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Cool Town: How Athens, Georgia, Launched Alternative Music and Changed American Culture

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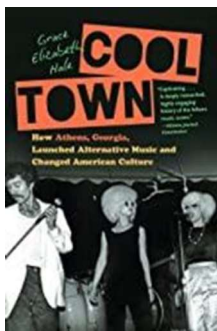
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suggested software both free and proprietary, and portfolio examples linked to assessment goals discussed in the book's second chapter. The book's uniform layout and design make it particularly easy to use as a reference and readers can find pertinent information related to possible assessment projects that may be on the to-do list. Highly recommended, this is a valuable tool for planning and implementing projects related to assessment that libraries rely heavily on as they work toward demonstrating meaningful value within communities.

Austina M. Jordan, The University of North Georgia

Cool Town: How Athens, Georgia, Launched Alternative Music and Changed American Culture



Grace Elizabeth Hale
Chapel Hill: The University of
North Carolina Press, 2020
ISBN: 9781469664057
384 p. \$20.00 (Pbk)

How could Athens, Georgia, a small sleepy college town, become an alternative music scene and change parts of American culture? The standard answer is the low cost of living, isolation, and the presence of the University of Georgia (UGA). *Cool Town*, however, provides a somewhat different and more complete answer. Historian, musician, and one time resident of Athens, Georgia, Grace Elizabeth Hale, chronicles the birth of the B52s, as well as other groups including Pylon, Love Tractor, REM, and other bands that were all a part of the Athens scene in the 1980s. One of Athens' locals, Jeremy Ayers, provided a New York connection as he had been the model/actress Silva Thin for Andy Warhol. Ayers used his connections to introduce some of the Athens bands to New York club managers which garnered them bookings in New York's underground clubs. So, as is often the case, who you know matters. As importantly, Hale claims that the UGA Arts department provided the fertile ground that gave rise to the Athens music scene. Students enrolled in arts classes, who believed

that almost anything was possible, quite literally banded together to form music groups. They had the optimism and courage of youth even though some could not even play instruments when they first became bands. By way of an example, the B52s learned in the classroom that anyone could be an artist if one tried. In Athens, alternative art-making grew out of a perfect mix of confidence and naiveté, intelligence, and ignorance. "In the late 1980s, then maybe passion, vision, and a willingness to work trumped professionalism, expertise, and even experience in other areas of life" (p. 235).

That Athens became a "cool town" is somewhat surprising given that many of the early bands were not really seeking success and only wanted to pay the rent; however, REM was different. They wanted success, toured college towns, and labored to gain a fan base. They morphed from a "bar band" into a college radio favorite. By the time they got a New York gig, they were ready for it. They worked hard to get a contract and were offered a couple before eventually signing with Warner Brothers for a reported \$6-12 million deal.

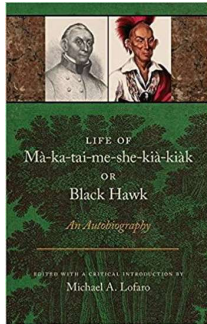
However, the music in Athens was not about cashing in. The bohemian bands created an alternative nature that was a friendly space for feminists, queers, racial minorities, and others that did not dance to the beat of the dominant Southern culture. The second half of the eighties scene saw participants become involved in political activism as well as efforts turned toward the preservation of older buildings of the downtown Athens area. The gentrification movement was slow to come to Athens, but it did come, and people started to buy the older homes and storefronts in Athens and rehabilitate them. Even the University of Georgia changed with a new university administration pushing the school toward research, which transformed UGA into a more serious academic institution. All these changes served to erode the coolness of the town.

Grace Elizabeth Hale is an award-winning historian and writer who teaches at the University of Virginia. Her chronicle of this period in Athens history will be of interest to anyone who loved the music of the dozens of bands that made the town cool. Public libraries would benefit from this addition to their regional collections as well as aca-

demic libraries for the documentation of musicology of the time period.

Chris Andrews, University of North Georgia

Life of Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kiak, or Black Hawk: An Autobiography



Michael A. Lofaro, ed.
Knoxville: University of
Tennessee Press, 2021
ISBN: 9781621906360
\$25.00 (Pbk)

Life of Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kiak, or Black Hawk: An Autobiography, edited with a critical introduction and essay by Michael A. Lofaro, 2021, contains a Chronology of Black Hawk's life, which is fascinating and overwhelming to a reader whose scholarly knowledge of the Sauk tribe is little to none. However, the attraction to any reader is the promise of an autobiography by a Native American who lived between 1767 and 1838.

Michael Lofaro's chronology of Black Hawk's life and times (I-xxxiii-xliii) helps a novice of Native American studies to place Black Hawk within the life and times of early American History. Lofaro begins with Black Hawk's birth in 1767, in Saukenuk on Rock River, and ends in October 3, 1838 at his home on the Des Moines River.

Lofaro details "the life of a warrior who in 1822 held the distinction of attacking a band of one hundred Osages with seven men, kills a man and retreats without loss, and is allowed to participate in the first scalp dance" (p. xxxiii). With great leadership skills, "Black Hawk was able to assemble five hundred Sauks, Foxes and one hundred Ioways for a battle to exterminate Osages" (p. xxxiii). The author further documents the timeline of Black Hawk's life and places it within the historical context of the early 1800s and the political and historical context of politics and native life. Between January 18th and 23rd of 1801, in Battles of Frenchtown, Michigan, Indian fighters, including Black Hawk, surround and kill or capture four hundred Americans. Lofaro's chronology of Black Hawk's life also shows a later period when he focused upon his native people and attempted to find peace with the Americans who fought with

them.

Black Hawk's dictated autobiography, *Life of Blackhawk*, begins on page 7 and ends on page 78. It is the jewel of this text since it is Black Hawk's own words which begin "I was born in the Sac Village, on Rock River, in the year 1767, and am now in my 67th year. My great grandfather, Nana-ma-kee, or Thunder...was born in the vicinity of Montreal, where the Great Spirit first placed the Sac Nation and inspired him with a belief that, at the end of four years he should see a white man who would be to him a father..." (p. 7).

The last line of the dictation wraps up Black Hawk's narrative, "I am now done. A few more moons, and I must follow my fathers to the shades! May the Great Spirit keep our people and the whites always at peace—is the sincere wish of all. Black Hawk" (p. 78).

Additional unique pages of illustrations, portraits, maps, and landscapes are inserted after page 78. Recommended to all who may research and study Native American lives and cultures, particularly during the years of 1767 through the late 1880s, and for academic libraries and Native American historical collections.

Carol Walker Jordan, Ph.D., MLIS

Spreadsheets for Librarians: Getting Results with Excel and Google Sheets

Bruce White
Santa Barbara: Libraries
Unlimited, 2021
ISBN: 9781440869310
305 p. \$50.00 (Pbk)



With respect to S.R. Ranganathan's first law of library science, "books are for use," White explains in his preface that the goal of this book is to be used and useful to all librarians. It is clear that this author is an information professional who knows spreadsheets, and finds they are a source of passion. It is a challenging feat to take a concept as jargon-heavy as spreadsheets and explain it through informal, accessible language. By avoiding too much internal professional phrasing and software-specific terminology, and keeping the overall tone of the book both welcom-