his Macon-based Capricorn Records company around the band Duane Allman created, conceived of a way to overcome the post-Watergate campaign contribution limits of $1,000 per person. Congress had designed the law to stanch the flow of big-money donations into presidential campaigns; it allowed for the federal government to match campaign contributions. At a ticket price of $6.50 (in advance) and $7.50 (day of), and with 10,000 tickets sold, the show grossed around $65,000, after expenses. Matched by federal funds, it infused more than $100,000 in much-needed money into Carter's campaign.[58]

Carter's connection to the Allman Brothers Band and the youth vote played an important role in his candidacy. In 1975, the band was one of the top concert attractions on the rock scene, its popularity at its zenith. When Carter introduced the band at an Atlanta concert one month before the Providence benefit, Scott Freeman argues, "His presence sent a clear message for the band's fans that the Allman Brothers Band thought Jimmy Carter was a pretty cool guy."[59]

The Providence benefit was indeed an endorsement of Carter's candidacy. Following a brief introduction from television personality Geraldo Rivera, Carter took the stage at the Providence Civic Center to introduce the Allman Brothers Band. The candidate made his case for the youth vote. "I'm gonna say four things," the future president began. "First of all . . . I'm running for president. Secondly, I'm gonna be elected. Third, this is very important, I need your help. Will you help me? And fourth, I want to introduce to you my friends and your friends, the ones who are gonna help me get elected along with you, the great Allman Brothers."[60] "There is no question that the Allmans' benefit concert for me in Providence kept me in that race," Carter later said.[61] The museum leaves this connection unexplored.

Finishing the tour of the home's first floor communal areas, visitors tour the kitchen area. The kitchen is where guitarist Dickey Betts penned the band's biggest hit, 1973's "Ramblin' Man" which reached number two on the *Billboard* charts. "I wrote 'Ramblin' Man' in Berry Oakley's kitchen [at the Big House] at about four in the morning.

Everyone had gone to bed but I was sitting up. Once I got started, I probably wrote that song in about twenty minutes but I'd been thinking about it for a year or two."[62]

Betts often credits the famous line "Tryin' to make a living and doing the best I can" as inspired by a Florida cowboy he knew who often used a similar line when greeting Betts. The song had its origins in jams recorded almost two years earlier, which appeared in embryonic form on bootleg cassettes dubbed *The Gatlinburg Tapes*, recorded during rehearsals for what became the *Eat a Peach* album.[63] "Ramblin' Man" also references Highway 41, a federal highway that runs north from Miami to Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The road traverses Betts's native Florida and also Macon, where it's called Vineville Avenue—the street on which the Big House sits.

The song is replete with references to the band's native South, references that Betts saw as important to the song's popularity. Betts addressed this phenomena in an interview with Cameron Crowe in published in the June 1974 *Hit Parader.* "I'm real glad that people from all over the country have been able to identify with the song. I think it's a damn good expression of the kind of people our band comes from. People in the South can feel my heart beat in that song. Down there, that song is really close to everybody. Everybody knows those places. Everybody knows about 41 running down through Florida."[64] "Ramblin' Man" and the era the band recorded its albums *Brothers and Sisters* and *Win, Lose, or Draw* is the time period where the Allman Brothers Band became most closely associated with Southern Rock. This is something the museum does not tout, probably because it is a label the band has long tried to disassociate itself from.

The kitchen contains another artifact significant to the Allman Brothers Band: an original vintage table from Macon's famous H&H Restaurant. The H&H holds a place of reverence in the band's story. Louise Hudson, its proprietor, is known by fans worldwide as "Mama Louise." The moniker came from famous Allman Brothers roadie Joseph "Red Dog" Campbell and Gregg Allman, who approached Hudson shortly after the Allman Brothers Band's second album, *Idlewild South* was released. As she recalled, Gregg Allman asked, "'How do you feel if we call you Mama Louise?' I said, 'I'd feel good.' I knew that Gregg called his own mother 'Mama A' and I always did feel like they was my sons."[65]

The band's relationship to Hudson and her H&H Restaurant began shortly after relocating to Macon in 1969. Money was tight, and the band and crew lived off the modest government disability checks of Vietnam veteran Campbell and road manager Twiggs Lyndon. On their first visit, three or four members of the band ordered two plates of food. "'We don't have any money,'" she recalled them telling her, "'but we're going out on the road and when we come back, we'll pay you.'" "Most people who said that never came back," she noted, "and they did. . . . They always treated me real respectful."[66] The band had thanked Hudson in the credits on the back of their *Idlewild South* record with, "Vittles: Louise."[67]

The kitchen area also contains exhibit cases featuring instruments and other ephemera from the band. Behind it, towards the museum's exit, is a well-apportioned gift shop. In addition to the onsite experience, the museum runs a very successful mail order service for Allman Brothers Band-related memorabilia. Outside the door is a small

courtyard featuring one of the koi ponds onsite, and commemorative bricks from museum donors.

The home's second floor contains its original living quarters and additional museum exhibit space. The stair landing includes an exhibit case that holds Oakley's Gibson Hummingbird acoustic guitar and candid photographs of band and its extended family—including several taken at the Big House. Among these images is the last photograph of Duane Allman, taken shortly before the fateful motorcycle ride that ended in his death, and photographs of Oakley, his wife Linda, and daughter Brittany living at the Big House.

Upstairs to the left is the bedroom originally occupied by Candace Oakley and Gregg Allman. (Roadie Kim Payne later took up residence with Oakley, staying there with her until her brother Berry's death in 1972.) The room serves as additional exhibit space and at various times has held exhibits of concert posters and photographs. It has housed exhibit cases holding Twiggs Lyndon's hat and belt, a coat and photographs of bass player Lamar Williams, and a gray Confederate-style kepi worn by roadie "Tuffy" Phillips. The room also contains an old jeweler's case that scrolls and contains smaller Allman Brothers Band items such as pendants, a Zippo lighter, and even drummer Johanson's AARP card. The museum presents these artifacts without interpretation.

Upon exiting the bedroom, a small room is on the immediate left. Originally a storage closet, it was the nursery for Duane and Donna Allman's daughter Galadrielle. Today the museum interprets it as the "Roadie Room." While all road crews are an

essential part of a band's touring operation, the Allman Brothers Band's roadies were truly a part of the band's "family" and the museum honors that in this space. "The crew always played a special role in our band," Gregg Allman said, "and we were quite the tight family." Kim Payne agreed. "We felt like we were part of the band. It was truly indeed more of a brotherhood than any kind of employee/employer relationship. . . . Duane put out a presidential law that the roadies would get paid before the band when money was tight—which was always in the first few years." Willie Perkins recalled likewise, "[H]is ironclad rule was, 'If everyone can't get paid, the crew gets paid first.'"[68]

Next to this room is Duane Allman's bedroom. The Big House was not a raucous playhouse for a rock and roll band. It was a home, one that the women who lived there made it a respite for their husbands when they returned from the road. The room that Duane Allman shared with his wife Donna reflects this principle. The closet, small for the present-day, contains one of Allman's shirts as well as his Gibson J-45 acoustic guitar. The bedroom is sparsely apportioned. It contains a period-style (non-original) bed and a wooden rocking chair. A framed photograph of Allman taken at the Warehouse in New Orleans sits on the fireplace mantel.

On a small bedside table is a reproduction, in Allman's handwriting, of one of his most famous quotes. "This year I will be more thoughtful of my fellow man, exert more effort in each of my endeavors professionally as well as personally," Allman wrote on January 1, 1969. "Take love wherever I find it, and offer it to everyone who will take it. In

this coming year I will seek knowledge from those wiser than me and try to teach those who wish to learn from me. I love being alive and I will be the best man I possibly can."[69]

Across the hall is another example of the domestic life in the Big House: the bedroom of Berry and Linda Oakley's daughter Brittany. Museum staff worked with Linda to design the room according to her remembrances of her family's time at the home. Walls are painted or papered in the bright, vibrant colors popular in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The room features toys and other material that could be found in many girls' bedrooms of the time. The display contains two original artifacts of the Oakleys' daughter. First is Brittany Oakley's original dollhouse, making it germane to her time in the home. The second is a blue gingham dress with yellow smock that she wore in the photograph on the back cover of the Allman Brothers's *Brothers and Sisters* record—the last studio record to feature her father Berry Oakley with the band.

Next to this room is the Casbah room. Linda Oakley decorated this room to appear as when she lived there. This room features no original artifacts, but its current formation allows visitors to sit in the room where the band and family enjoyed a respite from the world, listening to music, conversing, and enjoying each other's company.

The third floor of the Big House currently houses the museum's offices as well as its archives. It is not open to the public except for research appointments.

The Big House Museum contains some of the more significant items and stories of the forty-five-year career of the Allman Brothers Band. Most noteworthy, of course, is the house itself. Museum staff use the space well to tell the story of the first band to

break out of the South in the rock era. The importance of the physical space itself is often assumed, maybe too much so. Important artifacts such as Duane Allman's 1957 Goldtop Les Paul are highlighted, but the space where the band rehearsed—where the guitar is on exhibit—is not as effectively conveyed nor interpreted as it could be as a place where history was made.

In addition, the Big House Museum has tremendous opportunity to tell the story of the Allman Brothers Band in the context of their times. While it does a great job of telling the band's history through exhibits and artifacts, the *meaning* of the band to its audience, both then and now, is somewhat missing from the interpretation. With the Allman Brothers Band officially retired for good, the museum has a prime opportunity for the institution to begin to focus on expanding the site to the larger context of the band and its legacy.

The depth and complexity of the full Allman Brothers Band story is missing from the public history of the band at the museum and within Macon as well. After Duane Allman and Berry Oakley's deaths, the band forged ahead and continued as a touring and recording unit for most of the next forty-two years. The Allman Brothers Band has also birthed a number of successful offshoot bands, Warren Haynes and Allen Woody's Gov't Mule and Derek Trucks's Tedeschi Trucks Band, among others.

Historians and public historians could, and should, look at the band in relation to Duane Allman's original vision, utilizing the various iterations of the band and its music to examine how Allman's bandmates morphed and changed his original musical approach.

How, for example, did the Allman Brothers Band go from a the jazz/blues/rock fusion of *At Fillmore East* and *Eat a Peach* to more country and Southern Rock sound of 1973's *Brothers and Sisters* and *Win, Lose, or Draw* (1975)? Listeners embraced the band's version of Southern Rock when the group reformed and recorded for 1979's *Enlightened Rogues* but lost interest by the two follow-up records: *Reach for the Sky* (1980) and *Brothers of the Road* (1981). Some observers have blamed changing musical tastes, particularly in the era after the emergence of punk rock, for this trend. While this is true, the music on these records is a far cry from the influential band that Duane Allman formed in 1969. It is more likely that audience's collective shrug reflected disinterest in the tired, lifeless music found on the albums.

Likewise, there is much to be found in the story of the band's reformation in 1989 and continuing as a touring entity for the next twenty-five years. The launch of the classic rock radio format in the 1980s again brought the band's music in the Duane Allman and *Brothers and Sisters* era back into rotation. In parallel, the advent of the compact disc format led to a surge of record sales as people replaced vinyl copies of the band's albums. As a result, nearly every one of the Allman Brothers' albums has been released multiple times in various formats, remasters, deluxe sets, and the like. As cd's became ubiquitous, record labels mined their vaults and put together comprehensive multiple-disc box sets, including the Allman Brothers Band's four-disc *Dreams*, behind which the band toured in 1989.

Upon reuniting, the band returned to the studio. It recorded four well-received studio records from 1990 through 2003: *Seven Turns* (1990), *Shades of Two Worlds* (1992), *Where It All Begins* (1994), and *Hittin' the Note* (2003). The Allman Brothers also released four live albums since 1989: *An Evening with the Allman Brothers Band: First Set* (1992), *An Evening with the Allman Brothers Band: 2nd Set* (1995), *Peakin' at the Beacon* (2000), and *One Way Out* (2004).

Due to the band's continuing popularity, record companies continued to reissue material. In 2013, for the record's fortieth anniversary, Mercury Records re-released *Brothers and Sisters* in deluxe and super-deluxe editions, the latter including a disc of band rehearsals and demos along with a full concert from September 26, 1973. The label released a six-cd set called *The 1971 Fillmore East Recordings* in 2014. It included all six of the concerts recorded in March 1971 and a disc of the band's closing show at the venue on June 27, 1971.

The Allman Brothers Band itself and various record labels have also issued ten live records from archival recordings since 1989. These include: *Live at Ludlow Garage: 1970* (Polydor, 1990); *Fillmore East, February 1970* (Grateful Dead Records, 1996); *American University 12/13/70* (The Allman Brothers Band Recording Company, 2002); *Live at the Atlanta International Pop Festival: July 3 & 5 1970* (Epic/Legacy, 2003); *S.U.N.Y. at Stonybrook: Stonybrook, NY 9/19/71* (The Allman Brothers Band Recording Company, 2003); *Macon City Auditorium: 2/11/72* (The Allman Brothers Band Recording Company, 2004); *Nassau Coliseum, Uniondale, NY: 5/1/73* (The Allman Brothers Band Recording

Company, 2005); *Boston Common, 8/17/71* (The Allman Brothers Band Recording Company, 2007); *Play All Night: Live at the Beacon Theatre 1992* (Epic/Legacy 2014); and *Live from A&R Studios* (The Allman Brothers Band Recording Company, 2016).

All of this activity is worthy of additional study. For the Allman Brothers Band not only weathered changes in American music and musical tastes, it experienced a great evolution of the American music industry. First, the band consciously decided not to pursue music-industry success through AM radio singles. Its success instead rose with the popularity of FM radio. And while radio listener attention declined through the latter 1970s and early 1980s, the classic rock radio format revived interest in the band and led to an additional life for the band as a touring and recording act.

Second, the band lived through several changes in how albums and material were issued. The Allman Brothers Band existed in the era of vinyl records, the 8-track and cassette tapes, the compact discs, and, later, digital media. Each of these formats spurred sales and, often, renewed attention for the band. Digital media and cd's also became a way for the band to easily issue material from its extensive live catalog.

Finally, when the group reformed in 1989, it made a decision to allow taping of its live shows. It was a formula the Allman Brothers borrowed from the Grateful Dead. Allowing "bootleg" recordings added a new element for fan interest—the ability to have additional material from the band.

An examination of these elements provides multiple entry points to the study of the Allman Brothers Band and of American and southern music and musical culture. The

forty-five year career of the Allman Brothers Band, forty-three of them without their founder Duane Allman, offers public historians the opportunity to take iconic bands (and brands) and examine the various layers that comprise them.

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[1] William Chaze, "Allman Brothers' House Now Empty," *The Tuscaloosa News*, January 26, 1973.

[2] Chaze.

[3] Hoskyns, "Southern Men."

[4] Chaze.

[5] Hoskyns, "Southern Men."

[6] Chaze; Paul, *One Way Out*, 196.

[7] Historic Macon, *Macon's Historic Districts*, n.d., accessed March 19, 2016, http:// www.historicmacon.org/explore/macons-historic-districts/#vineville.

[8] Macon/Bibb County Board of Tax Assessors, "Owner and Parcel Information: 2321 Vineville Ave.," n.d., accessed March 20, 2016, http://www.co.bibb.ga.us/Tax Assessors/PropertyCard/PropertyCard.asp?P=P071-0345. Harris served as governor of Georgia from 1915 through 1917.

[9] Sanborn Map Company. Insurance maps of Macon, Bibb County, Georgia, 1908 : [sheet 71 of 111] / published by the Sanborn Map Company. University of Georgia Libraries Map Collection, Athens, Ga., accessed 20 March 2016, http://dlg.galileo.usg. edu/cgi-bin/sanb.cgi?query=id%3Amacon_ga-1908-s-71&_cc=1&Welcome, presented in the Digital Library of Georgia.

[10] Perkins, *No Saints, No Saviors*, 13-14. Poe, 138. The house also had a formal dining room, which, befitting the communal spirit of the times, original Allman Brothers Band bassist Berry Oakley furnished with a large dining room table for "family" meals.

[11] Kirsten West, "History of the Big House," April 29, 2009, accessed March 19, 2016, http://web.archive.org/web/20090429065212/www.thebighousemuseum.org:80/ history.htm. Along with her husband Kirk West, who worked for the Allman Brothers from the 1990s through the 2000s. The Wests later owned the Big House and founded of the foundation that opened an Allman Brothers museum there.

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[12] Kirsten West, "History of the Big House."

[13] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 148-149.

[14] Freeman, 67-68; Poe 138.

[15] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 149.

[16] Paul, *One Way Out*, 71.

[17] Perkins, *No Saints, No Saviors*, 15.

[18] Perkins, *No Saints, No Saviors*, 15; Poe, 138; Freeman, 67-68.

[19] Kirsten West, "History of the Big House."

[20] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 149-151.

[21] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 150.

[22] Robert Palmer, Liner Notes. *Kind of Blue*, Miles Davis, Columbia/Legacy, CK 64935, 1997, CD.

[23] Perkins, *No Saints, No Saviors*, 13; Poe 138-139.

[24] Paul, *One Way Out,* 196.

[25] Kirsten West, "History of the Big House."

[26] Kirsten West, "The Big House Update," *Hittin' the Note*, no. 3 (Winter 1996), 32.

[27] Paul, *One Way Out,* 196.

[28] Paul, *One Way Out*, 196.

[29] "ABB Song Lists 1969-1999"; Paragon Agency booking forms, Willie Perkins private collection.

[30] Tiven; "An Interview with Duane Allman of the Allman Brothers Band." Though the band booked Bill Graham's Fillmore East to record its epic live record, *At Fillmore East*, they did play the Warehouse on March 21, 1971, one week after the last of shows recorded for the album.

[31] Freeman, 94.

[32] Paul, *One Way Out*, 126.

[33] Fred Beckey, *Mount McKinley: Icey Crown of North America* (Seattle: The Mountaineers, 1998), 283.

[34] The band toured regularly from 1969 through 2014 with breaks from 1976 to 1979 and 1983 to 1989.

[35] Paul, *One Way Out*, 92. Not noted in the room's exhibits, but important to the band's story, is that that the song's authorship is attributed to all six band members.

[36] Willie Perkins and Jack Weston, *The Allman Brothers Band: Classic Memorabilia 1969-1976* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2015), 11-13, 19, 22.

[37] Perkins and Weston, 17-18.

[38] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 123.

[39] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 123.

[40] Paul, *One Way Out*, 37.

[41] Perkins and Weston, 17-18. Holmes also designed the band's iconic *Eat a Peach* album cover and he and Powell illustrated the album's gatefold.

[42] Paul, *One Way Out*, 39.

[43] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 123.

[44] See Lewis.

[45] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 90.

[46] Kyle, "Remembering Duane Allman"; Nolan 7-10; Poe, 57.

[47] Gregg Allman, *My Cross to Bear*, 91.

[48] Poe, 57.

[49] Alan Paul, "Guitar Lust: The Story of Duane Allman's Long-Lost 1957 Gibson Les Paul Goldtop," *Guitar World*, January 2011, accessed March 29, 2016, http://www.guitarworld.com/guitar-lust-story-duane-allmans-long-lost-1957-gibson-les-paul-goldtop.

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[50] Paul, "Guitar Lust." Allman had one of his roadies surreptitiously switch and install the '57 Goldtop's pickups into his new guitar.

[51] Paul, "Guitar Lust." See also http://www.duaneallmansgoldtop.com/ for the guitar's backstory and provenance.

[52] Paul, "Guitar Lust."

[53] Perkins and Weston, 4. Gregg Allman was married to Blair's sister Janice at one time, which is how he came to own the amp.

[54] Perkins and Weston, 3-7. See Buster Lipham, "Things Were Really Rolling Back Then," February 27, 2012, accessed August 13, 2013, http://www.gainesvillerockhistory. com/BusterLipham.htm. As a thank you for Buster Lipham's generosity, the band played a battle of the bands organized by Lipham's in September 1969 and also thanked him in the liner notes for *Idlewild South* and *At Fillmore East*. The Allman Brothers' relationship with Lipham and the store's central role in the careers of Gainesville natives and Rock & Roll Hall of Fame members Tom Petty and guitarist Don Felder (of the Eagles), is a very interesting, and relatively unexplored part of the Allman Brothers Band's story, and the story of popular music in Florida in the rock era.

[55] Paul, *One Way Out*, 243-244.

[56] Perkins and Weston, 85.

[57] Perkins and Weston, 33.

[58] Ticket prices from image of concert poster, author's personal collection. See also, Robert T. Garrett, "Blue Skies Over Georgia," *The Harvard Crimson*, December 8, 1975, accessed April 1, 2016, http://www.thecrimson. com/article/1975/12/8/blue-skies-over-georgia-pbwbm-s/.

[59] Freeman, 203.

[60] Allman Brothers Band, concert recorded November 25, 1975, at Providence Civic Center, Providence, RI, CD, author's personal collection.

[61] Paul, *One Way Out*, 238; Freeman 211.

[62] Paul, *One Way Out*, 184.

[63] Paul, *One Way Out*, 181. Allman Brothers Band, *The Gatlinburg Tapes*, rehearsals recorded April 1971, Gatlinburg, TN, CD, author's personal collection.

[64] Cameron Crowe, "The Allman Brothers Band Together," *Hit Parader*, June 1974, accessed August 13, 2015, http://www.theuncool.com/ journalism/the-allman-brothers-band-hit-parader/. "Ramblin' Man" is the song that most scholars correctly use to associate the Allman Brothers Band with the Southern Rock movement.

[65] Paul, *One Way Out*, 93-94.

[66] Paul, *One Way Out*, 35-36.

[67] Credits, The Allman Brothers Band, *Idlewild South,* ATCO SD 33-342.

[68] Paul, *One Way Out*, 126-127.

[69] Galadrielle Allman, 129. A slight adaption of the quote is embossed on Allman's tombstone as well.

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