



HEALTHCARE

The Obamacare Cookie Crumbles

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bookmarked and/or username-password remembered. I have spent the afternoon with my secret password book...second only to the "football" containing the president's nuclear launch codes... re-entering passwords from years gone by. With each stroke of the key my frustration grows. It will get worse, I am sure, when I try and access

something I need that I can't think of right now. In fact, all I can think of is the disaster that is the rollout for something I fought so hard for, so publicly. More personally, I have based some career decisions on the ACA, as well; but, as we liked to say back in Brooklyn, who the frosted cookie am I? What about everyone else? Millions of people with no grandsons to fix their laptops or explain

cookies are in the same boat; or is it cookie sheet?

I find myself thinking about the difference between knowing what people need and the daunting task of getting it to them; of ideas and execution; of hope and change and deliverance. I am of a mixed mind this evening. The Obama Administration, which has done many good things in terms of policy, has fallen victim to a common malady affecting the arrogant: It is not enough to be the smartest person in the room. This

dynamic is exacerbated when you apply it to the general sloth and incompetence of government. There, I said it. But before you think I am ready to join the Tea Party, know this:

While it appears that the Obama Administration cannot find the Lincoln Room with both hands, their hearts, at least, want me and millions of others to have access to affordable health care, and eventually we will get it. There is no other alternative. The Republicans don't care; don't have a plan

and a large enough portion of them think that those without insurance don't deserve to have it.

The whole thing leaves me with a sour taste in my mouth, one which I will most certainly not cure with a cookie. Besides, I am filling up on crow.

Bob Marrone is an author and freelance writer.

MUSIC



THE SOUNDS OF BLUE

By BOB PUTIGNANO

"Song of the South: Duane Allman & the Rise of the Allman Brothers Band."

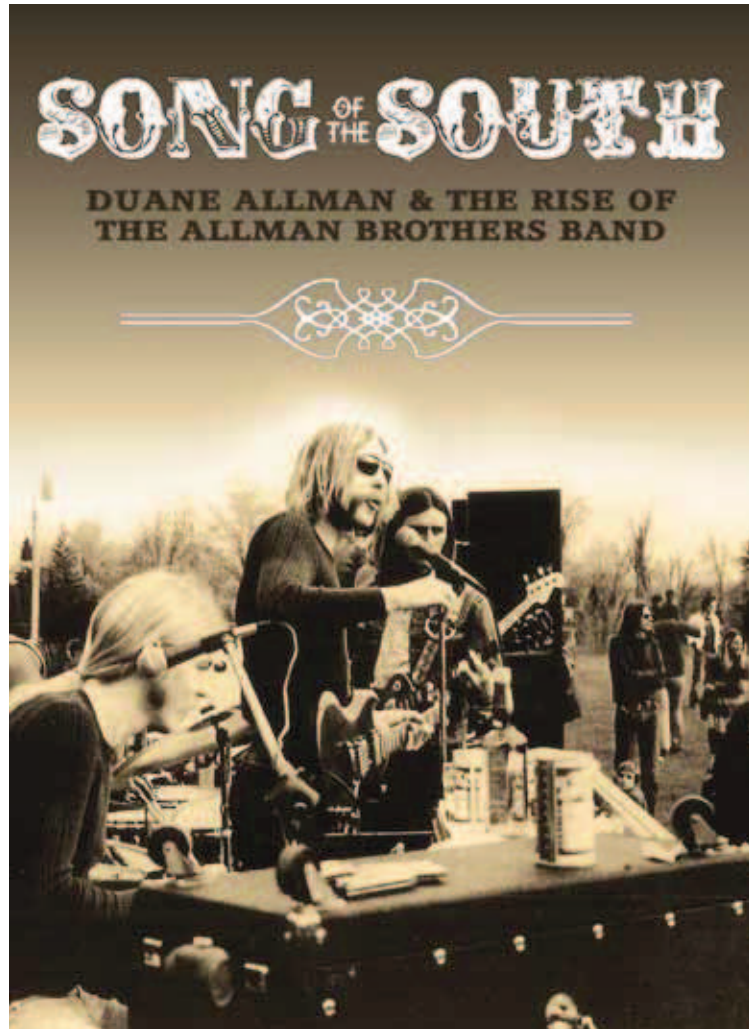
131 minutes. www.ChromeDreams.co.uk MVD Video DVD

This fine documentary depicts the career of guitar-great Duane Allman, Duane's career was short but there's an abundance of historic segments discussed by those who knew Allman's power. Budd Scoppa, David Hood, Jimmy Johnson, Paul Hornsby, Randy Poe, Robert Christgau, William Perkins and others opine about one of the greatest guitarists of all time.

Starting with bands like The Escorts, the Allman Joys, onto the Hour Glass's excursion to Los Angeles during the summer of love, and their eventual signing to Liberty Records. They opened for bands like The Doors, The Grateful Dead, The Animals, The Buffalo Springfield, Moby Grape and more. But in the studio the Hour Glass was produced by Dallas Smith who wasn't a good fit for the band. Their first album didn't gain any traction, during the recording of their second LP Duane left the band but later returned, yet that album also didn't sell. Their final effort was recorded at Muscle Shoals and included more blues, but after another venture to L.A. the Hour Glass disbanded. Not long after Duane returned to Muscle Shoals' legendary Fame Studios as a session player, his first session was with Wilson Pickett and suggested "Hey Jude" to be covered, it was a rousing success, and his guitar solo caught the ear of Phil Walden who signed Duane to a recording contract. Atlantic Records Jerry Wexler also heard Duane and subsequently purchased Duane's contract. But the session world was not comfortable for Duane, he didn't sing well, and his solo album was halted. On a recorded interview Duane states he became sick of being a session guitarist, and specifically talks about wanting to form a band. Yet his session work taught him how to arrange and

also bolstered his abilities to be savvy in the studio.

After a three hour recording session with the original Allman Brothers Band (with Reese Wynans on B3) the ABB was born, even though Wynans dropped out. Wexler had doubts about Duane's new band, so Walden recorded them for Capricorn Records and allowed them artistic freedom. Duane's vision was finally fulfilled and the rest is history. During another interview Duane discusses his affinity for jazz music and talks about Miles Davis and John Coltrane. There are also discussions about the Brothers "Dreams" with analogies of Duane's solo being similar to Coltrane's openness. Also mentioned is Bill Graham's support that established the ABB's foothold at the Fillmore East and the Northeast, and Tom Dowd's production work on their second album "Idlewild South." That session also led to Duane's monumental contributions on Derek & the Dominos "Layla" album (that Dowd also produced,) and we learn how Clapton and Allman became instantly connected. So much so Duane missed several ABB live gigs. In another Duane interview he also speaks lofty praises about his new found peer Clapton. There's also chat about how Duane suggested lifting an Albert King lick from "As the Years Go Passing By" and used it on the intro of the classic "Layla" track. Afterwards the ABB's popularity soared and they started to tour heavily (three-hundred live dates that year.) But their use of serious drugs including the dreaded heroin also became troublesome. Duane almost overdosed and nearly died, the entire band had an addiction problem, and the band took time off to enter rehab. Even with these afflictions their performances didn't suffer.



Their first two studio recordings weren't commercial successes, but the double LP "Live at the Fillmore East" finally put them on the map. They followed with "Eat a

Peach" which almost wasn't finished as when the album was being worked on - Duane died in a horrific motorcycle crash at just twenty-four years of age. Fortunately there

were enough Duane content and "Eat a Peach" was completed. Duane's closest friend bassist Berry Oakley also died one year later in a similar motorcycle accident about one mile from where Duane crashed. Yet the band continued on, though they've gone through many musician changes - the ABB famously continues onward to this very day.

Even though I thought I was fairly knowledgeable about Duane Allman, there's a lot I learned from this DVD. For example: I didn't recall that the only song Duane wrote was the short acoustic "Little Martha," the tune that hauntingly closed "Eat a Peach." In summary: The interviews are often informative and insightful, the Dolby sound is quite good too, but the "extras" are mostly filler. Long story short: I thoroughly enjoyed "Song of the South" and suspect you will too. Last but not least: Do not dismiss this DVD as being just for rabid Duane Allman/ABB fanatics. It's a document about American music history from the seventies that should be learned from and enjoyed by any and all music enthusiasts. Note: Thanks to WG reader Rob who alerted me about this DVD, without his prodding I might not have found this wonderful documentary. Thanks Rob!

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