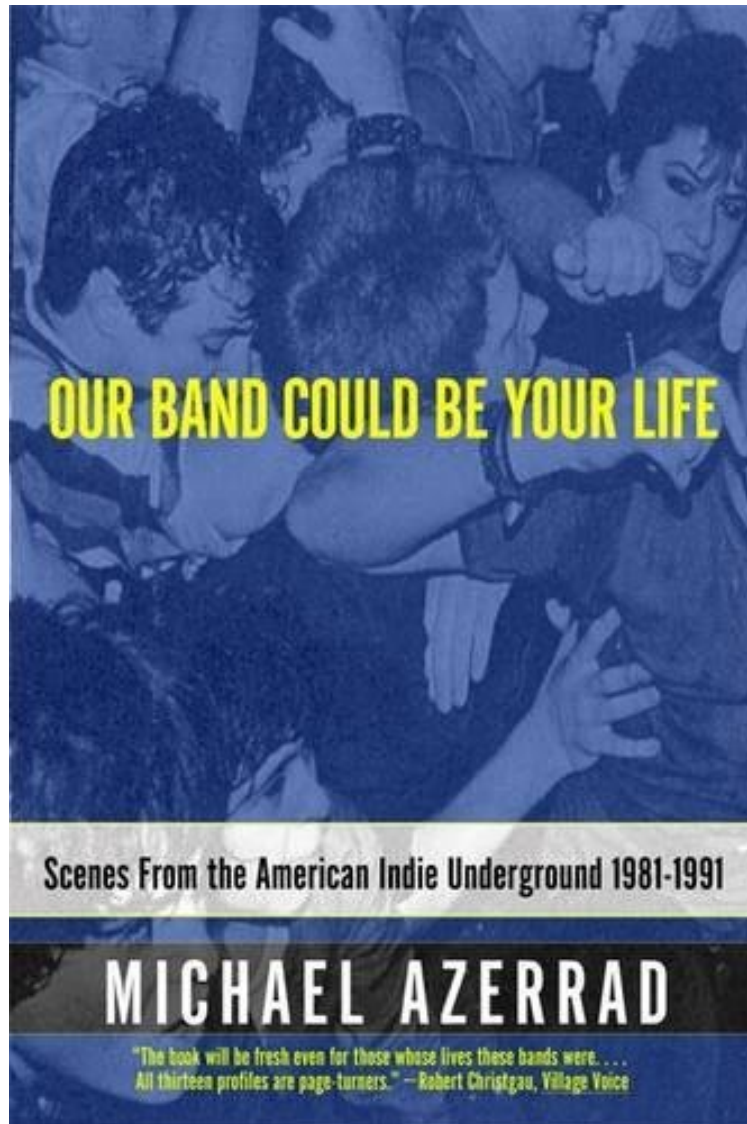


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# Our Band Could Be Your Life: Scenes from the American Indie Underground 1981-1991

*Michael Azerrad*

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**Michael Azerrad : Our Band Could Be Your Life: Scenes from the American Indie Underground 1981-1991** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Our Band Could Be Your Life: Scenes from the American Indie Underground 1981-1991:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Our Band Could Be Your Life (Bringing Underground Music Above Ground)(By NittyGritty17Our Band Could Be Your Life is a very thorough book with about 590 pages to read. If you

are of the age group of the 'Indie' records, you will identify and like reading about the known groups. If you missed the generation and always wondered what it was all about, you'll learn about what these groups went through just for getting their music heard. I was impressed with their desire to make their own songs, have a friend make the labels and distribute their records the old fashion way, locally. All this with boyhood angst, they created a new genre. I might add, there are quite a few youtubes with footage from many of their gigs, so you can listen to them. I found this most helpful whilst reading each chapter. ~1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great for beginners or veterans !By AshleyThe best thing about "Our Band Could Be Your Life" is how well it works as both an introduction to indie/punk/DIY to those who are unfamiliar with the music, and how well it will adds, reinforces, and strengthens the knowledge of those familiar with this type of music. Most of these bands are quite different from each other in terms of sound but they all share a similar story of rising from nothing to become unique and important bands in the world of independent rock music. "Our Band" is an easy and well paced read and spends enough time on each to give you a solid understanding of each band but not so much that is overwhelming or becomes too tedious. A unique portrait of an often overlooked time in Independent music !2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A very insightful look into the birth of Alternative RockBy Nicholas CarrPrior to reading this book, I wasn't extremely familiar with the majority of the bands within it. I had followed Minutemen, Sonic Youth, Big Black, and Husker Du extensively because of their popularity and acclaim within my circles of friends, but I had never known anything about Black Flag's sordid history, Beat Happening's metamorphosis from a noisy garage band to a crisp-sounding Twee band, Muhoney's exploration of studio sound and songwriting approach, or The Replacement's interest in the past and the future and how that factored into what music they played. These were the Punks after Punk, No Wave, and Post-Punk had all fizzled out and they were extremely instrumental in shaping the music industry of today and the widely accepted independent style that is utilized by all sorts of bands and artists. It's very worth buying this and learning about the history of these bands.

This is the never-before-told story of the musical revolution that happened right under the nose of the Reagan Eighties--when a small but sprawling network of bands, labels, fanzines, radio stations, and other subversives reenergized American rock with punk rock's do-it-yourself credo and created music that was deeply personal, often brilliant, always challenging, and immensely influential. This sweeping chronicle of music, politics, drugs, fear, loathing, and faith has been recognized as an indie rock classic in its own right.

From Publishers WeeklyNirvana's mega-best-selling Nevermind was credited with dramatically altering the American pop-musical landscape. Azerrad ably demonstrates that the "new" sound actually sprang from almost 15 years of innovation by hundreds of bands who remained "[b]elow the radar of the corporate behemoths." Linked under the loose rubric "indie rock," bands like Black Flag, Sonic Youth, Minor Threat and the Replacements languished in the musical minor leagues because they were too experimental for commercial radio, made unfortunate career decisions or eschewed mainstream success. Yet these bands formed the nucleus of a new youth movement. Youths who defined themselves in opposition to middle-American values found an aesthetic and a community through the music. Given the fervor for indie progeny like Nirvana and Pearl Jam, the indie scene's impact was not insignificant and rock journalist Azerrad (Come as You Are) partly aims to trace that larger cultural legacy. But this thick slice of nostalgia, replete with colorful anecdotes that demystify even deliberately mystifying artists, primarily targets die-hard supporters of seminal 1980s indie bands, underground-club scenesters and 1980s college radio buffs. Though day-in-the-life bios predominate over extensive musical or cultural analysis, this is an astute insider's account of the collective accomplishment of these various bands: strong musical and political statements by people with little clout and even less financial support that reverberated throughout youth culture. A devotee himself, Azerrad is occasionally belligerent in his support of his subjects' art and attitudes, but he also deftly captures the thrill of being young, antiestablishment and impassioned the inspiring ingredients of all these bands. Photos. (July 31) Forecast: Indie culture has lost little mystique for insiders or outsiders, and with national TV and radio interviews, this tribute may draw the MTV crowd. Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.From Library JournalMusic journalist Azerrad (Come As You Are: The Story of Nirvana) makes it clear through his tales of 13 highly influential punk and indie rock bands from Black Flag to Beat Happening that his subjects could have easily been any misshapen, angst-filled, morbidly creative teens on the planet. In painting the portrait of the volatile 1980s underground music scene, he reveals the importance of subversive-minded musicians in an industry controlled by hit-hungry executives. Azerrad, however, is careful not to glorify this era: sprinkled throughout his inspiring pictures of musical revolt are details of the poverty and drug-induced dilemmas each band faced on its path to cult icon status. Featuring original interviews with the scene's leading lights (e.g., Thurston Moore of Sonic Youth), this collective biography is written in a cultured voice that even low-brow, in-the-know fanzine readers will appreciate. For all public libraries. Robert Morast, "Argus Leader Daily," Sioux Falls, SD Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.From The New YorkerAzerrad crisscrosses the American landscape of nineteen-eighties "underground" rock music, from Washington, D.C. (which spawned such bands as Fugazi and Minor Threat), to Washington state (Mudhoney, Beat Happening). He profiles

thirteen bands that came of age before Nirvana closed the gap between alternative rock and the mainstream market, and the best stories here are the most marginal, such as the chapter on the explosive Boston band Mission of Burma. Even in his treatment of better-known bands, though, Azerrad does a fine job of demonstrating how the post-punk prime movers of the eighties echoed the original rock-and-rollers of the fifties springing from a complacent political climate to reject the sentimental excesses of the music that preceded them. Copyright 2005 The New Yorker