



Come As You Are

A
Biomythography
of
Aberdeen, WA

by Sierra Jane

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1. INTRODUCTION

i'll just get it out of the way now by saying that yes, Aberdeen is where Kurt Cobain is from, yes, Courtney did call it "the most depressing little town in america", yes i've bbq'd with Kim, held his art, yes, my partner's dad sold a skateboard painted by Kurt to Tony Hawk and no i didn't get an autograph, yes i'm the recipient of the Kurt Cobain Memorial Art Scholarship so every time you listen to "Smells Like Teen Spirit" you're paying for my english (with a specialization in *creative writing*) degree. whatever, who cares. no, i don't wanna debate how he died.

(i had a G.E.T. credit & went to WWU)

KURT PAID FOR ABOUT 1/3 OF MY YEARLY COLLEGE TUITION

This letter is to certify that Sierra [redacted] is the recipient of the Kurt Cobain Visual Arts Scholarship awarded at Aberdeen High School on June 5, 2019. The amount of the scholarship is \$2,000.00.

when i started writing this it was supposed to be, like, 5 pages. now look where we are. a lot is skipped over and skewed by my lil ole perspective. i aim to let this zine be a tour rather than a deed for a home. you've given me your gas money, let's ride.



Growing up, you had to choose either Hole or Nirvana, Courtney or Kurt, so obviously: was always a Courtney girl. but SKURTcobain gets my love too. and i love her on repeat... beans...

ALL PHOTOS, INFO, & ART NOT ATTRIBUTED CAME FROM MY OWN 2 HOOVES!

*or something like that i can't find the quote

when you drive into town from Olympia, headed to the beach, you'll see the Welcome to Aberdeen: Come as You Are sign on the right and the abandoned Weyerhaeuser mill equipment to your left, brandishing out into the gray water of the Chehalis River*. right along the highway is Morrison Park, which boasts a blue metal rowboat in a sea of wood chips and a small playground, and across the train tracks are remnants of The River, a place you used to end up if you had nowhere to go. once you drive past walmart and wendys and mcdonalds and taco bell and starbucks and dutch bros and burger king and cannabis 21, you hit "downtown" aberdeen; big brick buildings, most of which are empty and in disrepair. most of these empty buildings are owned by a man named terry emmert, but we'll get to him later. if you'd like to stop by the Kurt Cobain memorial "park" you'll have to avoid the roundabout that the city installed a few years ago as locals refuse to learn how one works and will tell you exactly that on the "Grays Harbor Citizens" Facebook page. if you continue towards the beach you'll drive by the mission line and then Billy's Bar & Grill, named for the famed (alleged) serial killer and labor rights activist, Billy Gohl. you'll need to cross the bridge over the Chehalis to get to the southside where you'll pass the used car lot and the new car lot and another used car lot and another weed store and the abandoned mall and then once you're past the community college you will finally be on your way out of Aberdeen and towards the shore.



i have a far more nuanced opinion on gun control than what i was 16, but the point still stands. nothing has changed.

image below-posted by the baily world was what provoked his reaction. (Krauss).



*before all that, actually, you'll drive by the dump, the 5 billboards for 5 different weed stores, 1 billboard for the Quinalt casino, and 1 bikini barista stand owned by a man who called me a "***** feminist who only dates bad boys" on Facebook when I was 16, whose wife cheated on him with the high school gym teacher. since we're not pulling punches.

the architecture of Aberdeen is built to function badly. the Walmart Supercenter, which is many harborite's* sole source of groceries, is shoved between the shore and the train tracks. if a train passes through Aberdeen, anyone on the shore-side of the tracks is stuck, and if it's a long train this can sometimes take up to an hour. the traffic is on purpose. the amount of lanes downtown were reduced to create traffic so that tourists would be forced to stop to grab lunch somewhere, or perhaps buy a used couch. on hot days, traffic will be backed up to the dump. any time a large cargo rig travels from the port, it must go under the Chehalis bridge. this can take another 30-45 minutes, in which time no traffic can cross from downtown towards the beach. this would be a bigger issue if Aberdeen's port had ever blossomed into the industrial mecca it was promised to be. there's only one route to the hospital from the east side of town and in 2019 a large sinkhole swallowed up the asphalt, rendering the route completely blocked. once a year the town floods and the soccer field turns into a lake that locals flock to to try out their RC boats. if it's bad, the people living on cherry street will break out the canoes to go by the 7/11.

'John Hoquiam' Will Burn

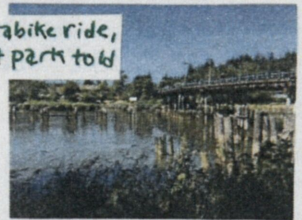
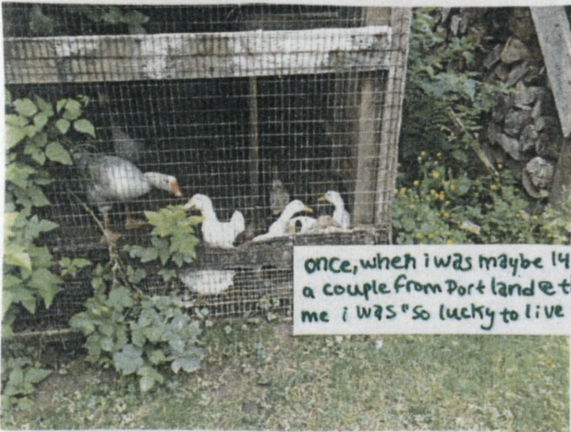


via NORTH COAST NEWS ↵ via Tahlia Espino on Facebook ↗

*Aberdeen is the biggest town in Grays Harbor, double the population of the second biggest town in Grays Harbor, Hoquiam. Hoquiam and Aberdeen bleed into each other and to outsiders may appear to even be the same town. do not say this to anyone over the age of 50, especially in autumn. our high school football rivalry is over a century old (117 years and counting). it used to be genuinely violent, there was arson, blood. nowadays some houses get tp-ed, there's some light graffiti, some highschoools get drunk and burn a mannequin on a beach, and there's only the occasional pepper spray. ok the point of this was to tell you that most of the surrounding rural population travels to Aberdeen for groceries. i lived in Brady for a while and drove 25 minutes to Aberdeen to go to grocery outlet and walmart rather than buy \$25 toilet paper at Montesano's thriftway.

2. FROM THE MUDDY BANKS OF THE WISHKAH

the namesake of grays Harbor, the county that Aberdeen resides in, is captain robert gray, the first white man in written record to set foot upon Chehalis land. i should note that the Chehalis did not consider their land "owned" or as if they had possession over it. the land known as grays Harbor today was once resided upon mainly by members of the Chehalis and Quinault tribes, as well as to a lesser degree by members of the Queets, Humptulips, Satsop, Wynoochee, and Copalis tribes. if you're a Nirvana fan you probably have heard "Something in the Way" (and the live album "From the Banks of the Muddy Wishkah") which, legend has it, was written about the time Kurt spent under the small bridge* that passes over the Wishkah in the area of town between felony flats and the goose cemetery.* the word wishkah comes from the Chehalis word hwish-kahl, meaning "stinking water". it's reassuring to know that the water has always smelled like over-boiled eggs and manure, and that's not just a product of chemical waste.



*these days there's a small park in the area surrounding the bridge complete with an air guitar stand for Kurt's guitar. i'm not joking. no matter when you visit, there WILL be a spray painted Bart Simpson and a few used needles under the bridge.

**actually just a funeral home that has a nice garden with some ducks and geese.



John Boit, 14 years of age, fifth officer in the Columbia, 1788:

"May 7—Vast many canoes came off, full of Indians. They appeared to be a savage set, and was well arm'd, every man having his Quiver and Bow slung over his shoulder. Without doubt we are the first civilized people that ever entered this port, and these poor fellows view'd us and the Ship with the greatest astonishment. Their language was different from any we have yet heard. The men were entirely naked, and the women, except a small apron made of rushes, was also in a state of nature. They was stout made, and very ugly. Their canoes was from the Logs, rudely cut out, with upright ends. We purchas'd many furs and fish.

"May 8—Vast many canoes along side, full of Indians. They brought a great many furs which we purchas'd cheap, for Blankets and Iron. We was fearfull to send a Boat on discovery, but I've no doubt we was at the Entrance of some great river, as the water brackish, and the tide set out half the time. This evening heard the hooting of Indians, all hands was immediately under arms. Several canoes was seen passing near the Ship, but was dispers'd by firing a few Muskets over their heads. At midnight we heard

them again, and soon after, as't was bright moonlight, we see the canoes approaching the Ship. We fired several cannon over them, but still persisted to advance, with the war Hoop. At length a large canoe with at least 20 Men in her got within $\frac{1}{2}$ pistol shot of the quarter, and with a Nine pounder, loaded with langerege (langrage) and about 10 Muskets, loaded with Buck shot, we dash'd her all to pieces, and no doubt kill'd every soul in her. The rest soon made a retreat. I do not think that they had any conception of the power of Artillery. But they was too near us for to admit any hesitation how to proceed.

"May 9—Very pleasant weather. Many canoes along side from down River and brought plenty of Skins; likewise some canoes from the tribes that first visited us, and their countenances plainly show'd that those unlucky savages who last Night fell by the Ball, was a part of the same tribe, for we could plainly understand by their signs and gestures that they were telling the very circumstances, to their acquaintances from down River, and by Pointing to the Cannon, and endeavoring to explain the noise they made, made us still more certain that they had no Knowledge of fire arms previous to our coming amongst them. I am sorry we was obliged to kill the poor Devils, but it could not with safety be avoided. The Natives brought us some fine Salmon, and plenty of Beaver Skins, with some Otters, and I believe had we staid longer among them we shou'd have done well.

Welsh

this horrific bloodshed during the first interaction between european settlers and Native tribes was only a small taste of the violence that was to come. treaties that the american government brought to tribes of the pnw originally planned to condense all tribes to one reservation, even as Indigenous peoples were crowded on existing reservations due to the influx of white settlers in the 1870s. throughout this time the b.i.a.* continually shrank reservation areas in order to give more acreage to white settlers. when plans to move all tribes of the Puget Sound to a Puyallup reservation failed, the b.i.a. shifted focus to the eradication of Indigenous culture and the assimilation of Indigenous peoples living on land the american government wanted to colonize, without giving full rights of citizenship.

The Court of Claims recognized the failure of the federal government to honor the treaties made with the Puget Sound Indians. Nevertheless, no reward was given. It was the Indians' responsibility to demonstrate the monetary value of the loss, and the court believed their proof was inadequate. (Porter 121).

many Chehalis people were sent to boarding schools as part of the mission, where expressions of Indigenous culture were punished and forced european assimilation was rewarded. as an article on Hazel Pete, a woman who would become the "single most influential disseminator of Chehalis culture on the reservation" (Collins 24) states,

Her homecoming raised too the issue of Chehalis identity. For better or worse, Hazel's family had conceded that assimilation was largely a given - a reality to be calculated merely in terms of degree. An accommodation with white society was both necessary and unavoidable. Chehalis society had ceased to function in isolation but had come to reflect an ongoing transition, a continuous evolution, an ever-changing reconstruction within the context of relations with white America and the policies of the federal government. It was a dynamic process that the Chehalis had to master in order to survive. (Collins 24).

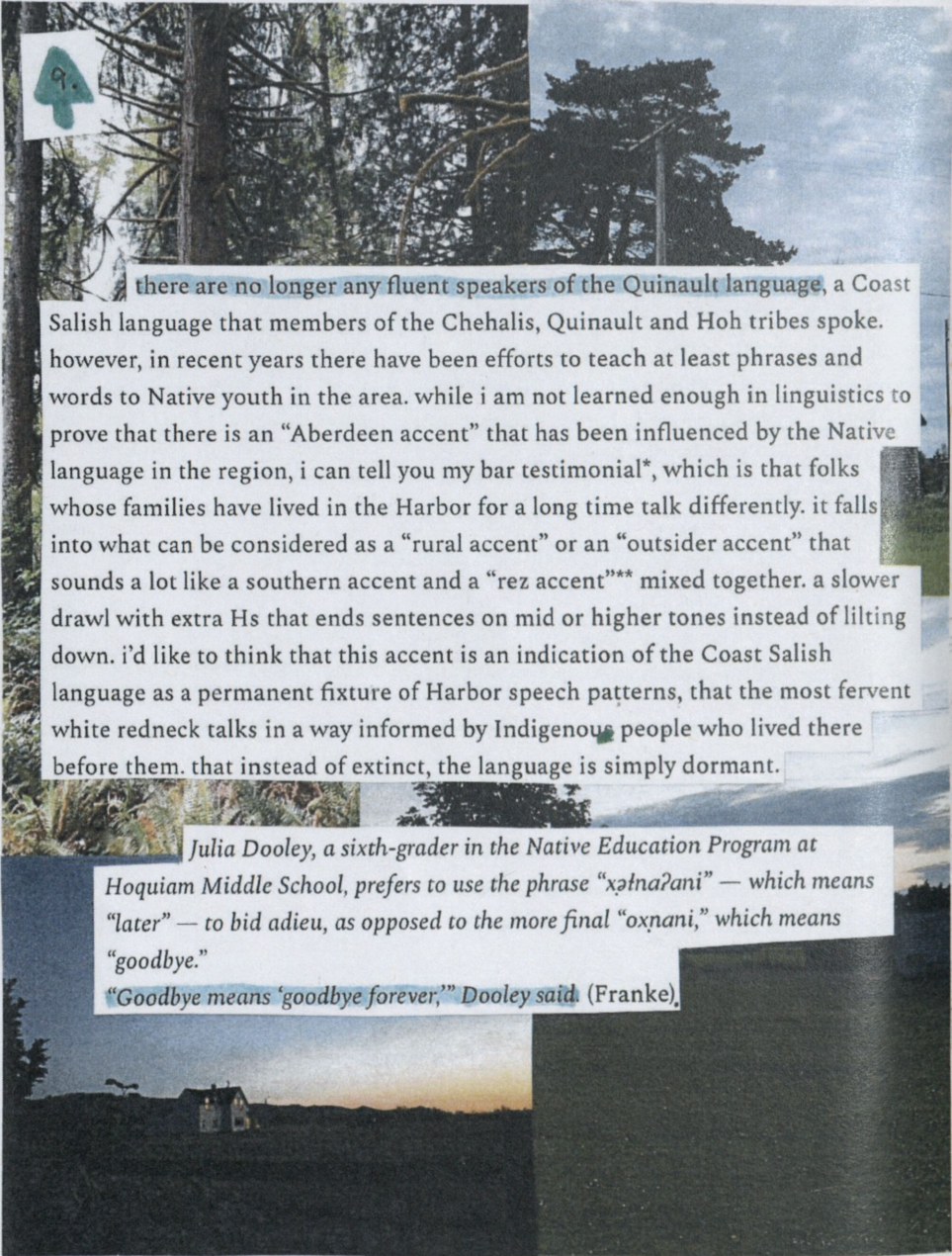
(via collins) →



left: HAZELPETE & older sister, KATHERINE PETE, who died of tuberculosis.

right: HAZELPETE in her 80's

*bureau of indigenous affairs



there are no longer any fluent speakers of the Quinault language, a Coast Salish language that members of the Chehalis, Quinault and Hoh tribes spoke. however, in recent years there have been efforts to teach at least phrases and words to Native youth in the area. while i am not learned enough in linguistics to prove that there is an "Aberdeen accent" that has been influenced by the Native language in the region, i can tell you my bar testimonial*, which is that folks whose families have lived in the Harbor for a long time talk differently. it falls into what can be considered as a "rural accent" or an "outsider accent" that sounds a lot like a southern accent and a "rez accent"*** mixed together. a slower drawl with extra Hs that ends sentences on mid or higher tones instead of liting down. i'd like to think that this accent is an indication of the Coast Salish language as a permanent fixture of Harbor speech patterns, that the most fervent white redneck talks in a way informed by Indigenous people who lived there before them. that instead of extinct, the language is simply dormant.

Julia Dooley, a sixth-grader in the Native Education Program at Hoquiam Middle School, prefers to use the phrase "xəlnaʔani" — which means "later" — to bid adieu, as opposed to the more final "oxnani," which means "goodbye."

"Goodbye means 'goodbye forever,'" Dooley said. (Franke).

*conclusions visited after spending enough time at Ashley's aka The Place to Be aka the old black pearl tavern, which, in response to a conflict in which an owner threatened to kill an amateur drag queen, sold tee shirts with a don't-say-gay slogan. they went out of business shortly thereafter. the old lesbian population in Aberdeen is strong.

**for more on this there is quite a bit of writing on Chehalis language and dialects in the International Journal of American Linguistics.



When O'Leary* arrived Kakahwan (or Kakawan) was chief of the Chehalis people, a considerable tribe scattered along the bay shores and the many tributary rivers, speaking its own language. There was a sizeable village where Westport now stands and it was here Kakahwan lived, but many of the houses were empty, for a number of years before smallpox had almost decimated the tribe. In the 50's and 60's the Indians were still talking of the "big sick" that came upon them, leaving only 500 souls where there had perhaps been several thousand before. (welsh).

early residents of Scaberdien fancied themselves the Wild West of the Pacific Northwest, & much like the Wild West, disease brought by white "explorers" left lots of land open, ready for colonization.

Aberdeen was founded on mud and planks and

spit in the middle

of the

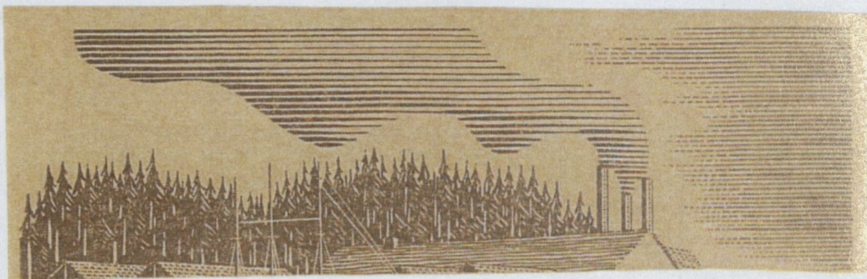
19th century.

via van Syckle ↗

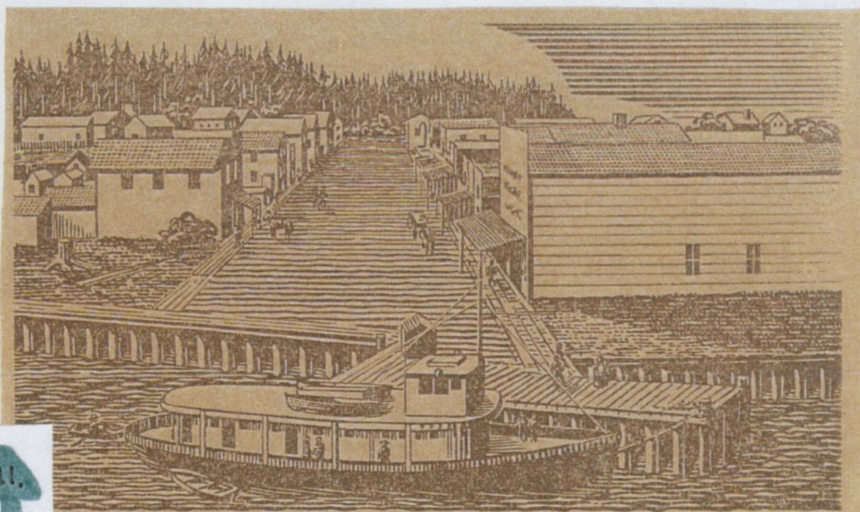
With saws ripping through the big firs and sawdust piling up faster than it could be burned, one of Aberdeen's great institutions began—sawdust streets. These fills in turn were decked by planks, the sidewalks were planks, and it was not long until the sailors were calling Aberdeen "Plank Island."

Began then an era of rapid growth, weedlike and raw. Bull teams grunted and strained along the skidroads and the mighty oaths of the bull whackers rang in the valleys. Seamen came in from the briny Pacific and mingled the thump of their boot heels with the sticky sound of loggers calks biting into the city's boardwalks. The loggers, the seamen, the millhands, the gillnetters developed a tremendous thirst. Saloons mushroomed. The gamblers came, and the dancing girls. It was a fertile field for the man of God, and he came too. (welsh).

* William O'Leary, first white settler



in the late 1800s Aberdeen and San Francisco were the two major ports on the west coast. when San Francisco burned down in 1906, Aberdeen was the source of the lumber they rebuilt with. my middle school history teacher told us that Aberdeen was supposed to become state capital but as far as I can tell, the competition was between North Yakima, Ellensburg and Olympia. there was a red light district- lots of gambling and whorehouses and drinking and fights. there was a lot these men wanted to forget about. i was told as a child that during this era if you were in the military and you visited aberdeen, you were dishonorably discharged due to the gravity of its reputation. a common nickname was "the hell-hole of the pacific". in 1903 a fire started in a hotel that shared a wall with the jail and the fire station. the prisoners ran free, so did the chickens in the backyard. it took the firemen from Westport like 10 hours to get to Aberdeen by the wooden handcar and by the time they arrived mostly everything was gone. the blaze decimated 140 buildings. i've never understood this part of the story, why they would be much help, anyway. everybody has buckets.



Aberdeen in the 1880's



4. THE PORT OF MISSING MEN

you may know the name billy gohl if you watch too many ghost hunting videos on youtube- they like to search for spectres at the eponymous diner, which supposedly used to be a brothel, which supposedly housed some of the working girls billy supposedly killed. i worked at this establishment for a summer. a bald man asked me to take off my mask so he could see my beautiful face while his girlfriend, who still sported nose job bandages, was in the bathroom. a regular would tell me, every time he was in for the Saloon Beef Melt, what the ghosts of the ladies of the night flirted in his ear.

the story goes like this. billy gohl was so bad he had a funny name that sounded like a scary thing in our language. billy gohl made a married woman out of a loose one and she ran a boarding house and he worked on the water, the part of town not on the hill. he was scuff and rumble, a drinking man, a man with a glint in his pocket and an itch in his knuckles with a few too many debts. the sailors come and stay, they leave their things with his wife. the sailors roar up wasted and billy comes down hard, the trapdoors plentiful. the bodies appear on the horizon line when the bloat goes bad. the story goes like they finally caught the bastard who dunnit and would've done it 144 more times although they only pinned him for one.

i'd like you to picture a man. he's straight and arrow now, although, perhaps once his fist got caught on some jaws in some allies after some beers with his buddies that lasted far too long into the night, plotting a revolution of sorts; unionization among the port of Chehalis. you see, the truth is that Aberdeen wasn't such a good place to be if you pictured yourself a man with more moral fiber than a bowl of catholic muesli. the truth is hired muscle would kidnap men after a few too many who would wake up not just with a hangover but 100 miles to sea and no food unless you start swabbin the deck matey.

* every time i tell this story i say "whose job" although the truth is the bandages could've just as easily come from a violent break, which is an ending to a story that does not succeed as a punchline.

picture a man who grew into his position as the head of the local labor movement. picture the type of man to write letters to the editor over the spotty livers of the young men these days. the type to call for streetlights by the water. the type of man to nail boards to his lawn to stop kids from sledding. to yap about the usage of tax dollars far beyond the point of blind ears. but a man who is a figurehead for something, comrades. a man who listens to Eugene V. Debs and takes up his arms to fight, to hold scabs at gunpoint, to strike for far longer than investors bargained. a man well respected among the port people who has become a major problem for the men jingling their pockets up the hill.



VIA VAN SACKLE 7

imagine bad infrastructure. missing planks. no streetlights. too much drink. imagine men bottled from mistreatment by the big men who watch while they work. imagine men who have no idea how they ended up here, maybe don't know the language, in debt to captains with slick grins and slicker knives. imagine, out of a population of 3,000 women, 100 jailed and fined in one night for prostitution. imagine waking up in the morning and heading to work and your muscles slug and eyes blur a little and you're thinking how you didn't get enough sleep last night on account of your makeshift shack flooding, a predicament on account of the debt and your nationality, and you shout the wrong things and the log falls in a hot crush upon hot flesh. imagine that this happens all the time. imagine that probably all the names don't get written down, that suddenly there's a lot of bodies with wives and children that a lowly ceo of the lumber company now must provide with compensation. that all these compensations would go away if the bodies disappeared into the water and there was a man to pin it on. that, in fact, there would be maybe no rule about compensating these widows in the first place if this man hadn't been here.

13.

imagine a crooked witness, a supposed friend who's a labor spy, a loaded jury. imagine not enough money to pay the lawyer, bad business at the boarding house, a smeared name that cost the union rep job, a file for bankruptcy. imagine you die behind bars, far from the water.

imagine in 50 years the town is experiencing the beginning of a recession which is what they've been saying for 50 years. imagine nationwide panic over killers and cults, an uptick in demand for salacious true crime tourism. imagine digging up an old story and turning it into a legend. imagine naming a diner "billy's", not "William", like he called himself.



Courtesy of Southwest Washington Archives, Olympia, Washington. (Goings, 97)



via van syckle S

via Roy Vatejia on FB
MONDAY, APRIL 28, 1902

Gohl once co-owned a cigar stand, which is why this is relevant.

"THINK OF ME"

This sign advertised "Think-of-Me" cigars on an Aberdeen hill for many years. The hill still bears the name. (Aberdeen Library Collection)



NOTICE
how evenly and free the
"Think of Me"
Cigar burns—how firm the ash is—
what a delightful fragrance is in the
smoke. It's a great cigar—and it's
winning new admirers every day.
Manufactured by
L. L. MALEY
TEL. 211 Aberdeen, Wash.
And Sold Everywhere.

5. THE LUMBER CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

Here was the best of the timber country, where Pacific storms brained themselves against Grays Harbor hills, and the summer sun warmed the mudflats to a welcome stench. Here was Utopia! Here the seismic man howled and shook the earth. Here even the meek and the puny could hitch up their britches and reach for the logger's "pie in the sky."

Here was the range of the rampants! And, by God, the wilderness would bend! AND IT DID!

Not only did the wilderness bend, it shattered.

Within a lifetime the despoilers came and went away, the lumber barons with them. They devastated and raised hell, but their era deserted them. For all their prodigious labor and sweat, their mighty engines roaring on the benches, baring the hills and gutting the canyons, they could not outlast the timber. Though they screeched the tidewater reaches with two-dozen sawmills and made the land all around raw with scars, time would take them, and the miracle of abundance would hide their going.

(VAN SYCKLE) ←



political cartoon originally captioned: "The Lumber Barons are fat with profits & their hands are smeared with the blood of workers!" via center for the study of the PNW

instead of developing into a place of opportunity, Aberdeen became the place everybody desperately crabs to get out of. the community college's mascot is the choker which is a type of job for a logger to have, although with the high suicide rates you hear the obvious joke a lot. chokers hook cables up to the logs so they can be hauled, it's very dangerous work. the joke writes itself.

the story goes that since about the 60s, lumber demand started decreasing, and environmental protections started increasing, things had been going bad. more specifically, a lot of lumberjacks wanted to do evil, sick, twisted things to the endangered species, the spotted owl. however, the reality is a lot more complicated. as pointed out in "Forty Years of Spotted Owls? A Longitudinal Analysis of Logging Industry Job Losses" by Freudenburg et. al, success in union bargaining and improvement in logging technology led to lumber extraction being both easier and more expensive. bounds in technology of international shipping often led to a segmented supply chain when resources are extracted and then processed elsewhere where labor is cheaper, ex: raw lumber exported and turned into furniture in, say, China, and then shipped back to the U.S. to be sold to american consumers at american prices.

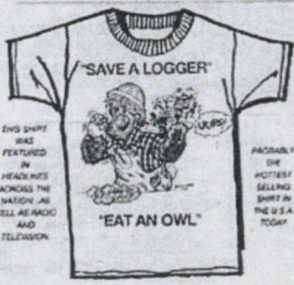
This phenomenon [of the cost-price squeeze] often causes extractive activities to stop "at an earlier stage-not when everything is gone, but at the point when the extraction is no longer profitable" (Freudenburg 1992:324). Yet there is an important catch: The catch is that there is no one such point.... In particular, extractive corporations have the option of using the ambiguity of exhaustion as an argument for extracting not just raw materials, but concessions -from workers, who may be willing to accept wage and benefit cuts in exchange for a few months' or years' worth of employment, and from the political system, as in the form of the willingness to exempt facilities from environmental or health and safety regulations (Freudenburg 1992:324).

via center for the study of the PNW → →

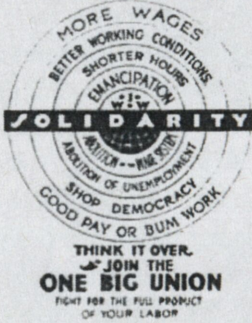


MY Partner used to play Yugiduel Links with a relation of Scott Birdsall. it's a small town.

GET THE SHIRT THE WHOLE INDUSTRY IS RAVING ABOUT!! LET 'EM KNOW WHERE YOU STAND!!



I.W.W. WHAT WE STAND FOR.



regardless of whether it was some poor owls' fault (it wasn't, but it would be funnier if it were) the last straw of this economic decline in Aberdeen was in 2005, when Weyerhaeuser closed their large-log sawmill, and then in 2009 they shut down everything. suddenly everyone was even poorer. even This American Life had a little piece about it. it was kinda that big a deal.

Chana Joffe-Walt: He could have stayed in school until he was 60 in the hopes of getting a park ranger job, making half the salary he made at the mill. He made about \$60,000 a year at the mill. Or, as he says, he could just accept that he was no longer useful to this economy. Didn't have the right education, right skills. He could just accept that and check out. Turns out, there is a way to do that.

Scott Birdsall: And then that's how I wound up getting into the disability thing.
Chana Joffe-Walt: And it wasn't just Scott. I talked to a bunch of mill guys who

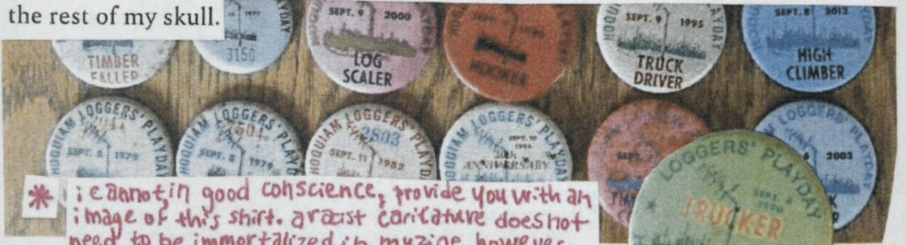
took this path. One who shattered the bone in his ankle and his leg, one with diabetes, another with a heart attack. When the mill shut down, they all went on disability. And they all, like Scott, would prefer to be at the mill. Scott says if circumstances had been different, if the entire economy had not changed underneath his feet and the mill was still open, he'd be there.

according to the last census, 14.9% of Harborites under age 65 are disabled. nationally this number is 8.9%.

via seller @kewelljewels on ebay



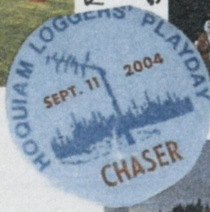
there's still this annual festival/parade called Loggers' Playday which can be best described as the logger olympics. sports include staying on top of a spinning log in the water as long as you can, scaling a tree, hacking through a log as fast as possible, etc. Aberdonians used to dress up as pine trees and walk the streets but nowadays there's just the marching band and some grizzled belly dancers dressed up as pirates throwing candy. you can buy buttons that have types of logging jobs on them including: hooker, chaser, whistle punk, gandy dancer, riggin rat, bull cook, riggin slinger, shake rat, flunky, pick up man, and, of course, paul bunyan. it would be remiss to not mention that in 2011 Aberdeen's finest sold "osama bin loggin" t-shirts at the event. this year my Olympia friend Chris told me he djed Loggers' Playday and my jaw just about disconnected from the rest of my skull.



* i cannot in good conscience, provide you with an image of this shirt. artist caricature does not need to be immortalized in myzine. however, google is free.



via the Daily World
via seattle.pics

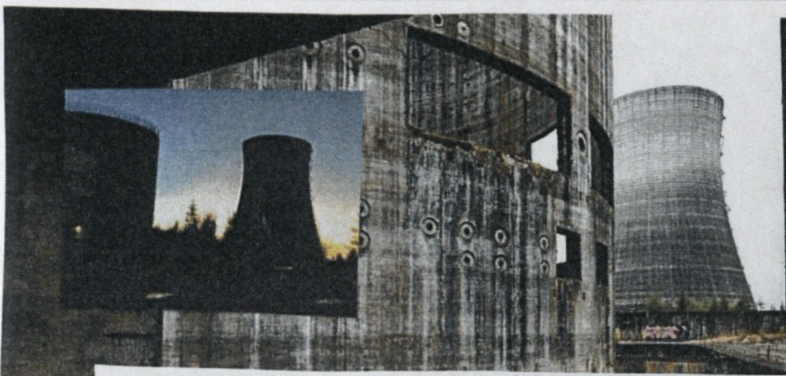


via the loggers' Playday FB:
via the Daily World



A photo of a person climbing a log.





the abandoned Nuclear Power Plant in Elma is one perfect example of the Harbor economy. in 1972 the Washington Public Power Supply System (WPPSS, oft pronounced “whoops”) started the process of buying land and creating plans to build two nuclear power units. construction began and lasted until 1986 when plans to finish the towers were terminated. in the 90s, the towers’ ownership was transferred to grays Harbor County with 25 million dollars allocated to transform the area into a business park. today, the Port of grays Harbor manages the “business park” which translates to “hive of sad office buildings”. the only real use that the towers get is the occasional film* or audio shoot (the acoustics!), and, at least when i was in high school, construction worker apprentices trained on the more-abandoned tower. i hung out at the towers a few times in high school with my boyfriend. i remember i went when there were icicles on the beams of everything, and the ground shined with mist. in my diary i wrote nothing of the *nuclear power units* and instead wrote several lines about the hopelessness of the initials carved into the site’s picnic benches. what being 17 will do to you. the real grays Harbor experience is making out under the husk of your county’s industrial past.



© JORDAN STEAD / Seattlepi.com

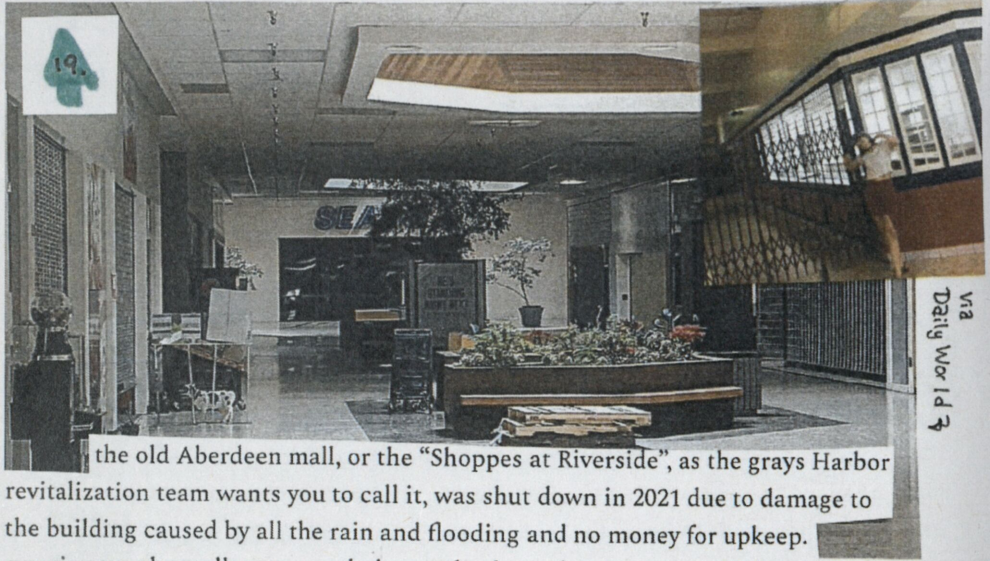
Via JORDAN STEAD / Seattlepi.com ↵



*APPARENTLY a very small part of Transformers 4 was shot here. yes, Mark

Wahlberg.

19.



VIA
Daily World 7

the old Aberdeen mall, or the "Shoppes at Riverside", as the grays Harbor revitalization team wants you to call it, was shut down in 2021 due to damage to the building caused by all the rain and flooding and no money for upkeep.

growing up, the mall was a good place to heely or skateboard around in because no one was ever there. shops inside consisted of; a junk store that smelled like patchouli and glitter whose owner wouldn't let you buy anything, a bead store, a nail salon, a tattoo studio where you could get either a lion or a rose or a blood borne illness, a music store that occasionally hosted bizarre house-show-esque mini concerts, and a used book store that consistently reeked of B.O. due to the regular D&D meetings.

VIA
@anything-complex
on Reddit

Mall Entrance

after i left Aberdeen, i learned a hispanic grocery store, butcher's shop, and a maternity clothing store moved in. if you went to see a movie there was a very good chance you and your friends would be the only person in the theatre. really, the only good reason to visit the mall was to get nachos from Taqueria San Jose*. the mall had a dusk that lovers of vaporwave, urban exploration, and the "liminal space aesthetic" everywhere would be jealous of. overgrown plants in cracked tile center blocks. flickering and burnt out bulbs. food court stations with branding unchanged from the 80s or 90s that had long since sat empty.



*still around just relocated

if you poke around enough in the bramble behind the mall parking lot, you can discover a path littered with wrappers of the kind of mass produced food you can microwave at a gas station. if you follow the path you will be led to a tennis court that (someone's dad told me) used to be an amenity of a grand-ish hotel nearby that has since been turned into a crumbling realty office. the court is usually flooded and usually contains disturbing evidence for imaginary crimes. children's ballet slippers, crushed up cans of Hurricane, a burnt canoe, a dead fish, more used needles. coughs of bugs breed in the still water and puff up in the summer. in the day it's a spot where high school kids smoke weed. at night it's a place for people living on the streets to sleep if they want to be sure no one will bother or find them.



my friends who still live in Aberdeen either work remotely, for the state, or for walmart. opportunity isn't everything, but, god, is that all a person should choose from?

With the loss of so many jobs, especially unionized ones with good pay in the area, Janssen said young people in the county don't see a future there. "The feeling that our best hope is young people leaving is what makes a community die," she told me. - Melissa Hellmann, "What Nirvana's Birthplace Taught Me about Inequality."*

*Stina Janssen, director of Firelands Workers Action.



6. THE IMMIGRATION BOOGEY MAN & LOCAL POLITICS

21.

The United Ways of the Pacific Northwest's ALICE report provides county-level estimates of ALICE households and households in poverty. ALICE is an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed - households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), but less than the basic cost of living for the county (the ALICE Threshold). Combined, the number of ALICE and poverty-level households equals the total population struggling to afford basic needs... According to the 2018 United Way ALICE Report data, 46% of Grays Harbor County households were living below the ALICE threshold compared to 37% statewide. - (Community Health Needs Assessment, 14)

there's a lot of immigrants in Aberdeen cause it used to be cheap plus there's a lot of work on farms, in canneries, and other grueling jobs that you don't need a green card for in the surrounding areas. according to the most recent census, Aberdeen is about 20% hispanic although nobody brown shows up on the big mural of immigrants in the middle of downtown Aberdeen. they arrived too late, i guess. Aberdeen in general is 14% foreign-born, although i don't exactly trust the US census for exact details on the immigrant population. the i.c.e. building is right behind the denny's. in 2018 i attended a protest against family separation outside i.c.e and, let me tell you, a lot could be gleaned from the vehicles of the people who flipped us off versus those who honked.

my mom has been an elementary teacher for over 30 years, most of which has been in the harbor. but never has she seen more students struggling due to poverty, language gaps, and familial drug dependence. last year she had a student who came to her very shy, who spoke very little English. over six months the girl learned, grew in confidence, and made friends. then one day she simply stopped showing up. my mom discovered that she and her family had been deported.

in a legislative testimonial for Firelands, an organization that "advocates for good-paying jobs in Washington's timber country", a woman named Patricia says* "I live in a mobile home park in Aberdeen which is a rural area, in Grays Harbor County. As you can see here the houses are precarious and unhealthy. My children, my nephews, and many other children who live here suffer from asthma and other serious health conditions. We are more than sure that they are derived from the poor conditions of these mobile homes. Even so, the owners are waiting for the evictions moratorium to end, and increase our rent."

a lot of ex-loggers and their descendants in the Harbor blame the immigrant population for "stealing their jobs". that's one reason why, in the 2016 presidential election, grays Harbor turned red, voting overall for both donald trump and representative jim walsh. in 2020 the Harbor continued this trend by voting loren culp for governor, a man who was somehow fired from his position as police chief in a district with a police force of one. this question of "stealing" is one rather of exploitation. at one time the easiest person to exploit for labor in Aberdeen was the poor white immigrant, now it's the poor hispanic immigrant.

Candidate for state rep (District 24, po. 1)
in 2020, he got 15% of the vote →

KYLE & Daniel
@ KXTRO made
me take this
picture with
Maria Cantwell
when i was
interviewing there.
it was 8:30
AM. i did not
want to do it.

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT 24 - State Representative Pos. 1

2 Year Term - Clallam, Grays Harbor,
Jefferson



Daniel Charles Svoboda
(Prefers Trump
Republican Party)

Information

Candidate Statement

Elected Experience

I Have No Prior Elective experience and therefore will be bringing a bold fresh new vision to the capitol

Community Service

Instead of using this section to boast, I will rather use it to list my many faults which include lying, cheating and stealing. Fornication, adultery and blaspheme and a host of many other sins which I am not proud of.

Statement

I am running for office to restore marriage equality to the state of Washington and to put the fear of God back into the political landscape. I believe that once married always married and will work to put an end to the special rights that dictate our state. That means no more special rights for women, people of color, homosexuals and those that wish to misrepresent their gender, tribes, and illegal aliens and anyone else that believes they deserve special rights. I am pro life and do not believe in a woman's right to vote or kill her



*translated from Spanish

do not yet be offended by me saying that jim walsh looks like a bullfrog who was turned into a man by a pimpled wizard's apprentice until you hear about his political stances. he is the sole sponsor of HB1214 that proposes blocking any medical support for transgender youth, including puberty blockers, as well as the stipulation that any doctor that refers this treatment to another doctor (in another state, for example) would be subject to discipline due to "unprofessional conduct". in HB1154, he proposes the prohibition, when a state of emergency is called, of "Any number of persons, as designated by the governor, from assembling or gathering on the public streets, parks, or other open areas of this state, either public or private;"; literally attempting to overrule the first amendment. sponsored bill HB1071 calls for a "school resource officer" aka cop to be put in every school from kindergarten to 12th grade. HB1827 and HB1871 both are proposed to "prevent vaccine status discrimination" aka ensure that schools and businesses are not allowed to ask for vaccine status for enrollment or employment. he solely sponsors HB2435 which would ban TikTok in Washington State, apparently not caring about the invasive tracking and data selling that home-grown Meta engages in. HB2477 wishes to strengthen and expand harsh sentences for drug possession and sale. all of the aforementioned bills are from the current 2023-24 session and are very much alive. in an article from The Washington Post in 2021;

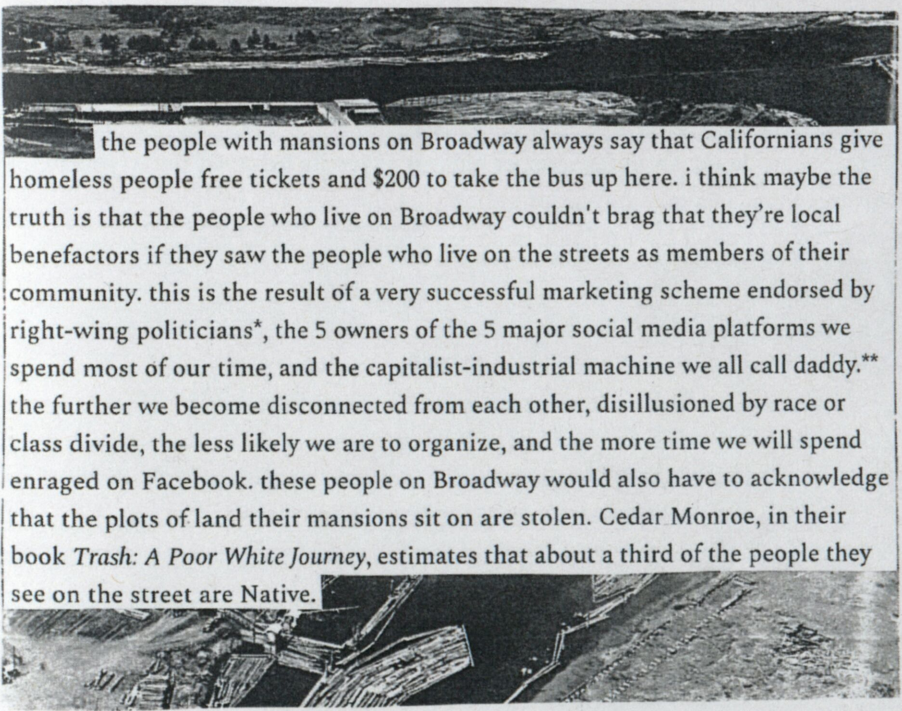
Washington state Rep. Jim Walsh has decried "vaccine segregation" and likened his state's lottery encouraging immunization against the coronavirus to the "The Hunger Games." Then, last weekend, the Republican lawmaker wore a yellow Star of David.

"It's an echo from history," Walsh wrote of the star in the comments below a live stream of his talk Saturday in Lacey, Wash. "... In the current context, we're all Jews."

okay, i'll be fair to you and fess up that i know jim walsh personally. his daughter was on my basketball team when we were 10 and he loved to yell at her. when i was in college i showed up at his office as part of an organized lobbying event and he wouldn't look me in the eye. i did a radio spot for his opponent in the last election, Marianna Everson, east grays Harbor rep for the Poor People's Campaign. she didn't win.

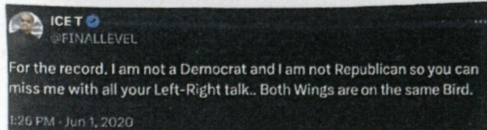
THE HOUSING CRISIS #7.

Saying that we're all just messy drug addict bums that just live down there because we want to, or whatever, and just trash the place. That's, like, the big perception a lot of the townspeople have, especially the people up on Bel Aire, up on the hill, the nice neighborhood and stuff. They forget that the view from the bridge isn't the only perspective that there is of my home.
-Adalley, in the documentary *The River*



the people with mansions on Broadway always say that Californians give homeless people free tickets and \$200 to take the bus up here. i think maybe the truth is that the people who live on Broadway couldn't brag that they're local benefactors if they saw the people who live on the streets as members of their community. this is the result of a very successful marketing scheme endorsed by right-wing politicians*, the 5 owners of the 5 major social media platforms we spend most of our time, and the capitalist-industrial machine we all call daddy.** the further we become disconnected from each other, disillusioned by race or class divide, the less likely we are to organize, and the more time we will spend enraged on Facebook. these people on Broadway would also have to acknowledge that the plots of land their mansions sit on are stolen. Cedar Monroe, in their book *Trash: A Poor White Journey*, estimates that about a third of the people they see on the street are Native.

*although, let's be honest. it's just like Ice T always said;



One of the only times i saw a therapist, she told me she grew up on broadway. i knew it was over from that moment. also called 'billy's a "dive".'

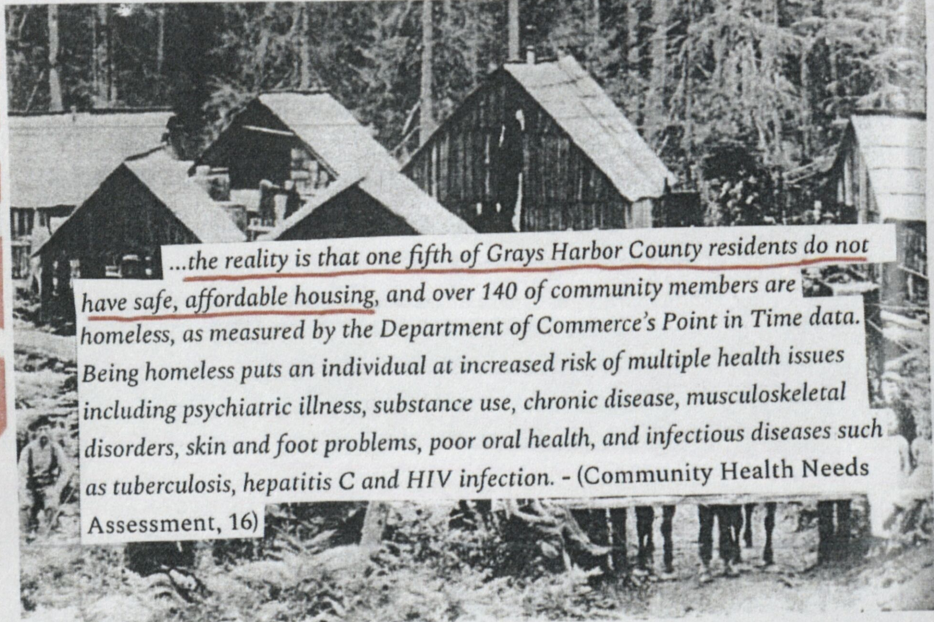
**this is not a sexual innuendo, just a quip at american paternalism. get your head out of Freud's drawers.

in a public comment at a city council meeting, where the mayor at the time, Erik Larson*, was not present, a person named James commented;

The thing that upsets me the most about our mayor, or any of you, is when you go to that river, you wanna say that it's just these people, these river people. That's the city of Aberdeen. That's your people... I don't mind dressing up like I'm going to a funeral all the time, but it feels that way. Every time I walk in those doors with y'all. -from the documentary The River

via van sykkle 2

it's hard to say for sure the exact number of people living on the streets in Aberdeen. official counts number around 200, but this does not include those who couchsurf or don't have reliable housing.

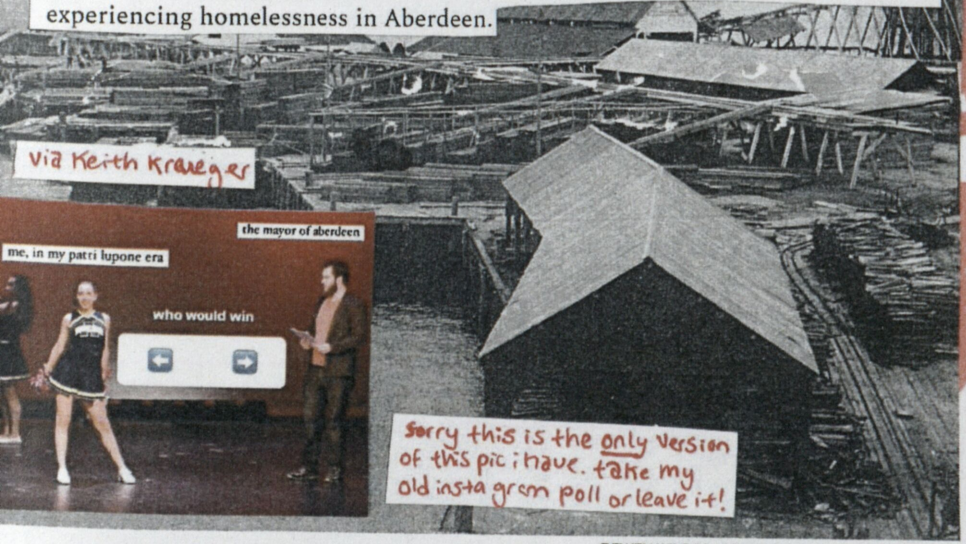


...the reality is that one fifth of Grays Harbor County residents do not have safe, affordable housing, and over 140 of community members are homeless, as measured by the Department of Commerce's Point in Time data. Being homeless puts an individual at increased risk of multiple health issues including psychiatric illness, substance use, chronic disease, musculoskeletal disorders, skin and foot problems, poor oral health, and infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, hepatitis C and HIV infection. - (Community Health Needs Assessment, 16)

*for the record i also know Erik Larson, he had a cameo in the production of *Legally Blonde the Musical* i was in in high school and i cheerlead at him. talking to him backstage, he said something like "being a mayor is pretty easy, i don't really do much."

in *Trash*, Monroe talks about how incredibly steep the uphill battle is in the Harbor to provide housing for those experiencing homelessness. in 2020 they officially dozed The River camp for the last time, putting a temporary tent city up in an unused parking lot in front of city hall. the irony astounds. the "Temporary Alternative Shelter Location", like most shelters, comes with clauses. people found using heaters or propane would be kicked out (understandable fire hazard but how else are you going to keep warm?) as well as those caught drinking or using drugs. considering how difficult addiction is to kick when basic needs are met, it seems unlikely that these rules do anything other than ensure that addicts on the street don't have a sanctioned place to sleep at night. those who were not able to secure a spot in the city hall tent city now set up camp under the bridge to the southside, just like Kurt. just like the original River camp, city police occasionally tear down tents and then halfheartedly offer supplies. when Monroe managed a shelter out of a church in Westport, a Harbor beach town, the welcome mat stated "Come back with a warrant."

city council in Aberdeen recently (as i'm writing this, the Daily World article was published this morning, March 19th) have been meeting about maybe possibly applying for federal funding for a permanent shelter building for those experiencing homelessness in Aberdeen.



Called the "Western Penitentiary" because of cheap wages, Grays Harbor Commercial Co., mill in Cosmopolis was termed "world's largest" in 1900. —DEWEY WILSON COLLECTION via van sycKle

#8

SICK &
TIRED

of
Being

SICK &
TIRED

When HRHCH's 2017 CHNA** was developed, Robert Wood Johnson's County Health Rankings listed Grays Harbor County as the 35th lowest (out of Washington's 39 counties) for overall health outcomes. This ranking has worsened, with the County in 2020 now ranking 37th out of Washington's 39 counties. - (Community Health Needs Assessment, 3)

healthcare in Aberdeen is dire. two of my close friends became certified nurses and subsequently abandoned the profession altogether after working at the great institution that is the grays Harbor hospital. when i was in high school on an average Friday night you could be sure to find several cars pulled up in the parking lot of the hospital blasting music, using substances, and fogging up car windows. the parking lot overlooked the city and would light up at night. mostly, my friends and i tailed with blankets and candles and tarot cards, meeting up with the occasional boy and returning to the group an hour or two later to inevitably giggle insults. years later my twin sister would stand knee high in the bramble bushes, psychotic, threatening to tumble all the way down to the port until she was talked down by emergency services, who swiftly sent her to the nearest concrete palace not yet infected



*Harbor Regional Health Community Hospital

**Community Health Needs Assessment

the hospital operates, like everything in the harbor, underfunded and understaffed, dealing with a higher concentration of “social determinants” of illness.

As depicted throughout this CHNA, the District/PSA and the County both face a number of health and socioeconomic challenges, including health care access being compromised by a low provider to population ratio, higher death rates than the State at large, higher rates of teen pregnancy, lower birth outcomes and higher rates of behavioral health concerns, including use of opioids, heroin and higher rates of suicide. The CHNA also depicts that the social and economic factors—the social determinants that can contribute to poorer health—are more of a burden within the boundaries of the District and Grays Harbor County than in most other areas of Washington State.”
(Community Health Needs Assessment, 5)

yes, many healthcare workers there are dedicated and against all odds kind. however, many other nurses and doctors have been worn thin and no longer can muster sympathy for their patients, especially those who are poor, in mental distress, or are black or brown.

Though Grays Harbor’s overall rates for mammogram screenings and flu vaccinations are generally better than the state, 2017 rates are lower for specific racial and ethnic minority populations” (p.28) These “racial and ethnic minority populations” being defined as American Indian & Alaska Native, Black, and Hispanic. (Community Health Needs Assessment, 29)

i have, allegedly, heard from a hypothetical source that there are more, alleged, medical violation reports, allegedly, made to the state about the grays harbor community hospital than any other hospital in washington. allegedly.

the Harbor was also one of many small towns across the country that was ravaged by the opioid epidemic, leaving addicts to turn to cheaper, unregulated substances when penalties for "over-prescription" increased. one must remember that, likely, much of this pain medication was prescribed for blue-collar workplace injuries. OSHA, on their website, state, "By many measures, logging is the most dangerous occupation in the United States."

Grays Harbor County now ranks fourth highest of all Washington Counties for all opioid fatalities, with a rate of 15.95 per 100,000 in 2016-2018, compared to 10.28 per 100,000 statewide. The County also ranks in the top 5 counties for heroin overdose deaths with a rate of 7.29 per 100,000 in 2016-2018. (Community Health Needs Assessment, 22).

in many ways, Kurt Cobain's death was an homage to his hometown. experiencing debilitating physical and emotional pain, Kurt self medicated with heroin and pain pills. after years of use and lack of trust in available resources, he killed himself.

For deaths that involved drugs, but weren't necessarily ODs, the county is more than double last year's drug-involved deaths.

"We're more than double last year's number, 23, as unnatural ones involving drugs," [Grays Harbor Coroner George] Kelley said. "This year we're at 53 unnatural cause of death involving drugs."...

"Kelley also shared concerns about the rise of the use of xylazine, a tranquilizer, that's increasing in larger cities. Xylazine, a non-opioid sedative, cannot be treated with Narcan, though its common mixing with fentanyl means that any overdose should be treated with Narcan, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"I wonder about the calls that we're not getting," Kelley said. "The ones we don't know about are the ones that scare me." (Lockett)

visit stopoverdose.org for info on how to obtain buse narcan. (hint: it's easy)

there are between 10 and 15 drug rehabilitation centers near Aberdeen, depending on if you count a hospital detox room as rehab. Quinault Wellness Center, a center specifically for Indigenous people, shares a parking lot with the bowling alley near downtown.

aside from opiates, self-medication through legal drug consumption is popular as well. there are 14 registered producers/processors of cannabis in grays Harbor and 11 retailers.

The highest per capita spending in a Washington county not bordering Idaho was in Grays Harbor, a coastal county in Southwestern Washington, and home to the city of Aberdeen. The county's 60,000 adults spent more than \$21 million on cannabis in 2021, for a per capita figure of \$347. And I suppose that makes Grays Harbor the true marijuana capital of Washington. (Balk)

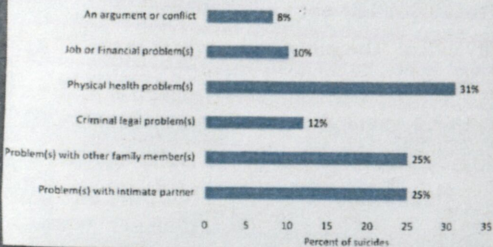


SHIRT THAT SAYS: ASK ME ABOUT THIS PHOTO. W

now i'm not a recreational weed hater, i just think that consumption at this high of a volume cannot be a sign of a well-adjusted population with access to pain management, affordable & quality medical care, and mental health support. when i went to high school, i can think of 4 kids i knew (vaguely, friends of friends) who killed themselves. my grandpa killed himself when i was 14.

Grays Harbor County experienced an overall suicide rate more than 25% higher than the State average for the 2013-2017-time frame. (Community Health Needs Assessment, 22)

Why? Family member ,financial/job, physical health, legal problems, or conflict contributed to the suicide, Grays Harbor County 2016-2018



HONESTLY, I DIDN'T EVEN WANT TO GET STARTED WITH TALKING ABOUT ALCOHOLISM, LET'S JUST ASSUME THAT'S BAD, TOO.

(deGraw, 11)

(Jenkins, 0:01)

Cocaine and Kurt Cobain
I been blowin' up my (click-click) brains
Oh I ain't gonna feel no pain tonight

it's all coming up A.C.E.S #9

31.

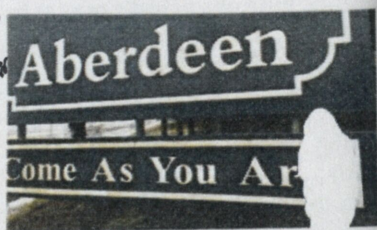
Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACEs, are traumatic events that occur in childhood and cause stress that changes a child's brain development. (Community Health Needs Assessment 23)

In Washington... 26.5% have 3 or more [ACEs]... According to Grays Harbor Public Health Department 2019 Snapshots, 38% of Grays Harbor adults had three or more ACEs. (24).

According to the Washington State Department of Health Center for Health Statistics, in 2018 11.5% of mothers in Grays Harbor County received late or no prenatal care compared to 6.5% statewide. (19)



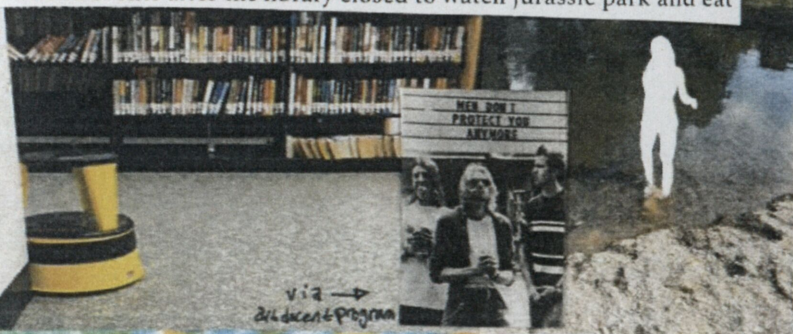
5- while other kids were shooting bottle rockets from be+wi xt their cheeks, & getting twisted at twin bridges, i remember it as the first time i got "yee yee'd" at as a cot-call. legendary



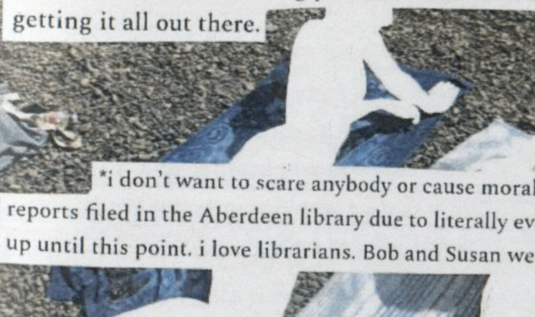
according to the official sex registry, there are currently 39 sex offenders within a 2 mile range of the elementary school closest to my house growing up. for comparison, i checked the range for the Olympia elementary school closest to my house and within the same range, there are 14 registered sex offenders. just a reminder that Olympia is much denser, population wise. the "watchman" name was Grant Victor Salem

when you don't have anywhere to go in Aberdeen you become a myth cause it's a big enough town for people to see you but not know you, not talk to you, not know your name. there's this guy called "the pimp" who wears insane monochromatic glittery suits and walks all over town and whistles at people. he's also, helpfully, a pimp, which is how he got his name. there was a guy who sold watches outside the ross on wishkah and he died and it was in the Daily World obituary. now there's just a guy who plays his sax outside walmart but only on rainy days. i wonder if the bell fills up with water like a drowned turkey.

SOMEONE I KNOW who now works at the Aberdeen library said there's this guy who made a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and deposited it in the book return slot and all of the butter and jelly flowed over protective casings. one time this gross old man literally offered me candy when i was a kid there. like they tell you. the librarians recommended me books and helped with school projects. around maybe age 7 i saw porn for the first time walking by the free computers. i remember the man watching it smelled like wet socks and onion.* in middle school i'd attend events after the library closed to watch jurassic park and eat pizza.



i knew of four teachers in the area who got arrested or fired for child porn or pedophilia over the time i was in school.** the wife of one of them frequented the nice restaurant i hosted at (i was polishing glasses on the right side of the bar so as not to be illegally barbacking) and told me that i saw things no one else did. she said i listened good. i said i hope so. and went back to polishing glasses. i wonder what she saw. i went back to that restaurant there a little while ago and they all told me i was the best hostess they ever had. i could tell the owner thought i was hot and was a little uncomfortable about that. he asked me if i had to throw out any of the books i sell due to sticky pages. i said i don't get paid enough to answer that honestly. i wasn't bothered in the way i would've been if he was ugly or older than 42. i'm being real about my prejudices. getting it all out there.



*i don't want to scare anybody or cause moral panic. there's just a lot of incident reports filed in the Aberdeen library due to literally everything i've talked about in my zine up until this point. i love librarians. Bob and Susan were integral figures in my childhood.

**one of which was named mr. gross. can't make this stuff up.

This economic decline has direct and dire impacts on the people who live in these communities. Many, whose livelihood has been in the forest products industry have lost jobs, exhausted their unemployment benefits, and have little savings to rely on or marketable skills for other, more affluent, labor markets. Children are most affected by this sour economy. Hunger, child abuse and neglect are increasingly common, a circumstance which is directly attributable to high unemployment rates, lack of money for food and other necessities, adult alcoholism, and despair about their personal economic tragedy.

Via Pacific Coast economic recovery conference, Sept. 18 & 19, 1992. G.H.C.

Until 2021, when the laws were changed, Washington State had the highest rate of youth incarceration for noncriminal offenses in the country. In 2015, Grays Harbor led the state on this count, with 77.2 percent of their arrested children incarcerated for truancy charges. That year they incarcerated 541 children for truancy. Meanwhile King County... incarcerated only 180. (Monroe, 77).

a friend's younger brother was incarcerated at age 12 for threatening another kid, who happened to have a cop or a judge or something for a father. the younger brother also happened to be Native. the younger brother said that he would get so bored in solitary confinement that he would spin around in circles until he got so dizzy he fell over. he said this was "so balls".*

*for more on youth incarceration in the Harbor, refer to Monroe's book. there's no use in my summing up something so un-summmable, so [redacted], a [redacted] on the present and the future of those who live and work in the Harbor.

REAL CRIME TIP #637: DON'T POST IT

Officer Simpson handled a theft investigation yesterday where the 20-year old suspect from Montesano was captured on video taking a large advertising sign off the Hoquiam McDonald's on the evening of September 15, 2020.

If the video of the theft was not enough, then the suspect apparently posted video of himself on social media taking said poster, followed by posting the stolen item for sale on Offer-Up. Not a good plan.

Officer Simpson called the number posted on Offer-Up and she convinced the suspect it was in his best interest to return the poster...which apparently advertised the limited time \$6 "Travis Scott" meal.

I know what some of you are thinking...most of us here at the station outside of our 20's also had to ask...who the heck is Travis Scott!?

According to our generation Z employees, he is a famous rapper?

But since a few of us still listen to (and enjoy) Bob Dylan (make sure to check out his new album- there are some great tracks), we had to inquire as to why this particular poster would be so popular?

Rapper-OK- we will take your word for it.

Yesterday, the suspect arrived at HPD with the poster but apparently did not still understand the gravity of the moment as he "snap-chatted" himself coming into the police station with the stolen goods.

Young man, perhaps it was time to park the social media for a while?

The suspect was fingerprinted, photographed and released on a citation for theft in the third degree. Lesson learned (remember back to Kindergarten)= if it is not yours, don't touch it!

3.7k comments!!

WAS THIS POST REALLY NECESSARY? I FEEL AS IF IT IS AN EXAMPLE OF A CRUEL & UNUSUAL FORM OF CARCERAL JUSTICE. IT'S A SMALL TOWN, EVERYONE KNEW WHO THE COPS WERE TALKING ABOUT.



there are really, truly, way too many police officers in Aberdeen. I was pulled over 4 times in 2 years for things like "getting close to the line on the side of the road" and "signaling early" and "having a tail light out" that was not out when I got home and did not go out for another 2 years. but this is a purely personal grievance, a slight annoyance in the grand scheme of things. not a hair on my head was harmed. except that i do blame the fact that weed makes me paranoid on the fact that the first time i tried to smoke a joint the cops showed up to the dead end my friends and i met in. don't worry, i didn't inhale. the weed was swiftly thrown into the woods when the cop lights appeared and nothing happened. for all teens; practice harm reduction and DARE to hotbox your friend's older brother's room instead.

i highly recommend you check out a.p.d.'s annual review which has photos of a training session for an armed pullover taken in the AHS parking lot. some of you may know the CRU (crisis response unit) team in Olympia for being people you can call on when there's a mental health crisis and you do not want law enforcement involved. they wear blue polos and give out snacks and rides. the photo of Aberdeen's CRU unit resembles military forces in Afghanistan.



literally how in the world are the cops allowed to drill in a high school's grounds? is this legal?

these tiles sit outside an Aberdeen elementary school, painted by kids. i think they make a nice political alignment chart.

(APD report, 2022) ↑
↓ APD's CRU



once i heard the Aberdeen Sheriff talk about voting for congresswomen based on tit size. i heard the old Hoquiam police chief describe himself as a libertarian. i was at the time invisible to them. girl who brings coffee takes notes.



the county is renowned for the famous men who come out of it (kurt, krist, the melvins, hellbound glory, patrick simmons of the doobie brothers, kurt vanderhoof of metal church, chris freeman of pansy division, WWE wrestler bryan danielson, the ship the lady washington which was in pirates of the Caribbean... do i need more?). is it like new york pizza in that it's in the water? or is the urge to create nurtured by the Harbor's special brand of poverty? is it powered by the rage encouraged in these young men?* must you recontextualize the world in an interesting way if you are forced to make sense of the senseless throughout your childhood?

*i'm excluding the boat from this gendered assumption.

i don't believe art comes from pain, just from contrast, like comedy. van gogh, etc...

#10

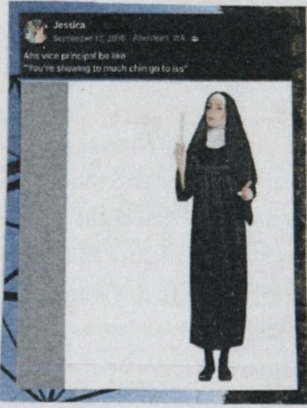
BOBCAT PRIDE

when i was in high school a girl (Stephanie) started #freethethigh at Aberdeen High School, a protest where girls would all wear jeans with rips one day and walk out of classes at some point to protest the dress code. girls were getting pulled out of classes to spend time in ISS for visible bra straps while boys wore tee shirts with naked women on them and were still allowed to suffer through mnemonic songs that were supposed to help you learn the quadratic formula. i wasn't at school the day this went down, but i guess it got the administration pretty upset. at the time, frankly, i thought it was pretty ridiculous and kind of reductive to protest for "more scandalous" clothing* but looking back it was pretty radical to challenge the dress code the same year the Vice Principal (a woman) told a girl that "someone could penetrate" her through the holes in her jeans. the "movement" got a short segment on both KIRO7 and KOMO5 News on live television. the summer after this happened i heard AHS was threatened with a lawsuit and so the dress code was pretty much removed- barring clothing depicting violence or sex or anything that shows underwear. memorably, a kid who wore a "boats and hoes" shirt was forced to read a letter apologizing to the class in lieu of disciplinary action. real life "i'm sorry women" moment. he was 100% earnest.

(Students of AHS)

Aberdeen Ran Rivals Ragged

Showers Facilities Poor For '06 Teams



They printed this awful drawing of a bobcat in the paper in the 60s. What?!



(KIRO 7) ↗ (BOUBACK) ↘



*i think my opinion on the matter had more to do with the girls who were proponents of #freethethigh; popular girls who high-school-me perceived as dumb and had at times been cruel to me and other students. if you're reading this Stephanie, i'm not talking about you.

this wasn't the first time AHS got in legal trouble. in 2010 the ACLU sued AHS on behalf of Russell Dickerson III, a Black student who was viciously bullied in the Aberdeen school district. students called Dickerson racial slurs, physically assaulted him, and threatened to lynch him. in 2012 the school district settled for \$100,000. in 2020, Maria Joyner sued AHS for sexual abuse she experienced in the 90s at the hands of the band director at the time, Michael L Alstead. administrators approached Joyner about the abuse at the time, and when she denied it was occurring, administrators told her she would be in trouble if they caught them together and that she should stay away from him. the school district settled for 2 million dollars.

i think this stark difference in payout says a lot about what kinds of trauma that we, societally, take seriously in a court of law. Joyner deserved that 2 million, but i'm sure that monetary amount was influenced by legal reckoning the #metoo movement had begun, a movement started and led by very rich white women. i'm also sure that the fact that Dickerson was paid out so little comparatively was because the district did not see a black boy as a strong legal threat.



in 2002 the original Aberdeen High School (referred to more often as Weatherwax High School) was burned to a crisp after two kids snuck in drunk in the middle of the night to burn their report cards and disciplinary files. when i was maybe 15 i clicked on a BuzzFeed listicle titled something like "how you know you go to the worst highschool ever" and realized that the cover photo was an image of Weatherwax High School burning down. immediately validating. there was a school police officer and an army recruiter or two who were there almost everyday "making friends" with the highschoolers, trying to get them to join the american war machine or at least rat on a kid who was juuling in the bathroom. there were semi-regular drug sweeps. honestly though, nationally, AHS is nothing compared to many underfunded and overpoliced black and brown schools nationally.

after the teachers union secured 18% raises in the Fall of 2018, superintendent Alicia Henderson proposed a reduction of 46 staff members—some in the form of layoffs, others being the condensing of rolls. many teachers who had been in the district for decades (therefore made more money and were better protected) were reassigned to positions far from their comfort zone in order to, ostensibly, make them quit. my middle school P.E. teacher was reassigned to teach science to 8th graders. Henderson had an ex-principal teaching kindergarten. At the time she was getting paid more than the governor of Washington.

in 2019 “Michelle Reed, president of the Aberdeen Education Association (the district’s teachers union), said she believes there are “indications of potential significant fiscal mismanagement by the district,” and that the union disagrees with the cuts.” (KXRO)



in 2020, “A day after the Aberdeen Education Association passed a “no confidence” vote of Aberdeen School District Superintendent Dr. Alicia Henderson and asked for her resignation or termination, the Aberdeen School District Board of Directors issued a statement of support for the Superintendent.” ↗

in the spring of 2021, the Aberdeen teachers union filed an unfair labor practices suit with the school district due to the complete ineptitude, utter lack of planning and insight of the hybrid education plans for K-12 education during the pandemic.

(KRAUSS)

finally, in August of 2021, Henderson announced her “decision” to leave the position the following year. the district continues to operate understaffed.

this guy called terry emmert started buying up property in Aberdeen in around 2020. like not just houses but all the big historic buildings on main street that sit empty. as a career he owns professional basketball stadiums. he tried to do this in Portland but was ran out of town. Aberdeen is too poor and libertarian for this. too many little people trying to feel big in positions of power.*

he was allowed by city council members, including dee ann shaw, and mayor pete schave to buy these historic buildings under the stipulation that he was revitalizing them. an anonymous source (shoutout) who works at the PUD told me that there's no electricity or water running to all his buildings, which means that, no, there's no revitalization happening and apparently none planning to. john shaw (yes, they're married) is running the aberdeen museum (which burned down in 2019) out of one of emmert's buildings in Montesano. without embroiling myself in an unfounded defamation claim, i'll just say that while looking through many city council meeting notes i could not find recorded information on this deal. david quigg was his real estate agent for these purchases. quigg is known and loved by locals for being goofy and loose with money. there's a whole lake named quigg, after his grandpappy, he's that kind of money. personally I know him from my stint doing amateur theatre in the harbor growing up. he was daddy warbucks and I was an orphan in the musical Annie if that gives you an idea of his local persona.*

#11 THE WILD WEST OF TAX WRITE-OFFS

*for a fuller history of emmert's plans for Aberdeen, listen to MOLTOUNOW'S podcast episode "Who is Terry Emmert?"



*at this point in my zine i must recognize how many times i have mentioned doing musical theatre. it's not my fault that theatre is my only reference point for the mayor. let this not be a reflection upon my character so help me god, i renounce the artform. while we're at it i would like to mention gary morean, who everyone knows likes ~~stare~~ ~~girls~~ ~~undress~~ ~~took~~ ~~grope~~ ~~teenager~~, but no one says anything about ~~to~~ because he is a major donor of most of the theatres in Aberdeen and a successful lawyer. eat dirt.

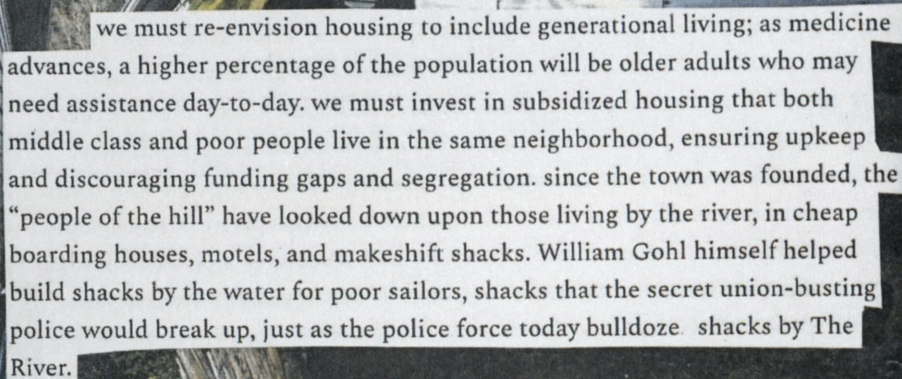
during the 2020 pandemic a whole lot of rich people from big cities moved to Aberdeen cause of the cheap houses. it was on a new york times list and everything. number 9 in the top 10 cities in the country. sight unseen bought. they're complaining on the grays Harbor citizens facebook group how Aberdeen is scarier than Chiapas, Mexico where they went on a mission trip when they were 20. i walked to the 7/11 near my house on felony flats all the time as a teen i never saw anyone get shot they just shot up. there's a nauseous irony to Olympia yuppies telling me how they visited Thrift City in Aberdeen (which locals just call B-Street) and got vintage single stitch tees, leather boots, vintage carhartt, etc, and only spent 12\$ while i know deep within my heart that they walked past a woman outside the laundromat pushing a metal cart full of everything she owns in the world. i guess i don't know this for sure, i am inventing vicious fictions to anger myself, but it feels true, and isn't that the basis of all politics?

if you move somewhere for the cheap housing, & then get upset at the poverty surrounding it. idk. hopeless.

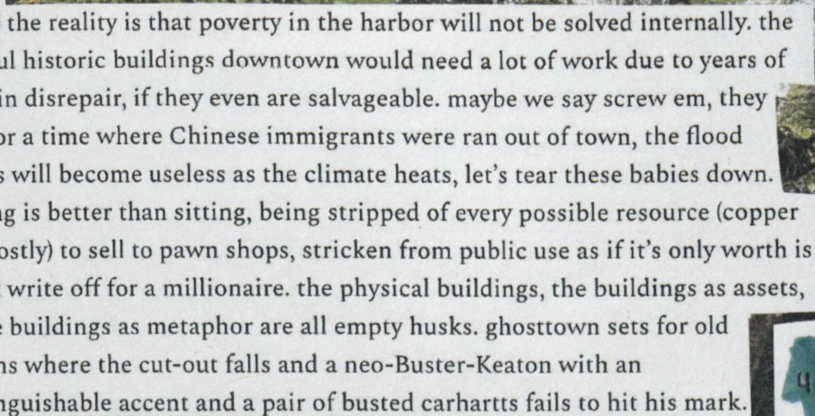
i empathize with those middle class online office workers who can no longer afford the suburban dream in the place they grew up, instead buying a house in a place a lot poorer. but this is an incorrect response to the problem of affordable housing. there is not and there simply will not be enough affordable white-picket-fence-houses. there is not enough space.

This old logging road & the forest surrounding it have been dozed to make way for a cookie-cutter housing development.





we must re-envision housing to include generational living; as medicine advances, a higher percentage of the population will be older adults who may need assistance day-to-day. we must invest in subsidized housing that both middle class and poor people live in the same neighborhood, ensuring upkeep and discouraging funding gaps and segregation. since the town was founded, the "people of the hill" have looked down upon those living by the river, in cheap boarding houses, motels, and makeshift shacks. William Gohl himself helped build shacks by the water for poor sailors, shacks that the secret union-busting police would break up, just as the police force today bulldoze shacks by The River.



the reality is that poverty in the harbor will not be solved internally. the beautiful historic buildings downtown would need a lot of work due to years of sitting in disrepair, if they even are salvageable. maybe we say screw em, they stand for a time where Chinese immigrants were ran out of town, the flood barriers will become useless as the climate heats, let's tear these babies down. anything is better than sitting, being stripped of every possible resource (copper wire mostly) to sell to pawn shops, stricken from public use as if it's only worth is as a tax write off for a millionaire. the physical buildings, the buildings as assets, and the buildings as metaphor are all empty husks. ghosttown sets for old westerns where the cut-out falls and a neo-Buster-Keaton with an indistinguishable accent and a pair of busted carharts fails to hit his mark.

i started writing this zine in 2021 thinking that i would just write about emmert and the housing crisis, addressed to all those who moved to Aberdeen during the pandemic. instead i realized that for my rage and passion to make sense i had to tell a (albeit abridged, mildly narcissistic, and very subjective) full circle history. Aberdeen is a place full of ghosts, a place more susceptible to legend than most because of its size, demographic, relative isolation, and role as a meeting place for the rural populations surrounding it. i called this a mythography because although i tried to nail down what Aberdeen is and why, i think a lot of it escapes in the process of catching. like butterflies.

#12
TAKE
ACTION!



Firelands is a great organization to check out if you are working class in the Harbor and you would like to be involved in more advocacy work, especially that unites workers across racial lines. on their 2024 legislative agenda they are advocating for protection from pollution in rural towns (HB2070), fully funding of washington health care regardless of immigration status, a tax on billionaires (SB5486 & HB1473), rent stabilization (SB5961 & HB2114) and lots more. find them at www.firelandswa.org

the Chehalis River Mutual Aid Network is a wonderful source of updates on community emergencies, and a great way to give directly to community members in need. find them on facebook and instagram @crmutualaidnet. buy your neighbors a pizza or something.

as mentioned earlier, the Poor People's Campaign has a chapter in grays Harbor to fight the 5 evils as defined by Martin Luther King Jr: systematic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, the distorted moral narrative, and the war economy. visit www.washingtonppc.org for information on how to get involved.

follow Aberdeen Local 1312 online for on the ground updates that connect back to the history of Aberdeen and movements around the world. their podcast, *Molotov Now!* is on youtube and is entertaining and informative!

13. Acknowledgments

THANK YOU to everyone who listened to me when i said i was working

on a zine about the Aberdeen housing crisis in 2021, sorry it's coming out now.

thanks Cedar Monroe for the A.R.C., thanks to everyone who dmed me about emmert, thanks patric, who was the first person to call what i was writing "journalism" even if he did put "gonzo" in front of it.

thank you to aiden, for knowing just what to write on the back. ♡

thank you to my professors, Lee Gulyas & Jane Wong especially, for taking my writing seriously even when it was very bad. thanks Dore, also, my 10th grade english teacher & Aberdeen legend. thank you Gary Murrell, the most radical professor at Grays Harbor community college.

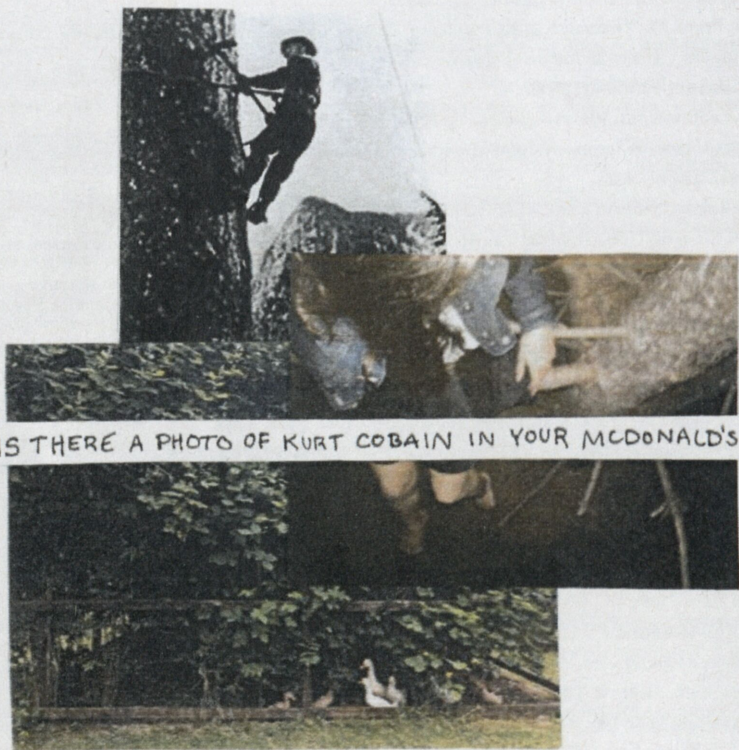
love you all who are still reading this.

44.

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IS THERE A PHOTO OF KURT COBAIN IN YOUR MCDONALD'S?