



Blue Monday: Fats Domino and the Lost Dawn of Rock 'n' Roll

By Rick Coleman

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While many think of Elvis Presley as rock 'n' roll's driving force, the truth is that Fats Domino, whose records have sold more than 100 million copies, was the first to put it on the map with such hits as “Ain't That a Shame” and “Blueberry Hill.” In *Blue Monday*, acclaimed R&B scholar Rick Coleman draws on a multitude of new interviews with Fats Domino and many other early musical legends to create a definitive biography of not just an extraordinary man but also a unique time and place: New Orleans at the birth of rock 'n' roll. Coleman's groundbreaking research makes for an immense cultural biography, and is the first to convey the full scope of Fats Domino's impact on the popular music of the twentieth century.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

"When people get started dancing and having a good time, they don't care what color you are," reflected Herbert Hardesty, one of Antoine "Fats" Domino's band members, on the ability of Domino's music to break through the color barrier in postwar America. It is a recurring theme in Coleman's biography, as are, not surprisingly, segregation and mainstream society's reception to rock 'n' roll, particularly songs by African Americans. Based on interviews and years of research, Coleman's book is well-written and full of lively details about life on the road, recording sessions and how things worked in Domino's inner circle. After making quick work of Domino's grandparents and childhood, Coleman begins a chronological journey through Domino's life, peppering his narrative with important events in music and the civil rights movement. Although Coleman touches lightly on some of Domino's irresponsible behavior-his drinking, womanizing and ambivalence to certain times set the mold by which later rock stars would be cast-the book borders on hagiography. Also, Coleman's suggestions that the earliest African-American performers of rock 'n' roll are largely forgotten and that there still persists a myth that it all began with Elvis are outmoded at best. However, Coleman's book succeeds as a warm tribute to an American music icon.
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From [Booklist](#)

Coleman launches the first book-length biography of a New Orleans legend by contending that Fats Domino's 1949 "thunderous rocker," "The Fat Man," has a more legitimate claim than Elvis Presley's "That's All Right" to being the first rock 'n' roll song. He argues that Domino's seminal role in rock history is underappreciated, and it's genuinely easy to agree with him. Coleman intertwines Domino's biography and the story of an American society changing in the 1940s and 1950s so that race and pop music often merged. Domino became a reliable hit maker on the mainstream charts and a smiling TV presence, which was then still odd for an African American. Fats' indomitable spirit pervades the book, even in discussions of his gambling problems, inspiring the story of an excellent musician who provided a link between such older Crescent City R&B giants as Professor Longhair and young rockers like Ernie K-Doe. Fats Domino's story is central to rock history, making this a must for the pop music shelves. *Mike Tribby*
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Review

"A fine biography...A first-rate rock'n'roll critic...A well-written, deeply researched biography." -- *Boston Sunday Globe*, 8/27/06

"A readable, long overdue bio...Needs to be read by anybody who truly cares about the origins of rock'n'roll." -- *Relix*, October 2006

"Coleman nicely summons the glorious heyday of New Orleans." -- *Washington Post Book World*, 7/2/06

"Coleman's meticulously researched biography...is a highly engrossing portrait...After reading *Blue Monday* you'll feel like [Domino's] an old friend." -- *American Songwriter*, October 2006

"Coleman's lively writing style...helps bring the period to life...A love letter to the New Orleans music scene." -- *Associated Press*, 6/16/06

"Domino at last gets his due...A well-rounded portrait of the artist...An exemplary biography." -- *No Depression*, October 2006

"Undoubtedly [Coleman's] finest achievement. He's marshaled his resources well and closely documented his hero's life...A compulsive read." -- *Blues & Rhythm*, August 2006

"[An] excellent biography...Thanks to Coleman, Fats Domino may finally get his props." -- *Ottawa Citizen*, 11/12/2006

"[The] definitive biography...There is a wealth of recording detail here...[A] vivid account." -- *Rolling Stone*, 6/15/06

"Coleman has put together an impressive work that is long overdue." -- *Jazz & Blues Report*, August 2006

Users Review

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Henrietta Jimerson:

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