of a brighter European future or do they more closely resemble the flowering of avant-garde art between the wars that was snuffed out by fascism?

Further, the very idea of constructing a ‘tradition’ with any of the arts is fraught with difficulty. Such attempts often resort to canonical approaches based upon certain key figures and recordings and frequently exclude from and include within the canon using criteria that are themselves contestable. The most serious example of this in jazz arose with the 1990s debates triggered by Wynton Marsalis and his mentors, writers Albert Murray and Stanley Crouch, who sought to impose a very rigid definition of tradition that diminished the roles played by white musicians and rejected developments such as free jazz and jazz-rock. The pernicious effect of this can, I suggest, be seen in the responses of various interviewees referenced in *Jazz in Europe*, who one suspects are reacting to that debate (see for example pp. 26, 121–9). Indeed, one interviewee suggests that European jazz might define itself less by ‘swing’ and ‘blue notes’ – blues, swing and blue notes being key signifiers for the MMC troika – while another refers to a number of key European jazz figures, as if proposing an alternative canon (p. 123).

Despite references to the ‘American jazz tradition’ and, even more problematically the ‘European jazz tradition’, nowhere in *Jazz in Europe* is defined. The possibility that it might be possible to describe a distinctive jazz tradition in ways that are reasonably open, non-canonical, dynamic and yet respectful of the music’s rich African-American and African origins seems to escape these young musicians.

The need to move beyond the notion of jazz as genre, replacing this with a more functional understanding of jazz as a set of musical practices, could not be more apparent. Such an approach allows for a much more radical, indeed politicised jazz tradition that restores to jazz certain elements such as its connection to African-American gospel, dance and (secular) spirituality, while leaving space to include how jazz, as a folk-based music, has been taken up across the world and brought together with local musical influences to create a plethora of ways of making jazz. Sadly, I find little evidence of such a conception in *Jazz in Europe*.

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Recent years have seen the notion of the Music City gaining prominence in a number of circles including via consultancies such as Sound Diplomacy (www.
sounddiplomacy.com) and the UNESCO Cites of Music Network (https://citiesofmusic.net/). The term has also been used within academia and is due for serious academic analysis. So this is a timely book. Unfortunately, it is not a good one, but a seriously bad one.

Located firmly within journalism studies and using a ‘a journalism lens’ (pp. 3 and 21 etc.), Andrea Baker seeks to expose the shortcomings of previous accounts of the Music City. However, what the book actually exposes is some serious shortcomings in academic work and publishing. It begins with the following sentence: ‘Today music cities, with its popular economy focus, is one of the world’s fastest growing urban spaces’ (p. 3). So, a plural noun is followed by a singular possessive noun. This is either a failure to capitalise or a failure to write properly. In any case, it does not get the book off to a good start. It is also said on the same page that the book ‘explores the tensions and contradiction between a music city’s natural and built environment and the contradiction between the ways in which a music city fosters attachment, and the ways in which it facilitates, disenfranchises or encourages music activity’ (p. 3). I have no idea what is meant here.

The book falls in to six parts: Introduction (two chapters), Hierarchies of Power and Influence (three chapters), Life (three chapters), Death (three chapters), Rejuvenation (three chapters) and Conclusion (one chapter). Melbourne, Austin and Berlin are used as ‘a purposive case study’ (p. 22), a choice justified on the basis that they have the ‘highest financial impact and number of music venues per capita in their countries’ (p. 22), have used music to brand themselves and hold annual music weeks. However the justification is undermined later in the book when Baker says that the evidence suggests that Adelaide actually has a higher ratio of venues to people than Melbourne (p. 306). Meanwhile, the first cities to actually be discussed are not those of the ‘purposive case study’, but London, New York and Los Angeles as they have, apparently, ‘provided the dominant players tied to a superstar music city discourse’ (p. 53), something which is backed up by interviews from nine people based in Berlin. These ‘superstar music cities’ are obviously important as they stand out in a context where, according to Baker: ‘There are about two and a half million cities across the globe’ (p. 54). Really? This number is somewhat in excess of the 4,037 cities cited elsewhere as having had a population of over 100,000 in 2015 (https://brilliantmaps.com/4037-100000-person-cities/).

Overall, Baker suggests that: ‘An analysis of London, New York and Los Angeles reinforces that the global music culture is associated with “hybridity” of traditional and digital routes, linked to a “mobile travelling culture”’ (p. 55). However, the means by which she makes comparisons is largely via interviews with people living elsewhere. Thus her evidence for the importance of London is drawn from interviews with people from Berlin (eight), Melbourne and Toronto (one each). She also claims that ‘London is home to the fourth largest record label … EMI’ (p. 64). Alas this was only true until its demise in 2012, seven years before the publication of this book, something which Baker herself notes elsewhere (p. 73).

The introduction to Chapter 5 – on New York and Los Angeles – says that it ‘highlights solutions’ to these cities’ problems (p. 87), but it does not do this, limiting its analysis to noting the appointment of a Night Mayor on New York. Baker claims that New York’s ‘relationship with multicultural music goes back hundreds of years with the opening of the Metropolitan Opera House in 1883’ (p. 93), thus equating 126 years with being ‘hundreds’.
Chapter 6 deals with Melbourne, showing its development in five eras from 1835 to the 1980s ‘when the scene became incorporated and moved to Sydney’ (p. 127). Chapter 7, on Austin, claims to examine its ‘musical life… and its social dynamics of urban ecology’ (p. 133) with analysis based on ‘journalism studies, social history, musicology and political economy’ (ibid.). The story runs from the 1800s to 2002, when the city proclaimed itself as the Live Music Capital of the World. A subheading on ‘Stage 3’ is followed by a line which begins: ‘The second stage …’ (p. 139). Richard Florida’s *Creative Class* is said to have a 3T’s Index of ‘talent, technology and tolerance’, but Baker then immediately describes technology as ‘Florida’s first T’ (p. 147).

Berlin from the 1700s to 1990s is the subject of Chapter 8, which includes interviews with 14 Berliners and two Melbournians. The chapter is said to offer ‘a much needed consolidation of the music scene’ (p. 153), although the extent to which this is achieved remains opaque. Similarly while it is said to include ‘participant observation’ (p. 153), the extent of the author’s actual participation is not clear. The chapter contains the following analysis: ‘Hitler was seen as the archetypal rock star whose propagandist speeches about Aryan supremacy in public place (sic) and on the radio swayed Germans to vote for the Nazi party’ (p. 157). The building of the Berlin Wall is said to ‘have greater impact on Berlin’s urban sociability’ (p. 158), but again what is actually meant by this is unclear. On page 160 the term ‘Kraftwerk’ is equated with Kraut Rock, although the latter is not named. In general the chapter tells stories, but rarely analyses, with the conclusion reading more like a repeated introduction.

The stories of each of the cities are brought up to date in Part 4, Death and Part 5, Rejuvenation. Melbourne’s recent history is outlined in Chapter 9, which has sections dealing with its north and south, its population growth and its global significance. This chapter at least provides critical insight via highlighting the inadequacies of some of Richard Florida’s and showing some of the tensions within Melbourne.

Chapter 10 deals with Austin from 1992 to the present. This speaks of ‘the gig competition for gigs in Austin’ (p. 198), by which is seemingly meant an oversupply of musicians for live work. One interviewee bemoans the fact that Austin musicians have to tour to make a living, seemingly overlooking the fact that ‘escaping (if only temporarily) the local has long been a measure of success for musicians.

The reunified Berlin is the subject of Chapter 11, which draws on a three-stage analysis built around interviews with 13 Berliners and four Melbournians. (Why some cities are reviewed internally and some only externally is not clear.) The chapter reports impressions, but adds little concrete analysis. It also claims that: ‘In 2017 Berlin’s scene economy was valued at $US82 million a year’ (Sisson, 2016, p. 1) (p. 220, emphasis mine). So, the value for 2017 was published in 2016? Really? In fact that value does not appear in Sisson’s article.

Chapter 12 returns us to Melbourne, discussing its recent claims to be the live music capital of Australia and possibly the world, the latter of which Baker disputes on one page (p. 247) and accepts on another (p. 261). The chapter includes an allegation from an interviewee that ‘Mushroom marketing gets every government music contract’ (p. 244). In addition: ‘The City of Melbourne has undertaken three steps to enhance its plight to be recognized as a seminal music city’ (p. 249) – having Melbourne Music Weeks, designing a strategy and exploiting its musical heritage.
Austin is returned to again in Chapter 13 and is also discussed in terms of being the live music capital of the world. This is one of the book’s better chapters, discussing aspects such as advocacy, rising property prices, heritage, twinning and the impact of the South By South West convention.

The rejuvenation of Berlin is discussed in Chapter 14 and is partly linked to various government initiatives, although how Baker’s claims that Berlin is ‘certainly the most talked about’ city in Europe (p. 293) could be verified is hard to see. Baker suggests that she accepts Richard Florida’s (paraphrased) view that ‘there is a correlation between bohemian culture and economic growth’ (p. 295) remains unproven here.

The concluding chapter is entitled: ‘Emergent Music Cities Discipline’, but it is not clear that such a thing exists, especially as Baker herself immediately talks of ‘the emergent music cities paradigm’ (p. 301). The chapter examines Political Economy and the Superstar Music City Discourse (again something I’m not sure actually exists), the impact of UNESCO City of Music status, branding and what is missing in current debates. Here she accuses Richard Florida of being ‘Fond of quoting communist scholar Karl Marx’ (p. 308). The book ends with this sentence:

As urbanization accelerates in the twenty first century, those who pursue the study of music cities will continue to look for language to legitimize its affective value to enhance its sustainability. (p. 310)

As with the beginning of the book, I have no idea what this actually means.

A key notion for the book is ‘urban sociability’, which is ‘mainly reported upon by journalists (and) mainly emphasises the social, cultural and emotional civic value of nurturing communities’ (p. 3) and is ‘the social, cultural and emotional configuration . . . that made (sic) music cities possible’ (p. 25). Drawing on Mumford, this is said to entail a five-point typology consisting of the life of a city, density, cultural health, social complexity and a city being hailed as a metropolitan hub (pp. 38–9). Yet it is never clear what this actually entails. For example, how could one chart the changing urban sociability of the case study cities? The desire to move on from what Baker sees as the dominant way of analysing music cities – political economy – is understandable, but urban sociability does not seem to be up to the task of being its replacement. Meanwhile Baker’s discussion of scenes, which forms part of her historical account of the development of music cities, neglects to mention Will Straw’s classic formulation.

She also uses a notion of four algorithms – Economics, 4 TS Creative Index, Heritage and Music Cities Definition – in order to ‘assess the value of music in urban sociability’ (p. 15). Yet again it is not clear what this actually means, something which is exacerbated by poor writing and/or editing. For example:

The ‘music cities paradigm’ . . . explores (sic) in this book built on Florida’s creative cities thesis, but moves beyond this mythologizing to empirically examine how music cities, as place-specific cultural outputs, contribute to local and global identities, as well as the cultural economy. (p. 17)

The methodology is said to be ‘mixed methods’ (p. 24), including textual analysis of journalistic coverage, interviews, official publications and interviews (p. 24). The book itself is said to be important as ‘no available book or music . . . examines the
machinations of a music city’ (p. 26), but perhaps this is not music’s job. I’m not sure that I want songs which critique the notion of a music city.

The book is poorly edited, with missing words and typos being obvious in several cases. It is also full of factual inaccuracies, poor writing, bad argument, misrepresentations and non-sequiturs. Overall a proper editing process would never have allowed it to be published and here the Series Editors, as well as the publishers, share some responsibility with the author. Amongst the numerous errors are the following: the UK’s current Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, is referred to as Johnston throughout. Essex boys Blur are said to have come from Manchester (p. 74) and Rammstein, who formed in 1994, are said to be post punk (p. 163). Readers are told that in a previous account Allan Watson ‘did not define what a music city was’, but a few lines later they are referred to ‘Watson’s... academic definition of “global music city”’ (p. 8). Readers are also informed that ‘The early days of music studies were dominated by easily defined genres such as classical, followed by jazz and then rock’ (p. 9), which is certainly news to me. However, the highlight of inaccuracy comes when Baker claims that at the South By South West event in 2014 the rapper Tyler The Creator drove while drunk and ‘killed 4 SXSW attendees and injured 20 others’ (p. 206), resulting in his imprisonment. In fact the culprit was not Tyler, but one Rashad Owens, a fact which Baker could have checked by looking at the source from which she takes the story. However, perhaps this is what is meant by having ‘a journalism lens’?

I ironically (or not) for a study which is keen to parade its journalistic credentials, the writing style is often poor and includes a number of irritating stylistic flaws. For example, in a seeming effort to provide credibility, readers are constantly told who sources are. Time and again people are introduced by their title, in a manner that is both name-droppy and irritating via its sheer repetitiveness. So readers are told that, David Byrne is ‘singer and songwriter of Taking Heads’ (p. 94), ‘from the band Talking Heads’ (p. 98) and ‘lead singer of Talking Heads’ (p. 123). Eddie Wilson is referred to as the owner of Austin venue Threadgills World Headquarters twice within four lines (p. 211). Liz Shaw is referred to as an ‘urban studies scholar’ twice within the space of three pages (pp. 225 and 2270), ‘Franke from Capital and Music’ appears as a phrase on successive pages (pp. 230 and 231), as does ‘Potkya from VUT’ (pp. 232 and 233), while ‘Ellinghaus from City Slang’ appears on pages 230, 233, 234 and 235. There are probably more examples that could be found if the book had a decent (or even consistent) index.

The point is not simply that the reader does not need constant reminders of who people are, but that all the missing words and quotation marks, the inconsistent use of tenses and numerous examples of non-sequiturs combine to make the book extremely hard to read and make sense of. At other times the book is simply shoddy. Thus, for example, hippie is spelt differently within the same line (p. 212). Baker also cites an author (who is actually a speaker) as being Frau Hertelin (p. 157) and lists her as Hertelin, F in the bibliography (p. 173) when Frau is her title and her first name is actually Jutta. Is this the sort of example we should set for our students? Is it par for the course within journalism studies?

We also get the following example of poor grammar: ‘Discussions about music cities is’ (p. 21), ‘London, New York and Los Angeles holds’ (p. 55), ‘Banerjee et al. ... notes’ (p. 94), ‘Homan et al. ... notes’ (p. 179), ‘Homan et al. ... says’ (p. 243). Numerous other examples could have been cited, but I trust that readers get the flavour of things. Either this is poorly written or poorly edited. The index is also a mess,
with some key people referenced and others not and the same applying to acts. The references at the end of each chapter are also inaccurate in many places (such as UK Music former CEO Jo Dipple being listed as the author of its annual Measuring Music reports). On page 67 an article is listed as Author Unknown, but a quick google will reveal the name. I have also never previously seen an academic refer to themselves as the author of an interview which they have conducted, as the convention is that the interviewee gets the credit. Not here.

Overall the use of a ‘journalism lens’ does not seem to incorporate a commitment to good writing, fact checking and proof reading. All of this is a real pity as the question of Music Cities is certainly one which is overdue some critical examination. Baker is certainly on to something and in places provides some food for thought. However, the occasions on which this occurs are far outweighed by those on which description is to the fore and factual errors undermine any argument.

As I conclude I am a highly aware that this is a very critical review, but that it is because all this matters. Good research matters, factual accuracy matters, methodology matters and the example we set to our students really matters. We live in an era of fake news and need to be ever sensitive to maintaining standards. Unfortunately this is an ill thought through, poorly edited and ultimately superfluous book which does nothing to forward the cause of using ‘a journalism lens’ (p. 3) to examine popular music. I learned almost nothing new about the Music City and much more about the depths to which academic publishing has sunk. If a journalism lens can enlighten the study of popular music, then it is to be welcomed. But it would need to do a much better job than is done here. Meanwhile the task of writing a good book about the Music City remains. This isn’t it. Avoid.

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In a sense, there is something quite remarkable about the publication of a scholarly anthology devoted to the music of a small island nation with the miniscule population of 350,000 people. In another sense, the appearance of such an anthology in 2019 is not at all surprising. Ever since the international breakthrough of the Sugarcubes and Björk in the late 1980s, musical ears have been pointed northwards. During the 2000s, the post-rock band Sigur Rós and electronica groups múm and Gus Gus spearheaded a growing export of Icelandic indie music that reached its peak in the 2010s,