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Book Review: Diary of a Rock and Roll Tour Manager: 2,190 Days and Nights with the South's Premier Rock Band

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Diary of a Rock and Roll Tour Manager: 2,190 Days and Nights with the South's Premier Rock Band by Willie Perkins (Mercer University Press, 2022: ISBN 9780881468465, \$25.00)

This is not a book about music or musicians. It is an entertaining narrative about the music business, detailing the meteoric rise and triumphant career of the Allman Brothers Band as a commercial enterprise. It starts in 1970, when author Willie Perkins is hired as tour manager, and continues through the last tour date played by the band before its breakup in 1976. Perkins was a witness to music history as the young, unknown band grew from \$500 club dates to million-dollar months earned at outdoor stadium shows in the mid-1970s. The Allman Brothers Band followed an often grueling schedule of touring and performing as put together by their personal manager and booking agents and, due to Perkins' hard work and dedication, "never missed a show except for rare, severe cases of illness and they never, ever failed to get paid in full."

Being a tour manager is a herculean task of coordinating the massive logistical challenges involved in transportation, housing, and computation and collection of all monies, dues, and expenses incurred by the band and crew while on tour (plus many more responsibilities, as described in the book), and Perkins tells this straightforward account without extra embellishment or fabrication. This book chronicles a time of "no laptops, internet, or cell phones...dependent on public and motel phones, [the manager's briefcase and brain]." Perkins recalls many promoters and their legendary venues, along

with a comprehensive account of the many performers and bands that he encountered along the way.

The writing is in the style of a diary, with concert dates presented chronologically throughout, including many details such as venues, ticket prices, contracts, and calculations of concert earnings and overages—all accounted to the penny. The book includes many pictures of tour memorabilia, including posters, tickets, contracts, receipts, and more of the paperwork documenting the band's evolution. The Allman Brothers Band progressed from an equal partnership to a corporation of shareholders and salaried employees, with a pension and profit sharing plan for all.

This book offers an excellent first-person account of the business of music and would be a worthwhile addition to an academic collection that

supports degree programs in music business and management. For anyone seeking a more complete picture of the Allman Brothers Band as a musical experience, this work would make a good companion piece to Perkins' earlier work *No Saints, No Saviors: My Years with The Allman Brothers Band* (2005, also Mercer University Press).

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