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the Pacific Sentinel

MARCH 2023



ABOUT TOWN

ARTS & CULTURE

PHOTO BY JADEN QUAYLE

COVER ART BY EDWIN PAQUETTE

WHO WE ARE

The Pacific Sentinel is a student-run magazine that seeks to uplift the diverse cast of voices here at Portland State.

We offer a space for writers and artists of all skill levels to hone their craft, gain professional experience, and express themselves. We are inspired by publications such as The New Yorker and The Atlantic. We advocate for the underrepresented and the marginalized.

We are always looking for new students to join our contributor team as we can't do it without your help. If you're interested in working with us, visit our website at pacsentinel.com or contact our Executive Editor at editor@pacsentinel.com.

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FEATURED THIS ISSUE

camden benesh is a creative from Scottsdale Arizona. He is pursuing creative writing at Portland State University. When he's not in school, he's thinking of new places to travel to and biking around town.

dan chilton was born and raised in Portland, Oregon where he now studies English and Creative Writing at Portland State University. He's a poet, essayist, and fiction writer.

jeremiah hayden is an activist-writer and drummer living in Portland, Oregon. He typically writes about art, politics, social justice and climate change.

matthew hull grew up in the Chesapeake Bay area where he joined the U.S. Coast guard as an aviation mechanic. He received a BBA from Northern Arizona University and is currently working on a MS in Finance. He has a passion for reading, watching movies, and all things finance.

courtney jeffs is from Coos Bay Oregon and moved to Portland to finish her bachelor's degree in business advertising at Portland State University. She enjoys illustrating, story writing, and design.

laura kowall is one of the beloved Californian transplants who has lived in Portland for the last eight years. She's studying Communications at Portland State University in hopes to work in the world of sports media. She likes to spend her free time watching sports and Marvel content.

dylan o'harra is a writer, musician and actor originally from Anchorage, Alaska. He is pursuing Creative Writing and Classic Studies at Portland State University.

ben norman was born in Oregon a while ago. He studies Arts and Letters at Portland State University, and hopes to write novels.

edwin paquette grew up bouncing between the states with their military dad, and rural Denmark with their mother. A senior in the PSUGD program, he spends most of his time working on his thesis, cooking for friends, and replaying old NDS games.

jaden quayle was born and raised in Klamath Falls, Oregon, she now lives in Portland Oregon where she now studies sustainability at Portland state university. She is an environmental photographer.

sarah samms, our Arts & Culture Editor, has returned to school in pursuit of proliferating her creative writing career after many years of traveling, playing music, and hiking mountains all over the world. When Sarah's not writing or at school, she's foraging medicinal herbs, painting, playing music, or hanging out with her pet kids. Check out her other works at www.sarahsamms.com and her online magazine www.travelinwithbones.com.

john watson is a writer, musician, and Christ follower from Salem, Oregon. He studies Political Science and music at PSU, and dedicates his time to loving and serving others. He is also an avid Avett Brothers listener.

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dylan o'harra | PRODUCTION EDITOR **edwin paquette**

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

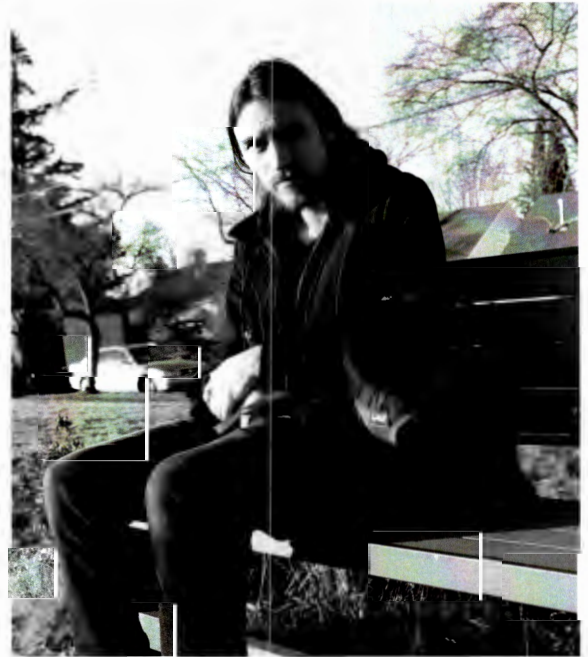
Dear Readers,

Welcome to another edition of the Pacific Sentinel.

Locked in the dead of Winter, hibernating away in the safety and warmth of our homes as we await those warm days so far off, we may forget what an amazingly beautiful place we have the privilege to live in. The Pacific Northwest, locked between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean, holds some of the most picturesque and beautiful landscapes in the world. From the Yukons to the Olympic Peninsula, to Portland's own Forest Park, there's never a shortage of opportunity for new adventures. This place, our home and the home of so many before us is all we have. It's who we are. The air we breathe that gives us life; the bitterly cold and dense oceans that provide us with food; the rich soil chocked full of nutrients; the months of rain that keep this place lush and green. This Earth sustains us and, in turn, we must seek ways to return the favor in the face of rampant, global capitalism which disregards the destruction it reaps.

In this issue of the Sentinel, we are considering our environment, where we've gone wrong, and, perhaps more importantly, where we can still go right. From Laura Kowall's considerations of the ultra-rich and their new egomaniacal "space race", to Jeremiah Hayden's report on Portland's CEI Hub and the dangers of environmental catastrophe, and to Sarah Samms' essay on our disconnect from nature following the Enlightenment era, the fundamental and globally systemic issues of environmental disregard are on each of our minds.

With this issue, you'll also find that we are seeking to continue expanding the scope of this project. Aside from a significant growth in student contributor work and



involvement, something that hasn't been seen since pre-pandemic, we've added a new section with the goal of community building. About Town offers both a showcasing of local businesses and staples of our community for those many students who may not be as familiar with Portland's offerings as well as a small selection of upcoming events that we think you may be interested in. As we continue to grow, we hope that this section will aid you in your newfound adventures in our beautiful city.

As always, thank you for your support and we hope that something here gives you some warmth amidst the biting cold of Winter.

With respect,
Dan Chilton

mr. t's top 7 essential nw bands & musicians

about town

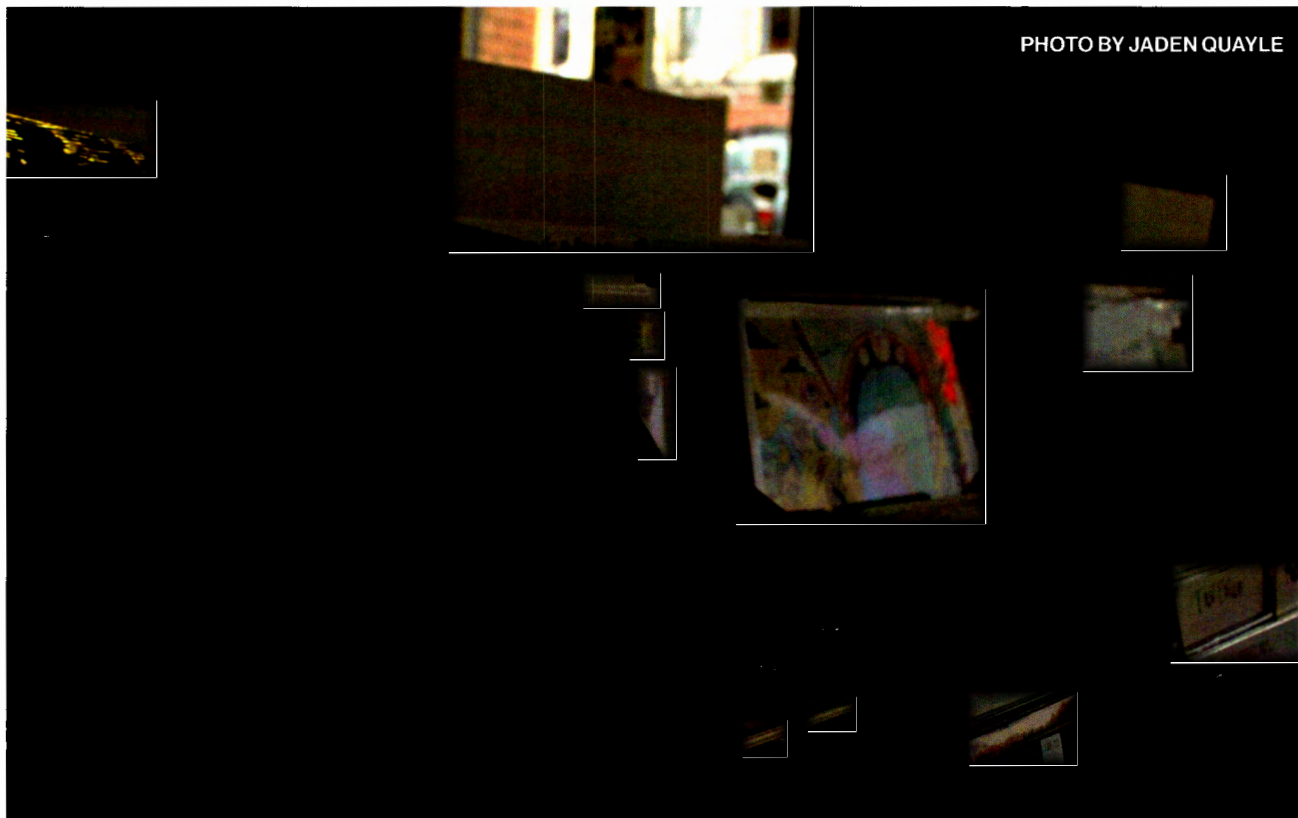


PHOTO BY JADEN QUAYLE

DEAD MOON

"Godparents of DIY garage-flavored punk, beloved worldwide."

WIPERS

"Premier melodic punk from the 70's and 80's, influencing the likes of Nirvana."

POISON IDEA

"Portland's most famous hardcore band, heavy and skull-shattering."

ELLIOTT SMITH

"Arguably the best ballad songwriter of the indie rock scene."

MIRACLE WORKERS

"Portland's best psych band, period."

COOL NUTZ

"Portland's king of Bay-inspired rap."

ESPERANZA SPALDING

"Portland's jazz history remains unexplored in its entirety; Esperanza is a culmination of all its influences."



by 2nd Ave Records

Located on the corner of SW 2nd Ave and SW Harvey Milk in a relatively inconspicuous brick building (if not for the colorful display of music memorabilia in the windows), resides a staple of Portland's music scene. Established in 1982, 2nd Ave Records packs some of the best selections of vinyl, music attire, and CDs found in the city.

Hump! Film Festival

\$25

@ Revolution Hall
FRI. 03/03 – SAT. 03/11

Portland's amateur erotic film festival showcases short, curated films meant to display the variety of human beauty beyond normative eroticism. 21+ event.

Portland Lit Mic

FREE

@ Rose City Book Pub
FRI. 03/10

PSU students started this open mic to allow writers to read longer form works in a public setting. Get there early if you want to read—slots fill up fast. Sign-ups start @ 6:30 PM, and the event starts at 7:00 PM.

Post-Art No Wave Show

CASH

@ Turn! Turn! Turn!
SUN. 03/19 (DOORS @ 8PM)

Lo glo, Social Stomach, & Vardaman Ensemble: Lo glo makes creepy low-fi experiments. Social Stomach is a weirdo art duo—half poetry, half drum noise. Vardaman Ensemble brings tumultuous, dance-adjacent jazz. 21+ event.

Winter Music Festival

\$40-45

@ Elks Lodge
SAT. 03/11

Formally known as the Winter Blues Music Festival, this is a day of music and entertainment before the start of Spring, including legendary blues artist Sugaray Rayford.

Candlemass w/ Special Guests

\$35

@ Star Theater
SAT. 03/11 (DOORS @ 8PM)

Swedish doom metal band established in 1984. On tour for their thirteenth studio album, Sweet Evil Sun. For fans of Black Sabbath, Pentagram, Melvins, and Saint Vitus.

Portland Saturday Market

FREE

@ Waterfront Park
EVERY SAT. 10AM - 5PM

Founded in 1974, the Portland Saturday Market is a mix "an art show, a live street concert and an open-air bazaar." After closing shop for the Winter, it is back open as spring (slowly) moves in.

events calendar

what happens when the artist becomes the art?

arts & culture

Burnout on *The Menu*

BY BEN NORMAN

The subheading on HBO Max describes Mark Mylod's *The Menu* as a "delectable horror satire." Perhaps that's partially right. Satirical horror, as a genre, is generally considered comedic. The Scary Movie franchise, for instance, or from a certain perspective, Violent Night, the new David Harbour flick in which he plays the most unhinged Saint Nick ever put to screen. In *The Menu*, however, there is less comedy present and more of an introspective hypothesis. What if there was a chef, on top of the world, who lost his mind due to the pressures of his position?

The Menu is part power fantasy, part horror movie, part social commentary. "Margot," played by Ana Taylor-Joy, is a guest of her presumed partner Tyler on an island home to one of the world's best restaurants, Hawthorn, run by Ralph Fiennes' Julian Slowik, an internationally famous chef. Their specialty is bread. Halfway through the meal, which is presented by the movie and the chefs in several courses, conveniently diagrammed in tastefully-shot mini-presentations which interrupt the characters and the plot, much like on a cooking show, one of the chefs kills himself because, Slowik explains: "He will never be great." This begins a long chain of similarly shocking scenes which takes the plot roaring to the end of the movie.

Without time to rest and enjoy the fruits of their labor, every person will eventually succumb to dreaded burnout.

Burnout, which is referenced literally at the climax of the film, affects everyone, no matter how passionate they are. It is a creeping sensation of disillusionment that eventually takes over your mind and won't let you enjoy the things you used to love. Passion, burnout's opposite, is a force which can drive people to reach heights they

never thought they would, but without time to rest and enjoy the fruits of their labor, every person will eventually succumb to dreaded burnout. It is an unfortunate reality of the creative world that although you may love to do something, the minute you are forced to do it for a living, or out of some expectation that you ought to, or even due to internal pressures (you feel you should, or you'd let people down, or you have to prove it to yourself you can), you begin to lose your love for it. This is what drives so many creatives to drugs, alcohol, or suicide. The cycle of burnout is vicious.

Slaving away to your passions is not sustainable.

To be a great artist, and particularly a great chef, is to be tortured, the film argues, and this torture is due to the commodification of culture. The critics, the fans, the rich douchebags who only eat at your restaurant for status, even the loyal regulars; all of these people are contributors to this commodification. Julian Slowik has been ripped apart by his own success, and cannot live with himself anymore. Therefore, he decides to (spoiler alert) symbolically commit self-immolation, and take all of the people who have caused his grief over the years with him. (It is with noting that the film makes clear it was not Slowik's original idea to kill everyone, but one of his chefs, Katherine).

This critique, presented obliquely by *The Menu*, is indicative not just of the problems with the food industry, but with art as a whole. Slaving away to your passions is not sustainable.

During the COVID-19 pandemic (which was due in no small part to climate change) many food worker's jobs were put at risk. Some turned to Doordash or other delivery apps, some tried to sustain themselves with unemployment and stimulus checks, and others simply gave up. The service industry is cutthroat without any complicating factors, and a global pandemic which

forced many restaurants to either close entirely or significantly cut back on staff led to a work environment that was even more stressful than before.

Part of the appeal of making food is seeing how people will react when they eat it, but when even that is taken away, the job becomes soul-destroying. Most restaurants that survived switched to to-go orders only. Workers became machines on a production line, the intermediaries between the red-bag-holding college kids standing in their lobbies on their phones and the faceless clientele, and burnout set in in droves. One can't help but believe this paradigm shift had something to do with the writing of *The Menu*.

The crux of the film, the most intense scene not because of stakes or high drama, but because of its implications, is when "Margot," who was not on the original guest list and has in fact been hired as an escort by the Slowik megafan (and

detestable person) Tyler, orders a cheeseburger to go. A slightly ridiculous premise to build the core of the film on, but the acting carries it through. The message here is not necessarily one of value judgment: a cheeseburger is a simple dish, made millions of times a day across America, and Julian Slowik, we learn in the film, used to be a line cook.

He has secretly kept his old "Employee of the Month" plaque, even here at his insanely overblown and pretentious food Eden. It is a symbol of the early beginnings of an artist, a reminder of where they came from, the passion they used to have, the ambition and the regret of fulfilling their dreams only

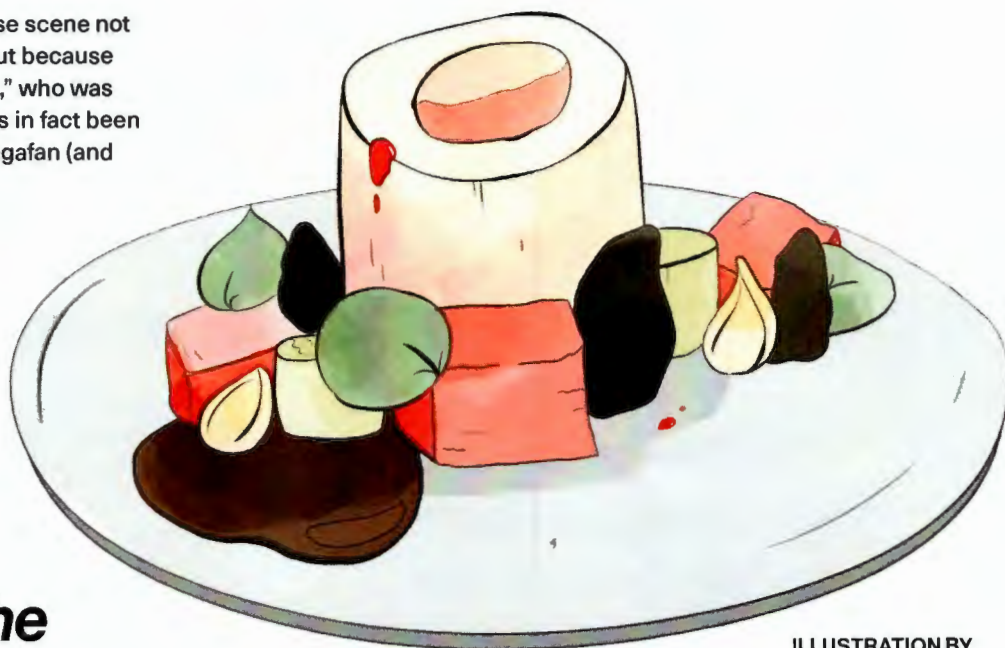


ILLUSTRATION BY
COURTNEY JEFFS

“

This critique, presented obliquely by *The Menu*, is indicative not just of the problems with the food industry, but with art as a whole.

”

to lose their love for the craft which drove them to create in the first place. And so the cheeseburger is a reminder of the passion he once had and has since lost; he lets her go.

Occasionally hamfisted as it may be, *The Menu* is still an interesting angle on the contemporary artist's dilemma: make money or enjoy life? Or, to put it another way: you can't have your cake and eat it too.



Sustainability, Art, and Community

BY SARAH SAMMS

Justin Boot—or as he likes to be called, Boot—trailed his way from the dense black spruce forest of rural Alaska in early January 2023 on his Northwest Tour where he played his honky tonk music from Port Townsend, Washington to Portland, Oregon. But Boot isn't just a musician. He is the host of the bi-annual Trapper Creek Bluegrass Festival (TCBG) that he hosts on his 80 acre property in Trapper Creek, Alaska (population 499)—where he has old school buses, tree houses, teepees and even sailboats converted into living spaces and is one of the founding members of The Subarctic Collective along with Kane Stanton, permaculturist Josh Smith who runs the nonprofit Regenerative Renaissance, and Chelsea and Matthew Dishner who have a farming project under the Alaska State Fair nonprofit.

When Boot took the stage of Laurelthirst Pub in Portland, he enamored the crowd with his towering stature, cowboy hat, rowdy guitar picking, and jokes that were dusted with a hint of outdated humor. Boot played his set to a lively crowd who danced to his tunes and laughed at his obscure jokes—capturing the undivided attention of the bar patrons. He seems to do just that, no matter where he goes.

“People coming together and building a better future for both the environment and their community”

Boot has a long history of connecting with the earth and building community in sustainable and nourishing ways. He spent a lot of time in the Alaskan villages from ages 15-20 where he immersed himself in Alaskan Native culture, eating Muktuk, a traditional Inuit and Chukchi meal of frozen whale skin and blubber— and Akutaq, a sweet Inuit treat made from fish/animal fat or seal oil, with berries and Crisco. He also learned how to set net for salmon, herd reindeer, and hunt.

It's during this time he saw the Yukon Fiddlers who played Athabascan Fiddle music. This was integrated into the Athabascan culture in the mid-1800's, when trappers and miners from the Hudson Bay co. traveled the Yukon river and taught the Athabascan Native people—that they met along the way—dance routines and the fiddle. This eventually evolved into the fiddle style named Athabascan Fiddle. All of this to lay the foundation in which the way Boot would live his life; sustainably and environmentally responsible while living off his art form.

His newest endeavor is taking on the cultivation of a nonprofit organization titled, The Subarctic Collective. The collective is in its early stages of its cultivation, but aims to teach people across Alaska sustainable and environmentally conscious practices that could greatly benefit these communities, especially the rural ones.

Their intention is to bring workshops all over the state and teach folks about:

carbon credits

Big corporations that impose harm into the environment by putting ungodly amounts of carbon into the atmosphere will pay people for growing crops that take carbon out of the atmosphere. Boot, an advocate for hemp farming said, “this is one of the only ways to make money on hemp in Alaska.” This additional income could be a huge relief for many rural community members that grow hemp, barley, and other agricultural products.

energy efficient structures

A few years ago Boot started branching out from converting old vehicles (of land and water) into living spaces to building energy efficient structures. The Subarctic Collective's goal is to bring folks out to his property and learn how to build things such as thermal batteries; a storage unit that utilizes solar heat and stores it in a way that releases the heat slowly into the home.

energy efficient structures (cont.)

They will also be teaching folks how to build earthship-like structures. These structures operate on solar energy, renewable energy, natural and repurposed materials, water conservation, and food production. You can find entire communities of these earthship structures on the outskirts of Taos, New Mexico.



ILLUSTRATION BY
COURTNEY JEFFS

sustainable agriculture

The way that agriculture is done today is highly unsustainable. Soil is not made to host one kind of a crop over and over. It also can not replenish its nutrients without proper turning. The Collective aims to teach sustainable agriculture practices such as turning over crops with livestock.

communities

When I asked Boot in our interview, "so, who exactly will the Collective serve? The villages in the Alaskan bush?" He answered, "everyone."

"We can take the current climate crisis into our own hands and make a difference"

The Subarctic Collective will serve anyone who is open to learning in the state of Alaska. Eventually, they would like to have paid internships for underprivileged youth that will be hosted on his property where they can have hands-on experience and learn skills that will aid in a lifetime of sustainability and get the opportunity to create art in their work.

The Subarctic Collective is a perfect example of people coming together and building a better future for both the environment and their community. It's also an exceptional model of how we can take the current climate crisis into our own hands and make a difference.

To find Justin Boots music, go to www.reverbnation.com/thegoddamnranchnhandband and if you have any questions about the Subarctic Collective or want to get involved, you can email him at: subarcticcollective@gmail.com.





THE ENLIGHTENMENT

BY SARAH SAMMS

“We do not ‘come into’ this world; we come out of it... Every individual is an expression of the whole realm of nature, a unique action of the total universe. This fact is rarely, if ever, experienced by most individuals. Even those who know it to be true in theory do not sense or feel it, but continue to be aware of themselves as isolated ‘egos’ inside bags of skin.”

This quote, from Alan W. Watts, resonates in the heart of what has been lost on most of today’s society. Most people think of nature as this pastoral place, a beautiful thing we need to live in harmony with and ignore the dangers it beholds. All living organisms in the wild spend the entirety of their lives trying to survive. Humans have created a world where we don’t have this stress and have created a better world for us. Unfortunately, this does not benefit any other life form other than the human species; rather we create environments that some fear will eventually not be able to host even our own kind. Forging fear of heuristic thinking and its effects on the planet.

We disconnect from nature when we conceive or utilize technology, for example a smartphone, and don’t think of its interconnectedness to nature.

the Human Disconnect

Technology today is no more drastic or complex of an innovation than the pyramids the Egyptians built, or the inner workings of a plant. Humans, plants, phones, computers, pyramids, soil—are all a result of an evolutionary process of information that has proliferated in time. We disconnect from nature when we conceive or utilize technology, for example a smartphone, and don’t think of its interconnectedness to nature. We don’t take the time to understand all the natural systems that contribute to what makes up the phone; what do we mine from the earth to get the chips for the phones; what countries are we exploiting in the innovation process; what ocean is polluted with the by-products of our consumption. By understanding these things, we connect back to nature, the force that once was our venerated storyteller of how the world worked.

The Sub-Saharan region of the African continent is composed of ubiquitous mountains that tower over the array of vast wildlife it fosters. This compelling environment, home to a multitude of creatures, while breathtaking, also harbors great danger within its borders. A great danger that many of the Egyptian Pharaohs braved to take their reign in glorious opulence and the first innovative society in the western world.



* featured

Humankind has depended on lore, legend, and myth to explain the enigmas abundant across the world since oral tradition was birthed by our ancestors. Many scientists today have a theory that a profound piece of lore is the reason that one of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Egyptian Pyramids, were erected by the blood, sweat, and tears of its people.

The theory posits that many of the Pharaohs from the southern region of Africa watched the sun set over the mountains in the west. These mountains were naturally assumed to be the Sun God, Ra's, home—where he went to sleep when the Star God, Sah, and his consort Sopdet, who arose to shine in the sweeping darkness of the skies.

History continued to follow this pattern of groups of people pulling society backwards whenever they evolve.

When these voyeuristic Pharaohs arrived in Egypt—a flat land dusted in cracked earth and copper sand—they wondered where the solar deity went to sleep. Afraid that Ra would go without refuge at night, they built the Egyptian Pyramids in recognition of the complex innovation and construction required. These monuments were the beginning of humankind's cognitive advancement. The Egyptians were able to take the earth's resources and build these structures from natural materials, all because they ignored nature and rebuffed contemporary beliefs which told them how the world worked—and asked themselves: is there a better way?

BONFIRES OF THE VANITIES

Humankind's history of cognitive progression is anything but linear. There has always been a pattern of what Girolamo Savonarola—an Italian

Dominican priest and leader during the 1490's who was known for his anti-renaissance preaching, book burning, religious reformation, and art destruction—declared the bonfire of the vanities; “a burning of objects condemned by religious authorities as occasions of sin.” The first official ‘bonfire of vanities’ did not take place until February 7, 1497 in the world's art and cultural center Florence, Italy. There, on Shrove Tuesday, Savonarola and his followers burned thousands of classic art pieces—fine dresses, musical instruments, manuscripts, paintings, cosmetics, vanities, mirrors, and other works—in a large bonfire. Devastating as it was, this was nothing new as human society had already participated in this pattern in other respects.

When the Assyrians conquered Egypt, instead of adapting the sophisticated things the Egyptians developed, like writing in an alphabet—they abandoned their advancements entirely, thus renouncing the human cognitive development the Egyptians achieved in their era. The very same occurrence happened in Ancient Greek when Sparta took over, and again when the Christians conquered Rome. History continued to follow this pattern of groups of people pulling society backwards whenever they evolve. In effort to, if you will, “make _____ great again.”

THE ENLIGHTENMENT

The Enlightenment period, or the Enlightenment, dominated Europe and influenced other nations globally in the 17th and 18th centuries. The Enlightenment is when humans started taking advantage of the unique aspect of the human brain which sets us apart from other living organisms: our consciousness and with it the ability to advance society in ways that were beyond imaginable.

**To reconnect
with nature, is to
reconnect with our
most powerful tool for
survival—our brain.**

We began to question dogma and tradition. We began to question if we should separate church and state. We began to question our own logic and our peers in order to find a better answer. To understand what our purpose is. Why we matter. Why the world turns and what gravity

really is. Why rain falls from the sky and is it truly the tears of a God. Asking infinite questions about the infinite. Cultivating societal groups who indulged in philosophy, intellect, and eventually the roots of what we call science today. This period is the foundation for the forward-thinking that resulted into reformed societies that started the tradition of continuing to progress cognitively, with only minor setbacks in its history since.

**“WE CAME OUT OF THIS
WORLD, NOT INTO IT”**

The Enlightenment period is when we began to betray our connection with nature, but we didn't have to. We became the dominant species of this earth not by our unsharpened claws and dull teeth—but by the proliferation of our cognition. To reconnect with nature, is to reconnect with our most powerful tool for survival—our brain. When we make the intention to understand that we come out of this world, not into it—we can begin to discern how we can better serve this planet, and all living and inanimate things that rely on the survival of this not-so ethereal world.



(P R E V)
NEOCLASSISM
PAINTING “APOLLO
& THE MUSES” BY
ANTON RAPHEAL
MENGS (1761)

(L E F T)
ROMANTICISM
PAINTING
“LIBERTY LEADING
THE PEOPLE” BY
EUGÈNE DELA-
CROIX (1830)



OVERFLOW PHOTOGRAPHY BY JADEN QUAYLE

ZENTH ENERGY
CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE HUB





Late in the evening on February 3, a train derailed in East Palestine, Ohio. Of the 141 railcars, 38 derailed, and 14 were carrying the potentially explosive, toxic gas vinyl chloride. Everyone within a mile radius of the small town of 5,000 were forced to evacuate, as Ohio Governor Mike DeWine warned of “the potential of a catastrophic tanker failure which could cause an explosion with the potential of deadly shrapnel traveling up to a mile.” It was like the “airborne toxic event” from the dark Don DeLillo book and absurdist Noah Baumbach film adaptation *White Noise*; a film that—to blur the line between art and life—was actually shot in towns near East Palestine two years earlier. The evacuation order was lifted after five days, but residents of East Palestine returned home to find some 3,500 fish dead in the waterways, sparking concerns of the long-term ecological and public health effects.

Could a disaster like this ever happen in Portland?

Just north of downtown Portland, where forests and waters interfaced for time immemorial, the Critical Energy Infrastructure Hub (CEI Hub) now houses in its 630 tanks more than 90% of all liquid fuel for the state of Oregon, including jet fuel for Portland International Airport. A Houston, Texas-based oil company, Zenith Energy regularly brings highly flammable Bakken crude and highly toxic tar sands oils by train to storage tanks at the CEI Hub, many of which were built in the 1950s. As far as anyone knows, they don’t transport vinyl chloride, but Zenith has historically tried to pull the wool over the public’s eyes since they started transporting oil through the former asphalt terminal in 2014, so a cynic might say no one knows for sure. It is reasonable to be skeptical of a wolf dressed as a lamb.

how to dismantle a bomb

news

WHAT CAN PORTLAND
LEARN FROM THE OHIO
TRAIN DERAILMENT?

BY JEREMIAH
HAYDEN

WITH

PHOTOS BY
JADEN QUAYLE

The train tracks run through the Linnton neighborhood between the edge of Forest Park and the shores of the Willamette River. Until the mid-1800s, the location was a seasonal lake, and a place of community, food, and medicine for Indigenous tribes. To this day, tribes retain water rights, but access to the river is effectively impossible. Because they are built on the soil of a former lake, the tanks are vulnerable to liquefaction—imagine sand bouncing on a speaker playing music—in the instance of a megathrust earthquake. Known colloquially as “The Big One”—a Richter-9-plus quake is statistically overdue in the Cascadia Subduction Zone off the Oregon Coast, and Portland community members have been trying to convince local leaders to act with appropriate urgency.

Could a disaster like this ever happen in Portland?

On June 3, 2016, roughly 70 miles from Portland, a train carrying Bakken crude oil derailed in Mosier, Oregon, spilling more than 45,000 gallons of oil and igniting a 14-hour firefight. The same type transported by Zenith, Bakken oil comes from a rock unit in Montana, North

Dakota, and southern Saskatchewan Canada, and ignites at a lower temperature than other forms of crude oil. The 500-population town of Mosier was left without water for several days, and sewage had to be shipped to nearby Hood River for months. In a recent interview, Mosier mayor Arlene Burns said “the [cars] that were very close to the fire that were not leaking, they could have exploded in what’s called a bleve explosion, which is just so hot and pressured. The entire city would’ve been in the blast zone if one of these explosions had happened, as well as all four lanes of the freeway.”

In August of 2022, the City of Portland denied Zenith a Land Use Compatibility Statement (LUCS)—pronounced “lux”—citing potential impact on the environment and on historically marginalized groups. That permit is necessary for Zenith to renew an air quality permit from DEQ and continue doing business. In a decision lauded by activists at that time, Commissioner Dan Ryan stated, “it is time to stop kicking our declarations down the road of intention—and start acting with the urgency needed at this critical time in history.”

But in November, in his position as head of the Bureau of Development Services (BDS), Ryan gifted a new LUCS to Zenith after they made vague promises to transition to “renewable energy” over the course of the next five years. Community members remain skeptical. In 2019, Zenith



had promised to reduce the amount of crude oil they transport through their terminals, but a February 2023 report showed crude oil transport had increased from 337 million gallons in 2021 to 374 million in 2022—an increase of 47 million gallons, or well over 100 trains per year.

City Commissioner Carmen Rubio took over BDS after the newly elected council took over in 2023, and in that role has the power to rescind the LUCS. Beyond a short meeting on January 17—including four activists, Rubio, Ryan, and about a dozen staffers—City Hall has refused to meet with community members to hear their concerns. According to public records, Rubio's office did however coordinate with Zenith's PR representatives prior to that meeting. Josie Moberg, a legal fellow with the grassroots climate advocacy group Breach Collective, was in the January meeting, and said it was abruptly cut off at the 30-minute mark despite the promise of an open-ended conversation. "The most information we got out of the meeting was how scared the city is of getting sued," she said. "You can always cite fear of litigation when you're citing industry over community, but that's a very frustrating answer for the community to hear."

For their part, community activists are primarily concerned with the long-term health risks of the CEI Hub, catastrophic failure in the instance of an earthquake, or a potentially explosive train derailment like those seen in East Palestine, or closer to home in Mosier. The United States sees a rough average of 1,700 train derailments per year, and while not all of those are carrying toxic material,

the inherent risk is notable. According to the non-profit Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility, 26% of Multnomah County residents are within a half-mile of a rail line that carries oil by rail. Black and Pacific-Islander residents are respectively 1.8 and 1.48 times more likely to live in an evacuation zone than white residents. Moberg is more concerned with those stakes than she is with the city's legal battle. "Even five years from now, if they keep their LUCS, they're going to be transporting all sorts of different flammable biodiesels," Moberg said. "These things also warrant a huge conversation about public health and safety."

City Hall has refused to meet with community members to hear their concerns.

After public testimony in the February 9 council meeting, Commissioner Rubio broke her silence and directly addressed activists in attendance. "As Commissioner Ryan made clear last year, Zenith will be expected to maintain compliance with full transparency and to ensure the agreements are actualized," she said. Activists reflexively laughed in unison, knowing that Zenith has





at no point been transparent in their business dealings with Portland. In a February 15 email to me, Rubio's office dodged questions, but wrote in a prepared statement that "the city cannot create a special procedure for one application," then passed the buck to DEQ, state, county, and federal government. "I welcome more energy-sector innovation to demonstrate to us, and follow through on, a shift away from fossil fuels and toward cleaner fuels," she stated. "Our time to act is closing. Our time to act together is now."

Moberg says it is reasonable to argue that Zenith's current and proposed activities pose too great a risk to public and environmental health. "People are genuinely scared for our families' lives, watching Zenith oil trains weave through our neighborhoods daily," she said. She also recognizes that there is an inherent tension between the severity of the problem and the minutiae necessary to dismantle it. "Yeah, maybe the LUCS isn't the greatest tool ever. Maybe it's boring. But Portland's stuck with 90% of the petrol-based fuels in the state on our riverfront, and Zenith is going to be status quo doing that work. It does sound boring, but it's also just outrageous—especially in a progressive city like Portland."



“ People are genuinely scared for our families' lives, watching Zenith oil trains... ”



WORKERS STRIKES OUTSIDE OF
ZENITH ENERGY

the new space race

billionaires still don't realize that they're the problem



opinion

BY LAURA KOWALL

With the way in which things are going, now, more than ever feels like a great time to get strapped into a rocket and be blasted into outer space with a destination of another habitable planet. Especially knowing the autopilot is set on course to take us to a new civilization where the planet isn't trying to purge us like day old gas station sushi. No judgment of the Earth though, if there was something stealing all of my resources without any work of replenishment, I would react in the same way.

The idea of our human civilization living somewhere other than planet Earth, or purchasing a ticket to get past the stratosphere for a joy ride, is starting to become less of a fever dream and more of a tangible reality as we make massive scientific progressions — but at what cost will to the Earth? And who can afford to join in on the fun?

You may have noticed over the last decade or so that the interest in achieving regular space travel, like catching the Amtrak to Seattle to catch a ball game, is starting to skyrocket. The leading companies in the game of making space more accessible include Elon Musk's SpaceX, Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic, and Blue Origin, founded by Jeff Bezos. However, what is happening is that these tax evaders have created a fun little game only they can play: who can produce the first commercial-use orbital rocket for a quick little cruise around the planet? It is a new age "space race," which is rapidly increasing the damage to our ozone layer.

They're leaving us behind to torch in their rocket fumes

Musk takes the vision a little bit further with plans to get these rockets to the planet Mars, in hopes of setting up a civilization on a surface that hasn't been completely ravished by human existence. However, it seems rather ironic—Musk is apparently aware of how unstable the Earth is becoming, while also being one of the biggest contributors of black carbon, or soot, into the atmosphere.

When each of these million-dollar-joy-ride rockets blast through the Earth's outermost atmospheric layer, the stratosphere, soot gets trapped and then reflects light onto the already extremely fragile ozone layer, (causing it to thin) and wreaks havoc on the Earth's surface. In dreaming of human existence stretching through space, we are creating more damage to the planet we already exist on. The billionaires are able to continue the abuse because there is currently no protection against rocket emissions in the stratosphere.

Researchers have found a potential global temperature rise of 1 to 4 degrees Fahrenheit

One of the biggest reasons why there are no regulations on the pollutants put out into the stratosphere is a simple one: it is a new age problem and widely misunderstood. Scientists at NOAA have conducted several studies to look into the impacts of the projected 10-fold increase of rocket emissions that will most likely happen over the next decade and, not surprisingly, have found a few areas of concern.

One of the potential issues found is that the kerosene-burning rocket engines emitting the soot (and thus causing the thinning effect of the ozone layer) will cause harmful impacts on the amount of harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation produced by the sun. UV radiation is known to cause skin cancers and weaken immune systems to us humans, as well as interfering with ecosystems and agricultural cultivation. And, as we all know, all of those things are already in a high-risk category just from things we are doing on the ground.

Through running a climate model simulation that dumps 10,000 metric tons of black carbon into the stratosphere over a 50 year period, researchers have found a potential global temperature rise of 1 to 4 degrees Fahrenheit. And if temperatures increase to that degree, it has the

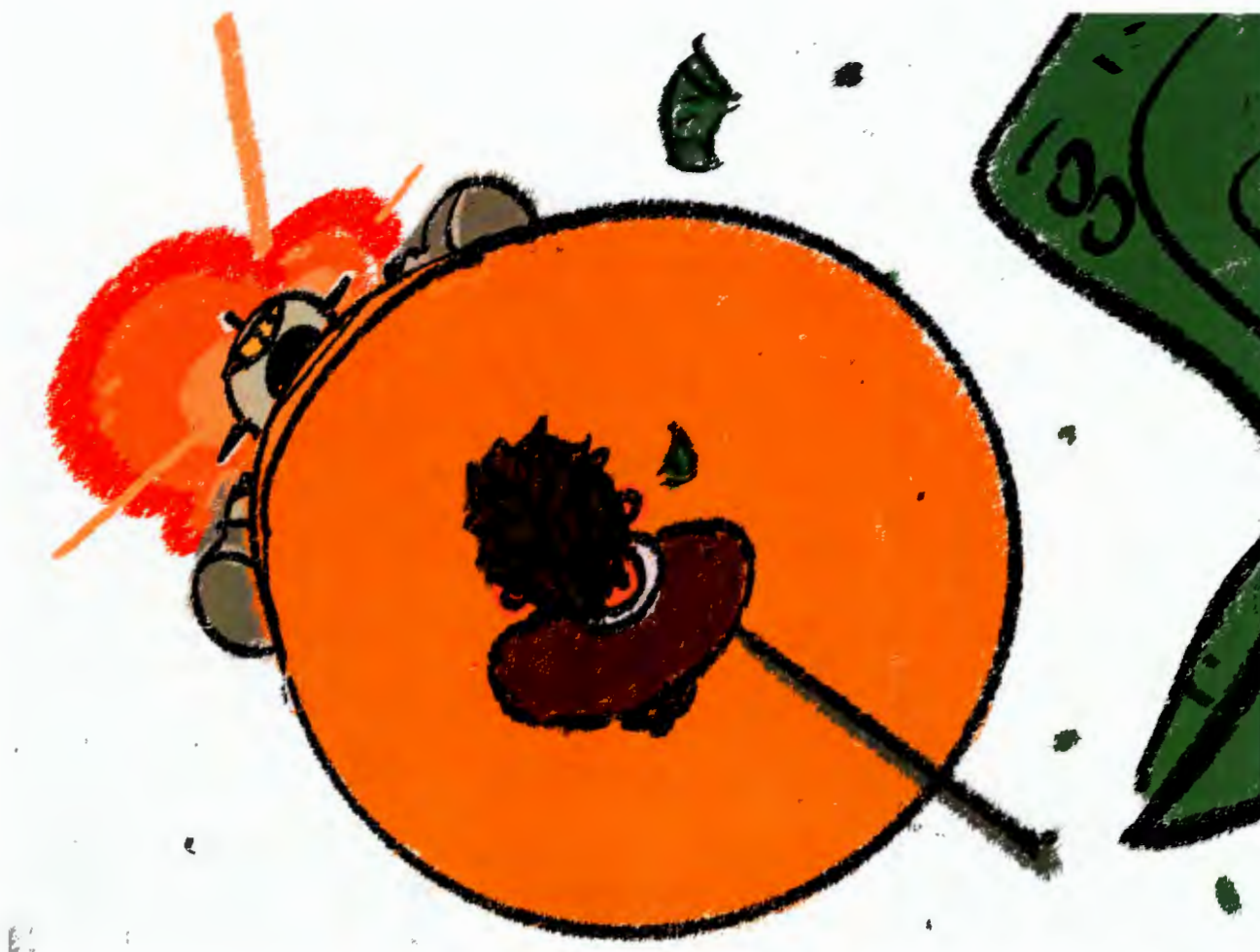


ILLUSTRATION BY CAMDEN BENESH

potential of disrupting the global circulation patterns that help to circulate the subtropical jet streams—even more than it already has.

Billionaires trying to one up each other with their excess fuck-you money

Outside of the scientific impact of the billionaires trying to one up each other with their excess fuck-you money to fly to outer space with, there is a huge socioeconomic divide in who will actually be able to access a joy ride through the stars. If you want to hop on a flight with Mr. Bezos on his Blue Origin rocket or Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic

spaceship, well you will need to cut a check in the price range of \$250,000 to \$500,000 dollars for a suborbital trip. However, if you really want to shoot for the stars, you can hitch a ride with SpaceX for a cool \$55 million dollars. But don't worry, food costs are included in that price. It seems too easy to predict the inevitable PR fluff stories that will come out once these overly-praised billionaires start to participate in "charity trips" for people who live in significantly lower tax brackets.

But for now, those of us who chortle at the idea of accessible space travel within our lifetime get to scroll through social media to see the rich live out their best lives. But it still begs the question: will these billionaires be able to see the irony that the Earth is becoming less and less habitable due in part to their own actions? They're leaving us behind to torch in their rocket fumes.



mycoremediation.

opinion

Environmental Solutions from the Wood-Wide Web

BY DYLAN O'HARRA

Life in the 21st century often feels like a never-ending doom scroll. Oil spills. Hazardous waste polluting soil in the wake of forest fires. Lead-contaminated drinking water. Nuclear radiation. What do these problems have in common? First of all, they are common, localized disasters caused by our modern, industrial world—which contribute in a myriad of ways to the current mass-extinction event on Planet Earth. And secondly, each of these human-made threats to life share a remedy: fungi.

Like any solution to complex problems, fungi do not offer a silver bullet. The scientific community has barely begun to scratch the surface on the fungi kingdom in general, much less on the incredible applications of individual species to mitigate threats to our ecosystem. But across the globe, from Chernobyl to Spokane, fungi are demonstrating remarkable abilities to process and remove contaminants at sites of ecological harm. Fungi can clean soil and water of crude oil, radiation, microplastics and heavy metals. This process is called mycoremediation and it is effective, cheap, and in some cases, offers edible mushrooms as a byproduct.

We are lacking an actionable, global consensus on addressing climate change, and are plagued by a grotesque shirking of accountability from corporations and governments—the responsible parties for environmental disasters. As a recent example, union efforts thwarted by the United States congress and President Joe Biden to strengthen safety protocols could have prevented the catastrophic train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio on February 3rd.

We need practical methods of stewardship that do not rely on the conscience of CEOs, senators, and lobbyists. Lifestyle choices such as commuting via bicycle, buying a Tesla, or sorting your recycling products (commonly marketed as “reducing your footprint”) are not enough to stop the deadly pollution of our waterways and air. To have meaningful effect, we need to turn our efforts directly to the source: the earth, and the extraordinary kingdom of organisms with the power to solve these problems.

Fungi at a glance

With a mere 148,000 species identified and described by science, it is now estimated the fungi kingdom includes between 2.2 and 3.8 million species. Described as the “link between animals and plants” by Paul Stamets, (author of *Mycelium Running: How Mushrooms Can Save the World*), fungi are vital to ecosystems as prolific decomposers of matter. The vegetative fungal growth in the soil (or other tissue) forms large, web-like structures, called mycelium. Threads of these mycelial webs (called hyphae) secrete enzymes into or onto its “food,” breaking down matter to a molecular level and redistributing it throughout the mycelial web in a process called “active transport.” Mycelial webs interact with other life forms in the soil, sharing and distributing energy with the roots of trees and plants. The health

of a forest depends on mycorrhizae—the symbiotic network created by the connection of mycelium and the roots of plants. This is affectionately known as the “wood-wide web.”

Mycelium's biggest claim to fame is in producing the fruiting bodies known as mushrooms. Mushrooms are diverse in and of themselves. Human beings have long ingested mushrooms for many reasons: some taste good, some help rebuild human cells during cancer treatment, and some cause psychotropic effects on the brain (see the Pacific Sentinel's January issue for Daniel Bloomfield's article exploring therapeutic applications of the latter.)

Amazingly, a mycelial web is a single organism. In fact, the current title of “largest organism on Earth” is held by a honey fungus specimen in Eastern Oregon—comprising over 2,000 acres in the Malheur National Forest. The *Armillaria ostoyae* is a single living organism connecting with roots of millions of individual trees and plants; it is estimated to be between 2,400 and 8,000 years old.

These unique traits are what make fungi well-suited to handle pollutants in localized areas. Utilizing enzymes in its mycelial web, fungi can quickly and dramatically decontaminate environments and waterways.

Here are six ways mycoremediation has the potential to clean up human-caused disasters and restore balance to the force.

1. Radioactive Waste Sites

In 1991, five years after Reactor No. 4 melted down at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant outside Pripyat, Ukraine (then U.S.S.R.), “radiotrophic” fungi were discovered growing inside the plant.

Since then, research at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine identified three species of fungi that appear to consume radiation, breaking down radionuclides for energy in a unique process called radiosynthesis.

Radiotrophic fungi have not yet been studied in depth, but scientists on the International Space Station published results from a 2020 study on how the strain *Cladosporium sphaerospermum* can be used to as a literal shield (9-21mm thick) to protect astronauts from ionizing radiation en route to Mars.

Back home on Earth, radiotrophic fungi have much more practical potential. With at least 21 “stranded” nuclear waste sites in the United States alone, and many times more than that globally, we could cultivate radiotrophic fungi to begin processing our otherwise dangerous lodes. (To give credit where credit is due; scientists have also discovered strains of bacteria capable of processing radiation.)

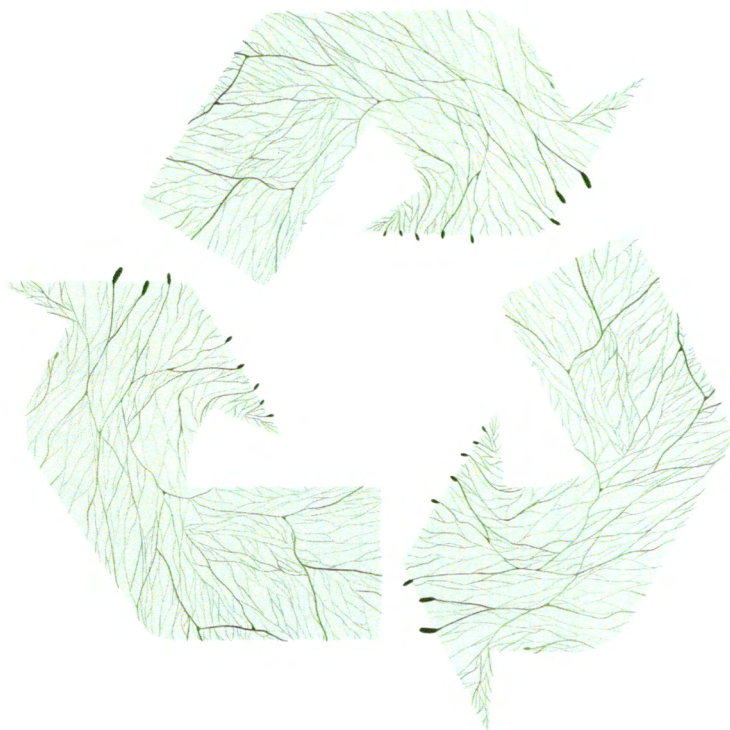


ILLUSTRATION BY COURTNEY JEFFS

2. Contaminated Waterways

In a 2020 study published in “Water, Air and Soil Pollution,” water from the Chicago River contaminated with the bacterium *E. Coli* was filtered through wheat straw inoculated with the mycelia of *Pleurotus ostreatus* (the species that produces oyster mushrooms). The study presents a 99% reduction of *E. coli* within 48 hours.

In Washington state, the Spokane River Regional Toxics Taskforce

is engaging an effort to clean the Spokane River. The river was negligently polluted with high concentrations of polychlorinated biphenyls—a carcinogen that affects human’s nervous, reproductive, endocrine and immune systems. In the Spokane River, fifteen segments have exceed “acceptable” PCB levels in edible fish tissue. The effects of toxic fish disproportionately affect the Spokane Reservation, where Indigenous people have relied on the river for sustenance for thousands of years.

The Lands Council, a member of the taskforce, is proposing use of white rot fungi to reduce PCB levels in the Spokane River by 95%—a figure drawn from successful laboratory tests of the fungi. While these efforts have been in motion since 2006, the restoration of the Spokane River is moving slowly, with the EPA only recently committing to a 2024 deadline for implementing a plan.

3. Plastic and microplastic waste

In 2011, a study group from Yale discovered *Pestalotiopsis microspora*, a fungus that can digest polyurethane, a common byproduct of plastic waste which is not biodegradable. This particular fungus does not need oxygen to survive and can quickly process polyurethane into small, brown mushrooms. Similarly, at a city waste disposal site in Pakistan in 2017, another fungus, called *Aspergillus tubingensis*, was discovered to likewise consume and process polyurethane.

Many other studies from Europe, India and the United States have made similar discoveries over the last five years. It is clear that many fungi species are capable of processing plastic, with some studies producing edible oyster mushrooms safe for human consumption. There have been some aquatic fungi species identified, with possible implications for remediating the great Pacific Trash Vortex. More attention and dedication is needed, but this area of mycoremediation has a very promising outlook.

Continued on next page...

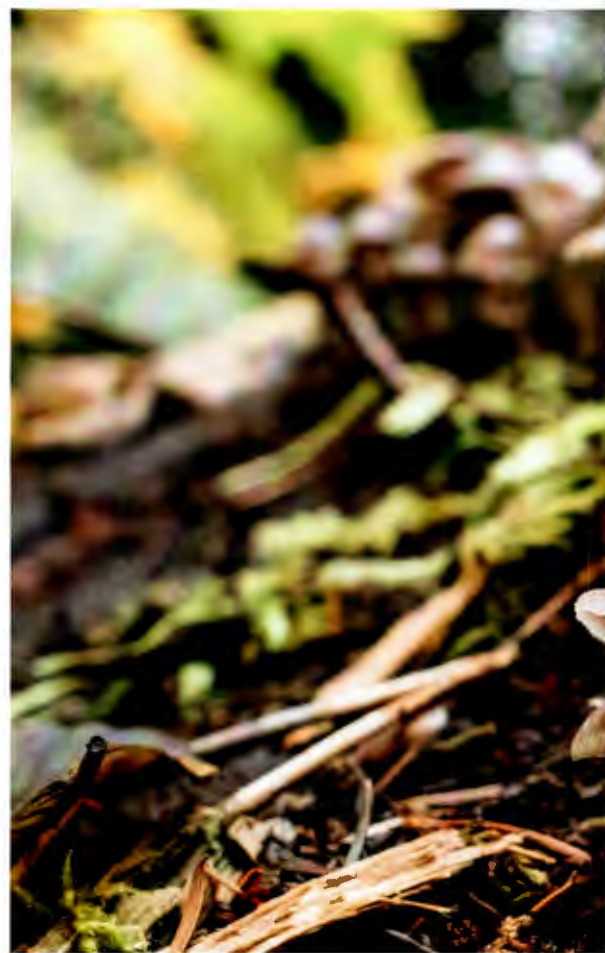
4. Oil Spills

Fungi have been found to be more effective than bacteria at processing the hydrocarbons left behind at sites of fossil fuel contamination. Many of the “traditional” methods of mitigating oil spills include incineration of soil and/or storage of contaminated soils at dumps. These methods are not sustainable or healthy—in both cases, the toxicity left behind is not broken down. Fungi has shown itself to be reliable, low-cost and efficient at cleaning the soil in localized sites of oil spills, such as engine oil at abandoned gas stations and private properties. Given the proper scope and resources to apply mycoremediation to catastrophic oil spills, many mycologists are confident fungi are capable of mitigating harm to the environment on macro scales.

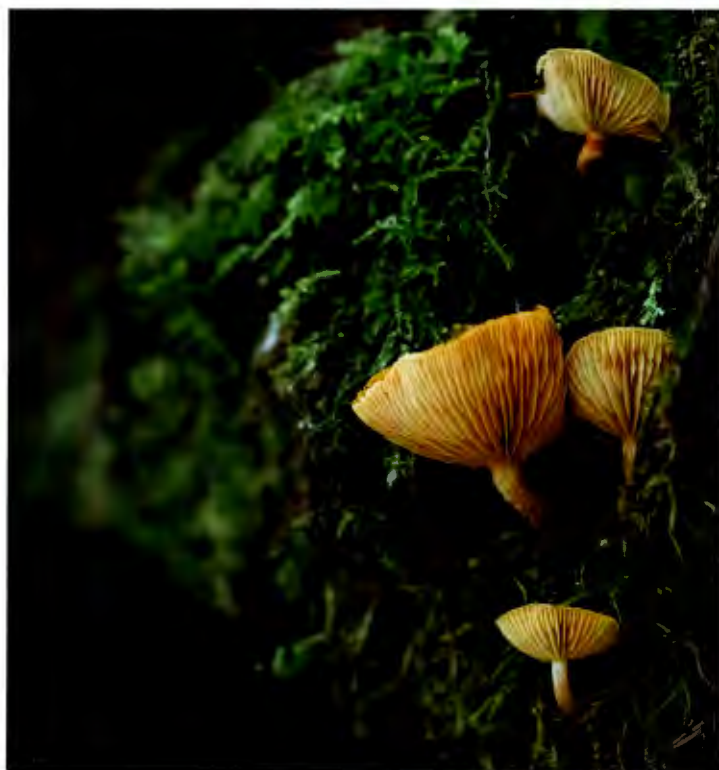
5. Forest rehabilitation following wildfires

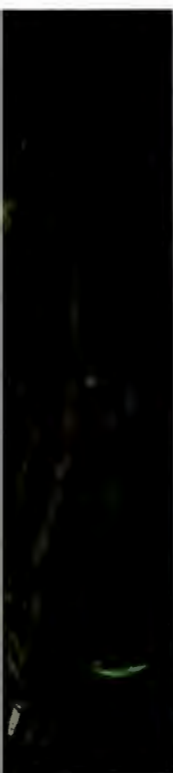
On the West Coast we are confronting the realities of devastating forest fires on an unprecedented scale. In the wake of a wildfire, soil is rife with pollutants leftover from human infrastructure. Residential, commercial and industrial buildings, when burned, leave in their wake arsenic, asbestos, lead, copper, and an array of hazardous heavy metals. Current methods for cleaning up after wildfires is what’s called “scrape and burn.” Often under pressure from elected officials and heavy media scrutiny, crews tasked with cleaning literally scrape contaminated soil into trucks, transport it to a separate site, and burn it. Eventually, uncontaminated topsoil from other parts of the forest are trucked back in to replace what had burned. This method is absurdly expensive and does little to actually heal the damaged ecosystem. Current federal regulations for wildfire response require a 100% clearing of contaminated soil in an immediate window of time—despite the evidence that this practice is ineffectual.

Following the historic Camp Fire in Northern California in 2019, a citizen-led group called The Fire Remediation Action Coalition took mycoremediation into their own hands, placing 40 miles of “wattles” (snake-shaped bundles of straw usually used to prevent erosion) inoculated with *Pleurotus ostreatus* (oyster mushrooms). The coalition of “citizen-scientists” is comprised of fire remediation experts, ecologists and business owners. In the absence of a large-scale study to test the results, such decentralized mycoremediation groups will have to continue to operate as volunteers.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF JESSE BAUER





Conclusion

One particular aspect of mycoremediation that makes it so ideal is also its Achilles' Heel: it works on miniscule levels. To properly address sites of ecological harm, fungi needs to be cultivated and inoculated site-by-site. In other words, mycoremediation is a phenomenal and promising practice to heal our world, but for it to make a difference on a global scale, we need all hands on deck. Resources are available to learn the basics of mycoremediation at home. We need to support mycology activists in their efforts to attract large-scale research. In the meantime, instead of buying a Prius, we can take responsibility for the bit of earth in our own environments. Mycelium has a message for us: no organism exists in a vacuum; each of our bodies is affected by the elements in our surroundings. Let's follow the mycelial example and care for the soil.

Further Reading: *Organic Mushroom Farming and Mycoremediation* by Tradd Cotter



nuclear oregon

nuclear power & green energy

opinion

BY JOHN WATSON

What happened to Trojan? From 1975 to 1992, Oregon had its only nuclear power plant, the Trojan Nuclear Power Plant, and it provided us with 12% of our energy. Since its closure, Oregon has been without nuclear power, with the exception of the small amount of energy we get from our friends up north in Washington. Why haven't we built a new Trojan since then? During the nuclear high in the mid 20th century, a partial reactor meltdown occurred in Pennsylvania—known as the Three Mile Island accident—and it completely changed the trajectory of nuclear energy in the U.S., sparking a movement of anti-nuclear sentiment. Since then, the rate at which we built nuclear plants has decreased significantly, with only one new reactor beginning operations past 1996 in the United States.

This slowing of reactor-building is merited though, right? It is easy to assume so when you look back at the devastation we've seen from Fukushima and Chernobyl, yet devastation from other energy sources has not led us to stop using them to produce energy. The most blatant example of this would be coal power plants. Though the nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide released from coal power plants is estimated to cause 13,200 deaths a year in the U.S. alone, it still makes up 10.8% of the United States' energy production. Hydroelectric power has proven to be safe in recent decades, but earlier in its history it claimed the lives of over 400 people in the U.S.

Nuclear on the other hand? Eight deaths in the United States. Ever.

Though there have been notable accidents in the U.S., such as the aforementioned Three Mile Island accident, not every accident is as bad as Chernobyl. Fukushima, the meltdown that caused Germany and Italy (among other countries) to move away from nuclear, has zero associated deaths. Germany doesn't even have a coast that can be threatened by earthquakes and tsunamis, as was the case with the Fukushima catastrophe. Is it really worth it for Germany to continue their reliance on natural gas, (a significant portion of which comes from Russia,) instead of maintaining their current nuclear plants? That is another topic of conversation, so for now I'll leave the Germans alone for picking Russian gas over the clean, and safe, nuclear plants.

Anyways.

All to say, nuclear energy is safe. The fear, though understandable, is unmerited due to little harm compared to other sources of energy we use. With that in mind, why is Oregon without a nuclear plant? Nuclear plants generate a massive amount of energy, with the United States having 54 plants that make up 18.8% of its energy production. For comparison, 72 hydroelectric sources make up 6.6% of the United State's energy production. With nuclear power being safe and clean, why is Oregon one of the twenty-two states that don't have a single power plant? What would it look like if it did?

How many nuclear power plants would it take to replace the coal and natural gas to make our electric grid 100% supplied by clean energy? At most, two.

One way to break down Oregon's energy usage is by electricity (~45% of overall energy usage), transportation (~29%; vehicles), and direct use (26%; house heating and the like). Though direct use and transportation are both mostly powered by unclean energy, it is complicated and risky to make them clean. A fair argument can be made that relying solely on the electric grid leads to recurring power outages, so I will focus on the energy sources that supply electricity.

Of that 45% of energy consumption we get from electricity, around half (47.97%) of it is powered by coal and natural gas, with the other 52.03% being powered by clean energy sources. Because this coal and natural gas is being used for electricity instead of direct use, such as heating, there is really no reason as to why it must continue to be powered this way. So, with that in mind, how many nuclear power plants would it take to replace

the coal and natural gas to make our electric grid 100% supplied by clean energy?

At most, two.

Coal and natural gas combined produce 25,820,000 Mwh in energy to our electric grids, and if our nuclear reactors produced as much as the nuclear plant in Washington produces, around 8,126,000 Mwh, then it would take four reactors.

(A good portion of our power plants in the U.S have two or more reactors in them. If we had two reactors in each plant, then with two plants, we could power ~47% of our electric grid, ~20% of our overall energy usage —making our electric grid 100% clean energy.)

So why haven't we?

Even though there are too many factors to distill things down to a single answer, one of the biggest factors has been fear. Ever since the Three Mile Island accident in 1979, the nuclear industry took a downturn that can be largely attributed to local opposition to the building of new plants and increased safety standards (a good thing, obviously) leading to longer construction times and increased costs. People really did not, and currently do not, want to live next to nuclear power plants, and since

Chernobyl, the perspective on anything nuclear has been largely one of hesitation. One looks at a dam and sees nothing but a dam, but driving past a nuclear power plant gives off weird vibes.

The fear, though understandable, is unmerited due to little harm compared to other sources of energy we use.

It is unnecessary to fear them though. We have seen little harm caused by nuclear power plants in the United States, and the potential that was seen in the 20th century for nuclear energy can be realized today. With the U.S. pouring tens of billions of dollars into solar and wind subsidies, which produce far less energy than nuclear, turning that money towards nuclear could lead to a cleaner America, and more specifically a cleaner Oregon, quicker.

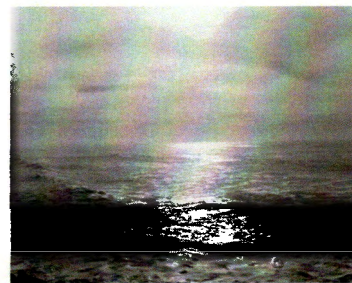


ILLUSTRATION BY EVA SHEEHAN

Denial by Jon Raymond (2022)

Jeremiah's Score: ★★★★★

In his latest book, *Denial*, Jon Raymond—known for his work with sublime filmmaker Kelly Reichart (*First Cow*, *Old Joy*)—presents the year 2052 after nearly all the oil executives responsible for the climate crisis have been convicted of their crimes. This thriller is told by Jack, a PNW journalist who travels to Mexico with a love interest to expose Cave, a surprisingly couth former exec who escaped the Toronto Trials and hid in comfort for a while.



DENIAL

a novel

JON RAYMOND

Pokémon Black & White by Game Freak (2010)

Edwin's Score: ★★★★★

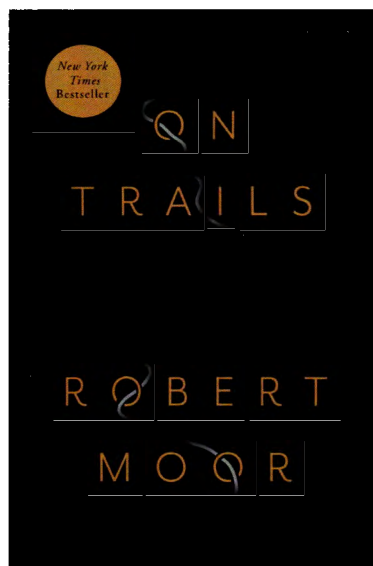
Since I got this game at age 11, I've probably played it through four or five times. I didn't appreciate it as a kid, but Game Freak took a huge risk with this game, removing all Pokemon from previous games. It told a bold story with interesting characters, and smoothly transitions between fully-animated pixel and 3D graphics. Dynamic and full of personality, I think the series reached its peak with this game and its sequel.



On Trails by Robert Moor (2016)

Sarah's Score: ★★★★★

New York Times Bestseller *On Trails: An Exploration* by Robert Moore is a delightful exploration of nature's wild and wonderful flora and fauna in North America. If you are enamored by the beauty nature entails and are curious of the mysterious trails that travel throughout, this book will uncover some of the most notorious trails' history and some of the most interesting characters who travel them.



Ali

by Vieux Farka Touré
and Khraungbin (2022)

Dylan's Score: ★★★★★

On *Ali*, Malian singer/guitarist Vieux Farka Touré teams up with the genre-blending Texas-based Khraungbin with a tribute to Touré's iconic father, Ali Farka Touré. The album—much like the bodies of work from Khraungbin and both Tourés—transcends conventions and continents in its seamless blend of blues, global folk, psychedelia and soul. In a world too often defined by cultural divisions, *Ali* offers a universal sound.



Jord

by Soreption (2022)

Dan's Score: ★★★★★

The fourth studio album by Swedish technical death metal outfit Soreption, *Jord* rips from wall to wall, employing extreme technicality, melting grooves, and a further refinement of everything that has made them a continual pioneer in the genre. Notably, the song "Död Jord" also features Dean Lamb and Toni Morelli of Archspire on guitars, cementing Soreption as a major influence for the band. Essential listening for fans of Necrophagist, Archspire, and Spawn of Possession.



Anarchist Gospel

by Sunny War
(2023)

Jeremiah's Score: ★★★★★

Sunny War. It's a good name. Her latest record, *Anarchist Gospel*, gets clean production from Andrija Tokic (Alabama Shakes, Hurray For The Riff Raff) to highlight the Nashville songwriter's rootsy, street-punk blues stories. The sixth track, "Earth" employs My Morning Jacket's Jim James, and evokes a dark sense of resignation to the present state of the climate. "Make no mistake," she sings. "It's not light-years away." In Sunny War's world, the battle against warming the planet doesn't feel so sunny afterall.



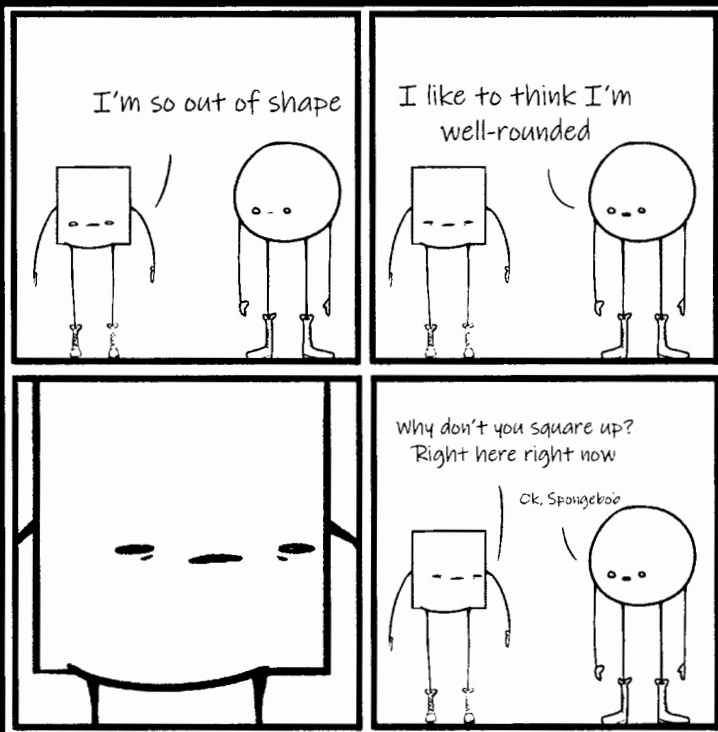
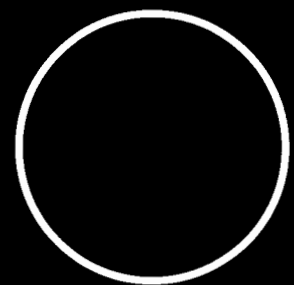
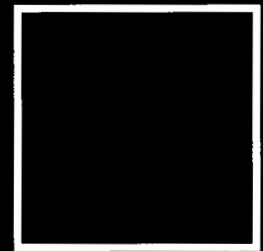
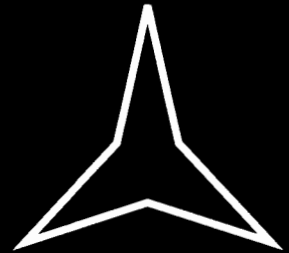
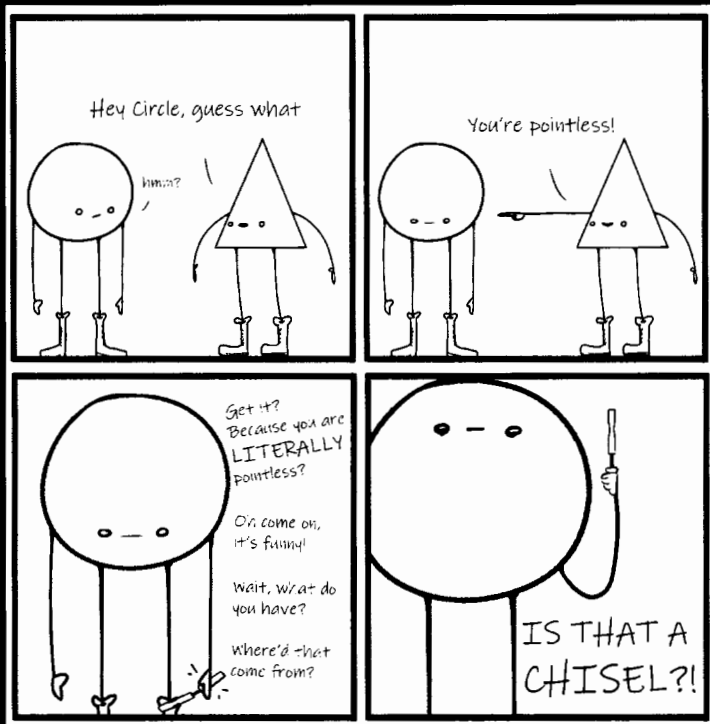
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DIFFICULTY: HARD

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FEBRUARY CROSSWORD ANSWERS

- | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|----|-----------|----|-------------|
| 1 | frostbite | 6 | icicle | 11 | thermometer |
| 2 | forty | 7 | cocoa | 12 | scarf |
| 3 | snowman | 8 | snowboard | 13 | hibernation |
| 4 | presents | 9 | christmas | 14 | fireplace |
| 5 | mountain | 10 | snowshoes | 15 | hannukah |



COMICS
BY COURTNEY
JEFFS

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