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**COMMON GROUND**

*the student newspaper of the evergreen state college  
swimming against the stream since '71*



# About Us

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## School Year Ends

Hello, and thank you for picking up the May edition of the Cooper Point Journal!

This issue marks my last contribution to the CPJ, as this is the last issue of the school year, and I am set to graduate soon. I would like to thank all of the great students that I have worked with in my two years here at the Journal, and I am grateful to all of those who weathered the pandemic with me. Being the Editor under the bizarre conditions that were thrown at us was a challenge. There is absolutely zero chance that this paper would have continued publishing had it not been for the encouragement and incredible work produced by our contributors.

This issue, more so than many of our others, looks forward. Community building is a prominent theme that runs throughout many of the pieces. I will leave the cheesy metaphors for you to construct, dear reader, and instead simply state that I cannot think of a better way to send this school year's volume off, considering the circumstances that we have all been through.

I hope you enjoy what you read. -Jacob

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### HOW WE WORK

The Cooper Point Journal is produced by students at The Evergreen State College, with funding from student fees, subscriptions from our readers, and advertising from local businesses. The Journal is published for free every month during the school year and distributed throughout the Olympia area.

Our content is also available online at [www.cooperpointjournal.com](http://www.cooperpointjournal.com).

Our mission is to provide an outlet for student voices, to inform and entertain the Evergreen community and the Olympia-area more broadly, as well as to provide a platform for students to learn about operating a news publication.

### WORK FOR US

We accept submissions from any student at The Evergreen State College, and also from former students, faculty, and staff. We also hire some students onto our staff, who write articles for each issue and receive a learning stipend.

Have an exciting news topic? Know about some weird community happening? Enjoy that new hard-core band? Come talk to us and write about it.

We will also consider submissions from non-Evergreen people, particularly if they have special knowledge on the topic. We prioritize current student content first, followed by former students, faculty and staff, and then general community submissions. Within that, we prioritize content related to Evergreen first, followed by Olympia, the state of Washington, the Pacific Northwest, etc. To submit an article, reach us at [cooperpointjournal@gmail.com](mailto:cooperpointjournal@gmail.com).

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We want to hear from you! If you have an opinion on anything we've reported in the paper, or goings-on in Olympia or at Evergreen, drop us a line with a paragraph or two (100 - 300 words) for us to publish in the paper. Make sure to include your full name, and your relationship to the college—are you a student, staff, graduate, community member, etc. We reserve the right to edit anything submitted to us before publishing, but we'll do our best to consult with you about any major changes.



# An Interview With Our Professor Peter Bohmer and the Crisis of Our College

by Patrick Hamilton



From 1987 until his retirement in Spring of 2020, Peter Bohmer worked as a professor of Political Economy at Evergreen. On a cloudless May afternoon, my friend Magnus Cain and I sat down with Peter on his porch here in West Olympia. We asked him to reflect on the many struggles for justice he's participated in during his life and to share his perspective on the college: what makes it unique, its history, and the crisis it finds itself in. When we asked about his first impressions of Evergreen when he arrived in '87, Peter explained that, "Before I came here for my interview... I wasn't entirely sure where the college was, I had thought it was between Tacoma and Seattle. But when I had my interviews here for the job, I remember I was amazed. I was in the CAB and I heard many different people talking to each other about the movement against apartheid in South Africa. Before that I had been teaching at a branch campus of Penn State... where people talked about dating, football, the cars they wanted. So it was very impressive to me when I came here." Peter continued, saying, "Coming here, students seemed very engaged with wanting to change the world, and after I got hired I found my ideas interested most students."

It is clear that the reason these conversations in the CAB resonated with Peter was because he himself had become a revolutionary student amidst the movement against the war in Vietnam. "During the summer of '67 I was an economics

grad student at MIT... I was growing increasingly critical of mainstream economics and by the beginning of the summer it had been recommended to me on multiple occasions by members of a group I'd been organizing with called Vietnam Summer, that I read *The Political Economy of Growth* and *Monopoly Capital*. Both were by Paul Baran and the other one was also by Paul Sweezy. Both of those books had such a big influence on me, and they made so much more sense than what I was learning in grad school. Basically the idea was that the surplus being extracted from the third world was feeding the development of capital in the first world." He continued to explain that through the group Vietnam Summer, in "both working class and middle class neighborhoods, we'd knock on the door. If people would let us in, we'd tell them that we'd like to show them a slideshow on Vietnam, and asked them to invite some neighbors over. At first I was very shy. I'd always have something to do, it could be a petition, a protest or a sit-in at a congress person's office. Why it was so significant for me was, even though I'd been a very good student I had seen myself as pretty lazy in school, and definitely not that disciplined. All of a sudden I couldn't believe the energy I had. I realized 'this really is meaningful to me'." Peter explained that what radicalized him "...was meeting people who were interested in change, seeing that I had some ability to make change, and frankly the Vietnam War. In '67 the war was really horrible."

Peter continued to contextualize how this experience of realizing his own ability to make change led to greater shifts in his political perspective, especially as it pertained to the coinciding national movement against institutional racism. "My parents," he explained, "had raised me to be very anti-racist, not so much critical of structural racism, but teaching us that all people were the same... so I think while all of this was going on it really affected me in my movement from guilt to solidarity; I don't think guilt is bad, but I don't think it's a healthy end point. I began to identify with the Black struggle, the Black Power movement, and the liberation struggle of the Vietnamese. That's when I decided I wasn't just against the war, I was empowered." We asked Peter to expand on the impact of the rest of the 1960s and 70s on his political vision to which he responded immediately, "Anti-racism. It just seemed so clear that it needed to be a part of any politics for revolutionary change and certainly after the militant global struggles I saw in '68 I believed in revolutionary change. Certain reforms are possible under capitalism, but alienation, environmental destruction, race and gender oppression, those are really baked into capitalism. Reforms had some value, but to me, anti-racism was always a very central part of anti-capitalism and organizing. I don't think my perspective on that was too different from what most people on the left [had]."

He observed the centrality of anti-racism and the need to

organize with communities off-campus in successful student movements which reshaped higher education in the US. "While I was most familiar with it in California, nationally there was a huge growing movement against racism, demanding open admissions and scholarships to first generation Black and Latino students. You often had, and this was certainly true at San Diego State, people in the community coming to MEChA, which was the main Chicano group. They were demanding opening up and of course opposition to racism. So it seems to me that when you can connect student movements to broader issues and when you can connect students to their community off campus that is really important. The movement around opening up the universities also went hand in hand with the movement demanding Chicano Studies, Black Studies, and Women's Studies programs and I think both of those things are some of the real gains of the 60s."

These movements which redefined who had access to, and what was being studied in American higher education, led us to ask Peter what the fundamental role of higher education was in a capitalist society. He explained that, "like a lot of things we have to look at it from the top and the bottom. From the top, there's a capitalist motivation. I think originally it was really to train and socialize the future managers and professionals, there was this reality where it was almost entirely white and male of professional and upper class (continued on next page)



## Bohmer, cont.

background.” He explained that after World War 2 higher education was opened up to white veterans through the GI Bill, and obviously opened up more during the 1960s. “From below you have this mass movement to make college more accessible for working class whites too, but of course for Black people, Latinos and Native Americans to get good jobs, but also just to learn about the world.” He added that in a more democratic society higher education would be more serious about “...setting someone up for lifelong learning as well as critical thinking...” and, moreover, its priorities would revolve around “...what people want to do...” and “...the needs of society.”

This made Magnus and I consider that Evergreen is unique insofar as it is a public liberal arts college. We asked Peter, in his view, how this makes Evergreen different from other colleges.

“First, a school that’s public is one where there really is access for people whose families might not have been to college before. Secondly, we think of the liberal arts as these private elite colleges, so making liberal arts accessible is positive. To me, liberal arts education has the goal... of developing three dimensional human beings, not just people who can make money and fit into the capitalist slots. Liberal arts schools have unfortunately been in decline, and at Evergreen specifically it does seem [to be] caused by the ideology that school is merely to train people for careers. People feel that with all the loans you’ll be taking on you need to get an education that will get you a high paying career. Plus, neoliberalism has been privatizing education as a whole. This has also increased the cost of education. To me, tuition paying for more of your education represents a form of privatization. When I got here tuition paid for around a third of your education, and now it’s well over half.”

After explaining this reality where the cost of tuition was rising, and thus forcing more students to develop a different economic relationship with their education, Peter further explained a history of the last time students

across the state attempted to build a coalition against the legislature’s funding priorities. “In the last major recession around 2007-09, state revenue was in decline across the whole country.” He emphasized that he was most aware of the impact this had in California, Washington and Oregon, in which there was a major decline in public support of higher education. This forced campuses up and down the West Coast to adjust for their lack of funding by raising college tuition. “You had many other social programs being cut as well... a lot of the time organizations which lobby the state government for social spending, anti-poverty groups for instance, are happy to lobby for their concerns in the budget even at the expense of other programs... The goal was to build a united Coalition for a Fair Budget across the state, while obviously I was most active in our local campaign, Olympia Coalition for a Fair Budget.” Peter in his “History of Student Movements and Activism at The Evergreen State College” describes the movement as being made up of “students of color, anarchists, and members of a national organization known as Socialist Alternative.” He described the campaign’s spirited rallies on campus admirable. Organizers went door to door in the dorms to educate students, which culminated in March 2010 when a rally “...on campus carpooled to the State Capital, led by a hearse, symbolizing the proposed State budget as a funeral for higher education. We filled the State Capital legislature, interrupting a Senate hearing by singing and demanding more Washington State funding of higher education.” Bohmer notes that while “there was some media coverage, the movement didn’t have much staying power or any substantial victories.”

Reflecting on the campaign, Peter explained some of its shortcomings, in terms of not “...going into classes to discuss the issues involved and our demands for freezing tuition.” He continued, “There is a need to build alliances, not only with student groups on other campuses,

but also with unions and workers, on and off campus, and with community groups demanding a comprehensive fair budget that furthers economic and social justice, paid for by higher taxes on the wealthy. One difficulty has been the necessity to make demands simultaneously on Washington State and also on the campus administration and the Board of Trustees. Student movements have tended to focus only on demanding changes in campus spending and have deferred too much to the administration for lobbying the State government.”

While the list of social movements Evergreen students have been involved in is long, and includes more successful campaigns than this one, nearly all of them have the same thing in common. “I think the issue of building power is often absent. That’s what I was talking about earlier regarding mass movements, actually having power to change things. You’d think there’d be more power and movements with so many anti-capitalist students. There’s almost never been a strong student movement here. The administration co-opts and pretends to listen to movements until they lose steam.” Often missing has been building campaigns that have staying power. He contrasted this to his experience at “UMass Amherst... [It] was supposed to be a radical department, but it was so far short from what it claimed to be in terms of supporting on the ground activism. When I was at Penn State, the idea of changing the college would have never occurred to me. It was such a bureaucratic and pro-corporate school, but at Evergreen the way the liberal arts are taught, the openness, the way I can say my ideas publicly, it’s so much better than most places, but so far from what it claims to be, in terms of an anti-racist, equitable, school for liberation. Both of those truths are important to remember, better than most places but also so far short”.

Despite the deepening crisis the college has found itself in, Peter acknowledged that it’s crucial to not “romanticize Evergreen or its

past.” While there is a tradition of students here not just “...going to school for their careers...” but instead, “...trying to become better human beings...” It was more white than it is today, students were disproportionately wealthier than today,” and when the college was founded the faculty “was almost entirely white and male.” There is no great past for Evergreen to return to.

As we concluded our conversation, Peter made one thing abundantly clear, that “we are in a time of crisis. Of course there’s COVID, and the environmental crisis is clear. There’s constantly worsening inequality of income and wealth. Not to mention economic instability, I could go on and on. At Evergreen of course there’s an enrollment crisis... this began after the state budget cuts and rising tuition in 2009... but of course has gotten considerably worse since 2017... To me, morally and strategically, we have to push Evergreen as a school to understand these major crises in our time. This will allow us to teach about these crises historically and scientifically. By teaching about it, learning about it, discussing it and recruiting on this basis we have a path forward.” In his final thoughts, Peter added that what the college is going through is what Naomi Klein would call “the shock doctrine” wherein at Evergreen “the crisis of enrollment” is being seized for neoliberal ends. The problem is where administrators “don’t effectively explain the college.” The way forward to this goal “to me is seeing an effective student newspaper again, seeing effective student movements again to challenge and learn about these crises, to study and propose solutions to the many crises we face, to hire faculty on this vision and to recruit students on this basis. After all, how would Evergreen ever be more conventional or business-friendly than a school like Western?” Isn’t Evergreen for students and potential students that want to change the world? There are many students like that out there.

*Find this article on the CPJ website for a link to a broader history of Peter Bohmer and Evergreen*



# A Discussion with Talauna Reed, Running for Olympia City Council

by Miguel Louis

*This is an interview with Talauna Reed, conducted on the night of the 18th of May, 2021.*

*If you could start by introducing yourself.*

My name is Talauna Reed, I'm from Olympia. I am running for Olympia City Council Position 5. I am an organizer, and a community member at large, that responds to acts of racism, to acts of violence to people of color. A big push in my work is focused on holding institutions accountable for systemic racism.

*Can you talk to me about why you're running for City Council?*

Well after two and a half years of going to city council meetings and essentially being stonewalled, ignored, not responded to by our elected officials, regarding the murder case of my aunt Yvonne McDonald, I feel like it's time for folks to get into those positions who care about the people in community. It's important right now, with the disparity of white folks and people of color in positions of power, to get into those positions and begin to give voices to those who haven't had voices ever.

I'm also accepting an invitation from the Mayor herself, back in June of 2020, after the murder of George Floyd, where she invited "people of the color" to come in and take their seats at the heads of the decision making tables. And as much as she should recount her statement calling us people of color, "people of the color," she's right.

People of color do need to be centered, and do need to be at the heads of the table. Not only that, but folks impacted by the system, the racism, the violence, within these systems that are oppressing folks need to be heard and they need to be

part of the process. And that just hasn't happened here in Olympia, and I'm ready to do that.

*So what got you started in your fight? You said two and a half years?*

On Aug 7th, 2018, I got a call that one of my relatives was on life support, my aunt Yvonne McDonald. That she was on life support at the hospital, and at the time we just knew that it was an emergency and we needed to find out what was going on. After going to the hospital we were met with a police detective that left [us] with no answers. The detective basically told us that she was found in the yard of an abandoned home and that she was partially clothed and she was left there, with no more information to give us. They told us they'd conduct a thorough investigation to discover what happened.

We were in shock. After leaving the hospital, it took days to get any response from the police. The days turned into months before we could get any police report. In fact it was 90 days before we received the police report and realized that things didn't add up. There was no movement on their investigation. In fact, they were still at a standstill.

The first egregious act from the police was when they said they were going to wait for toxicology reports before they finalized her autopsy, insinuating that she was under the influence and that was the cause of her death.

*Talauna goes on to detail her research into the events that happened the night of Yvonne's death. She explains that after conducting public records requests, she found inconsistencies with the reports made by those at the scene,*

*she felt that much more could have been done to prevent Yvonne's death, and that a more thorough investigation would disprove the claims that she caused her own injuries. This account can be found on the website for Justice For Yvonne, justice4yvonne.com.*

While I investigated the case I became very involved with organizing for the community at large. I do a lot of work for SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice). I'm one of their core organizers. I have organized events to bring awareness about police brutality, also in solidarity with the Thompson-Chaplin family. Andre Thompson and Bryson Chaplin were shot by racist police officer Ryan Donald.

But anything to bring the community together, and make them aware of what really transpires. When you call your elected officials and they don't return your calls, it's not only disheartening, but you lose absolute faith in the system before you. You feel like your voice is never going to be heard.

There are 5 open seats, and while I don't know a whole lot about all the candidates coming on board, I know enough. That aside, I do know that those in positions do not need to be there, do not need to keep seats, and do not need to be voted back in.

To me, this community, we are tired. It's exhausting to rally, to protest, and to march. To continuously fight this fight and basically hit a brick wall everytime. It's definitely time for a new set of eyes and ears to join the council. But also folks who will put people over property will value the lives of everybody. And most importantly, value the lives of black and indigenous people. It hasn't happened.

As a black woman I've done a lot of organizing in this community. I've brought a lot of people together. I think that the Mayor asserting that people of color, and those most impacted by the violence happening, need to be at the table; it needs to happen. We shouldn't take that invitation lightly.

Even after that comment to the public, I have never gotten a phone call, or a returned email. Not even a response at City Council meetings when I make public comment. It needs to happen.

*What does Justice for Yvonne mean for you?*

It means there is going to be a standard. For investigations, for accountability, a standard where people in positions of power are accountable and have to answer to the public. These are public servants, these aren't private servants. All of them paid by every single one of us, to do a job.

Because I knew what happened to [my aunt], that's probably what has gotten me through this.

*This 25th marks the one-year mark of George Floyd's murder. I know you were heavily involved in the Movement for Black Lives last year. What's your view of where we're at now?*

In Olympia, Washington, I believe that the only progress we've made is that people have become more informed, because of the activism and the protests, on the fact that Black Lives have not mattered. But in terms of things getting better systemically, no.

None of that will change unless people in positions of power call it off, and start holding racist police accountable. Unless we have (continued on next page)



## Reed, cont.

a prosecutor that is willing to indict police officers, or other wealthy individuals that act in a way that is racist and causes harm, even death, nothing will change.

The progress has been made with the people in terms of becoming informed. The amount of support I have for this campaign. Knowing that that is part of my history, and that's part of who I am. I'm an

activist first. That's inspiring and gives me hope that we'll be ready to go full force against this system.

But our elected officials have not changed, no.

*Anything you'd like to add?*

It's been heavy on my heart to talk to folks about people of color, particularly black or indigenous people, running for office, or trying to penetrate

the walls of the system. I want people to know that's not something we've really not been able to do in Olympia.

It's been prevented. We've been stopped at every attempt to enter these places. So it's not going to be easy for us to get there. But the expectations that people have of us, they should be had. You should be qualified to be in these positions, and I am qualified.

I would ask that people hold those who look like them, or have more money, to the same standard of qualifications. Because the fact of the matter is, I have life experience and work experience. I have passion, and love for this community, and my actions prove it. That's why I'm a great candidate for Olympia City Council.

# Love in the API Community

by Natalie "Lee" Arneson

As I reflect on this last article I'm writing for this school year, I think back to the first article I wrote last Spring—"Being Asian American in the Time of COVID-19". While this article is near and dear to me and the issues I discussed in it—the spike in anti-Asian racism and the violence that has accompanied this—are incredibly important and necessary, they are not all that should be acknowledged. Joy, contentment, love—these are so vastly important to write about too, and so I found myself reaching out to fellow members of the API communities I was a part of—myself being White/Korean/Hawaiian. I asked them to answer two questions for me: What does love look like to you and how do you give & receive love? This can be in any context—romantic, platonic, familial, cultural, etc.

While speaking with my community members, it felt only right that I give my own, brief, reflection as well. To me, love can look tired, sometimes reluctant, but always genuine and always steady. I give love in innumerable little ways; trying to make sure the last thing I say to my family is "I love you" every night, meeting my friends' eyes when they speak to let them know I am here, holding my loved people close but also knowing when to let them go, giving space—whatever that may mean at the

time—in the way that is needed. Receiving love can be tricky, but I try through accepting the love from others that I am hesitant to give to myself. I receive love by unlearning the narrative that to be mixed is to be fractured or watered-down or anything other than whole. I receive love in the way I bask in the sun, allowing it to lovingly color my skin the way my ancestors existed—and that I do this despite white folks telling me my skin wasn't something beautiful.

**Joni Cobarrubias**  
she/her/hers  
22 years old  
Filipino-American  
Mesa, AZ

To me, love is showing up. When I feel loved, I feel the people around me support me, care about me, and genuinely listen to what I say. However, everyone expresses their love differently; love is also showing up for others in the way they receive love. Love is also understanding where someone is coming from. If they didn't grow up in a nurturing environment, they might not receive love in the same way. Love is accommodating to their preferences and fully accepting who they are.

My love language for expressing love is words of affirmation. I enjoy encouraging and uplifting my loved ones in a safe space. My top love language for receiving

love is quality time. I feel close to those I spend the most time with.

**Miko Vergun**  
she/her/hers  
20 years old  
Pacific Islander, Marshallese  
with Japanese descent  
I am adopted from the Marshall Islands and was raised in Beaverton, Oregon. I now live in Corvallis, Oregon.

Love for me looks like a good friend, someone that will always look out for you but will also give you the courtesy to tell you the truth because they want to see the best person that you can be. Love is also being a good listener.

My love language is very physical; I love to give and receive love, [like] platonic kisses. Love that is given and received can also be in the form of positive affirmations, which I really appreciate. I also have a few people in my life that aren't physical lovers so in a way to respect that, I like to make sure that the space is up for them to navigate so that I'm not crossing any boundaries. Sometimes it could just be sitting together in silence, where the love for each other is acknowledged, but the silence emphasizes what's there and it's a good feeling.

**Amira Joy Norte Caluya**  
they/them  
39 years old  
Asian and Filipino to the state.

**But I come from Bikolano, Ilokano, and Tagalog peoples. I live in Nisqually territory.**

I don't think there is one way that love looks like. First and foremost I'm Filipino and I am deeply connected to my cultural identity even though I am far away from the motherland. My ancestors were travelers, they built amazing boats called balangay, that carried families, so when I realized that...this narrative that I am "lost" because I'm not "home," that hurt in my heart healed because I realized it wasn't true. I know that my ancestors travelled and found their homes and I am [doing the same] as well.

The balangay has deep cultural influence in how Filipinos think about love, I think, especially how I was socialized growing up. I'm not a scholar on this so this is just how I've interpreted the histories that I've learned from my family, my parents, from reading books, my kasama (friends, comrades), and the internet, LOL. In a balangay everyone has their own roles in making sure the boat stays afloat and they get to where they need to.

So to me, love, regardless of the context—there's different parts (like a balangay or boat), and there's different things to attend to, but there is a commitment and trust that we are all in this together.



# Love, cont.

A few years ago I read bell hooks' "All About Love" and this idea of living with a love ethic and that love is a verb—you are loving. I really connected with that because it resonated with my own culture and how I have been loved and want to love.

I think for me giving love—they're very everyday things. Asking if people ate food, if they're hungry, giving rides to places, celebrating big and little things, taking time to do something together. But I want to be clear that there is a difference between CARE and LOVE. To give love I first make a commitment to both of our growth, to respect each other, to trust, to care. I think care is one piece of love but if you give care without respect, trust, willingness to grow...that's not love. In Filipino psychology there is this idea called kapwa, which is the idea that we are connected to each other, like a collective consciousness. Kapwa is what helps us do things like bayanihan, which is the spirit of collective power, us working together on something, on a goal. I feel like these two things are forms of love that I grew up with culturally and continue to live by.

How I receive love? Well I don't want any kind of love. Tbh I am very choosy and I think that's because I grew up in a household where violence was a norm. I receive love that respects me and that my body is its own sovereign being, love that has a commitment to not just my

growth but for them too (friend, lover, family member, colleague, etc). It all sounds very nice and smooth while I type it but these are not things that society rewards us to do.

I actually have a hard time loving myself and receiving self love, I am in my late 30s and I still struggle that there is hope in myself. That's not to say that that is all the time that I feel that way. It just happens. So I leave little love letters to myself in places I look at automatically. On my mirror, something that my late mentor taught me as self-affirmation: "I am the love that I seek, I am whole, I am complete." I say this to myself at least once a day, because it's a post-it note on my bathroom mirror. This world teaches us to hate ourselves and rewards us for punishing ourselves into accepting things like racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, classism, colorism... that it was my peoples fault for being colonized. I may not have an easy time loving myself, but even nurturing myself with my daily affirmation (the one on the bathroom mirror), it allows me to both give and receive love in a way that I think rejects patriarchy, domination, self hate. It helps me do kapwa and bayanihan in less toxic ways.

**Miriam Taqieddin,**  
she/they  
23 years old  
Bi-Racial: Arab/White  
Seattle

Love looks like understanding without second-guessing. Listening, respecting, and accepting. Love is a kiss on each cheek, a kiss on the lips, a kiss on the head or hand. Love is sharing discomfort. Love looks like showing up against injustice that does not affect you. Love looks like a midnight shawarma, and my Ammo bringing me snacks when I'm sick. Love looks like morning chai on a sun-soaked balcony, and nargileh coals warming on the stove. Love looks like the people around you saying the words, "I hear you, I feel you, and I see you."

I give love by nodding my head during conversation, and by asking what I can do to help. I give love by resting my head on someone, by holding their hand. I give love by sharing food, sharing my space, sharing my time. I give love by having their back, even if they don't know it yet. I receive love by eating the food someone makes for me, and by allowing people to help me. I receive love in ways that words can't describe, like soft touches, smiles, and endless support for what I believe in. I receive love from the sun, as my skin warms and turns golden.

**Stephen Garfield**  
he/him/his  
30 years old  
Filipino-American  
Currently in Portland, Oregon;  
born in Hawaii.

To me, love looks like connection. It might sound too

simple, but it isn't just passive. I grew up disconnected from my Filipino roots and family, with just my two parents (and before too long, just the one) as models for what love is. I was blessed, in this case, to have very loving and open role models. But everything else took work, which I was often hesitant to do—it was hard to pull this American boy away from his video games and dial-up internet fun long enough to talk to a rotating cast of family members on the phone. The love I could have had from lolos and lolas, aunties, uncles, and cousins withered and disconnected because of my lack of effort. Those atrophied muscles of mine went on to fail in multiple romantic partnerships, until I learned how much work I had to put in to get it in return. But each time I do, and cultivate a healthy, loving connection, the rewards are amazing—and I am reminded of why we all need more of it in our lives.

How do you give & receive love—openly, and indiscriminately. Love isn't finite; we don't run out of it like so many other resources. It can be exhausting and frustrating, of course, and the effort we have to put in to develop loving relationships is constant. But, I'm open with my love, and ready to receive it from anyone. A smile, a hug, a kind or supportive word, and so much more often than you'd think: silence.

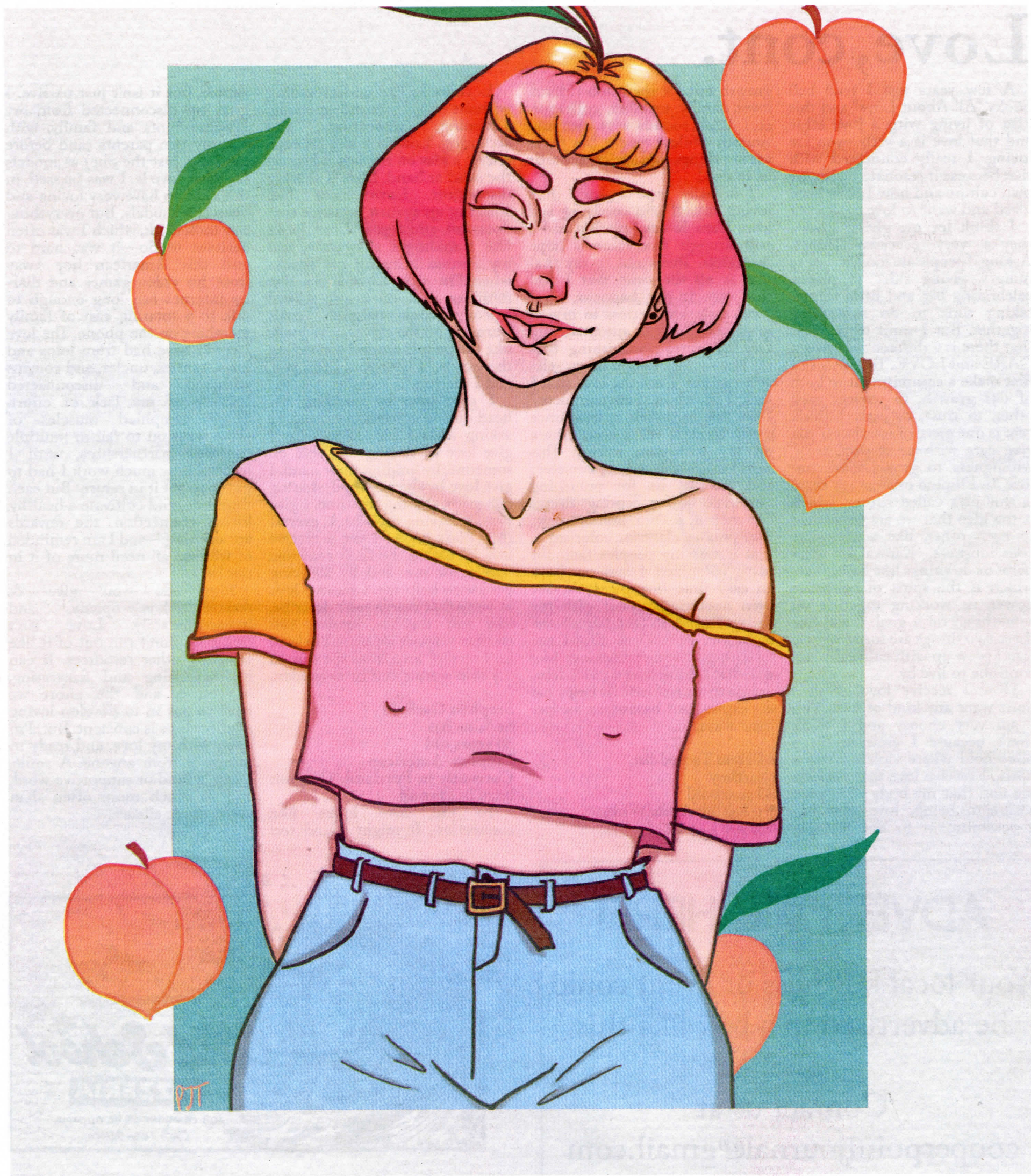
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# Interview with Cover Artist Pearl Jade

by Avery Quinn

*Pearl Jade is a 21-year-old musician and visual artist currently residing in their hometown of Anacortes, Washington. I had the pleasure of interviewing them over Zoom. Look for them in the coming months as they move back to Olympia and at <https://pearltottenhammusic.bandcamp.com/music>.*

*What have you been working on in this quarter?*

I'm doing a sort of capstone project. It's a little overwhelming but has really come together in the last couple of weeks, so I'm getting excited. I've done this kind of program twice before and in both of those programs, I've written projects musically and recorded them as evidence of my work. But in this case, I'm taking a lot of material that I've written over my time at Evergreen and I'm focusing on recording. I'm also doing an internship right now at a recording studio in my hometown. So I'm actually getting to record in a really cool space.

*It's really interesting that you're, it seems, mainly following this musical path. I think your visual art is really amazing, but I'd love to know about any of your artistic processes.*

I've been making music for a really long time. I was a really musical kid, always in choir, and I learned to play guitar really young. I started writing songs at like 12, recording at 14 and I've been recording myself since I was 18 or so. But then in the last couple of years, I've started to devote more of my time to visual art. When I first got to college and started exploring visual art more I realized that, yeah, I want to keep making music forever, but it's a really hard thing to make a career out of, because I'm a really anxious person. I just don't love the idea of being

successful in that particular way. I like my privacy and my cozy home life. I want to keep making music but I realized that visual art is something that I am really comfortable spending a lot of my time on, and really happy spending time on. I've been going down a path of pursuing that as a career rather than music, even though I'm still equally passionate about music. I just don't want to put a lot of pressure on myself to make it, if that makes sense.

*I think that makes a lot of sense. It's really interesting to see the different ways artists use other art forms or multiple art forms to create a practice that supports their livelihood.*

Yeah. I mean, my music is really personal to me. It's something that I write for myself and I record because I want to have a thing to hold in my hands, basically. But visual art is something that I feel way more comfortable making for other people. Before I turned 18, I started to get really into self-taught tattoo culture. That was honestly what opened me up to making art more consistently. I got and gave my first stick and poke tattoo at 17. My friend and I traded. Then I got my first shop tattoo at 18. As a college music student I was so busy studying that I didn't have time for a full-time job or anything. So I couldn't afford to get tattooed as often as I wanted and my way around that was learning how to do it myself. I practiced on my leg and on fruit. I've taken a little bit of a step-back from it because I realized I would like to learn properly. But I mostly have been focusing my energy on designing tattoos for myself and other people, which has been really fun. I'm trying to sort of build a portfolio, it's something I would definitely like to pursue.

*I'm wondering about how your style has changed over the last few years and what influences your visual work.*

I've been building my style for a long time. I've always really liked drawing but I didn't put a whole lot of serious effort into it until high school and college. But in middle school I started off drawing anime characters because I was like, super into anime. And then when I sort of got out of that I thought I should try and draw more realistic things. So in high school I got into trying to do hyperrealism and portraits. Then I realized that's just like, not what I want to do with art. And so I sort of found a blend between realism and cartoon, because I'm really into cartoons, I love children's television, and that's where I get a lot of my color inspiration. I'm super into fun bubbly cartoons even though I'm actually a pretty moody person. I just like to slap a lot of pretty colors on my moodiness.

*That definitely translates. A lot of feeling.*

Yeah. I was told by someone once, when I was first getting into painting portraits because I started doing watercolors in college, which is where I really got into art. I was doing a lot of watercolors and I was just trying to find my style doing a lot of really similar portraits. And someone was like, you're just drawing yourself over and over. And I was like, oh, that is a little bit like me. And I think being being a plus size, AFAB non-binary person, I don't see myself represented very much. Even though I am non-binary, I'm pretty femme presenting, and so I just felt like there was something a little missing from the styles of art that I was encountering. I love looking at other artists' work, but I was

feeling like, well there's not a lot of fat people here. Like, can you draw literally anyone who's above a size six? Please?

*I really like the piece you have with the different sizes of the hands. I also appreciate the claiming of non-binary, regardless of presentation. That's part of what drew me to your work. It's just the weirdness of it as a standalone, not in relation to a norm, if that makes sense. Weird in the best possible way.*

Yeah, I wasn't necessarily trying to make it weird, but I was trying to make it myself. Weird is a way I would describe my art just because I couldn't find exactly what I wanted. So I made it. It did a lot for my self esteem and my body image doing self portraits and portraits of other plus-size people and variously sized people. Then I started playing with proportions, stretching things in weird ways and making things fun and less realistic. And [as] I started to feel more comfortable about that, the more comfortable I felt about the image of a plus-sized person in relation to myself. Because I felt weird about distorting proportions at first. I was like, well, people are gonna say, "that's not what you look like," "that's not what people like you look like." But no, I started playing with it. And then that big hands piece that you were talking about is one of my favorites. I did that after watching an opera in class. I'm trying to remember the name of the director, and it's not coming to me off the top of my head. But it was a production of Oedipus Rex and all of the main characters had these huge, paper mache hands. They were so expressive and every character had a different set of hands that had different shapes and poses.

(continued on next page)



## Pearl, cont.

*What was interesting about that for you?*

I mean, there were a lot of directions you could go with it. Like theoretically, there was a lot of, like, hands-reaching-out-to-God imagery. But at the same time the opera itself is pretty perverse. There was a lot of reaching and longing with the hands. And they were so expressive, so much emotion in them. I kind of wanted to make them more apathetic, to take away the relation from other people. Because they were always reaching for something or gesturing to something. They're always in relation to something. And I wanted them to be in relation to a self, if that makes sense. Selfish has a negative connotation. But like, the personal—the act of hanging out with yourself in your underwear and smoking. It's so singular. And so intimate.

*Reclaiming selfishness is a really interesting part of that piece.*

Yeah. I feel like it took an upsetting amount of time for me to get comfortable taking time to myself. It's a weird thing to grapple with when you're in a pandemic. I had just gotten comfortable hanging out by myself and then I was forced to be by myself for like, too much time. And now I'm almost never by myself because my partner and I are living together. I was used to doing all of my creating completely by myself. I would write music by myself, I would practice music by myself, and I would draw and paint by myself. Then [I realized] that I do it in a different way when I'm around other people, which is not necessarily better or worse, I feel a little more open. And sometimes it brings out a more fun side of art for me than the moody, alone side. It's interesting. I definitely noticed that I make art differently in different situations. And from a music standpoint I was so used to not just playing shows, but going to shows and being a part of a community in that way. There's so many

barriers between then and now, which is really disheartening and has definitely been a void. But I started interning at a recording studio in, I think, late February, early March. And working there has brought so much back into my life because it's such a collaborative environment. I get to see so many people creating and it's a really different side of it for me because I only ever recorded myself. It's really interesting to see other people making music, especially in bands, because when I do play with bands, it's things that I've written by myself and that I already have all my ideas for, and they just helped me achieve it. But a lot of the bands that come to the studio are totally collaborative and they're really working together the whole time. There are so many perspectives being put together to make one piece of music, it's really incredible.

*Where is your internship?*

It's the Anacortes Unknown Studio. It's a really beautiful space. I'm working with the engineer there, Nich Wilbur. He's teaching me a lot, I've been working with him as my supervisor and observing him. There's so much really cool equipment there and so many instruments that I've never had the chance to play before. I haven't worked with other people to make a piece of recorded music since I was 16. So it has been really great just to play music with other people again after a year of not being able to do it. I'm really thankful that the people that I'm working with are all vaccinated and we can actually play together in the same room.

*Thematically, what are your influences?*

I have always listened to a pretty wide variety of music, and being a music student, it has gotten even wider. So sometimes my music ends up a little all over the place. Like on this project that I'm recording now, there's one song that's like, borderline punk, one that's indie folk and



acoustic, but there's enough stuff in between them that they sort of mesh eventually. I write almost everything acoustically so everything starts like, acoustic singer songwriter kind of stuff. I'm into really melodic music. So I love a lot of moving melodic lines and really physical harmonies, because I like it when you can feel the harmonies buzzing in your ears. I love Joni Mitchell, who I didn't get into until someone told me that I reminded them of her. So I started listening to Joni Mitchell two years ago, and I literally for an entire summer didn't listen to anything else. She talks about how she considered herself a painter who ended up a musician. And I feel like I'm ending up the opposite. But

she talked a lot about how she thinks of her songs as sound paintings, which I resonate with a lot, because I think that sound has color, and it's important to match them correctly in a song. In the last few years, I've taken a lot more inspiration from nature and I've incorporated some soundscape kind of stuff into my regular music. So it's like pop music, but with birds chirping in the background. I started making music because I love singing. As soon as I could talk I was singing. I was humming before that. And so vocally and melodically driven music has always been what I've made. I also love writing lyrics. I love the interdisciplinary mode. I'm an Evergreen student.





# Go Play *Disco Elysium*. Now. Posthaste.

by Alice McIntyre

The 2019 role-playing game *Disco Elysium*, developed and published by ZA/UM, is phenomenal.

This column has been, and will continue to be, essentially a place for me to gush about media I like and think CPJ readers ought to check out. On this occasion, though, I really do mean it, if you can't tell from the sense of urgency in the title.

My affection for this game stems primarily from the themes it explores—being a recovering addict, criticizing institutional power... you know the drill. But here, I want to focus on the actual mechanics of the game, the means by which those themes are conveyed to the player.

First, for context, *Disco Elysium* follows a post-bender amnesiac cop named Harrier "Harry" DuBois (or, for those inclined towards fancy things, Raphaël Ambrosius Costeau). Your task is to investigate the death of a hanged man in the backyard of the Whirling-in-Rags hostel, with a dockworkers' strike raging in the background.

How you navigate that task is entirely up to you. If there's one thing above all that *Disco Elysium* excels at, it's player choice. Many role-playing video games suffer from the painful obviousness of their constraints, especially as the player interacts with other characters. Dialogue options often boil down to a formulaic dichotomy between good, neutral, and bad options. Here I'm reminded of latter-day BioWare games in particular,

or "Fallout 4." But in *Disco Elysium*, where dialogue is the core mechanism for the player's interactions with the world, these constraints not only seldom seem apparent, but feel natural when they do. What is essentially a wall of text sprawled across a fairly small in-game map becomes, in tandem with the game's beautiful art style, a world of its own.

The driving factor in why *Disco Elysium* feels as large as it does, and why the possibilities for the player feel limitless despite their limitations, is due to the sheer volume of content that fits into the space you're given. In the game's branching dialogue trees, the player becomes meshed in a fluid set of neural pathways, capable of reacting to and providing content for whatever the player does. The game in fact encourages you to try making unconventional choices, reminding you that your institutional power as a police officer grants you significant leeway. The whole process feels quite similar to having a good Game Master in a tabletop RPG—the very thing so many games strive for and fail to do. Instead of expanding the physical space the player explores, the *Disco Elysium* team instead expanded the *space of decision* you operate in. This also extends to smaller pieces of worldbuilding, such as books you can find and interact with. Whereas the "Elder Scrolls" games have hundreds of books that very few read and operate in a static manner which contrasts

with regular gameplay, books in *Disco Elysium* operate in the same way the player interacts with the world at large, making them feel just as vibrant as the rest of *Martinaise*.

Much of the game's narrative is also self-reflective. As opposed to just being numbers that determine the difficulty of tasks, each skill in *Disco Elysium* is its own persona. Conceptualization dreams big, sees the art in the world, and verges on ostentatious. We all know someone like Conceptualization. Or, on the flipside, Half-Light is raw, reactive, easily slighted, and ready to pounce. And not only does the player interact with the skills, these aspects of themselves, but they often interact with each other. In the case of Inland Empire, passing a check towards the game's beginning allows your Horrific Necktie to become a character of its own, offering its perspectives on the goings-on.

Another key component of *Disco Elysium* is the fact that actions have consequences. This is natural in a game with so many choices, and *Disco Elysium* does it beautifully. One of my favourite moments happens close to the game's beginning, in the Whirling-in-Rags. The manager, Garte, asks you to cover the 130 real in damages inflicted upon your room in your drunken stupor. Confronted with this task, and having zero money, you can choose to attempt an escape from the Whirling—and in my most recent run of the game, I failed. My, uh, *disco moves* didn't

do me any favors, but I did laugh my ass off, and that was worth it. Some of the game's most entertaining or interesting content comes from failures.

Again I return to the subject of tabletop RPGs. It's no accident that the worldbuilding for *Disco Elysium* started as a tabletop setting. Recreating the experience of tabletop gaming is something that role-playing video games, from D&D adaptations like *Baldur's Gate* to the first two *Fallout* games and beyond, have strived to do since their inception. *Disco Elysium* hits the mark closer than any I've ever seen. Don't get me wrong, I love a lot of other games that try to replicate tabletop. But the unique, narrative-centered mechanics *Disco Elysium* brings to the table give me a feeling that beautifully resembles the best moments of past D&D campaigns. Interacting with a world that felt living despite being dice, maps, miniatures, and the human imagination; cracking up at fumbled rolls; acting unconventionally just to see what might happen; you name it, it's there. I haven't even, and due to length constraints can't, even begin to talk about the characters and story—which are fantastic.

In short, try *Disco Elysium*. It's well worth your time.

**Verdict:** 9.9/10. So good it made me return to numerical ranking for just this article. It's not a 10 because 10s aren't real.



# Guilty Pleasures

by Brooke Lynch



Recently, I have been horrified to find that I have an affinity for 80s hard rock and metal. Van Halen, Mötley Crüe, Guns N' Roses and other bands whom I've had absolutely no love for have been popping up in my playlists and recent listens, and I hate it. My high school years of loving scrappy DIY bands such as Bad Brains or Operation Ivy, and more importantly, my love of grunge bands like Nirvana and Mudhoney, has left me with a bad impression of 80s rock. To me, they were sexist, vapid pop stars not even making the metal they claimed to be making. And while I would still place many of those adjectives on those bands (sexist being the most important), I can't stop listening to them. The undeniable pop sensibilities of these artists means I can't stop myself from singing along to "Running With The Devil" or "Shout at The Devil." Pop

seems to be an important part of this conversation.

Looking up guilty pleasure songs on Google turns up lists of pop songs from all generations, with modern songs like Carly Rae Jepsen's "Call Me Maybe" sitting next to 80s songs like Wham!'s "Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go." Looking up guilty pleasure songs in genres like punk or metal turns up punk-adjacent or pop punk bands like Fall Out Boy, and hip hop has its fair share of pop crossover artists to put on lists as well. Despite having pop bands in their genre, fans of harder rock and metal don't seem to want to have this same contempt for their liking of pop songs. Despite having 147,533,532 more Spotify streams than Wham!'s "Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go," Metallica's "Enter Sandman" isn't considered a guilty pleasure, or even a pop song to some. While there are some who will

consider Metallica's self-titled album that "Enter Sandman" appears on a "sell out album," meaning an album made in an attempt to achieve mainstream appeal at the cost of a band's supposed authenticity or sound, the general consensus is that Metallica is still primarily a metal band, not a pop band. And there are a ton of bands that seem to have this pop immunity. Nirvana, Black Sabbath, SlipKnot, Pearl Jam, all hugely popular artists that have evaded the pop label, despite having songs that have similar if not more Spotify streams than some of the pop stars listed as guilty pleasures by many. In fact, many of the artists listed above have songs that are far more popular than some of the pop metal acts I talked about at the beginning of the article. So popularity clearly doesn't determine a guilty pleasure, but there is one thing

that Metallica and Nirvana and Black Sabbath all share, being perceived as authentic.

To many, Nirvana was the voice of its generation. Metallica is one of the greatest metal bands of all time; all of these bands, despite being huge stars, have retained their image of being underground or outside of the major label system. Bands like Motley Crue, Guns N' Roses, and Wham! don't have this perception of authenticity from the music listening public. Motley Crue and Metallica shared a label in the 80s and 90s, but somehow Motley Crue are seen as the ones who don't make 'real metal.' This perception of authenticity seems to have shielded all of these bands from having their songs labeled as guilty pleasures. There are those who might refute this, and say that these bands haven't evaded guilty pleasure status because of some perception of authenticity.



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# Guilty, cont.

They just have a bunch of good songs, and Britney Spears or Wham! doesn't. But make no mistake, guilty pleasure songs are just good songs.

As much as some might hate it, "Toxic," "Wake Me up Before You Go-Go," "Total Eclipse of the Heart," and "Party in the USA" are all good songs. I personally have seen a push among some friends of mine, and online in general, to get rid of the term guilty pleasures because you shouldn't feel guilty for enjoying things, you should just like the things that you like. But that doesn't explain why when I found "Toxic" on many guilty pleasure lists, a song that I like, it made sense to me that it was considered one. And I think time is a factor.

There were no songs from 2021 or 2020, the most modern ones were from the early 2010s, and I think that has a lot to do with what songs are considered guilty pleasures. Artists like Britney Spears, Wham!, and Carly Rae Jepsen all seem to encapsulate pop music for their time and because of that, these good songs seem to be a surrogate for our ideas of society and ourselves at the time. So if you find the 80s as a campy age of overly optimistic white dudes, then Wham! is pretty much that, so you might find some shame in listening to them. Nothing is more early 2000s than Britney Spears, so it makes sense that there are multiple of her songs that are considered guilty pleasures.

But this doesn't explain why I consider all these 80s hard rock bands guilty pleasures. These bands in some way exemplify the rock of the 80s, but I love other 80s pop songs without having them as guilty pleasures, so why do I put my music on a private session when I listen to these bands? I think some guilty pleasures have more to do with a person than a collective group of songs that we all find to be guilty pleasures. As stated before, in high school I was someone who hated 80s rock and valued the more underground acts, hating these bands became part of my identity. I was a DIY musician, so liking a major label rock band went against my identity. But as I began actually liking these bands it felt like almost a

threat to my identity, so I felt I had to hide it, and that's also where guilty pleasures come from. If someone's social circle would make fun of them for liking a band or it doesn't seem like a band they would be into, it feels totally valid to want to hide that from the people around you out of guilt. This is the kind of guilty pleasure a lot of people want to get rid of, because you shouldn't feel bad for listening to the music you like, you should just like it.

# Poetry Submissions

by N. Warrows

1.  
 there are vultures that can speak but don't want to  
 somewhere so remote the language has not changed in centuries  
 they've grown weary of the sounds  
 sounds of the dying  
 sounds of speaking  
 they tune it all out, preferring the ambience of the sun's drying  
 old-rain from the sand  
 (as if moisture had a tone, once)  
 the birds find no use for shape-sounds  
 and so silently preen with  
 vestigial bone-faces

a tree standing alone in the red-bellied canyon  
 lighting-white bark drained of its blood  
 by who-knows-what  
 used-to-be a tower  
 IS a tower, for the birds  
 the vultures  
 the vulture-tower-tree-walls spiral into the sky  
 word-less, pocked with sound-holes  
 used-to-be words  
 unintelligible glyph-scars  
 where the carrion pecked out all sense  
 what used-to-be meaning

"naimes?"  
 a vulture convulsing  
 hasn't quite adapted to the flock-silence  
 the others immediately kill Him

2.  
 I take the best, most properly pointed stick  
 and poke at the body of language  
 stinking on the roadside berm,  
 now leafmeal prone in damp green decay  
 shrouded by the Byzantine curtains  
 of a lace-webbed northern maidenhair  
 unfolding under rain weight.

and too the heartleaf arnica  
 weeps from its petalmeat fronds  
 as I bury the twig-point into meaning's shank  
 while nodding onion bows  
 to lead the blue lips in psalm.

who are they praying for?  
 to...?  
 not language,  
 certainly no god.



## Evergreen Basic Need Insecurity on Campus

submitted by JC Wortham of the Evergreen Basic Needs Student Team

The Evergreen State College, like many schools across the country, got hit with the brunt of the impacts of the pandemic. This exasperates a lot of issues and hardships students faced even before the pandemic. Though organizations and schools became more aware of these issues, without data and proof, little could actually be done.

Well, proof has arrived!

Evergreen participated in The Hope Center for College, Community, & Justice Basic Needs Insecurity Survey known as the #RealCollege Survey that was available during October 2020, and the results were delivered in March of 2021. They were officially sent out on April 15th to staff, faculty and students.

A total of 306 students participated in the survey - resulting in a 13.9% response rate. Considering the pandemic this is a very good response rate. This survey is specific to our community and we would like to share the results because they are relevant to our students and peers.

With the current pandemic, many students nationally are dealing with more insecurity about their basic needs. Increased depression and anxiety, trouble concentrating in online classes, and economic stress placed on everyone nationally, many being laid-off or having their hours cut can make it more difficult to access education and more difficult to meet one's basic needs.

These are the statistics we want to highlight from the survey because they influence each other greatly. With the overwhelming worries of finishing school, many students having to work to support themselves, not knowing where their next meal will come from, or the uncertainty if they will afford the roof over their head and then having the lack of access and information about programs to help with those needs.

Then add on top, is the perpetuated stigma about assistance programs. Many of us often are taught that programs that assist with basic need insecurity are only for people

who go through the worst of insecurity, the first image you think is people on the street, living in tents. But these stereotypes are harmful. This shame then becomes instilled in people when they seek out assistance programs like SNAP or even visiting the Thurston County Food Bank, that they don't fit these stereotypes so they feel guilty taking up and using these resources, thinking they are limited and only for people who "really need it." This idea of putting others before our own needs because if we do not we are selfish.

The leaders of The Evergreen State College need to address basic needs insecurity on campus. To direct funding to student services such as the Basic Needs Center, Student Wellness Services, Academic Advising, etc. and create assistance programs to access meal plans and housing. Evergreen needs not only to state they care for the wellbeing of their students but prove [it] with actions. To set an example for institutions all over America to care for their students

by making information and resources more accessible, but we also need to dismantle the shame and guilt of using these resources. That student's worth and validity is not through how much they work and sacrifice that everyone deserves to have their basic needs met because they are living breathing human beings.

[More infographics we provided to us by this submission. You can view them online on our website, [cooperpointjournal.com](http://cooperpointjournal.com).

These figures stated:

62% of students with part time employment lost their jobs. 30% of students with full time employment lost their jobs.

and 67% of students AT TES experienced basic need insecurity.

36% experienced food insecurity 58% reported housing insecurity 23% homelessness.]

FIGURE 1. PERSONAL EXPERIENCES WITH ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION AT THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE

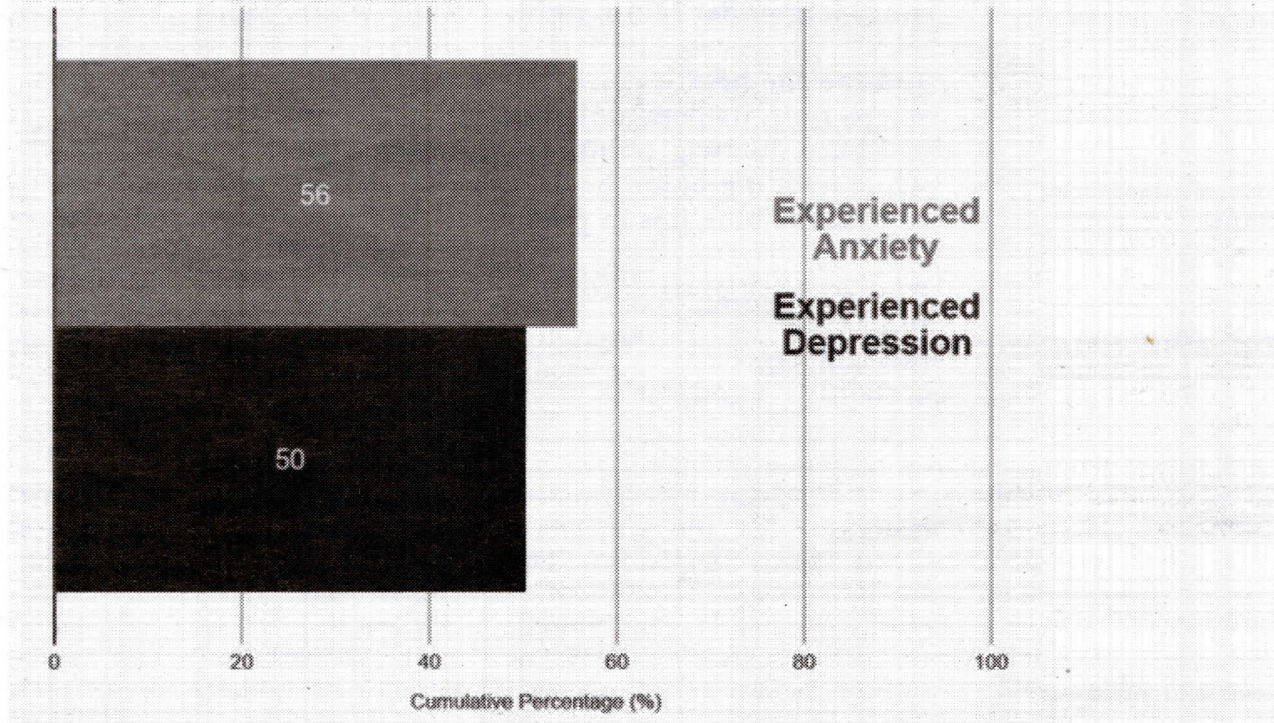


Fig. 1 pg 3  
56% of Evergreen students reporting experienced anxiety, 50% experienced depression.



# Basic Need, cont.

**FIGURE 3. OTHER CHALLENGES FACED SINCE SPRING 2020 DUE TO THE PANDEMIC AT THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE**

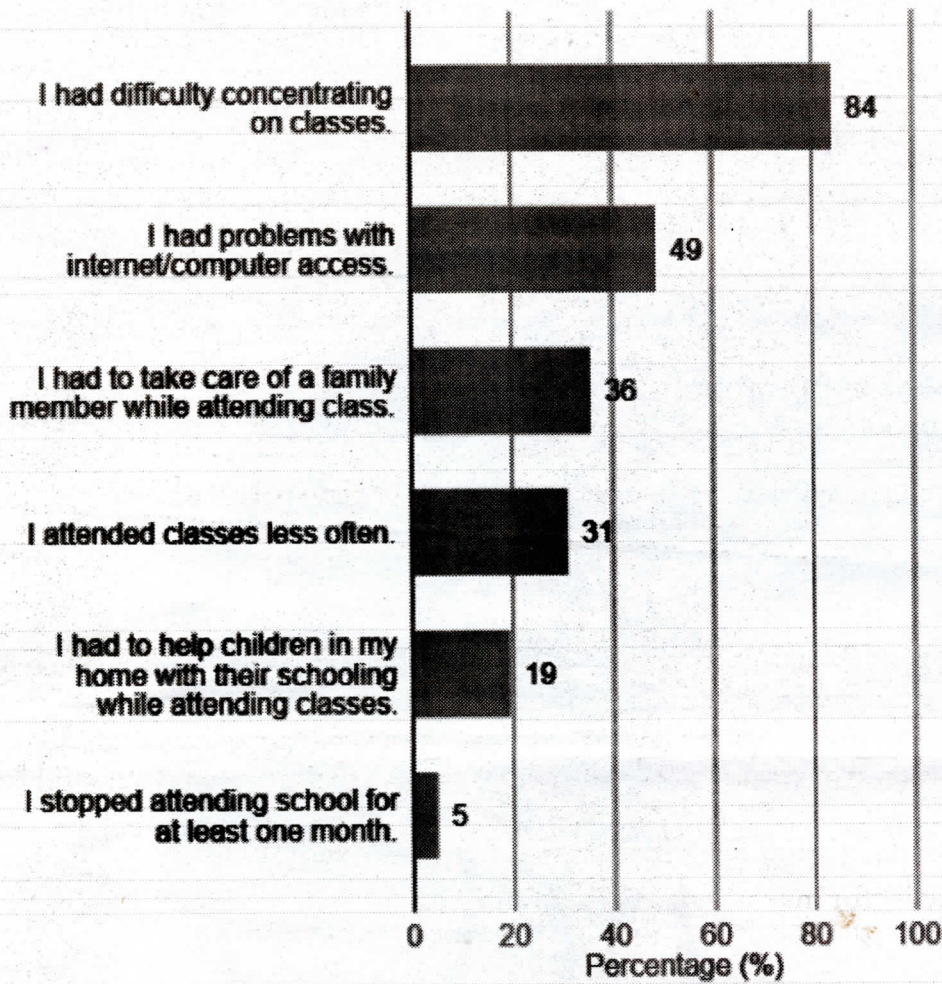


Fig. 3 pg 5  
84% had difficulty concentrating on class.

**FIGURE 5. CHALLENGES FACED BY PARENTING STUDENTS DUE TO THE PANDEMIC AT THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE**

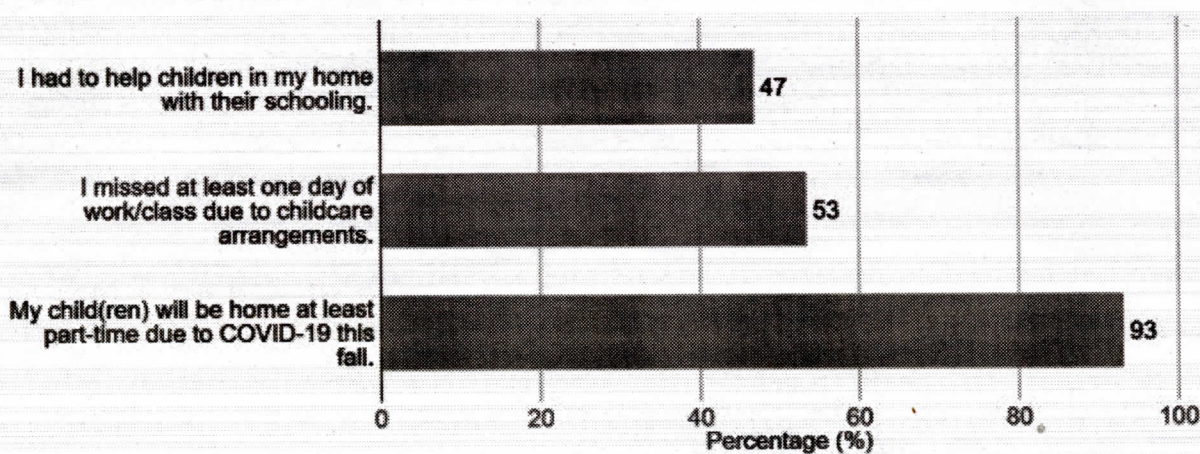


Fig. 5 pg 7  
53% of parenting students reported missing work or class due to childcare arrangements.





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INSIDE