



Cascadia Spoke

Volume 1, Number 1

A BIOREGIONAL JOURNAL

Winter Solstice 2022

Welcome Home!

Welcome to the premier issue of *Cascadia Spoke*, a new community publication about bioregionalism, where diverse voices and communities can share issues most important to them, and connect with like-minded people from around our bioregion. This is a space for you, and we hope you'll join us here, as readers and contributors.

Why a bioregional journal?

Now, more than ever, a growing number of people are recognizing that in order to secure the clean air, water and food that we need to healthfully survive, we have to become guardians of the places where we live. People sense the loss in not knowing our neighbors and natural surroundings. The best way to care for ourselves is to support our communities and the web of life we are part of. As crises mount, after many years of denial and willful ignorance, we need new solutions now.

No longer restricted to isolated areas, threats assume regional and global proportions. Warming caused by greenhouse gases threatens our planetary future, while a pandemic challenges assumed realities and the status quo. The interconnectedness of all of our movements—human rights, climate action, economic justice, criminal reform, racial and social equity—is on display like never before.

Cascadia is on the front lines of all this. We have seven of the ten largest carbon storing forests in the world and are a thin green line between resource extraction in the east of the continent and booming global markets in Asia. Every year forest fires and droughts are becoming normal, while heavier flooding, natural disasters and waves of economic migration increasingly strain our food, resources and ecosystems. We have one of the highest concentrations of billionaires and global corporations in the world, alongside poverty and homelessness. Everywhere people are saying that we need a change, but it's less clear how to achieve the changes we need.

How can we manage our rivers in a way that balances hydroelectric energy, fishing, recreational uses and wilderness? How can we build communities that can provide for all while accounting for historic and systemic imbalances? How can we transition away from fossil fuels? How can we transition from a rapacious economic system of global capitalism to community economies that provide sustenance and dignity for all without a dependence on unsustainable growth and environmental abuse? How can we honor, learn from and partner with First Nations in shared stewardship of land, and move away from harmful colonial practices, governments and the creeping tendrils of fascism?

In the midst of widening and deepening crises, a new movement is emerging globally that offers solutions—not only to ecological problems, but social ones as well. This movement calls for

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Coastal Canoe family at sunset celebrating after doing land protocol at Lummi Stommish Grounds Tribal Canoe Journeys. Photo credit: Paul Chiyokten Wagner

Protecting the Salish Sea and the Circle of Life

An indigenous perspective from Paul Chiyokten Wagner

Lansing Scott and Brandon Letsinger-Brown of Cascadia Spoke sat down with Paul Chiyokten Wagner to discuss his work with Protectors of the Salish Sea and the role of indigenous wisdom—particularly the teachings of the Coast Salish people—in bringing our communities and society at large back into greater harmony with the web of life we are all part of, whether we acknowledge it or not. This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Hi Paul, please tell us about who you are and where you come from:

My tribal affiliation is a member Saanich nation. Our people have lived along the shores of these lands since time immemorial, and cared for these lands with the sacred promise in our hearts, educated by our elders, causing us to be an elder society people. With that understanding of who we are, and that

form of education and form of leadership, we were able to co-create paradise here.

The world had fallen. Our stories inform us that the world had fallen to bone and ash. A long time ago, when humans were brand new—it was really the time of the animal people. It was so long ago. Humans were just beginning in that time and the only thing that brought us back were these sacred promises that ended all disrespect. Because the falling of the world is attributed to planting the seeds of disrespect causing a chain reaction, causing darkness to move over land and into the hearts of the people and causing the burning of the world.

Everything fell. But we managed to create paradise with with tools and knowings and sacred promises to hold a sacred relationship with every being that the Creator put here on these lands.

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Artwork by Lisa Bade, Erin Fox, Jeffrey Linn and Trevor Owen.

Welcome (from page 1)

a scaling down of human institutions, the decolonization and dismantling of arbitrary borders, technologies rooted in and controlled by local communities, and in harmony with local environments. It calls for more participatory democracy, equity, justice for past wrongs, cooperation, and awareness of our interdependence—with other people, other cultures, other species and our planet.

People use different names for this all-embracing, still-coalescing movement, but for this place “bioregionalism” and “Cascadia” serve as useful umbrella terms that include many interconnected strands, such as renewable energy, local scales of economy and government, permaculture, feminism, democracy, Black rights, Indigenous sovereignties, Latinx, immigrant and refugee rights, community self-reliance and empowerment, civil rights, privacy, and digital rights, LGBTQIA rights, nature sovereignty, social justice, and peace.

Superficial reforms are not enough. Today’s crises require a fundamental rethinking and restructuring of our society: to think globally and act locally. A bioregional perspective not only criticizes prevailing mass institutions, but offers positive alternatives that can be controlled by the local community and adapted to the constraints, opportunities, and rhythms of a local place and its inhabitants.

Cascadia SPOKE speaks to these concerns and aims to advance our Cascadian conversation. And it does so in a way that’s not in another email newsletter, or buying into a social media platform that we hate but use because we feel it’s our only way to reach out and engage with amazing Cascadians. We are SO EXCITED for this first hard-copy printing of the *Cascadia SPOKE*, and to generate new spaces for dialogue and discussion.

Our first issue, made possible with generous support of King County 4Culture and Department of Bioregion members, features work from more than 30 writers, poets and artists including:

Paul Cheokten Wagner on Indigenous Wisdom and his work with the Salish Sea Protectors; artwork from Lisa Bade and Erin Fox; articles from the archive introducing bioregionalism, updates from Cascadia Deaf Nation, Salmon Nation and the Bioregional Catalysts, new books and maps including the Ish River Country, a Cascadia Field Guide, and Cascadia Zen; the year in review where we touch on major happenings, and share awesome pictures from Cascadians; and in depth pieces by a range of authors who explore Cascadia, bioregionalism and how we can put this idea into practice; and lastly, a section on flags and vexicology where we discuss the importance of creating bioregional symbols, and how these can be used to decolonize nation state concepts.

An Invitation

Decades ago, *Planet Drum* and bioregionalists led an explosion of writing, poetry, art and maps that challenged dominant narratives in our society, and did so without screens, email or social media. “Welcome Home” and “Centering Cascadia” are based on writings by Lansing Scott in 1988 for the Bioregional Congress of Pacific Cascadia at Breitenbush Retreat Center in Oregon. Since then, these issues are more important than ever, and we are honored to include and update these articles here, and to connect the voices of *Planet Drum* with our movement today. We invite you to be a part of these discussions, and to create the changes that we and our world need.

Have an idea for an article? Want to include a piece, or an update or introduction for your group? Don't hesitate to reach out at cascadia@deptofbioregion.org.



The Cascades, Rockies, and Coast Mountains around the Columbia River, the largest watershed in the Cascadia bioregion, connect the coastal and dry interior landscapes of British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon. Photo credit: NASA. The International Space Station.

Centering Cascadia: Pacific Northwest of What?

by Lansing Scott & Brandon Letsinger

When we use the continental landmass of North America as the frame of reference, we find that the “Pacific Northwest” is not in the northwest at all. That’s why people who use the Earth as the frame of reference have begun to refer to the region as “Cascadia” in reference to the major landform in the region, the Cascade Mountains, the Cascadia Subduction Zone, and also in reference to the plentiful waters cascading from the mountains to the sea. Cascadia is an endonym, meaning a word created by the people living here to help describe our place. First Nations of Cascadia have similarly come together to call this region “Salmon Nation” in reverence to the rivers that flow and stretch from Northern California to Alaska, and where the Salmon ran at their fullest extent before colonial contact.

While the states of Washington, Idaho and Oregon are known as belonging to the Pacific Northwest, this term “Northwest,” is only a framework that makes sense in respect to the 48 contiguous states of the United States and to our relationship with Washington DC. Go ask someone from British Columbia what region they are a part of and see how many come back with the “Northwest.”

The boundaries of this enormous nation-state constitute the frame of reference within which the designation “northwest” makes sense, but for us, it is time to begin to break away from this juggernaut and rethink our own relationship as citizens of our watersheds and place. Instead, we choose to use rivers and mountains and the Earth itself as a frame of reference we find important. Unilateral borders imposed by the United States and Canada are irrelevant, arbitrary, and non-representative of the people, inhabitants, and place. Where you were born matters less than where you choose to live, and the watershed you live in now.

When we define our places using the Earth as

the frame of reference, taking into account flora, fauna, landforms, climate, and so on, we are talking in terms of bioregions. Can we move from our status as an internal colony of the American and Canadian industrial system, used for resource extraction, technology services and holiday vacationing, to a more self-reliant and self-determining bioregional community? Can we gain greater control of our common destiny at the local level?

Can we? Perhaps. But it all depends. It depends on what we do and how we do it. The challenge of change is great. Without a clearly articulated, collective vision for what we want to do and coordinated strategies for how to move forward, our ability to affect deep and widespread change is stymied. Is there a way to create greater “connective tissue” between various parts of our movement for change, so that we can strengthen and nourish one another? Can we interject a clear and comprehensive agenda for change into the stale debate that passes for politics these days?

These are the questions and challenges that we must face, and it is in that hope that we have drafted and created these documents, not as an answer to this debate, but hopefully, to open up a conversation.

It is up to Cascadians, each in their own way, to create and promote these changes, and lead the way forward, rather than wait for someone else to do it for us.

Lansing Scott and Brandon Letsinger are writers, activists, and organizers living in the Lake Union watershed of Seattle. Scott worked as part of the Portland Alliance, Cascadia bioregional congresses, Seattle Community Catalyst, Eat the State!, and Catalytic Community. Letsinger coordinates Department of Bioregion (publisher of this newspaper) and has led many other Cascadian projects.

What is Bioregionalism?

by Van Andruss, Christopher Plant, Judith Plant, and Eleanor Wright.

Archived by Quinn Collard

For a theory and practice that promises to radically change the world so that we may all survive, “bioregionalism” is an unusually awkward and unappealing term at first sight. It’s hardly surprising that many people have not heard of the word—even though they may be experienced practitioners of the art—and equally to be expected that, if they have heard of it, it may have left them cold. A deeper probe, however, reveals the extraordinary power of an idea that genuinely integrates numerous other powerful ideas into a common view of the world.

More than just a set of ideas, however, bioregionalism is a movement, too. And just as other social movements contain within their names a critique of present society and a direction for future change, so it is with the bioregional movement. Bioregionalism calls for human society to be more closely related to nature (hence, bio), and to be more conscious of its locale, or region, or life-place (therefore, region). For humans who exhibit the most extreme alienation from nature imaginable, and who—in North America especially—are uniquely unattached to particular places, bioregionalism is essentially a recognition that, today, we flounder

without an adequate overall philosophy of life to guide our action toward a sane alternative. It is a proposal to ground human cultures within natural systems, to get to know one’s place intimately in order to fit human communities to the Earth, not distort the Earth to our demands.

If bioregionalism is a relatively new word, the many modes of thought and experience from which it draws its full meaning have deep roots in history. And, while the political change implied by the bioregional goal of ecologically sustainable, human scale governance—the dismantling of centralized structures—may be clear, the ways by which we work toward that goal, the day-to-day practice of bioregionalism, are many and diverse. For bioregionalists organize

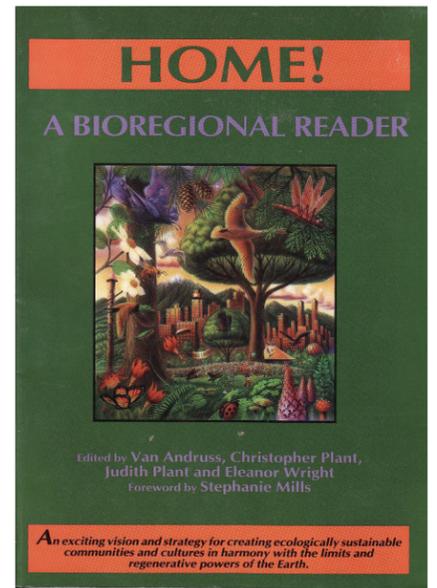
Active bioregionalists don’t merely raise their hands to vote on issues but also find ways to interact positively with the life-web around them. They work with neighbors to carry out projects and build a culture together. — Peter Berg

Bioregionalism doesn’t mean merely one thing; it isn’t restricted to a single issue or special activity. It has become connective tissue joining the diverse parts of a growing organism.

—Sheila Rose Purcell

across a wide spectrum that includes local, regional, and continent-wide political work; justice for native peoples and peoples of color; the creation of local economic and trading networks; the development of sustainable agriculture systems; and the education of a new generation. The rich mix of traditions that informs this work ranges from Western anarchism and the contemporary vision of the future known as the Fourth World, through the practice of consensus used by native peoples, Quakers, and anarchists alike, to the wisdom of the modern feminist movement.

Bioregional politics is the politics of scale, of decentralization, the politics of cultural autonomy and self-government. By extension, it is also the way by which we can most clearly



see the reality of empire—how Western Civilization has emerged on the backs of indigenous peoples and at the expense of viable local cultures and local ecosystems. The bioregional project, in this regard, is to establish the conditions for the re-emergence of sustainable local communities that might form the nuclei of new worlds.

This piece was originally published in Home! A Bioregional Reader (1990, New Society Publishers), edited by Van Andruss, Christopher Plant, Judith Plant and Eleanor Wright, and is excerpted from their introductory article, “Self Government.” It was scanned and archived by Quinn Collard, and can be found at cascadiaunderground.org



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Bioregioning (verb)

by Ed Tyler

Bioregioning: from verb “to bioregion”; act of bringing your bioregion into existence through grounding, connecting, celebrating, belonging & remember: bioregioning is an invitation, not a doctrine.

To begin: ground yourself in the here and now. You already live in a bioregion. Bioregioning (verb) is the act of manifesting it. Explore the land around you. Wander, discover, get lost, awaken to what is around you. Use your feet to do it; it’s what they are for; it’s what you are for. Garden: as well as crops, collect seed from plants that happily grow around you and introduce them into the spaces that you tend. Intend, tend what is around.

You have set off on what is to become your own personal saga of local connections. You start to reach out to all the life that is around you. Meet the animals and insects that share your bioregion with you. Make friends with your neighbours and start working on joint projects, projects that give you a sense of satisfaction

and conviviality. Spend less time driving and sitting in front of a computer screen in search of worthwhile connections.

The connections grow, helping create more connections. Like the plants around you, you begin to grow. Time to celebrate all the abundance! Make up your own rituals. We are all shamans-in-waiting.

As we get more grounded, as we spin our web of local connections, as we celebrate the abundant treasures of our land-and-sea scapes, we come home. We belong once more. We have found the antidote to alienation.

Permaculturalist Ed Tyler writes from Kintyre, Scotland. Read more at bioregioning.com

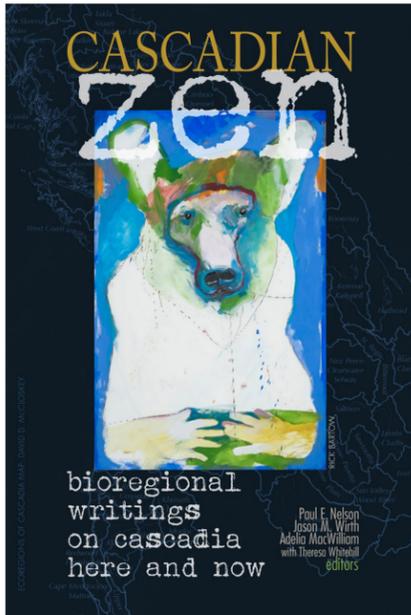
Bioregioning involves:

- *slowing down, looking and feeling inward and outward to the land, water, creatures and people around you*
- *making music, clothes, buildings, sculptures, relationships, furniture, poems, paintings and other necessities from locally available materials*
- *cycling and sharing resources, money and energy within your region*
- *growing and eating locally sourced, seasonally abundant, food*
- *networking and collaborating with one another to build diverse communities and ecologies*

Updates from around Cascadia

Cascadian Zen

Edited by Paul E. Nelson, Jason M. Wirth, Adelia Macwilliam, with Theresa Whitehill
by Paul E Nelson, Founding Director, Cascadia Poetics Lab



What is the nature of the bioregion known as Cascadia? How is this insight expressed by the people who live, work, practice and play here? Is there a connection between Zen practice, broadly construed, and the Cascadia bioregion? If so, what is it? Who have been the teachers in the relatively short time that Zen has been known in this bioregion? What role does water play here, more so than in other bioregions, and what implications does that have for the people who live here and for their practice?

It is these questions, and other questions brought on by these, that we seek to explore in the work, *Cascadian Zen*, a two volume anthology edited by Tetsuzen Jason Wirth, Paul E Nelson, Adelia MacWilliam, and with Theresa Whitehill, to be published in Spring 2023 by the Cascadia Poetics Lab. The volumes will feature poetry, essays, artwork and interviews, bringing together writings and translations that explore expressions of Zen within the Cascadia bioregion.

The idea for this project grew out of many iterations of the Cascadia Poetry Festival hosted annually by the Seattle Poetics Lab (SPLAB, now Cascadia Poetics Lab). The collection will be wide-ranging in geographic scope, potentially collecting work from Willits, Kelowna and Prince George to Port Townsend, Anacortes, Seattle, Vancouver, and Portland.

According to Jason Wirth, the book is organized via “baskets”:

Basket One, *The Buddha Way* includes poets whose work, or at least some of their poems, aligns explicitly with Buddhist themes. Most of the poets have Buddhist practices. By “Cascadian Zen”, of course, we mean just any intentional practice of being here. It does not mean it has to be necessarily any kind of Buddhist practice, but it

includes Buddhist practices under Zen, and so you see those sorts of things in the first basket.

The second basket, *Empty Bowl* is a reference to the press founded in the 1970s with a bioregional mission here in Washington State. *Empty Bowl* has gone through several editorships. Basket Two features poets in the region who all know one another and all know the press. Most of them have published in *Empty Bowl Press*, but even if they haven’t, they are aware of it and sympathetic to its general sense of things. We just use *Empty Bowl* to name a specific region of poetic tradition and sensibility.

Basket Three is titled *Original Mind* and this is going to be for the “beginner’s mind”. There’s a Zen beginner’s mind, but there’s also just the primal mind, the original mind’s wisdom and sense of its powers. These pieces are loosely rooted in that sense of the powers of thinking.

Basket Four is *Borders Without Binaries*, part of our general mapping idea. You can speak of limits or borders, but a binary would be “A” stops here and “B” begins there. So render them porous to wiggle free from all of these colonial mapping techniques and rethink space beyond mapping borders. Again, these are all somewhat loose, but in that cluster of mind world concerns.

Basket Five is *Wilson’s Bowl*, which is a specific item/place just to the north of here. This is a self-contained unit that Paul and Adelia put together around this particular carving in stone where indigenous people would make food and perhaps use for ceremonies. It’s a very ritualistic space, with a huge iconography and poetic sensibility and history around it.

Basket Six is *Issei Zen*, curated by art historian Barbara Johns. It begins with a poem from Paul’s serial poem, “A Time Before Slaughter” but goes on with Issei poetry and art, which is crucial to the notion of *Cascadian Zen*.

The final basket, Basket Seven, is *Storm Clouds*. This reflects the understanding that not all here is peaceful and harmonious. This is a region with its scars, painful history, massacres, unfinished business, and trauma. These things are not just things in the past that we’re acknowledging, but also a potentially troubled future, gathering storm clouds—these are going to be the things that we have to deal with.

The final section’s not so much a basket, but a postface, done by David McCloskey who did the map. He wrote two pieces for us, both very interesting, and they’re just kind of our regional manifestos from the great map maker himself.

CAFF Will Be Back on the Pitch in 2023!



The Department of Bioregion is excited to announce that the Cascadia Association Football Federation (CAFF) will return in 2023 to compete in the North American CONIFA Cup in Oaxaca, Mexico, and will put together our first women’s team to compete in Norway in 2024.

CAFF is proud to represent the Cascadia bioregion and North America as a part of the Confederation of Independent Football Associations (CONIFA), which represents countries, cultural areas and regions not recognized by the UN or FIFA. They compete in soccer matches locally and around the world

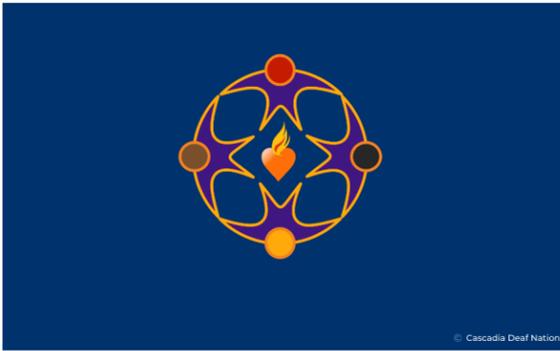
to grow player opportunities, and to elevate the causes of non-recognized nations, while elevating the sport of football itself.

Entirely supporter- and volunteer-driven, CAFF was originally formed in 2014 by fans from Portland, Seattle, and Vancouver. They first competed in the 2018 CONIFA World Cup in London, placing 8th in the world, and sending a team of 23 players, coaches, and representatives to compete against teams from Tibet, Kirabaldi, Tuvalu, Mann, Tamil, Cyprus, and many others.

Learn more at cascadiafootball.org



Introducing Cascadia Deaf Nation



by Cascadia Deaf Nation

Hello Stewards of Cascadia Bioregion! We are humbly honored to be invited by Cascadia Department of Bioregion to introduce our presence and connect with you all as agents pushing for bioregional transformation on the social, cultural and political levels for the greater good of humanity.

Through our cultural-linguistic lens, we believe that all systems of oppression (racism, homophobia, hearing supremacy, etc.) are interconnected. To dismantle all systems of oppression equitably, we need to understand the critical importance of de-internalizing or unpacking ourselves when confronting our own human fragility in terms of reproducing cycles of harm towards ourselves and different people. That leads to introducing our transformative justice based work at Cascadia Deaf Nation.

Cascadia Deaf Nation (CDN) is a cooperatively owned social enterprise in Bellingham, WA, founded by Ashanti Monts-Trévica in 2016. This was in response to

the monocultural practices of reproducing cycles of harm including racism, employment discrimination and hearing supremacy (reframed from the critical analysis of audism), which is continually impacting BIPOC deaf communities in the Pacific Northwest as part of the Coast Salish Territories.

CDN's core foundational values are mindfulness, stewardship and transformative justice. In this respect, the team co-directing CDN are called Stewards, as a reflection of non-hierarchical co-leadership in the circular ecosystemic work environment that fosters inner creativity to create solutions collectively.

CDN created twelve stewardship projects (also known as social impact projects) to reflect its pivotal work in dismantling the systems of oppression proactively. One of the stewardship projects, Transformative Equity Training (TET), has been very impactful because it guided few organizations and schools serving Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind and DeafDisabled populations to acknowledge the need to transform their fixed structural mindsets that reproduce systems of oppression without full accountable awareness.

CDN is moving forward to incorporate the concept of language justice and design justice into its Communication Equity Project (CEP) this summer. The Communication Equity Project was intended to start last spring, though it was placed on hold because we needed more time to evaluate the intentions of co-directing this project. The Stewards at CDN are looking forward to co-facilitating design lab events through the Communication Equity Project to collaborate

with social justice groups and communities. Together we can co-develop tools to dismantle the practices of hearing supremacy and raise an emergent understanding of communication equity (reframed from the critical analysis of accessibility) this summer.

Cascadia Deaf Nation (CDN) celebrated its sixth year of existing as a whole entity and to meet & greet communities in July. Look for our future announcements on our social media platforms. To learn more about design justice, CDN recommends reading *Design Justice: Community-Led Practices To Build The Worlds We Need* by Sasha Costanza-Chock.

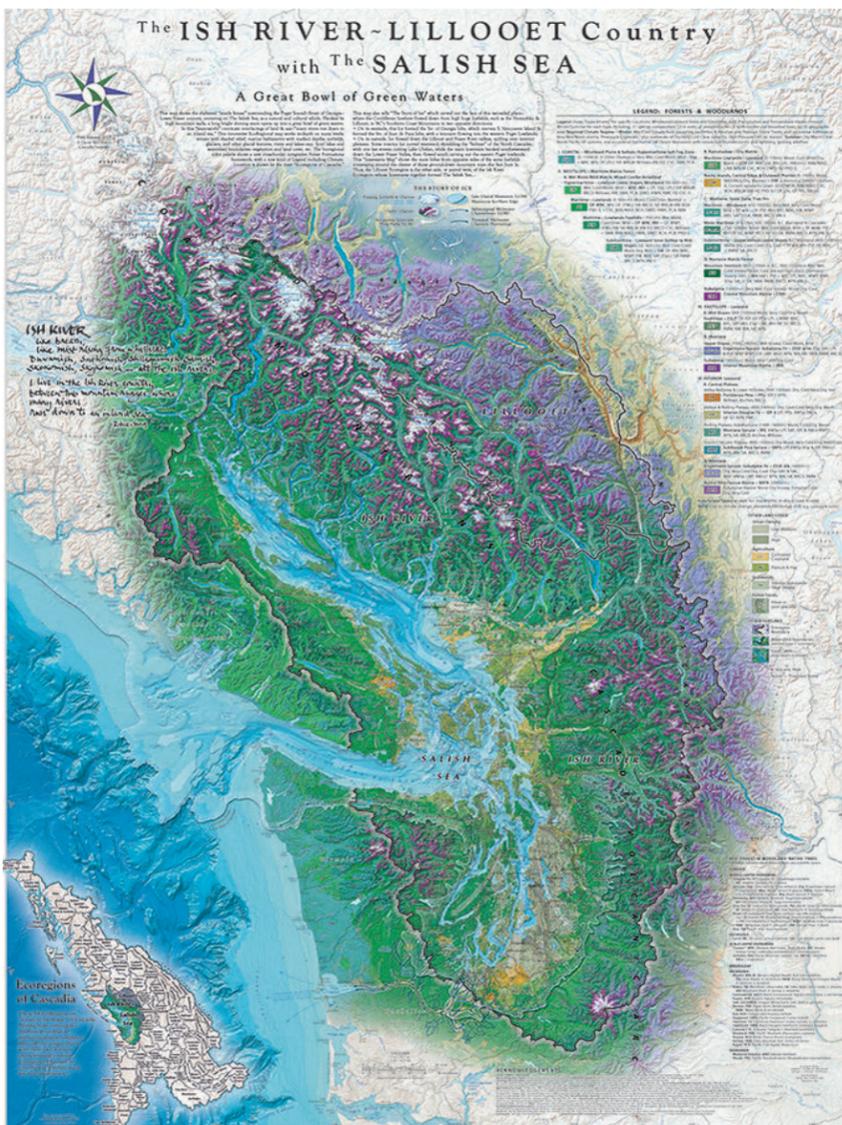
To read about hearing supremacy (reframed from CDN's critical analysis of accessibility) from cultural-linguistic lens, we recommend *Hearing Supremacy: The Deniability of Ethical Citizenship of Deaf Identified Community Members* by Cascadia Deaf Nation.

The Stewards at Cascadia Deaf Nation (CDN) look forward to meeting you when the time aligns with the authentic meaning of social change in Washington State. Deep gratitude to Cascadia Department of Bioregion for welcoming us to be part of the bioregional change with other Cascadia communities.

Cascadia Deaf Nation is a cooperatively owned social enterprise organization that works to invest in the flourishing needs of BIPOCD communities in the Cascadia bioregion. It is headquartered on the unceded lands of Lhaq'temish Nation (Lummi and Nooksack nations) within the Coast Salish Territories. Learn more at www.cascadiadn.co/*

David McCloskey Reveals New Ish River Map

A beautiful new map for the Ish River Country



McCloskey Salish Sea Map 2022

David McCloskey, creator of the Cascadia Map, is excited to release his new map of the Ish River country. It is a companion to his map of Cascadia—as an Ecoregion is a room in the house of a larger Bioregion...

"Ish River, like Cascadia, is poised on the verge of Mountains and the Sea. Great Western valleys like the Willamette center on their rivers, but this place is all Edge.... And this Edge is alive! bursting with energy from every pore.... Such relentlessly dramatic dynamism shines thru the map image: one can almost feel the surge and flood of tidal currents, pulse of whitewater pounding down from glaciers, continuous rising and falling rhythms of mountains and sea in this great bowl of waters...."

- David McCloskey, "Ish River Map Story".

Cascadia and the Ish River were first given names in a 1985 article by David McCloskey in RAIN Magazine, giving rise to ideas like "the Salish Sea" by Bert Webber in 1988. Planet Drum artists hand-drew this first illustration in 1985.

This new map of the larger Ish River-Lillooet Country centers on the Salish Sea as a whole, with its own distinctive character and

context. It shows the place with its natural and cultural integrities working in depth on many levels: Terrain, Coastline and Bathymetry (Seafloor), Hydrology (rivers & lakes), Ice in the great Icefields and Glaciers, Vegetation in the form of Forest & Woodland Formations, Population Centers, etc. Among many other innovations, it graphically tells "The Story of Ice" which carved out the face of the place. It also has an inset with a new map of the many "Ecoregions of Cascadia."

The map can be found at: marshamccloskey.com/cascadiamap.html



Ish River was first given name by David in 1985 in an article in RAIN Magazine, and hand drawn by Planet Drum.



Salmon Nation

by Ian Gill



At a time of cascading systems collapse and institutional failures at every turn, is it not time to unshackle ourselves from the visions of our so-called “founding fathers” and think anew about what it means to live well in place? Indeed, in this place, Salmon Nation, where now millions of people share common cause around environmental, social, cultural, and economic issues, and yet are witnessing a wholesale unraveling of the very fabric that makes this part of the world such a marvelous place in which to live and work and play.

So, what is this thing called Salmon Nation?

It is three things:

A Place: The coastal bioregion where wild Pacific salmon spawn (or spawned), ranging from Central California to the North Slope of Alaska. Rich in resources of all types, including extraordinary entrepreneurs, natural wealth beyond measure, and resilient, hard-working communities.

An Idea: A ‘nature state’ with thriving local communities living in deep relationship with the lands and waters they are nourished by, and connected to each other through human networks focused on

celebration, storytelling, reciprocity, and the replication and acceleration of what works.

A Shared Mission: To catalyze an ecosystem of initiatives, companies, and people with a shared purpose to improve social, economic, and natural well-being to unleash regenerative innovation across the bioregion.

Talk of a shared mission inevitably suggests that Salmon Nation is an organization, which it is—but only sort of, and somewhat reluctantly.

Salmon Nation, the place, has existed for thousands of years. Thriving trading economies, diverse but connected cultures and languages, and sophisticated stewardship practices have been in place for countless generations, guided by natural laws that saw no separation between people and nature.

For only a fraction of that time, our segmentation into countries, states and provinces, counties, municipalities, and electoral districts has been largely in service of colonization and the exploitation of natural resources that have fed power imbalances and economic disparities that yawn wider with each passing year—at nature’s expense and our own.

It’s a broken system—indeed many broken systems.

So, in pursuit of systemic change at the bioregional level, we decided to follow the advice of famed systems philosopher Donella Meadows, who once observed that “the most effective point to intervene in a system is the mindset or paradigm out of which the system—its goals, power structure, rules, its culture—arises.” Or, put another way: change the name, change the narrative, and you change the system.

And, just as important, change the lens—away from centers of power and influence, which seek to consolidate what they’ve got, and towards what we call edge communities, where a huge amount of innovation occurs, often in conditions of scarcity. That’s because

edges are seldom seen by capital and networks that cluster in cities, in places that are slower to feel the tangible effects and urgency of climate change and hugely disrupted supply chains.

At the edges, we seek out “souls of fire,” people passionate about people and place, their place. Through human networks we can share stories of what is working—conservation, mitigation, restoration, regeneration, innovation, instigation, imitation, replication—in Salmon Nation. Where we find souls of fire, we try to support their ambitions, and amplify their achievements.

The “we” here is a small group of partners who established a trust comprising a dozen high-profile leaders to guide us and act as custodians of our mission. The Salmon Nation Trust, PBLLC, is a private enterprise for public benefit. It is designed to be simple, adaptable, and scalable. Our work is whole system design and instigation of regenerative initiatives and companies that improve the health and well-being of Salmon Nation.

Having launched our effort just before the pandemic after a seminal meeting in Sitka, AK, we took the echo of what we heard there: that people want to know what works,

how to do things, and that they are desperate to share with others, to problem solve at the community level and hosted two online Festivals of What Works. Thousands joined us in celebration and exchanges of insights and ideas that connect us in Salmon Nation, and that promise sometimes radical changes to how

we do business in our corner of the world.

The meanwhile Trust incubated, recruited, developed and funded a team to create the Magic Canoe, a new 501(c)3 public charity, which serves as a storytelling and media production vehicle for Salmon Nation. See Salmon Stories for an early taste of what to expect from us. Magic Canoe is also where we offer a broader invitation for everyone in Salmon Nation to join us in growing the idea of Salmon Nation.

And, since modern business practices have so dramatically drawn down our reserves of natural capital, and come at such a cost to our social cultural health in the region, we are determined to redirect capital towards promising enterprises that contribute to living local economies. The Trust is in the process of structuring a new initiative to do just that.

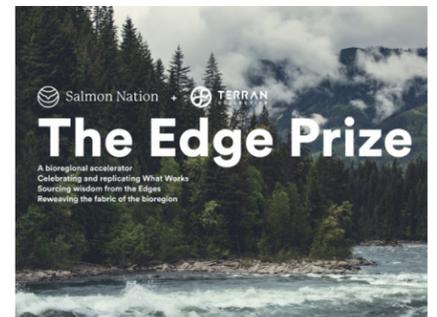
All of these modest initiatives are designed to help to lay the foundation for a wholesale reimagining and transition of our bioregional economy and environment towards climate resilience and adaptation. Over time, it is anticipated that many of our instigations will come to be

operated independently and remain collaboratively linked by values, friendship, and commitment to open, inclusive approaches.

In other words, we aren’t out to center Salmon Nation, the Trust, and its growing ecosystem partners and affiliates in a conventional corporate or non-profit structure that demands we grow a big hungry organization that behaves like everyone else. Our role is to be catalytic, to provide more and more ways in which people can enter into a robust flow of other people, resources, ideas and knowhow that is already abundant in Salmon Nation. We offer ways in which, from more and more engagement points, communities can become part of a larger bioregional fabric that continually regenerates, deepens, and surfaces relationships, trust, possibilities and opportunities.

What we want is to make real the idea of a nature state in which everyone has a stake, and everyone shares their story. Through shared stories comes a shared narrative to work towards—the fiber of the fabric that is Salmon Nation. A nature state, and a nature state of mind.

Ian Gill is a founding partner of Salmon Nation, where he lives and works from Tofino.



The Edge Prize:

Terran Collective and Salmon Nation Trust are partnering to launch the Edge Prize, a bioregional accelerator that celebrates and replicates regenerative projects in the Salmon Nation bioregion. Both a prize challenge and a community, The Edge Prize will identify ‘Edgewalkers’—innovators and local leaders growing healthy communities and ecosystems—and support them with mentorship, peer-to-peer learning, and the opportunity for direct monetary support. Innovators will be invited to share their stories in an open source library of solutions that showcases how humanity can be a net benefit to the planet. Their goal is to knit these leaders together as a bioregional network that helps each member level up, working in harmony with local ecosystems, resulting in more regeneration and resilience throughout Salmon Nation.

Applications are open through February 1!

Learn more at:
www.edgeprize.org

Cascadia in Action: Arte Noir & Black Spacification



Arte Noir founder Vivian Phillips greets Cassandra Mitchell during a soft opening for the Arte Noir and Gallery Onyx shared space at Midtown Square, September 14, 2022. Photo Credit: Genna Martin and Crosscut



by Yogi Uriah

The Cascadian independence movement is rooted in strong philosophical concepts, addressing failures or abuses from our world's current nation state affiliations. Bioregionalism amends failing structures specific to a designated space's political frameworks, lack of cultural inclusivity, and environmental policies.

However, it must be considered how the so-called common man, woman and "noman" can make basic changes to their day to day existence to promote a more equitable society. It's reasonable to suggest the likelihood of low bandwidth for activism and political engagement for those whose proverbial plates are filled with fulfilling their basic needs.

This article looks to address recent innovations that are ethical, sustainable, and local to the Cascadian bioregion; with a specific intention of suggesting solutions that are accessible regardless of class, race, or gender identity.

In Seattle, the city where I live, the historically black neighborhood called the Central district has undergone a substantial amount of development within the past three years. In the heart of the neighborhood, at the corner of 23rd and Union Street, sits Washington state's most profitable cannabis retailer, Uncle Ike's. Directly across the street, Midtown Square provides an "urban village" style mixed use property, with residential offerings and excellent retail establishments. Beautiful murals celebrating iconic black performers such as Jimi Hendrix and Langston Hughes adorn the surrounding walls, and local eateries like Raised Doughnuts have found impressive new homes.

White flight describes the migration of middle class white people to the suburbs. In the 1970s, more than 73 percent of the Central District's residents were Black. Redlining forced non-white communities into specific areas within Seattle, controlling where they lived and worked through a series of systematic oppression, such as discriminatory bank loans and financing, and the writing into deeds that houses could only be sold to white families. Today, it's fewer than 18 percent. The white population has climbed to nearly 60 percent.

Although I could see the reasoning behind adding what would have been a flagship pharmacy to the area, Arte Noir non profit founder Vivian Phillips had brighter ideas. Arte Noir exists to uplift black art, black artists, and black culture. Their mission is to create space, stability, opportunity, and training to serve the

needs of the displaced Black creative community with permanent locations. In collaboration with Seattle's Office of Community and Sustainable Development, Ms Phillips was able to acquire use of this space for Gallery Onyx at Midtown Square, Arte noir's first gallery. Viviane used the terminology, reparative economic opportunities to explain her goals for the space. Gallery Onyx, an extension of Onyx Fine Arts Collective, showcases the artworks of artists of African descent from our Cascadian communities. Her nonprofit has created an environment that will allow black ownership of the building this coming Spring, so this particular gallery won't be in danger of being a drugstore anytime soon.

On September 17, the inaugural exhibit titled Truth B Told II seemed like the most appropriate name for anything associated with Arte Noir. Ms Phillips explained the purpose of using the additional "e" at the spelling of art, to allude to the francophone spelling of most pan-african artists who are involved in her galleries. The nonprofit's name literally translates to "black art," and she hopes spaces like this will not only attract black artists and those who appreciate art, but the concept of blackness itself having a home.

Bioregionalism means creating new definitions and ways of operating, whether it already exists or not. So—why not fix this and create a new word?

Black Spacification: "The intentional attempt to make spaces ethically owned and operated by black people, with sustainable ownership, with local products or goods."

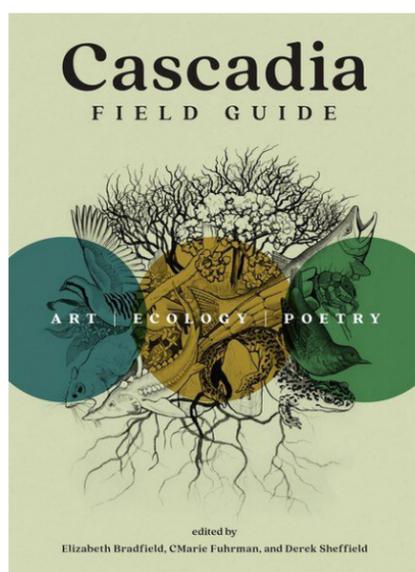
With white people now flocking into traditionally black and minority owned neighborhoods throughout Cascadia, however, there isn't terminology to suggest a community's intention to attract black residents back to a space that was once the only neighborhood they could reside in. Making these spaces most attractive to those who will resonate with the images strictly from a cultural lens seems to be a good start.

Yogi Uriah is an activist, organizer, and vice president of the Department of Bioregion board of directors.

Cascadia Field Guide: Art, Ecology, Poetry

Edited by Derek Sheffield, Marie Fuhrman, and Elizabeth Bradfield, published by Mountaineer Books, officially releases on March 1, 2023, available for preorder

In the *Cascadia Field Guide: Art, Ecology, Poetry*, local experts, poets,



and artists have created the first literary field guide for the Cascadia bioregion, an area defined by the watersheds of the Fraser, Columbia, and Snake rivers, and that stretches from Mt. St. Alias in the north to Cape Mendocino in the south, and as far as Yellowstone in the East.

Instead of using Western scientific taxonomy to separate species by type or kind (insects, birds, mammals, etc.), this guide groups species into communities, such as Salish Sea, Pine Forest, and Montane. Each community contains seven to eleven species, or beings, who are interrelated and rely on one another. In this way, and others, the guide blends Indigenous ways of knowing with Western ones, even as it gives place a voice. It is designed

to focus not on the divisions, but the many cohesions that make up our bioregion.

Have you ever been so filled up with the wonder of a place that it wants to spill out as a song? Well, here is the songbook.... This is a guide to relationship, a gift in reciprocity for the gifts of the land.

— Robin Wall Kimmerer

Cascadia stretches from Southeast Alaska to Northern California and from the Pacific Ocean to the Continental Divide. *Cascadia Field Guide: Art, Ecology, Poetry* blends art and science to celebrate this diverse yet interconnected region through natural and cultural histories,

poetry and illustrations. Organized into 13 bioregions, the guide includes entries for everything from cryptobiotic soil and the western thatching ant to the giant Pacific octopus and Sitka spruce, as well as the common raven, hoary marmot, Idaho giant salamander, snowberry, and 120 more!

Both well-established and new writers are included, representing a diverse spectrum of voices, with poems that range from comic to serious, colloquial to scientific, urban to off-the-grid, narrative to postmodern. In the same way, the artists span styles and mediums, using classic natural history drawing, form line design, graffiti, sketch, and more. All writers and artists have deep ties to the Cascadia bioregion.

The Case for a Human Rights Bioregion

by Michael Caster

The world is burning, scorched by the dual evils of the climate crisis and rising nationalism.

While there is a legal and political framework for promoting and protecting our human rights in the form of international conventions and other statutes, the rights framework has been too often sidelined or twisted in the name of national security, economic expediency, or xenophobic and bigoted populism.

The human rights to be free from discrimination, take part in public affairs, be secure in one's privacy, exercise the freedoms of expression, opinion and belief, assembly, and association, to have a fair trial and be free of police violence, and other civil and political rights are being steadily stripped away. For many, they were never protected in the first place. The rights to enjoy the "highest attainable standard of physical and mental health," access to education, safe and healthy working conditions, and the protection of unique cultural identities and life are likewise under constant attack at the national and global levels.

Dictators and demagogues from local government officials to world leaders have denied, twisted, or engaged in gaslighting, such as narratives of cultural relativism or environmental fascism, to weaken the human rights framework. Why? Because at its core the human rights framework is about rearticulating power: restraining the State and empowering the people. After all, it was in direct opposition to the fascism of the 20th century that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was born in 1948.

At the bioregional level, we can return the human rights framework

to its radical purpose by drawing from the foundation of the human rights city movement to make the case for the human rights bioregion.

Following years of authoritarian rule in Korea, on 18 May 1980 a group of university students in the Southern city of Gwangju took to the streets in opposition to ongoing martial law. In the ensuing days, the government responded with utmost brutality leading to untold deaths in what has become known as the Gwangju Uprising, an event and its intergenerational trauma recounted beautifully in Han Kang's 2014 novel *Human Acts*. Gwangju is often credited as the catalyst of Korean democratization. It is from this history of defying authoritarianism that the city of Gwangju has emerged as a pioneer in the human rights city movement.

Defined at the 2011 World Human Rights Cities Forum in Gwangju, it is "not just a social and political process operated by the philosophy in which human rights is the most fundamental principle as well as the principle to be abided by, but also human rights governance in which members of the city cooperate to improve quality of living for all based on human rights norms."

The human rights city concept emphasizes that all inhabitants, citizens and non-citizens, including the most marginalized, are respected regardless of racial, national, social, gender, economic, or cultural identity, and can freely participate in and take responsibility for decision making and policy setting. It emphasizes the localization of international human rights norms and fundamental freedoms, a framework seemingly tailor-made for bioregional action.

Declaring a human rights bioregion recognizes that we do not

exist as a series of cities, and would arguably ensure a greater place for environmental justice than a strictly urban approach to the localization of rights. It is about committing to action on climate change and the promotion and protection of human rights at the regional level, while fostering cooperation between localities and denouncing discrimination and nationalism.

If bioregionalism is about the rearticulation of economic, cultural, and political power, then the declaration of a human rights bioregion is as much about the rearticulation of rights power.

Arriving at a human rights bioregion means embracing the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its succeeding instruments. It means deliberation on a charter for human rights in the bioregion. For this, inspiration might be found in the Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City, but adopted to the bioregion.

A provisional charter of a human rights bioregion would be grounded in the principle of non-discrimination and a duty of solidarity. It may include such things as articulating the right to participatory politics and the transparency of public administration. It may include the right to physical and mental safety, including human rights training and delimited power for law enforcement, but also representative and transparent judiciaries. The rights to freedom of expression and access to information could not be curtailed but by the strictest parameters in line with international norms, while the right to privacy, against government or private company overreach, would be guaranteed to the highest standard. The rights to peaceful assembly

and to form trade unions must be upheld.

Health, and education rights, enshrined in international conventions that the United States has unconscionably not ratified, should likewise be enshrined in the charter of a human rights bioregion. Housing and land rights will need serious rearticulation from their current state of denial. Likewise, cultural rights, with a special emphasis on indigenous traditional knowledge and practices, must be enshrined in the charter of a human rights bioregion. A right to a healthy environment, including the necessary policies to promote green zones and address climate change, should be conceptualized within such a charter, while the declaration of rights for the environment itself would position the charter for a human rights bioregion as truly radical.

The idea of a human rights bioregion draws from the existing innovative movement for rights and power confined to the level of the city. It might begin with a symbolic declaration, evolve through the deliberation of a charter, and take form through local, national, and international human rights activism. It will not be easy.

Declaring a human rights bioregion is one way to make human rights more relevant in our daily lives, from social and cultural practices to policy making, and remind us why it is important to stand up for social justice.

Michael Caster is a Cascadian and human rights researcher specializing in China and Southeast Asia. He works with Article 19, where he manages projects on internet freedom and digital rights, and is a board member of the Department of Bioregion.

Breath Work

by Kim Goldberg

*We tied our hearts to a chain-link fence
while the lungs of the planet were ripped from
the breast and dropped onto trucks, boxcars
freighters from far away*

*We shed our old skin and stood naked
on the road, holding each other's hand
our fragile skeletons as gate
¡No pasarán!*

*If an owl's home falls in the forest
with no journalists around
does it make a sound
or a coffin?*

*We went to a mansion to bestow
a citizen's arrest but were given
a jail cell instead*

*We hung from the canopy, swaying
in the seam that binds heaven to earth, sacred
to mundane until the helicopter came
and commandos plucked us from the leaves
We could not breathe*

*We took the punishment of fists and slurs
and came back deeper
We laced ourselves to chainsaws
and let fire hold our pain*

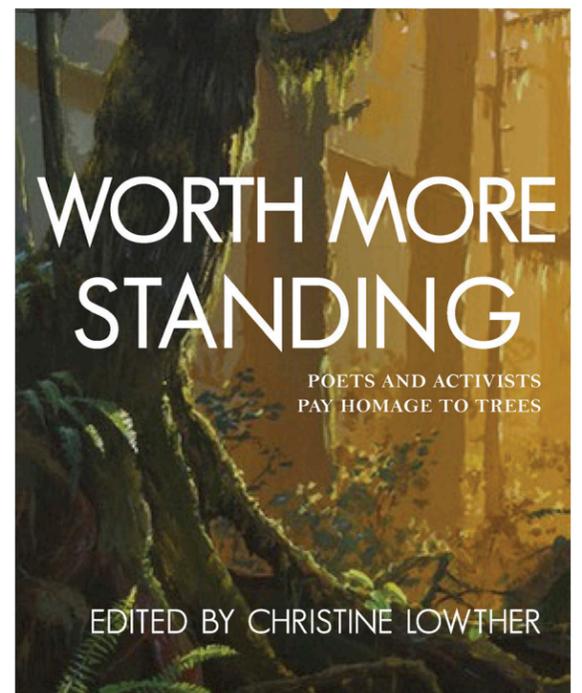
*We lay across a fresh-cut stump
wider than we are tall, sap still seeking
its absent corpus*

*We took our folding wheelchair
to the war zone to metaphorically
make our stand*

*We used our golden years to pass like water
through the phalanx of thin blue lines*

*By day, we sang on the ragged edge of our
future, by night we listened to the forest
keen for the disappeared*

*And our hearts fluttered and spun
on the chain-link fence like little brown bats
echo-locating in blackness
but hung fast*



Kim Goldberg is a poet and author living in Nanaimo on Vancouver Island. Each stanza describes something the Fairy Creek forest defenders did or experienced in 2020-2021, as reported by news media.

Bioregional Catalysts: Evolving Into a New Paradigm

This article is a bit unusual, which is, in fact, part of its purpose. Instead of having a single author, it is the product of a collaborative effort by seven individuals, all living in different places around the world and who are part of a larger group called the Bioregional Catalysts (BCs).

This composition is a living exercise for the BCs who are actively experimenting with how to approach tasks and objectives as Commons, thus minimizing emphasis on individualized ownership of the work. This has made the process of the writing itself as integral to the group's purpose as the production of a finished product. Another anomaly here is that while this article has a beginning and an ending, with several points of interest in between, the discourse it contains isn't complete. Like an old-fashioned Poloroid picture that starts blank while shapes and colors begin to materialize so that a recognizable image can be discerned, the story of the BCs is still emerging and awaiting full definition.

That said, it very clearly begins with a singularly pressing issue: planetary collapse. Regardless of the forum or platform in which it is raised, planetary collapse is always a complex and disturbing subject. Just saying those words can trigger strong emotional reactions, not to mention social and political turmoil caused by the many differences in understanding and acceptance of what is actually occurring on Earth at this time. These differences run the gamut from militant denial, to the wide middle range of those who believe that life on earth is at risk but there is still time to change and avoid collapse, all the way to those who consider themselves "collapse aware."

This small but growing contingent, when presented with compelling narratives such as Joe Brewer's book *The Design Pathway for Regenerating Earth*, understands that collapse is already underway. This understanding, which acknowledges both the complexities of our biosphere and that we aren't separate from nature, comes with the hope of a sobering-but-plausible path to restore planetary balance and health.

Bioregionalism, as a movement, invites all humanity into a new paradigm where social, economic, and decentralized governing structures prioritize ecosystemic interdependence with land, water, life and living systems.

It is at this end of the perspective-continuum that the BCs live, learn and find their purpose. They are answering the call to create the cultural scaffolding of relationships and resources necessary for establishing a world-wide network of bioregional hubs for sharing wisdom, learning, and other vital resources. Like any pioneering process, it has started with more questions than answers.

Currently, Bioregional Catalysts is a 77-member subset of a larger group called Earth Regenerators, a decentralized ecosystem of people and activities held together by a global platform of more than 3,400 members world wide. Earth Regenerators is two years into a discovery process that begins with building productive, equitable and collaborative groups through prosocial gatherings based on evolutionary science. Group configurations have been forming organically around a variety of common interests and innovations with a consistent focus on cultivating emotional regulation and psychological flexibility for the constituent members. Out of these groups,

capacity for regenerative leadership is evolving and inspiring new strategies for living and working in this transitional time when existing systems and structures are giving way to emerging bioregional paradigms. Many of these strategies focus on regenerative action in the real time settings and situations wherever the individual members find themselves.

Bioregional Catalysts is one such evolving group within the Earth Regenerators prosocial framework. Initiated and stewarded by Benji Ross, it is attracting a growing number of bioregional "Weavers," another descriptive label for those who are exploring and engaging in this living laboratory. However, beyond the labels, establishing comprehensive definitions for the people and activities of this movement is an ongoing challenge. To understand what BCs are, we need to look at what they do. Some close synonyms might be network builders and/or community organizers. However, these common terms are associated with transactional relationships contextually familiar to us from the marketplace, non-profits, and political activism where groups are separate with limited opportunities or incentive for generative collaboration. As such, they don't adequately reflect the relational aspects of interdependence, decentralization, and the holding of prosocial Commons that are essential aspects of effective bioregionalism.

Bioregional weaving is a form of social cross-pollination. By initiating dynamic processes that connect social and economic systems at multiple levels, BCs seek to create coherence across the entire system by encouraging the system to become visible to itself as an integrated whole.

Individual BCs are forerunners who may be deeply committed to a particular place, but not always. Members also cultivate bioregionalism, or "bioregioning," in virtual "placeless spaces" currently called bio-cyber-regions. This designation acknowledges a common experience in our world, often an outgrowth of our globalized civilization, where many people live mobile lives, or in other ways may not be living in a physical location where they can currently dedicate their on-ground lives. Recognizing this placeless space makes it possible for anyone, anywhere to fully participate in bioregioning, directly or indirectly. And yet, being a Bioregional Catalyst is more than an individual role or job description. It is a collective learning journey as well as a supportive, generative community that is becoming an integral component of an emerging ecological, social and cultural paradigm of bioregionalism.

As a learning cohort, BCs come together from around the world for weekly Zoom meetings, exploring subjects and ideas proposed and chosen by the participants. One especially productive activity, stewarded by BC Penny Heiple, has been the use of a prosocial ACT Matrix that has helped develop group cohesion and articulating shared values and purposes. A number of defining statements about the identity and intentions of BCs, individually and as a collective, have come to light through this process. These include being comfortable with complexity and paradox, cultivating life balance and appropriate boundaries, engaging in inner work and shadow work, dropping victimhood and cultivating empowerment, as well as being a community of

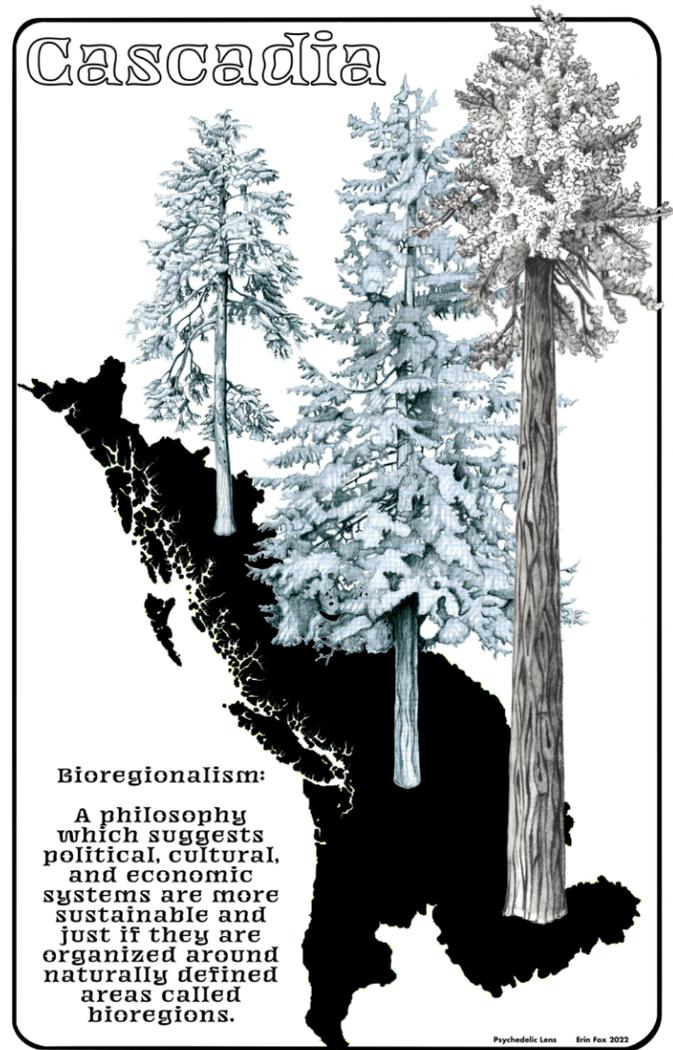


Illustration by Cascadian artist Erin Fox. Check out more of her artwork in full color at psychedelliclens.com

mutual support and honesty.

Looking ahead, during a BC session in early January, the subject of aspirations for the new year was raised and received a variety of fulsome responses. Among them were many expressed intentions for deepening relationships within the BCs as well as for reaching out to potential collaborative partners and opportunities outside the group. There was general agreement that the BCs desire more confidence in articulating and promoting the concepts of Bioregionalism as well as promoting the benefits that Bioregional Weavers offer to their respective communities and the world at large.

There have been several energetic conversations about vocational development for Weavers through the creation of a guild that would coordinate internships and apprenticeships for bringing new people into this work, as well as provide the structures for engaging with public and private funding sources. It is agreed among the group that developing social and economic support for this work, and for the people who are blazing a trail forward, is at the top of the current priority list.

It is an exciting time to be part of this burgeoning movement but it is not without considerable challenges, most notably how much is unknown.

As with the experiment of writing this article, there is no tried and true template, no assurances of outcome, nor any reliable gauges to measure how it will be received.

The Bioregional Catalysts are learning by doing and evolving as they learn, which is arguably the most intriguing and salient attribute of this group to date.

For more information about Bioregional Catalysts and Earth Regenerators check out: earth-regenerators.mn.co



Cascadia on /r/Place

On April 1, 2022, social news site Reddit launched /r/Place, their strange, collaborative, combative art project. For four days and nights, several hundred Cascadians worked together to ensure we got an amazing Cascadia flag into the final image.



For those not familiar, /r/Place is a challenge where members of different communities, subreddits, groups, fans of causes or individuals, all band together to create a piece of art on a collaborative canvas. Each user can place one pixel every five minutes. No one knows how long the challenge is going to go, or what twists the developers will throw in, such as, in this version, doubling the canvas size each day and opening up swaths of new areas for people to color in.



Larger communities run rampant. Smaller communities try and hold the few pixels they can carve out, and alliances are made with the groups and subreddits around you.

In total, the 2022 rendition of r/place tallied more than 943 million screen views, a billion minutes spent in the subreddit per day and four billion minutes spent in r/place in total over the four days. The r/place subreddit averaged over 10.4 million daily active users.

Year in Review

As probably the worlds largest mandala, after an unannounced fade to white signaling the end of the four day mad dash, our Cascadia Flag survived through our insane tireless pixel blotting and awesome alliances. A huge thank you to everyone, especially on the Discord, who helped make it happen.



Officially a 501(c)3 Nonprofit!

The Department of Bioregion (DOB) received our 501(c)3 letter of determination on April 20, 2022, which is a signifigant boon for our programs, projects and ability to provide services. The DOB is an anti-racist, anti-colonial 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to placing bioregionalism into mainstream thought as a viable solution to many problems facing our society and planet today. We seek to deepen our understanding and connection to our home places, and grow an interconnected network of bioregions and bioregional movements around North America and the world.

Launched in 2017 as the Cascadia Underground media center to empower voices and marginalized communities, we formed the Department of Bioregion to better connect bioregionalism and Cascadia, support the Cascadia movement, take action-oriented steps toward articulating why bioregionalism matters, and helping other organizers root into place beyond our own bioregion. Our mission is a world of interconnected bioregions and bioregional movements. We do this by building "Departments of Bioregion," place based hubs that research, promote and disseminate information about bioregionalism, community self-determination and regional self-reliance. Through our projects, publications, speakers and workshops, we encourage local organizations and individuals to find regenerative ways to live within the natural boundaries of bioregions. We believe that people who know and care about the places they live in will work to restore and sustain them.

In the next year we are excited to grow our network of bioregional ambassadors and support projects like the Cascadia Spoke, a Mutual Aid Network and Disaster Corps, and to strengthen our partnerships:

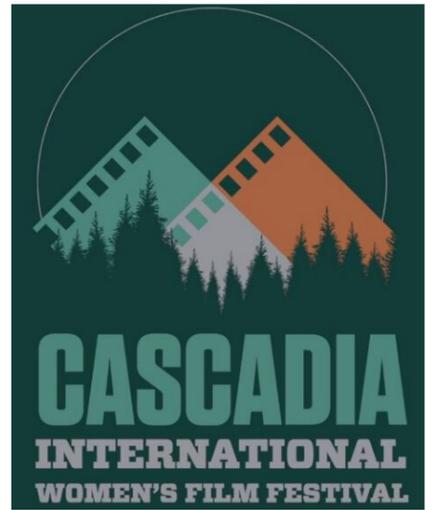
with the flag creator to help him make a Flag Trust that protects the symbol, as well our ongoing partnerships with the Cascadia Association Football Federation and CascadiaNW festival.



Cascadia at the SSEC Conference

The Cascadia Department of Bioregion presented with the People's Voice on Climate as part of a 90-minute presentation for the 2022 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference on April 26, 2022, which brought more than 2500 policy leaders, advocates, academics and scientists from around the Salish Sea for a week of discussions geared around better stewarding our ecoregion and bioregion.

The panel session was titled "Climate Assemblies: Lessons learned," and was part of the opening session. Laura Berry, executive director of the PVOC presented on direct democracy and the growth of people's assemblies around the world, followed by Ed Chadd, who talked about the Washington State Climate Assembly, the first in the United States, followed by the DOB presentation, "Biodiversity Knows No Borders: Why bioregional organizing is important for climate change."



Cascadia Women's Film Festival

The Cascadia International Women's Film Festival returned for the first time since COVID, live and in person from May 12-15 in Bellingham, Washington, and online from May 19-30. The multi-day annual film festival celebrates exceptional films directed by women from around the world. Now in its sixth year, it is one of only a handful of festivals currently dedicated to this purpose, and spans all film genres: narrative, live action, animation, documentary, and experimental films of all lengths.

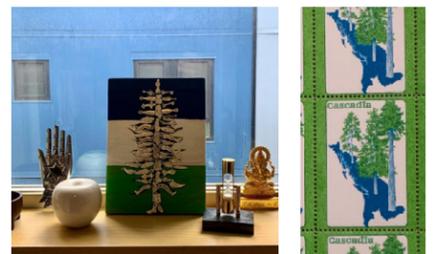
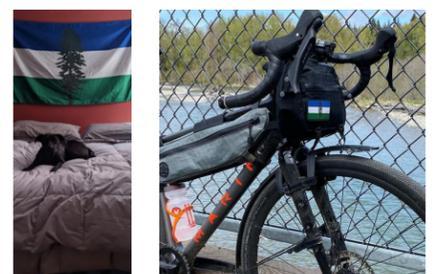
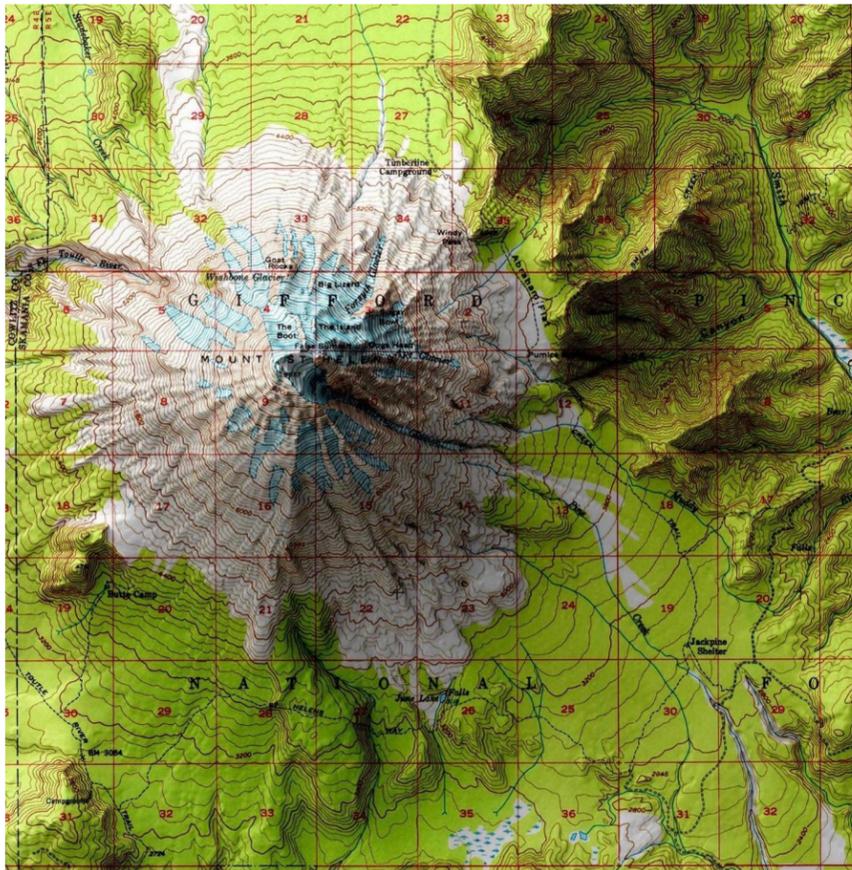


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Envisioning Loowit (Mt. St. Helens) before it erupted. By Jeffrey Linn, Conspiracy of Cartographers. See his amazing maps at: conspiracyofcartographers.com/

Cascadia Day! May 18

Cascadia Day, May 18... the anniversary of Mt. St. Helen's eruption. On that day people realized, forcefully, that the earth is alive!

- David McCloskey, Cascadia Institute

May 18 is the anniversary of the Mt. St. Helens eruption and was chosen by former Seattle University professor David McCloskey as a day to represent Cascadia because of its visceral reminder of the dynamism of our region. This is a day to raise your Doug flag, wear your Cascadia patch, join or host an event that represents Cascadia, plug in with hundreds of others throughout the bioregion to help make Cascadia Day an annual reality, and to build Cascadia as a positive force for change.

If you can't join an event on Cascadia Day, think of something distinctly Cascadian you or your friends can do: block parties, potlucks, movie nights, neighborhood cleanups, barbecues, tree plantings, wine tastings, wheat-pasting, pub nights....All can be part of Cascadia Day celebrations, and shared with others to create new narratives for values and causes we believe in. What are other holidays that could generate new Cascadian traditions?

LOOWIT

MOUNT ST HELENS

<p>Type: Stratovolcano Age: 40,000 years Last Eruption: 2008</p>	<p>History Loowit entered the annals of history on May 18th 1980 when a cataclysmic eruption leveled 1,314 feet (401 meters) off the summit of the mountain. The ensuing debris avalanche and earthquake measuring 5.1 on the Richter scale combined to create the most deadly and destructive volcanic event in the recorded history of the continent. 57 people lost their lives. 250 homes, 47 bridges and miles of infrastructure was lost. This powerful event reminds us of the great forces that exist beneath Cascadia, and marks our bioregional holiday; May 18th, Cascadia Day. For the Cowlitz Lawetlat'la is the name of the peak, while it is also known as Louwala-Clough to the Klickitat.</p>
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^ Summit: 8,363 ft (2,549 m)

Loowit Native Place Names Poster by Trevor Owen and the Department of Bioregion share the stories and indigenous names of places within the Cascadia Bioregion.



Photo Credits: Rody the Dragon and the Cascadia Furs, @CatAndDrumSC, ligetxcrypted and the FCAS, @Dragynwing, Okamiel and the Cascadia Bioregional Party, @hill.aaron @mackenzietstout, Dave O @uncleweed, @_snohomie99....



From the Discord: A huge thank you to NoTime4Infinity, Alex (THE COOL ONE), echosystemname, JimmysAwkward, JamesTDG, Buckeye, JoTheBro, PersusjCP, A Jomagurd, CyberDraconic, Infra, Infrastation, Brother Beard, Ronin Troy, Uncle Dave, Uncle Connolly Sephokur, JR, Etonamore, Nara, d00m, Dragon, BirdsArentReal, Frozen, OwlCat, Freedom Bones, Lunar Night, Naftali, and all the wonderful people I missed who keep the community so vibrant and and active.



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Cascadia PRIDE!

PRIDE Month is celebrated each year to raise awareness and recognize the impact of Cascadian LGBTQ2I individuals, organizers and culture. It is held each year in the month of June to honor the 1969 Stonewall riots in Manhattan, New York. For those who don't need a PRIDE parade—we celebrate the fact that we haven't had to face decades of marginalization, criminalization and brutality—and so stand in solidarity and mutual aid with those who have, and still face forced medical treatment, jail time or the death penalty in a majority of countries around the world.



Cascadia NW Festival Equinox

The Cascadia Northwest Arts and Music Festival hosted its first Equinox Gathering from September 16-19, bringing together several hundred people at the Moon Valley Lodge in Sedro Woolley. With support from the Washington Festival Association, ArtsWA, WA Chamber of Commerce and Boundary Bay, this was the first in-person gathering since 2020, when COVID forced a long pause. It was a great opportunity to reconnect, imagine and inspire in the runup of 2023. Cascadia NW has been celebrating our beautiful Cascadian culture annually since 2015, with three days of music, art and camping, traditionally held on 300 acres at the Masonic Family Park, near Granite Falls, Washington.

CascadiaNW is a sponsored 501(c)3 nonprofit program of the Cascadia Department of Bioregion. Photos by Sean Sweeney.



THE APOCALYPSE DEFIANCE CIRCUS

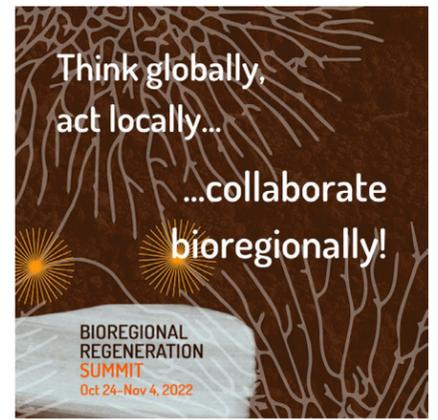


Bread and Puppets

The circus is coming! The circus came to town!! The Department of Bioregion was proud to host Bread & Puppet Theater as part of a rare cross-country tour on Friday, October 21.

This event was held at the Woodlawn Hall near Green Lake in Seattle and hosted more than 250 people. With performances coast to coast, from New York to Seattle, Los Angeles to New Orleans, the iconic political puppet theater company brought *Our Domestic Resurrection Circus: Apocalypse Defiance* to over 50 cities and towns. Fifty-two years ago Bread & Puppet Theater performed *Our Domestic Resurrection Circus* for the first time at Goddard College in Plainfield, VT. Since then, this capacious and provocative title has served as the basis of annual spectacles that generations of audiences have come to rely on for satire and celebration in the face of intolerable circumstances.

The Bread and Puppet Theater is an internationally celebrated company that champions a visually rich, street-theater brand of performance art filled with music, dance and slapstick. Believing that theater is a basic necessity like bread, the company frequently brings its work to the streets for those who may not otherwise go to the theater. Its shows are political and spectacular, with puppets often on stilts, wearing huge masks with expressive faces, singing, dancing and playing music.



Bioregional Summit

The Department of Bioregion presented as part of the Bioregional Regeneration Summit, from October 24 to November 4, which brought organizers together from around the world for an interactive in-person and virtual discussion. Our segment, "Cascadia: Why Bioregional Organizing Matters," discussed how systemic crises, of both Earth systems and human systems, are pushing humanity into a new relationship with Earth. Bioregioning offers hope that this relationship will be place-centered and regenerative. We discussed the Department of Bioregion in this context: our recent actions, thinking and where to go next.



Photo Credits: Brandi Lynn, LopezNumba11, Mary Beth, @NiceBigBuns, RandyFlynn, Melissa Cooper, Adam Denny u/ArtemasTheProvincial,

Remembering Stonewall Riots by Chris Schanz. Pride With Purpose by the Cascadia Arts Collective.

Thank you to all the wonderful Cascadians out there who make Cascadia such an amazing place and movement!

Finding a Place to Take a Stand

Mapping regions bio and cultural

by Patrick Mazza

Regions in a time of breakdown

Urbanist Lewis Mumford put forward many years ago, there is a “regional framework of civilization.” Mumford’s thinking was that regions are the basic units through which the world is connected. He wrote: “Real interests, real functions, real intercourse flow across (national boundaries): while the effective organs of concentration are not national states . . . but the regional city and the region.”

This is more than an abstract discussion. In focusing on the regional dimension, I am pointing in a direction to cope with and eventually rebuild from a time of national and global breakdown. A tagline of this journal could state, to plot a path for “living beyond empire.”

Breakdown is increasingly in the foreground. Conflicts and divisions are growing within nations and between them. Supply chains are snapping. Climate chaos is intensifying. National and global institutions are increasingly incapable of responding to the interwoven crises facing us. In fact, national and global elites continue to pursue models through which they have gained power and wealth, even as the destructive consequences of those models escalate. Whether it is continuing to expand the production of fossil fuels and arms, or perpetuating a profit-oriented capitalism heedless of social and ecological impacts.

Elites insulated in their bubbles will be the last ones to feel the consequences, which is why they will continue to prolong them. As historian Arnold Toynbee determined from his study of civilizations, this is the dynamic that causes civilizations to collapse.

The torrent of daily bad news, seemingly on all fronts, is driving many to despair. This is completely understandable. I struggle with grief myself over what is being lost, but we don’t have an option to give up, not if we want to leave a world with which our children can cope. We will be in struggle in coming years with the many dark forces coming upon our world, with institutions sunk in corruption, with ideologies that twist people’s minds. We need to find a common ground on which to struggle, and rebuild from the breakdowns which are now inevitable. We need a place to make a stand, a home ground. That place is the region.

Defining the region: The bioregion

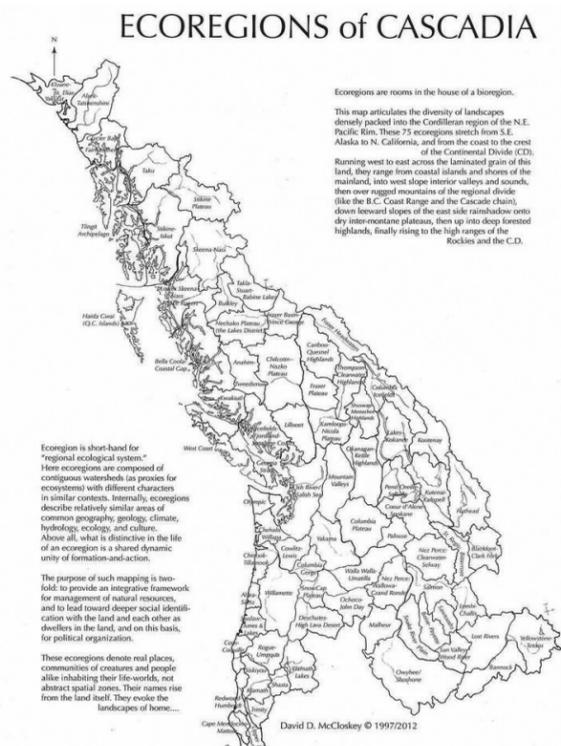
Region is an ambiguous term, capable of describing geographies on many levels up to continents and large sections of continents. A “region” in the context *The Raven* uses is bounded closer to home, more centered around coherent natural and cultural unities. But ambiguities remain, because those realities do not necessarily overlap. This is a reason for my use of the broader term, regionalism. It reflects the realities of culture as it exists on the ground, as well as the bioregional aspiration to build cultures more in tune with nature.

There is a bioregional reality drawing from the natural features of a region, predominantly in how the waters flow. Water is the fundamental element of the biosphere. It makes up 60% of the human body, and is the foundation of plant and animal life. The nature of a region is strongly conditioned by how much or little water it receives.

A great deal of climate disruption centers around the water cycle, how skewing key global wind circulation patterns such as the jet stream brings droughts to some places while drenching others. A place that one year is under a searing

heat dome may be hit by record rainfall the next (exactly as we have experienced in the Cascadia bioregion between 2021 and 2022). Wildfires, crop failures and floods are the outcomes. As we adapt to inevitable climate changes, how we use and live with water will be a core concern. That necessarily will draw the issue close to home, to the bioregions in which we live.

David McCloskey’s recent Ish River-Lillooet map is based on the natural unities around the Salish Sea and associated watersheds from mountain crests to the coast. It is a wet country, with some of the highest rainfall levels in the world. Mountain ranges catch storms blowing in from the North Pacific to feed some of the thickest forests on Earth and rivers running with salmon. Ish River-Lillooet is, in the lingo of bioregionalism, a combination of closely connected subunits known as ecoregions, also mapped by McCloskey, a retired Seattle University sociologist who is a progenitor of the now widespread Cascadia idea, which I detailed in my recent piece on the *Pacific Republic*.



Ecoregions of Cascadia Map (c). By David McCloskey and the Cascadia Institute

The cultural regions of Cascadia

Living in Cascadia, aka the Pacific Northwest, I am acutely aware of a cultural boundary roughly running along the crest of the Cascades Mountains. Also known as the Cascade Curtain, it may be one of the starkest dividing lines on the continent. Cascadia has a natural unity in the flows of the Columbia-Snake Rivers and associated coastal watersheds, but politically and culturally it is two different places. To the west are some of the most liberal-lefty cities and towns in North America, while to the east are some of the most conservative areas, at least on the United States side of the border. It’s not a pure division. Rural areas on the west side also tend to be conservative. But the west, unlike the east, is urban dominated.

The original settlers of Seattle and Portland hailed from New York and Boston, and came by ship. Seattle’s original name was New York Alki, the native word for by-and-by. Portland’s name was selected by a coin flip between two merchants. The Portland, Maine native won. In the 1970s, an underground paper called *Almost Boston* was published in Portland. The westside has many resonances with the Northeast.

In contrast to the cities, the original white settlement in rural areas came by land, down the Oregon Trail from places such as Missouri, Kentucky and Tennessee. That was reinforced by a large flow of Arkies and Okies during *The Grapes of Wrath* 1930s depression era. They formed a great deal of farm labor in that era. The areas east of the mountains have a distinctly different feel. I have the benefit of having lived on both sides. As a county beat reporter writing for newspapers in Eastern Washington in my late 20s, I covered agriculture and events such as the annual rodeo. I lived most of the ‘80s and ‘90s in Portland, and in Seattle since then. I like to say that in Cascadia, to go west you have to drive east across the mountains.

A studied ambiguity

In ecology, an ecotone is a transition zone between biological communities. It is neither one or the other, but a mix of both. In terms of culture and politics, we also need to think in terms of ecotones, crosshatchings where powers and identities are shared. Things don’t have to be all one thing or another. They can be both.

... all boundaries in black and white are, in one degree or another, arbitrary, reality implies a certain looseness and vagueness . . . To define human areas, one must seek, not the periphery alone but the center . . . The region, no less than the city, is a collective work of art.

– Lewis Mumford

Mumford wrote this in his classic, *The Culture of Cities*. We define the region not only by physical geography, but by our own actions.

Political breakdown is increasingly coming to the fore across the world. In the U.S., political camps are increasingly at each other’s throats. Secession movements emerge from both the right and left, from Texas to California. Rulings by a radical right Supreme Court on issues ranging from guns and abortion to climate are bound to draw distinctions and tensions between red and blue states ever more sharply. At the national level, we cannot expect coherent political responses to the crises growing all around us. To do that, we are going to have to build new common ground in places closer to home, in communities and regions.

Today we are cursed with the concept of the nation-state sanctified by the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, ending wars of 80 years. One distinct people in one bounded state. Countless wars have been fought and are being fought to define hard boundaries. In confronting a changing world, we need to shape new political forms that more mimic and reflect ecosystems, with their diversity and often ambiguous boundaries. We are going to have to build regional polities from centers out to peripheries, linking with neighboring regions through transition zones, ecotones where we join to build common responses.

In struggling for the future, we need a place to take our stand, a home ground. We will find those places in the regions where we live, drawing the boundaries loosely, and building common ground between us.

Patrick Mazza is a progressive activist and journalist since 1981. He is the editor for the visionary blog on Cascadian issues, *The Raven*. Learn more at theraven.substack.com

Watershed Councils: The Communal Essence of Bioregionalism

by Jeffree Mocniak

In and through community is the salvation of the world. —M. Scott Peck

Community has become my mantra. It graces me in my days of homesteading and awakens me from the narcissistic tendencies of my own prerogatives. There is a deep guidance to be had from the act of doing community, a wisdom lost to modernity, but present still in the cultures nearly obliterated by continuing waves of colonization. We settler colonialists of “western” heritage have replaced the deep interconnectedness of community bonds found between members of clan and kin with affinity groups of the disconnected. Joined merely in interest, preferred identity, aspiration or desire, our technology-facilitated attempts at community neither reinforce the bonds of kinship nor allow us to belong anywhere. Were we to fully achieve place-based community, we would surely realize the bonds of kincentricity—the deepest expression of connection, solidarity, identity, reciprocity, wisdom and belonging.

The premises of this short essay are: that community is necessary for humans to thrive; that our communities derive from empathic connection and should be fully inclusive (including the more-than-human); that communities, like ecosystems, that exist in fractals and bioregions are one fractal of human/ecosystem community spectrum; and that watersheds, both in form and function, offer a timely opportunity to realize bioregional community. While there is a book’s worth of material to cover here, consider this an introduction to the idea that bioregional organization and practice can provide community-based alternatives to the exploitative societal constructs of modernity.

Let us first acknowledge that many of our current problems stem from a legacy of disconnection. It has been an implicit aspect of civilization to divide and conquer. Many tools have been created to this end: social, economic, religious, academic, technological and organizational. These tools have systematically divided life according to gender, race, species, class, ability and origin. All of these divisions contribute to the general conflict, commodification, and exploitation that is history’s march towards “progress.” While many tactics for confronting the problems inherent in civilization are valid and necessary, perhaps the most profound is that of the way we inhabit our land base, for to commit to place is to find ourselves grounded in a bioregional reality, amongst a community which includes all who live there—and the guidance to be had from creating lasting bonds with them.

It is not enough to merely bound land in an identity and slap a flag on it. This furthers a separation mentality. Such thinking is the basis of nationalism and xenophobia and is what humans have been doing since the earliest waves of colonization. It’s the antithesis of living the weave, to being woven into the fabric of life. A bioregional approach to living is eco-systemic—it requires an interconnectedness that can only organically manifest when one lives in reciprocity and mutuality with the totality of life processes in a shared place. In essence, it looks like being neighborly to our neighbors—all of them. It looks like being in solidarity with those affected by our actions, including, and perhaps most importantly, the taking of their lives for our own survival.

The ultimate expression of solidarity is sustained empathy—staying with the trouble, as

Donna Haraway puts it. This trouble encompasses ongoing empathy in the face of the many challenges that arise from being in relationship, especially with those not of our immediate blood relations. It has become so easy to walk away, to tune out, to forgo the challenges of compromise, to forget what lives are sacrificed for our own comforts and survival. A profound spiritual insight develops from the empathic practice of returning to the plight of others, time and again, to understand their intrinsic value as it is tied to our own. The only thing that compels us to this refrain, this sustained resonance of lives concurrently lived, is repetitive interaction. Chasing rabbits from the lettuce bed yet again, grumbling disapproval for the neighbor’s ongoing disregard of blight accumulation, yanking at an unwanted and unyielding “weed” that encroaches ever into our domains—these are the troubles of relating in place and it is the call of our epoch to place empathy and compassion above consternation and anti-social tendencies, in service to solidarity. For it is true in one way or another, as Ben Franklin stated, “we must indeed all hang together, or most assuredly we will all hang separately.”

The empathic resonance at the heart of community calls for us to be in service, but in service to what? To neighbor Carl’s crazymaking and drama? To the unending removal of plants deemed “invasive”? To the dictates of ever-shifting political winds? What can we attach ourselves to in this service that has staying power and a lasting quality which accumulates all our successes, and gains perspective from all our failures? What we seek is the connective tissue of culture. From our day-to-day repetitive ongoing, patterns emerge which speak to traditions, to rituals, to shared identity in action and presentation. We gain culture by reinforcing the systems which outlive our individual selves. As a “holonic fractal” (repeating patterns that are simultaneously a collective of constituents and a constituent of something greater) of community, culture is in essence a collective of communities at the scale of the bioregion. Culture becomes bioregional when grounded in place, attached to the patterned groups of beings participating in the connective tissue of life unfolding and co-evolving. Bioregional community breaks bread together, and honors harvests in gratitude to the ancestor’s consideration of seven generations hence, and considers their impact on the seven generations to come. Bioregional culture can communicate the shared understanding of over 50 terms for snow, the ways that flora and fauna respond to specific weather patterns, the nuanced timing for the return of salmon to their natal river system.

We have opportunities to intentionally nudge our cultures in preferred directions. While it is often thought that culture creates values, so too can we apply values derived from a shared connection to place and its inhabitants, to our evolving cultures. This is a participatory act. It is best undertaken from a grassroots approach. Just as plant roots derive sustenance from healthy soil, so too can we expect the healthiest expression of culture to manifest from bonds rooted in the soil of shared place. Unfortunately, the prerogatives of empire via established economies and states create impediments to a free expression of relationships forged out of mutuality. This is where consciously designed alternatives can begin to provide opportunities for community collaboration which can lessen the influence and impact of globalized, mono-cultural forces.

When attempting to apply the bioregional perspective to alternative building, it helps

to think in terms of containers. These are the organizational structures we apply to our collective decision making, starting at the most intimate of relationships and extending, fractally, to the bioregion and beyond. Journalist Malcolm Gladwell once stated that “if everyone had to think outside the box, maybe it was the box that needed fixing.” Yes indeed, our boxes need fixing. In fact, they might be best repurposed as sheet mulch for that which we intend to nurture in their absence. For far too long humans of civilization have attempted to place boxes on the land and around life in the forms of kingdoms, states, jurisdictions, and property. We are being called now to recognize new containers to hold our transforming cultures, containers given us by the communities of life which beckon us to join them—bioregional containers. Think of these containers as nested dolls, or layers of an onion, fitting naturally one inside of another (holonic fractals of ecosystems). And consider that each layer becomes manifest through the recognition of unique patterns of life interacting, an amalgamation of climate, hydrology, geology, plants and animals in their overlapping habitats, and human cultural expression as it has existed over millennia. If we pay close attention and participate as one amongst a multitude of equals, what at first seems like illogical wilderness with scattered inhabitants pursuing individual aims, instead steps forth from the milieu as a body made of uncountable constituents, a biological super organism with its many cells and moving parts.

To further the question of applying this perspective to organizing, what can we grasp from this as yet ephemeral view of the world to make practical? It’s here that we catch our thread. In the reweaving of our worldview, and in looking to the life forces of which we are a part for guidance, what better to show us the way than water? We all live in a watershed, and it is the hydrological flow within landscapes which give rise to the shape of the land itself, and the expressions and connections of life found therein. This substance, water, is life. The containers in which water flows and life connects are, as Brock Dolman so aptly calls them, our “basins of relations.” Thus, watershed organizing seems obvious when life values are paramount. Firstly, because hydrology is a key element of bioregional alignment. We can follow the hydrological thread into a more complete understanding of all the bioregional elements which define one’s home place. Secondly, as Amy Sheaffer put it, “water is a resource that refuses to obey political or ideological boundaries. In this way, a watershed serves as an excellent arena for place-based pedagogy.” Learning to live in place is aided and abetted by water and the patterns of nutrient flows and hence ecosystem arrangements (the bioregional communities we seek to align with). Stated more scientifically, it is also now widely recognized that “the watershed is among the most frequently used spatial units of analysis in an ecosystem approach to resource management”[Sheaffer]. If we are attempting to see life not as resources, but as kin, as I myself am advocating, the watershed facilitates the ecosystem approach, which is an articulation of that container we are looking for as we undertake symbiotic cultural transformation.

The application of the watershed approach is multifaceted and immediately accessible. It starts within. We are watersheds. How we think of ourselves, our health, and the flows of nutrients and energy within ourselves, begins the journey from our own “headwaters” into the watershed beyond. At the level of the homestead, we can enter into a conscious relationship with the flows of water interacting with varied surfaces. We gain the imperative to create healthy water cycles in the living systems of our homestead infrastructure. By doing so we can improve our daily interactions with our home place by fostering water’s ability

to nourish our gardens and green spaces, and to infiltrate into the land and integrated systems of capture for dry-season use. We can facilitate the filtration from water from any substances not beneficial to downstream areas. This, in essence, is applied permaculture with water glasses on. Outwardly, through the tributary, we connect with neighbors to rally around restoration initiatives and occupational alternatives, which benefit from a better relationship to water and its flows. We daylight urban streams. We communicate with farmers to encourage healthier food and hence healthier water relations. Our widgets, technologies, and resource use become appropriate when in service to right relationship with healthy hydrology. At the level of streams and rivers, we come together to do council (direct democracy), gaining from work already done in watershed councils, adding more mutual aid aspects and building capacity for considering our watershed councils as clearinghouses for community solidarity.

“Strong people don’t need strong leaders.” I’ll leave you with those words from Ella Baker to consider. We are truly the ones we have been waiting for. The power is in our hands to fundamentally shift things in our world gone awry. Let us not waste time and energy begging the powers that be. Let us be the change we wish to see in the world. The watershed beckons. Our bioregional brethren will catch us if we stumble. In and through community will be the salvation of the world.

Jeffree Mocniak is an inhabitant of the Wind River valley of the Columbia Gorge, and a communitarian, homesteader, and culture change agent.

A Local Cascadia: Ideas for a Progressive Cascadia

by Matthew Choicej

Political ideology is defined as a set of shared rules, values, and beliefs held by a group of people. In the United States there are many political communities that clash over issues such as reproductive rights, LGBTQ+ issues, global warming, taxes, and the proper role of the state in the provision of basic services such as healthcare, education, and many others.

While value differences date back to the founding of the US, they have become more pronounced during the past 30 years. Americans living in “blue” and “red” states seem to exist in vastly different political and moral universes.

The central question concerns the irreconcilability of differing moral and political values. At their core, values are not necessarily rational. Values reflect the assumed worldview of what a group of people deems as “good.” If people view political and social hierarchies as either natural or divinely based, with calls for change viewed as an assault on the natural or divine order, such persons will support politicians that reflect this similar worldview.

Contrarily, if persons view society as primarily a construct of power relations with those at the top claiming their position through theft and force, such persons will support politicians reflecting this view of society.

Broadly speaking, the American polity is dominated by two parties, Republicans and Democrats. While neither party is totally ideologically homogeneous, there are clear lines of

ideological demarcation. Providing a list of issues both parties disagree on has been done ad nauseam by many media pundits and politicians. As Cascadians, we should begin to develop and clarify our own political and social values with an eye toward an independent Cascadian state.

As Cascadians, it is fair to say that the values we share differ significantly from both major political parties in the United States, especially the Republican party. While both parties differ significantly on social issues such as abortion, gun control, and the rights of LGBTQ+ persons, both parties share one key ideological tenant-- the fetishization of private property. In this case, private property is defined as a social relationship where one person or small group of people take possession of the means of production used by others for the production of commodities. This dynamic results in the creation of gross levels of inequality.

As Cascadians, this notion of private property must be radically deconstructed and reconsidered. (Of course, private property is NOT synonymous with personal property. Many Americans, especially rightists, like to conflate the two either out of ignorance or in a deliberate attempt to mislead). The basis for this fetishization of private property is the assumption that all rights are based on private property ownership. This assumption acts as a smokescreen to mask monopolies of political and economic power. Under this system, a citizen is coerced into playing by certain “rules” created by economic and political elites. One

either becomes a marketable labor commodity, or one risks sinking into penury.

A new Cascadian state should create an economy based on local human relationships, not on the abstractions of economic theory. Small businesses, worker-owned co-ops and employee stock ownership come to mind. However, most importantly, a Cascadian economy must be local. Human and natural resources should remain in Cascadia for the benefit of Cascadians.

Cascadian citizens are fortunate. We live in a geographically defined bioregion that allows for the production of energy through 100% renewable resources such as solar and hydroelectric. Cascadian soil is excellent and allows for agricultural independence. Cascadia has an educated population that will facilitate the creation of an educational system centered around local concerns, not dictated by a remote federal education department.

An independent and free Cascadia will create an economy largely removed from the vicissitudes of international capital. It will foster the development of true human relationships based on love, respect, concern, and a mutual understanding of the common good. Without the imposition of malevolent foreign values on our society, Cascadians will be truly free.

Matthew is a Cascadian writing from the southern portion of the Salish Sea. He enjoys Marxism, process theology, and working to establish a free, independent and joyful Cascadia!

Decentralization of Needs

by Austin Donofrio

Recently, in a niche corner of Twitter, there were several threads and response threads directed towards various political streaming personalities, such as *Demonmama*, in regards to their takes on large-scale supply chains. There are many who believe that large, centralized organization of supplies, typically through state actors, is important. For a lot of needs this might be the case. However, in the goal of building more resilient and environmentally-conscious communities, as well as pushing towards greater levels of social justice, decentralizing the production of most needs wherever possible should be a point of interest.

A bit on the nose with the world’s current situation is how the production, storage, and distribution of medicine/vaccines/etc. is a complex element of modern life. Long-distance, road-based ground transportation of any necessity or commodity from warehouses to distribution centers causes various issues that impact any car-dependent society heavily. It increases traffic, and compounds to create further environmental damage on top of the benchmark rate of CO2 emission. Long-term increases to exposure of emissions from traffic leads to damages to long-term health, and ultimately a higher mortality rate. On top of that, there are the side effects

of long-term stressors, like Bill’s 16-wheeler in front of you moving about a foot in the past thirty minutes on your commute. While medicine has been getting progressively better, we are nevertheless dying younger, in part because of the way we transport most of our goods, medicine included.

On top of this, a lot of necessities like insulin could actually soon be easily produced and stored locally. This piece of news has by now become famous, and as described in 2021 by Freethink, “The Biohackers Making Insulin 98% Cheaper Just Might Work,” projects like *Open Insulin* started with a similar goal of communal production in mind. From here, our human ingenuity will lead us to doing the impossible, to the miraculous idea that with cheap insulin, easily available to some of us now, we are on the path to producing even more of what we need within our communities, and without reliance on foreign countries.

Decentralization is also a key component to social justice. By ensuring that communities have equal access to their needs, by allowing communities to organize the production of the solutions to their needs locally, and by limiting small communities’ dependence on larger cities, we can create a more equitable country wherein communities are more resilient. In the

case of medical care, neighboring systems can compensate in the case of local system failures in vaccine production or other systems,

Decentralization can be further expanded to other areas of our society, following our principles of expanding direct democracy. Breaking down the norms established by colonial control needs to start with ending not only centralized power, but also by ending standards established by the old capitalist society. Giving communities the tools to establish, for example, indigenous language schools, and empowering local educators and indigenous people to overcome the damage done to them, will be a method of long-term, meaningful reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous people, which should be the one of the major goals of whatever societies replace the current status quo.

So, to allow culture to develop organically within the Cascadian bioregion in order to make the Cascadia of the future a more economically, linguistically, and culturally vibrant region, it all starts with grassroots organizing for the distribution of funding and resources, rather than focusing solely on a federal, centralized institutions to meet these needs.

Austin Donofrio is an author, writer and Cascadian abroad, currently living in Japan.



Pride of Cascadia. Pride of the Sound. Amazing pregame display by the Emerald City Supporters July 1, 2019. Photo by Sounders FC.

The Cascadian Flag: A Transformative Icon

by Alexander Baretich

The Cascadian flag captures that love of living communities in our bioregion.

The blue represents the moisture rich sky above and Pacific Ocean along with the Salish Sea, lakes and other inland waters. Our home is of continuous cascading waters flowing from our sky and mountains back to the Pacific. For

Unlike many flags, the Cascadian flag is neither a flag of blood nor a flag of the glory for a nation, but a love of the bioregion; our ecosystems and the place in which we live and love.

Cascadia is a land of falling water from the Pacific to the western slopes of the Rockies where water cycles as vapor and then rain and snow to run through creek and river back to the Pacific. The white is for the snow and clouds which are the catalyst of water changing from one state of matter to another. From liquid into vapor (mist and clouds) and from vapor into solid (ice and snow) and melting back to liquid or vapor. The green is the forests and fields which too carry life giving water through our biodiverse land. The lone standing Douglas fir symbolizes endurance, defiance and resilience against fire, flood, catastrophic change, and even against anthropocentric Man.

All these symbols of color and icon come together to symbolize what being Cascadian is all about.

When I was in high school (early 1980s) I was fighting against the deforestation and mass building of suburbia around my home in Portland. I was very well in-tune with the forests and the open fields (White Oak Savanna) on the south slope of the shield volcano I grew up on. I would enter the forest after school and just listen to Nature. I would do my version of forest defense, which meant pulling up surveyors' stakes, pulling down real estate signs and sometimes damage to equipment. I would even go into a forest where trees were marked with spray-paint (marked to be cut) and repaint them with paint matching the color of the bark so the hired tree cutters could not figure out which tree to cut. It was a losing battle as suburbia wiped out lots of forests and fields on the edges of Portland's expanding urban growth boundary.

One day at my forest, the real estate developer had secretly ordered the cutting of all the



trees while he was supposed to be arguing his case before Portland city council. It was an illegal cut as the city council were discussing if the "development" should take place given neighborhood protests and local media coverage. The damage was done, but as we tried to stop the loggers I realized this was a losing battle. I realized then that I needed to get into the minds of the chainsaw wielding workers and the bulldozer operators who would just scuff at my protest and say "it's just my job" or "if I don't someone else will." I had heard those words repeatedly or from the real estate developer himself "you cannot stop progress." First of all this was not "progress" it was greed and dominion over Nature. It was death and ecocide and its goal was eventually terricide. It was at that point I started to search for some means to shift the consciousness of people from anthropocentric (human centered) to one that was biocentric (life centered). I knew whatever that was, that catalysis, it had to be emotion driven and needed to have that "aha" moment or epiphany at the human conscious level. I also knew it was not something one necessarily went out and found, but was something that would reveal itself when it was time. So that began a subconscious search for what I would call a transformative icon.

In the academic year of 1994-1995, I ended up doing graduate work in Eastern Europe studying nationalism and ethnic minorities. Though I totally love the people, cultures and landscape of Eastern Europe, I was deeply homesick for the forests of Cascadia, specifically the Willamette Valley forests I grew up around. One day in spring as I sat on a hill with my companion, I explained to her what the landscape of my home looked like. I said those vast vineyards if at my house would be vast green forests; the distant mountains of the Matras would be the snowcapped Cascades with white clouds hovering above; and above that might be the blue sky.

The three colors of blue, white and green came to mind and that the pine tree in front of us would be a Douglas fir. The image stuck in my mind and spent a lot of time obsessively drawing the flag which really annoyed my soon to be wife. That period of time was crucial in regards to what was happening in Cascadia at that point. Massive deforestation targeting old growth was happening and salvaging of down trees cause by intentional fires as well as law suits countering clear cutting of endangered species habitat was filling up the courts. The Clinton/Gore administration during the summer of 1995 signed into law "Salvage Rider" which basically back stabbed environmentalists and made all the legal victories pointless. Like what I had realized fighting real estate developers in the 1980s, had again surfaced that we needed to create

paradigm shift in the minds of those who had power. The period was marked by "Cascadia Free States" which were environmental blockades and barricades set to stop the logging industry from harvesting national forests.

I tend to look at the meme (viral idea) of the Cascadian flag like it's a multilayered sphere or onion entering or implanted in the mindscape of the host and then unfolding while releasing its contagion. The meme conveys multiple layers to understanding Cascadia. As the memetic onion unpeels in the deep subconscious of the host some will stay or linger at one or another layer, but I have seen major shifts into the deeper layers by some who I thought would remain at the first several layers and I have seen some stay stuck at the first couple layers who I thought would delve deep into the core of the memetic onion. So the levels or peels. At first the normal reaction, the shallow surface level, is to be of nationalistic. The "oh we are a new country" concept which often ends up being "well if they are America then we are Cascadia." This is the flying of the flag as a form of simple regional identity, but then there is the deeper layers of consciousness that emerges as the simple concepts of nationalism peels away.

The next level then is the awareness that Cascadia is not defined by the limited borders of Oregon, Washington and British Columbia, but has greater broader borders that include Idaho, northern California, and southeast Alaska as well as northeastern Nevada, northwestern Wyoming, northwestern Montana and even a little of northern Utah. Then there is the realization that those borders are based on nation-state concepts and imperialism. This realization is that these lines on a map are dictated by the conquerors and oppressors who have destroyed so much diversity.

This comes to an awakening that Cascadia the bioregion is based on watersheds or river drainage systems that flow all the way to the Rockies or continental divide. Then a deeper layer of consciousness hits that the flow of water is crucial to a bioregion and that life is based on that water. ter that comes the realization that Cascadia

or any bioregion is not just a place, but a living complex of interactions and interconnectedness to many communities, human and nonhuman. We not a human in a vacuum separated from Nature, but are extensions of each other and dependent on the health and dynamic interactions with each other. It becomes a consciousness of living dynamic being and is no longer stuck in banal nationalism, but is an awakening to being part of a bioregion which is part of the biosphere which is the living Earth.

Alexander Baretich is a professor, author and the designer of the Cascadia Flag, which he designed in Portland in 1995.

What do we Mean by “Decolonize Cascadia”?

by Jack DeVore (Oglala-Hunkpapa-Lakota)



What do we mean when we say “Decolonize”?

Without context and explanation, many non-indigenous people make some pretty wild assumptions.

Do we intend to deport non-natives en masse? Do we want to take your homes and destroy your infrastructure? Do we expect you to learn our languages and practice our cultures and religions?

The answer is no.

We do not intend to do to you what so many of your grandfathers and great-grandfathers so readily did to us. We do not want you to leave and we do not expect you to mold yourself to our standards.

Decolonization is not a matter of citizenship, it is rather a matter of jurisdiction and respect for this land and those who have been stewards to it since time immemorial.

When we speak of decolonization we speak of treaties broken and territories restored. We speak not of generations past, but those to come and the world that they will inherit.

When we protect the land, we are met with militarized police. When we protect the water, we are met with militarized police. When we pray in the streets, we are again met by militarized police.

As a matter of fact, we are the number one most likely group in terms of percentage to be shot and

killed by police forces nationwide (at a rate of ten times the national average). And if we ignore colonial borders and acknowledge our “Hispanic” brothers and sisters as indigenous, we make up 32.6% of incarcerated individuals within these so-called “United States”.

Indigenous women are most likely to be victims of sexual assault and over 90% already have or will within their lifetime—that figure is closer to 96% in Seattle.

Our religions were illegal until 1978 on our own land. We are the only people whose languages were ever outlawed, and that lasted until 1990. We are the only racial demographic required to report blood quantum and require registration—which are concepts otherwise only relevant when discussing dogs.

Many of our people on reservations are expected to obey certain federal laws, yet still don't have the right to vote on them.

There are many tribes throughout Cascadia and this continent who have been displaced by colonial encroachment. Many who have been pushed to the smallest, most meager portions of their territories and even some who have been allotted none of theirs (see the Cascadia Department of Bioregion website for a detailed report on that subject).

There are also many tribal groups who have relocated to Seattle, be it their choice or not. In my family's

case and that of many others, people were relocated forcefully in government attempts to urbanize and white-wash indigenous people.

Here in Cascadia, when our Indian Health Board requests supplies for a pandemic, they are sent body bags instead. When our elders walk in groups, they are corralled like cattle and pushed to the ground or attacked by police for trying to use a crosswalk—while our youth are arrested for trying to protect them.

People leave comments about how they “would have run us over” on the Associated Press' bullshit statement, that spins a protest turned beat down in the Seattle Police Department's benefit yet again—yet Cascadia is such a “liberal region”.

Here in Cascadia, white kids are given “Indian names” at camp and taught to do things like “the Indians used to” while native children struggle to reconnect with the cultures that were stolen from them and elders do their best to keep them alive despite it all. Here in Cascadia folks give performative land acknowledgements at high schools on islands with white populations, but don't acknowledge the fact that there isn't anyone left there to be acknowledged and that our problems were not left in some nostalgic past.

Here in Cascadia, Seattle Police kill innocent Indians and get transferred to other departments instead of being charged for the murders that they commit.

Here in Cascadia, there is a lot of work to be done where our environment is concerned as well. British Columbia is being clear cut, 36 pipeline operators poison the land and water with over 45,000 miles of pipeline (both natural gas and fossil fuel) in Washington alone. Energy Transfer is still trying to push a pipeline through unceded Wet'suwet'en land in British Columbia. Nuclear plants sit like time bombs along the rivers and the mills beside them pollute the

air. Dams have driven our Salmon populations to the brink and bees are dying left and right. A Naval base pollutes the Salish Sea and a military base scares our region's native birds with their incessant flight drills. It seems MBTA laws regarding distance from known nest sites don't apply to Military choppers.

We have a long standing history of Red Power action in Cascadia. From the Franks, Bridges and Mills families at Frank's Landing on the Nisqually, who stood (and still stand) for the fishing rights of indigenous tribes, to Juan Jose Bocagenegra, who worked with others to establish the El Centro school on Beacon Hill. Ramona Bennett of the Puyallup has been instrumental in these movements and continues to fight to this day. She will have her Holocaust museum before she rests. Robert Free taught me that peaceful protest means little if we are not at the same time prepared to fight back if necessary. Hank Adams was a professor among American Indians, and kept these stories so that all of us could understand and continue this work.

Rick Williams continues to preach peace in the face of the violence all around him, despite the fact that a police officer named Ian Burke murdered his brother John.

So many have fought in these so called ‘Indian Wars’ which are the reality in which we live—yet seem a dream of a far off past to those it does not affect. Here in Cascadia and beyond, we walk in prayer that there will be an Earth for our grandchildren to inhabit.

When we speak of decolonization, we speak of respect for a land and its people—and of a trust in their ability to protect and restore this bioregion for all of us who inhabit and enjoy it.

Jack DeVore is a photographer and writer living on Vashon Island. Follow his work #wetheindigenous and @we.the.indigenous on Instagram and Facebook.

Not One Flag, but Thousands

Creating Bioregional Symbols

Symbols pervade our life at every level of our society. In a time when our identities are largely imagined (we will never meet the other 400 million people sharing our continent) it's more important than ever that we create symbols that represent our values and principles. The Cascadia Doug Flag is a symbol that represents our bioregion and movement. With it, our hope is to connect people together as citizens of their watersheds, rather than arbitrary lines rooted in blood.

But it is by no means the only symbol. Rather it is one of thousands, of which any person could make, that communicate the values on which we stand. By using the Doug Flag, and the green white and blue, we show a shared regional identity, and that we share common beliefs, dreams and principles.

Much like the Rainbow Flag, a Black Flag or the Occupy Fist, symbols can be an incredibly potent means for making a public and visible statement about the values and principles that we share and identify with. With so many brands manufactured for our consumption it is important that as citizens of this world, we have our own community inspired and created symbols that are driven by a love of place and our neighbors—something authentic, rather than rooted in a profit basis.

We hope every individual or community that agrees with bioregional values creates a symbol for their place. Green, white and blue can be used as a landscape, or colors that denote specific values. The douglas fir can be used, or can be replaced with a tree, plant or animal in a given ecoregion.



David McCloskey reveals his design for a Cascadia Flag at the first ever Cascadia Bioregional Congress in 1986. The waving lines are evocative of the dynamism of our region, while the triangle represents the bioregion.

We are all Cascadian, and together, we are the Cascadia movement.

Protecting the Salish Sea (from front page)

So there's a lot of things that don't live in colonialism that have lived in our hearts. Allowing every child to understand their human responsibility, for them to understand their place amongst all other beings. Even the children understood these things in those times before contact.

Do we continue to plant seeds of disrespect to the burning of the world, the falling of everything and the destruction of all? Or do we start listening to the first peoples? We hold the roadmap to paradise.

On the importance of indigenous teachings:

These knowings need to be taught to the children who are not necessarily indigenous to these lands, but they're people of Mother Earth, right? Everybody is. We're all the children of Mother Earth. We're all indigenous to somewhere from some point in time. I believe it's each and everybody's responsibility to understand that, to rekindle that, to re-indigenize themselves, and see the world through indigenous eyes once again. Experience the world through an indigenous heart once again, and feed the children indigenous understandings of Mother Earth, the circle of life, and the creator. And we can create a beautiful world once again.

Certainly the opposite of that is happening right now. In an extremely short period of time—a blink of an eye in our tens of thousands of years of existence here.

The ancient forests—we never harmed any of them. Yet we utilize the materials from them very wisely. Whenever we need, that material is there for us. And now those ancient forests that went all the way from, you know, California to Alaska, before contact, now those here in our Salish Sea are 98% annihilated. There's 2% left, even in the illegitimate province of British Columbia, what they call British Columbia, that huge territory. We're trying to protect the last 2% now and they fight us violently the minute you oppose them. Even the

salmon are down to 2% now.

We understand ourselves the cedar tree people. The mother tree of our people is the ancient cedar trees. We've worked with those cedar trees for many thousands of years. Now they're virtually gone. And we've also recognized ourselves as the salmon people because we've worked with salmon for so long. And they're down to 2%. And climate disasters, walloping them, cooking them in the river. The glaciers are melting and the waters are shallowing and heating up and so we just have a lot of work to do.

The governments of what they call the United States and what they call Canada need to start listening to our first peoples. We need to be at the table. Our indigenous-hearted elder women matriarchs need to be at the table in every decision making point.

What is the direction of our society? In the colonial society, there is no direction other than to take towards oneself. That's the only direction that colonialism has, and that direction has zero future. Zero.

Our people here have always had a direction given to us by these indigenous elder women matriarchs looking at the last voice spoken in a circle. We make decisions with that voice. Colonialism does not have that form of decision making at all.

Indigenous perspective is extremely important. Every person who walks in the bones of our ancestors here on these lands in our Coast Salish territories and throughout Turtle Island can gain indigenous perspective.

Our people don't even understand it anymore. Our culture has been smashed and robbed and raped and abused out of us inside of those death camps they call boarding schools. They were nothing more than death camps, cultural genocide. My four uncles were raped and murdered in those camps. My mom pulled up on the shores and witnessed everything that those priests had done to them. Last she saw them was still kicking and screaming, pleading for my grandpa and grandmother take them home, because they managed to pull up on



2016 Standing Rock solidarity rally in the streets of Seattle during the Defund DAPL and Wells Fargo bank campaigns.

the shore in a little power boat. But the priests had guns.

I believe that each and every one of us has good ancestors if you go far enough back. They lived in villages. They listened to the women, and women put their hands on Mother Earth and got the roots of the medicine plants and spoke to their spirits. And they learned things about this world that gave them strength and ability to heal and help their societies go in a good direction. But that was smashed by white male patriarchy and they burned millions of them, called them witches. Burned them and then took over the world by brute force. Men are just not necessarily designed to lead our societies. That's why the women gifted us men the drum which is the heartbeat of Mother Earth, so that us men could understand life just a little bit closer like a woman does. Right?

So we need more voices of women. We're getting that representation in the US government and you'll see more women of color being voted in. More indigenous women being voted in because people understand they have to have a strong gift.

On reconnecting to local place and local indigenous wisdom:

The colonial world doesn't have access to ancient wisdom because the destruction of the elders and the matriarchs. So they came here as adolescent-society people without elders. It's very sad. And yet we have remained elder-society people, which means that we held on to an education system of elders raising children. For tens of thousands of years, not the parents, elders. Those elders are the bank of wisdom for the circle life, Mother Earth, and ways of life that respect.

Before contact, those elders were surrounding us inside of our longhouse. They would raise the child from first breaths until that child heard those teachings so many times throughout their life that those teachings were now part of who they are. Their bones were filled with the teachings and the sacred place in their being—this intelligent place.

Now you've become a rich person. I tell people, I want you all to be rich because we were the richest people on the planet. We're walking embodiment of the teachings of Mother Earth in the

circle of life.

We're working on returning these ancient ways for people now. I believe that that we all need to do what we can to access it. Access ancient wisdom and knowledge and show up when our people hold an event. Show up, sit, listen, be quiet, like how we instructed the children. Sit, be quiet, and listen; it could be you up there next. Watch how they carry themselves. Listen to the way they speak. We need to just start all over and rebirth as a society that understands ancient wisdom and knowledge.

Like elders told us, we were put here last to lift up all the ones that were put here before us. In other words, we humans were the new kids on the block. And all these other beings they've been here so very much longer than we have. And indeed, our knowings that creator put us here for that very reason, that we would be the ones that ensure that each and every family of every being is going to continue in a way that the creator intended until the end of time. That's how it was when Lewis and Clark landed. Salmon plugged the rivers in ancient forests went from California to Alaska; now they're gone. Gone in a heartbeat. So if what I'm saying isn't true, and how else did all of this happen in the blink of an eye? I see no other explanation.

We need to all recognize where we're at, what group of families we've come from, and do our best to think about those ancestral roots. And if we don't have access to those old teachings, then listen to the people who are offering them up and sit with them as much as you can. The children should be sitting with with our old people. Children are bright, connected to the creator—they still have the umbilical cord to the creator. And when you speak to these things, they get it instantly. I love working with children.

Respect and acknowledgement. That means you give respect to all beings and you acknowledge gifts in other words, you reciprocate gifts, you give gratitude for anything that comes to you. You give something back to it and and live life in a reciprocal way instead of thinking about what I can take for myself. What can I give to this world to help those children? What can I give to my family? What can I give to my community?



Paul Chiyokten Wagner drumming and singing during Protectors of the Salish Sea's prayer walk (Mount Tahoma to the shores of the Salish Sea) commemorating the Slahal prophecy story of Coast Salish sacred promises to hold sacred relationships with all beings.



Paul Chiyokten Wagner installing the tarp skin on the 90th gifted Tarpee at the Indigenous Welcome camp to stop Line 3 in Minnesota.

Sadly that community doesn't still really exist but we do our best to simulate community now. We mostly have to get in our car we have to get on a computer to say well, this is my community. But a true community as we held would be that you rely on upon somebody's presence and and the sharing of spirit and the gift that they give in every single day. If they were to go away, your existence would suffer a little bit. That's community and yet we can't achieve that anymore. Because equity has been robbed from us by these dominant, abusive colonial governments, what they call the United States in what they call Canada.

Tell us about the work you have been doing in recent years:

I want to thank our ancestors, and our elders, and all that I spoke of. That's why we stood up. Those

Some of the best times in my life have been on the front lines. The vacuum of colonialism is a difficult place. It's a hard place, especially for our people. And yet on the front lines, there is community.

are the ancient wisdoms—why Sitting Bull fought, why Leschi and Jeronimo fought. It's because we're born as protectors. Our education systems allowed us to know that our job is very important. And that we we must stand up to anything that would want to harm these things that keep us alive. So they fought for that, too.

And so I do my best to get out there. Some of the best times in my life have been on the front lines. The vacuum of colonialism is a difficult place. It's a hard place, especially for our people. And yet on the front lines, there is community. Community does exist on the front lines, and it virtually doesn't exist anywhere else. We absolutely rely upon each other; we have a common purpose and a goal and there's no money involved. And we just show up. Nobody's getting paid to show up. We've done a lot of different things.

Of course, Standing Rock was a major major influencer. We started there by building these indigenous structures that we gifted—48 of them with extremely efficient wood

stove heaters—very warm structures that held up to the blizzards very well. Toasty as a matter of fact—blizzard minus 20 degrees Fahrenheit. The Standing Rock Sioux use them so they, in a term of endearment, they name them tarpees. (Ed. note: Teepees made with tarps.)

To date we've built and gifted many of them to resist fossil fuel and destruction

of ecosystems from colonial government slash corporations. We occupied the Olympia state capitol three times using these structures: demanding that they kick out the fish farms the first year and that they consider the fossil fuel expansions that they're invested in the second year.

We demanded a climate emergency declaration from Jay Inslee in September 2018. We walked from Seattle to Tacoma and then on the last day we popped up our tarpees on the lower step of the state capitol. We've returned to this Coast Salish built site to reoccupy it until they they do something real for our children's future. Our number one enemy for our culture is climate disaster.

Then on March 10, 2019, in the early stages of the pandemic, we put up two very large tarpees, that were washed away with 70 riot police after the sun went down. Peaceful people who just say we're here for your children, too. We're not leaving until we get a declaration of a climate emergency. And Jay Inslee, this so-called climate hero, sent 70 of his riot

police to flush us away. We used those structures to shut down Chase banks, Ferry Creek, and other places. And Line Three, we gifted about a dozen to help them make it through winter. Yeah, we've supported stopping of Trudeau oil, which is basically a tar-sands oil that they want to invade our nation's lands with putting tar sands oil through our land. Which is crazy. I mean, it's the highest carbon oil in the world. They just dump it on the ground and berms. We can see it from space. It's actually larger than the city of Seattle. More like 80 square miles of toxic tailing ponds, and they just dump it on the ground and say it doesn't go anywhere. Just look the other way.

The Athabaskan people have to eat the fish and elk from there and there's tumors, and now their people are sick and dying. They say that children can't be more than three minutes in the water because it's so toxic. And so they're literally killing our relatives.

There's so many things going on right now that people need to stand up for and show up for and

get involved in some way. You might not be able to get on the front lines, but that's the number one way to do it. And after that, I would say just organize amongst people that you know, and just talk about what are we going to do?

There must be something we can do and you can do it. You could start a petition, you could just show up and demonstrate, and now's the day, now's the time. There may not be another time if we don't do it now.

At Ferry Creek we were up there on the mountain for months just battling the RCMP to say, hey, these are unceded lands, you have no right to be here. They're doing extremely violent things to peaceful people. So yeah, we're on the front lines. Protecting that last 2.7% of any tree that's 150 years to 250 years old, causing it to be an ecosystem. In the illegitimate province of British Columbia, there's only 2.7%. Just 0.7% if it's 250 years or older. So of truly ancient trees, there's not even a percent left.

On taking local action, wherever we are:

I know people get overwhelmed. It's a tough thing you know, to look at all the things that are going on in the world, but we can just pick one thing and find some people that are passionate about it. And it actually relieves a lot of the stress, because now you're actually putting your spirit into something rewarding.

We can just take a look at at what is right under our feet. How is the water there? How are the trees here? Or how's the circle of life right where you're at? Because the truth is, it's not well. Ninety percent of the ancient forests have been annihilated and in a blink of an eye and 95% of the natural animals without those forests where they can live. It's a no-brainer. And upwards of 95–98% of our indigenous people are gone. Indigenous people in the Salish Sea are only a half a percent. And the rest are settler colonial people who continue—for the most part—continue to destroy this place.

There's just not time to live like cancer on Mother Earth anymore. We all need to really examine our our relationship with all beings, even give equity to water. That we would speak to its spirit before we interact with it. My grandmother did this was my mom and she was a little girl. And and so I know we've given equity to water for thousands of years here. And it's something to learn from our people that way.

We've got to keep coming together. By ourselves we can we can come up with some nice ideas but it's hard to bring them into fruition unless we're talking to another being and then they chime in with their ideas and bring up their synergy and then you're feeling good about doing something good for for this world and the future of the children. So yeah, we can just decide we're going to get together and have a have a talk, you know, make a meal. And talk about some things that are the closest thing that you could find that

you could affect. How could you change that and how?

Indigenous people hold and protect 80% of global diversity on Mother Earth today. And 33% of forested lands are protected by indigenous peoples who only make up 12% of the population globally. So we're still number one threat to these corporations and governments because we're willing to give our lives for these things. We have in the past. Many of the people in the global South still do. The corporations send thugs off to the Amazon areas like that. They literally just kill them.

On the role of stories, music, and culture:

There really are a lot of layers of ways that we co-create a paradise—I use that term because I believe it's true. And once we co-create it, we hold it very dearly. When I do storytelling, these traditional stories are teachings and they are living beings and they hold power. They hold these things that can allow us to become a better human being. have a better relationship with all these other beings around us. And the songs are very important for us to also because they're living beings, too, and we would use them to express the spirit power and in a song that begins as a cry and then turns into a song, and then that's an expression of your spirit power that came from nature.

That spirit power already exists. And part of that whole process is that song and everybody supporting each other with that song, the entire house, entire longhouse, multiple families singing one person's song, supporting them, lifting them up. As they dance their spirit power around that house.

So all of these different ways, including the songs and stories, are ways that we connect the Mother Earth and connect to nature, connect to each other, and connect to the ways of the creator and the circle life, Mother Earth and they empower us and they give us they give us a lift up. They are tools or ways that we can help each other and help ourselves in this world.

For more information about Paul's work, see protectorsofthesalishsea.org or the Facebook page, *Protectors of the Salish Sea*. For his music, see sacredbreath.ca.





CASCADIA

DEPARTMENT of BIOREGION

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Welcome to the first issue of the Cascadia Spoke, a new community publication dedicated to raising awareness of the Cascadia movement and bioregionalism. If you're one of the folks who magically received this in the mail, then you must be super awesome. Enjoy! If you just stumbled on it and are learning about Cascadia or bioregionalism for the first time, then please, by all means, dig deep, enjoy and feel free to reach out anytime.

If you have recommendations or personal artwork, poetry, stories, projects or feedback you'd like to see included in our next issue, feel free to email cascadia@deptofbioregion.org.

The Cascadia Spoke is a 501(c)3 nonprofit program of the Department of Bioregion. This first issue is created with generous grant funding from King County 4Culture. In the future, we are looking for 40 people to join us in donating \$10 a month as members. That level of support is all that is needed to cover costs of printing and distributing 2000 copies for each season.

Support the Spoke at
cascadiaspoke.com/join



Are you a Cascadian Cryptozoologist? *The Pacific Tree Octopus can be difficult to spot, but is often found deep in the forests of Cascadia, an important food source for Sasquatch. If you ever see one in the wild, give us a tag and we'll send a sticker your way.*

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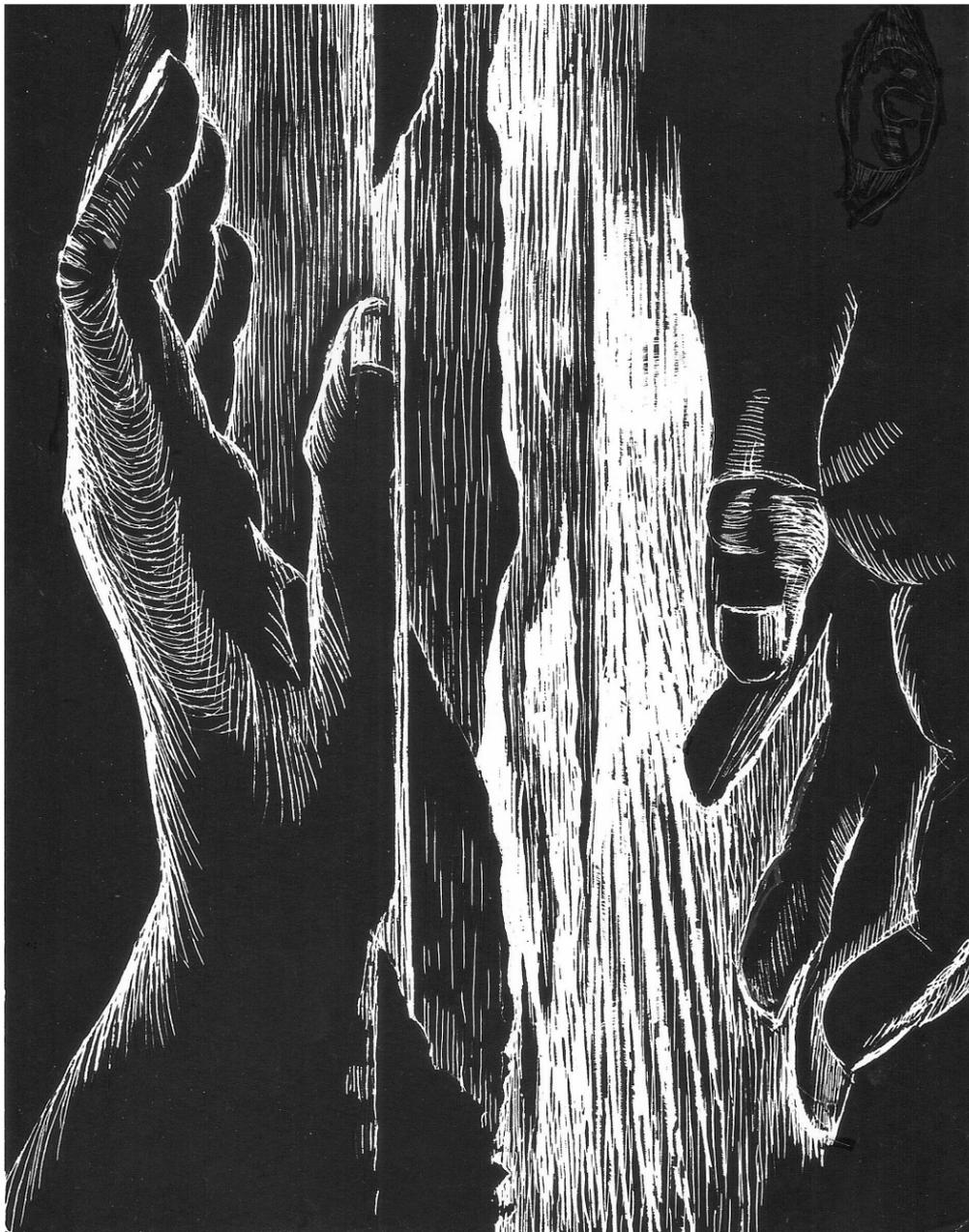
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WINTER SOLSTICE



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