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Spring 2011

Review of *Weird City: Sense of Place and Creative Resistance in Austin, Texas*. By Joshua Long

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Caldwell, Sally, "Review of *Weird City: Sense of Place and Creative Resistance in Austin, Texas*. By Joshua Long" (2011). *Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*. 1165.

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Weird City: Sense of Place and Creative Resistance in Austin, Texas. By Joshua Long. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010. viii + 207 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$50.00 cloth, \$25.00 paper.

Joshua Long makes a fine contribution to the literature on urban places with *Weird City*. It is written in a way that makes it a natural for students of urban geography and an equally solid choice for classes devoted to urban sociology, community organization, urban planning, or public history.

The book provides an in-depth look at the cultural landscape in a specific urban location. In laying out his analysis, Long introduces us to characters that run the gamut from elected officials to neighborhood personalities, as well as some famous and not-so-famous musicians. For me, the material accompanying some of the biographical sketches could have been a bit more detailed. Nonetheless, no sooner is a character introduced than you begin to see how this individual fits into the picture in a very place-specific sense.

The result is a detailed look at one of the Great Plains' more interesting urban places. Long takes the reader on a journey through a myriad of interest groups, all sharing the common characteristic of being locked in a battle over a sense of place. He gives meaning to the notion of "Keep Austin Weird," a phrase so well known in Austin that it eventually became a popular bumper sticker. For me, the standout chapter is "Aliens, Affluence, and Abnormality," which drew me in simply because it focuses on the old-timer-versus-newcomer divide that seems to have voice in so many smaller communities. What Long alerts us to is the same sort of division playing itself out in a much larger context.

The book is well documented and includes a relevant and well-written annotated glossary of terms that is, regrettably, too short.

In sum, Long has given us the sort of writing that appeals beyond the classroom. He has also given us an intimate look at a very subtle yet important aspect of urban life—a sense of urban place. **Sally Caldwell**, *Department of Sociology, Texas State University San Marcos*.