

Starr-Waterman

American Popular Music

Chapter 11: The 1970s: Rock Music, Disco, and the Popular Mainstream

Key People

**Allman Brothers Band:** Most important southern rock band of the late 1960s and early 1970s who reconnected the generative power of the blues to the mainstream of rock music.

**Barry White** (1944–2004): Multitalented African American singer, songwriter, arranger, conductor, and producer who achieved success as an artist in the 1970s with his Love Unlimited Orchestra; perhaps best known for his full, deep voice.

**Carlos Santana** (b. 1947): Mexican-born rock guitarist who combined rock, jazz, and Afro-Latin elements on influential albums like *Abraxas*.

**Carole King** (b. 1942): Singer-songwriter who recorded influential songs in New York's Brill Building and later recorded the influential album *Tapestry* in 1971.

**Charlie Rich** (b. 1932): Country performer known as the "Silver Fox" who won the Country Music Association's Entertainer of the Year award in 1974 for his song "The Most Beautiful Girl."

**Chic:** Disco group who recorded the hit "Good Times."

**Chicago:** Most long-lived and popular jazz rock band of the 1970s, known today for anthemic love songs such as "If You Leave Me Now" (1976), "Hard to Say I'm Sorry" (1982), and "Look Away" (1988).

**David Bowie** (1947–2016): Glam rock pioneer who recorded the influential album *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars* in 1972.

**Dolly Parton** (b. 1946): Country music star whose flexible soprano voice, songwriting ability, and carefully crafted image as a cheerful sex symbol combined to gain her a loyal following among country fans.

**Donna Summer** (1948–2012): Recording artist known as the "Queen of Disco" who recorded dance-oriented hits like "Bad Girls" and "Love to Love You Baby."

**The Eagles:** Influential American band who epitomized the culture of southern California and recorded influential songs like "Hotel California" (1976).

**Elton John** (b. 1947): British pop rock singer, songwriter, and pianist whose lengthy and influential music career includes writing and recording songs like "Crocodile Rock" (1972).

**Glen Campbell** (b. 1936): “Country pop” music star of the late 1960s and 1970s whose genial, laid-back style helped to expand his national popularity.

**John Denver** (1943–1997): Country crossover artist who won the Country Music Association’s Entertainer of the Year Award in 1975 and recorded songs like “Thank God I’m a Country Boy.”

**Joni Mitchell** (b. 1943): Singer-songwriter whose music includes the influential, introspective concept album *Blue* (1971).

**Marvin Gaye** (1939–1984): Motown recording artist who recorded the theme album *What’s Going On* (1971) about social justice.

**Merle Haggard** (b. 1937): Country music artist associated with the “Bakersfield Sound,” a self-conscious attempt to turn country music back to its honky-tonk roots in the 1970s.

**Miles Davis** (1926–1991): Began his career in the late 1940s playing trumpet with modern jazz pioneers such as Charlie Parker and for much of the 1950s and 1960s played a critical role in the evolution of jazz; in 1970 released an album that was a fusion between jazz and rock, *Bitches Brew*.

**Olivia Newton-John** (b. 1948): British-born Australian pop vocalist who had a lot of success recording country music in the 1970s and later recorded in other musical genres.

**Stevie Wonder** (b. 1950): Highly successful singer and songwriter who recorded for Motown records and borrowed from different aspects of African American musical traditions in hits like “Superstition” (1972).