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FRONT COVER: Howard Clifford, 95, holds a photo thought to be of Clifford himself running off Galloping Gertie on November 7, 1940, just before it collapsed. In the background, the second and third Narrows bridges span southern Puget Sound. This post-melts-present portrait was shot by Dean Keepfer, a Tacoma News Tribune photographer. Keepfer's work is featured in Bridging the Narrows, an exhibit at the Washington State History Museum through November 18, 2007. See related article beginning on page 3. (Courtesy News Tribune)
The Collections Department: Preserving Washington's History

What do a 1966 Beatles Seattle concert ticket, a glass decanter used at Fort Nisqually, a painting by Northwest artist Kenneth Callahan, a photograph of territorial governor Isaac Stevens, and a 1943 Kenmore refrigerator have in common? They are all part of the Washington State Historical Society's collection and they are all cared for by the Collections Department—one of the Society's least visible staff units. Despite its near invisibility, the Collections Department supports nearly every other arm of the organization. We are responsible for collecting and preserving the history of the state as well as making the collections publicly accessible. Patrons of all kinds visit us in person or online to do research for books, essays, theses, and genealogies; find illustrations for their publications; or purchase photographs to decorate home or office walls.

Collections staff also serve other historical society departments. When the exhibits department prepares an exhibit, the education department produces on-line curriculum resources, or the marketing and publications staff prepare print pieces, they often turn to the Collections Department for help.

Where do collections items come from? The curators are always on the lookout for materials that will help shed light on some aspect of our state's history. Many of our collections are offered to us by generous community members, but we also pursue collections of special interest. We identify and contact businesses, organizations, or individuals who hold historically significant materials. Once we receive a new collection, it must be numbered, sorted, cleaned, cataloged, entered into the collections database, photographed, and placed in storage. The record can include information about when, where, and by whom the piece was made, the materials and techniques used, its dimensions, condition, owner(s), and any other pertinent history. Research is often needed to augment the cataloger's observations. This lengthy process is necessary to make the artifacts and information about them accessible to staff members and the public.

There are six staff members in the Collections Department—three in the artifact collection and three in special collections. Although there is some overlap, each person has a separate area of responsibility. As head of the Collections Department, I supervise the department, oversee the artifact collections, and act as site manager. My specialty is working with the Native American and art collections. Nancy Jackson, collections manager, is responsible for general care of the artifact collections and acts as database administrator. Fred Poyner, registrar and digital assets manager, is responsible for maintaining the collections records and supervising any movement of collections, both our own and those we borrow for exhibitions. He also manages our growing digital assets collection. Ed Nolan, head of the special collections, acquires and oversees the book, manuscript, photograph, and ephemera collections. Elaine Miller, photo archivist, works with our extensive photograph collections. Joy Werlink, curator of manuscripts, works with the manuscript and map collections. Both Elaine and Joy provide assistance to researchers. In addition, we have many dedicated volunteers and are always looking for more.

We are here to help. The Research Center is at 315 North Stadium Way, a building familiar to many as the "old museum," and open to the public Tuesday through Thursday afternoons by appointment. You may reach us at 253/798-5914. A research request form is available on our Web site: WashingtonHistory.org.

—Lynette Miller, Head of Collections

Staff members of the Collections Department (left to right): Ed Nolan, Elaine Miller, Nancy Jackson, Lynette Miller, Joy Werlink, and Fred Poyner.
The Tragic Tale of Tubby the Dog

By Richard S. Hobbs and
Gerry Coatsworth Holcomb

On November 7, 1940, the Tacoma Narrows Bridge, then the third longest suspension bridge in the world (nicknamed “Galloping Gertie”), collapsed into Puget Sound. The only fatality was one small dog by the name of Tubby. The unfortunate canine gained instant fame, but the public knew little about him besides his name. Not surprisingly, over the last six decades Tubby has become the subject of persistent myths, which have been perpetuated time and again in newspaper accounts and more recently on numerous Internet Web sites.

Until that fateful day, Tubby was an ordinary dog leading an ordinary dog’s life. His story began around 1932 when he arrived at the home of Leonard and Ethel
Coatsworth as a puppy—a gift for their seven-year-old daughter Gerry. The pup was a black, mixed-breed male, mostly cocker spaniel, with long ears and short legs, suggesting dachshund as a recent ancestor. By the time he was full grown, Tubby stood a foot high and weighed about 20 pounds. His body, some two feet long, stretched between a long, pointed nose on one end and a disproportionately long tail on the other. The little fellow immediately became a beloved family member, and for eight years the Coatsworths enjoyed life with Tubby. Gerry and Tubby were inseparable from the start.

The Coatsworths lived on North 31st Street in Tacoma. In front of their house a path through the trees led down a long hill to Puget Sound. Gerry’s parents forbade her to go there— “tramps,” they warned—which only heightened her interest. She always ventured out with Tubby, sometimes hiking all the way to the bay. Tubby usually ran about unleashed, happily exploring his neighborhood. While out for a walk with Gerry and her dad, Tubby, at age three, suddenly dashed into the street and was struck by a car. The accident left him alive but with a permanently stiff right foreleg. Otherwise, he was active and healthy.

In the manner of the time, Tubby was an unneutered male whose owners fed him a generic variety of dog food. His only trick was to “sit up and beg” with front paws waving frantically to keep his balance. His body was so long that he could only hold the pose for a few seconds before he tumbled down, embarrassed. He would immediately bound off to investigate something, trying to create the impression that his return to all fours had been intentional.

Tubby proved a bit of a rascal at times. Gerry’s mother Ethel (1895-1983) kept the house immaculate and refused to allow the dog in the living room, where guests might be offended by stray dog hairs. Whenever Tubby thought no one was watching he tried to sneak into the forbidden territory. At the words, “Back in the kitchen!” his limp became exaggerated, even pathetic, as he hobbled dramatically out of the living room. When the Coatsworths left the house, Tubby liked to curl up comfortably on the living room sofa. As soon as he

 heard the family returning, he would jump down to greet them at the back door in the kitchen, excited and furiously wagging his tail. Her suspicions aroused by his overacting, Ethel would check the sofa, and sure enough, she would find a warm spot where Tubby had been snoozing.

Like many dogs, Tubby loved to roll in things that, by human standards, smelled revolting. Baths were a frequent necessity, and the clever canine quickly learned the meaning of the word. The Coatsworths resorted to spelling it out, but Tubby soon caught on to that as well. The family then played with ways to announce an impending dog bath without alerting “the victim.” They had great fun creating phrases such as, “The hour has arrived for ablution of the family pet,” or, “Time is overdue for canine fragrance nullification.”

Gerry’s father, who loved words and wordplay, invented this game. Leonard Coatsworth (1895-1956), a news editor at the Tacoma News Tribune, later became widely known for his close brush with death when Galloping Gertie collapsed. At the Tribune he enjoyed a reputation as a talented newspaperman, the only one on the staff who could cover a story, write it, edit it, set the press type, and even run the presses, if necessary. His colleagues would say, “Don’t bother with the dictionary, just ask Leonard.”

Leonard was a private man, reserved and somewhat shy. Ethel Coatsworth was the opposite, a woman who loved entertaining and would coax her husband to attend social gatherings. Friends noted, “Leonard doesn’t say much, but when he does, people listen.” He had a droll, often cornball, sense of humor and loved any word game, especially puns, which he considered the purest form of humor—not surprising, since words were his forte. He delighted in naming the family’s outboard motorboat “Gerryco,” and watching passersby snicker at the “misspelled” name. One of his favorite quips was, “A pun is its own reward.”

The Coatsworths owned a summer place at Arletta, a small beach community on the Kitsap Peninsula, on the west side of the Tacoma Narrows, only a short drive from the city. Tubby joined the family on frequent trips to Arletta, first by ferry and after July 1940 via the Narrows Bridge. Weekends, summers, and holidays were busiest. Tubby usually found himself sharing space in the car with assorted supplies, boxes of apples, or a freshly cut Christmas tree.

Tubby dearly loved Arletta. He greeted visitors to the beach house like a miniature host. When the family went boating, he inevitably tried to follow, dog-paddling behind the boat until they were so far offshore that they had no choice but to go back and bring him, dripping and shaking, into the boat. In the Arletta yard stood an enormous cherry tree that dropped a lot of fruit,
Suspension bridges failed with alarming frequency during the 19th century. Ten suspension bridges (three in the United States and seven in Europe) either collapsed in winds or suffered significant damage between 1818 and 1889. Before the 1883 Brooklyn Bridge, people considered suspension bridges risky and unreliable. That began to change after 1909 with the construction of the Manhattan Bridge in New York City. In its design Leon Moisseiff, a brilliant bridge engineer and mathematician, applied what is known as deflection theory (an early 20th-century theory that very long suspension bridges could remain stable without deep stiffening trusses through a balance between flexibility and self-weight). This laid the groundwork for three decades of long-span suspension bridges.

The 1931 George Washington Bridge in New York bolstered confidence in the progressive evolution of suspension bridge design to longer, lighter, and more slender spans. In 1931 it was the longest suspension bridge in the world. The bridge had a relatively flexible suspended structure, that is, it had very little stiffening against vertical movement. After this, the leading bridge engineers designed bridges with virtually no stiffening.

The 1939 Bronx-Whitestone Bridge became the first suspension structure to use a solid plate girder for the deck. It was also the first with steel towers that had no diagonal cross-bracing. Although experts hailed the bridge as “the ultimate” in suspension bridge design, aerodynamic problems began to appear as this trend accelerated in the late 1930s. Vertical oscillations (waves and vibrations) of the roadways began appearing, most notably in the 1939 Deer Island Bridge and the 1939 Bronx-Whitestone Bridge.

Thirty years after he helped design the Manhattan Bridge, Leon Moisseiff became the lead engineer on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge design. The trend to build ever longer, narrower, and lighter bridges culminated catastrophically with the 1940 Narrows Bridge. The center span’s width-to-length ratio was 1:72. This represented a dramatic increase over the previous record-holder, the Golden Gate Bridge with its 1:47 ratio. The Narrows Bridge was also the cheapest.

Work began in November 1938. Nineteen months later, on July 1, 1940, the bridge stood ready for official opening ceremonies. It was the third longest suspension span in the world and stretched like a steel ribbon nearly a mile across southern Puget Sound. Four months later, the bridge’s life ended in disaster. “Galloping Gertie,” as the locals called it, collapsed in a windstorm on November 7, 1940. Although engineers had designed the bridge to withstand winds of up to 120 miles per hour, it collapsed in a wind of only 42 miles per hour. Galloping Gertie became the most dramatic failure in bridge engineering history and the world’s best-known example of aerodynamic instability in a suspension bridge.

A much safer Tacoma Narrows Bridge, pictured below, opened October 14, 1950. At 5,979 feet, it is the fifth longest suspension span in the United States and 40 feet longer than the 1940 bridge. Japan’s Akashi Kaikyo Bridge is currently the longest suspension bridge in the world. Its center span measures an astounding 6,527 feet and the bridge’s total length is 12,828 feet.
With Tubby in the back seat, Leonard drove off in his dark green 1936 Studebaker.

Leonard Coatsworth and his 1936 Studebaker, the car that fell with the 1940 Tacoma Narrows Bridge into Puget Sound on November 7, 1940.

which Tubby would devour, seeds and all. He also liked to raid the family’s small vegetable garden—peas were his favorite. He would pluck off the pods within reach, give them a crunch, lick off all the peas, and abandon the rest. Gerry’s mother was so amused by this trick that she didn’t try to stop him. After all, she reasoned, he could only reach the lowest pods.

Gerry and Tubby had great fun on the beach at Arletta. Tubby especially enjoyed dragging huge lengths of kelp about the beach. It seemed he could not resist the fun of mastering something so much bigger than himself. A tangle of large driftwood logs crowded the sand above the tide line. With Tubby at her heels, Gerry liked to see how far she could travel, jumping from log to log, without touching the beach. This posed quite a problem for the short-legged little dog. He followed Gerry on the larger logs until the gaps between them became too wide. Then he would jump down and quickly hop up on the nest log, acting as if he had been right behind her all along. His compassionate companion always let him think she had not seen him “cheat.”

Tubby once actually saved Gerry’s life. When she was nine years old, her dad took her to Titlow Beach, where the City of Tacoma had shaped a lagoon to create a public swimming area. Leonard sat at a picnic table watching Gerry happily splash about close to shore. Tubby sat with him, for once on a leash to keep him from following Gerry into the water. Just as Gerry’s dad turned to look at the young lifeguard flirting with some girls, Tubby started to bark. He glanced from Tubby to the spot where he had seen Gerry only a moment before, but she had disappeared. He yelled at the lifeguard, but he didn’t stop there. With the newspaper as his forum, Coatsworth publicized the lack of training lifeguards received at that time and launched a forceful water safety campaign. As a result, lifeguard safety training became the norm at Tacoma public swimming venues, as it is today.

It was not always like any good dog, Tubby could sense the needs of his owner. One summer day Gerry let her bravado outweigh good sense when she rubbed her hands and face in poison oak, foolishly believing herself immune. The result was an itchy, unsightly rash. Desperate for privacy, she retreated daily deep into the apple orchard behind the Arletta house, taking with her a blanket and book, some snacks, and a bottle of calamine lotion. Tubby never left her side. If he heard someone approach, he warned Gerry in his own special language of grunts and whines so she would have time to throw the blanket over her head before anyone could see her. He was her only companion for weeks, until the rash abated.

In 1939 the Coatsworths, like many Tacomaans, often drove to the bluffs overlooking the Narrows to watch the bridge construction. Gerry and her mother spent the entire summer at Arletta, and Leonard joined them on weekends. Gerry was 14 years old and had completed her sophomore year at Stadium High School. One evening she saw salmon jumping near the shore and decided to take the motorboat out alone to catch one. After trolling for a while, back and forth, she caught something—a small shark, or “dogfish.” Cutting the motor, she tried to reel it in, but the three-foot-long shark thrashed wildly about and Gerry felt afraid to take it off the hook. She had decided to kill the helpless fish by bash ing it with an oar when she suddenly noticed a handsome boy approaching in a rowboat. He quickly freed the shark and introduced himself. His name was Palmer and he was spending the summer at Arletta with his aunt. Later on he introduced Gerry to a group of several other teens, which proved the glorious beginning of the best summer she could remember.

On July 1, 1940, the first Tacoma Narrows Bridge opened. Built by the Washington State Toll Bridge Authority in a record 19 months, the span proved extremely popular. For Gerry Coatsworth and her family, the Narrows Bridge made trips to Arletta
Sometimes the trips were also more easier, faster, and cheaper than the ferry. Sometimes the trips were also more easier, faster, and cheaper than the ferry. Sometimes the trips were also more exciting. Like seeing in living of sight as it moved into the trough of a roller coaster, with the added fun of wave, then reappear on the crest of the next wave.

The “joy ride” that thrilled motorists crossing the Narrows became an increasing concern to bridge engineers. The Toll Bridge Authority hired Professor F. Burt Farquharson, professor of civil engineering at the University of Washington, to devise a solution to stabilize the bridge. While the bridge’s movements worried some people, hardly anyone imagined that the bridge could fail. Farquharson’s studies concluded on November 2, 1940. They revealed that fitting the solid, flat eight-foot sides of the bridge deck with curved steel to deflect the wind could minimize Galloping Gertie’s “vertical oscillations.” But before engineers could implement Farquharson’s plan, disaster struck. Only four months after the bridge opened, it collapsed into Puget Sound.

On the morning of November 7, 1940, Leonard and Ethel Coatsworth planned a trip to Arletta to do some maintenance and prepare the house for winter. At the last moment, Ethel decided to stay home. With Tubby in the back seat, Leonard drove off in his dark green 1936 Studebaker. As fate would have it, a windstorm had moved into southern Puget Sound overnight and by mid-morning gusts up to 42 miles per hour raced up the Tacoma Narrows. Galloping Gertie was undulating rapidly when at 10 o’clock in the morning Coatsworth paid his toll and drove west onto the bridge. Just after he passed the east tower, the span suddenly began twisting spasmodically.

The bridge violently tilted 28 feet to one side, then the other, back and forth, making it impossible to drive. The car was thrown against the opposite curb. Coatsworth climbed out onto the roadway. He tried to coax Tubby from the back seat, but the frightened dog refused to budge. Coatsworth decided that Tubby would be safer in the car and planned on returning for the dog as soon as the bridge calmed down. He began a desperate scramble for the safety of the toll plaza, nearly 1,900 feet (over a third of a mile) distant.

Haltingly, Coatsworth shuffled and crawled toward the east end of the bridge. When Gertie twisted, he clutched the curb, narrowly avoiding a fall over the side. In the brief periods when the road deck was level, Coatsworth crouched and ran a few steps before he again fell and clung to the curb for dear life. If he had been able to get Tubby out of the car, it is likely that neither of them would have made it off the bridge. By the time he finally reached the toll plaza, he was battered, bloody, bruised. The shaken newsman phoned the Tribune and they immediately dispatched photographer Howard Clifford and reporter Bert Brinnall to the bridge. In an unsteady voice Coatsworth dictated the story of his ordeal, a story that would appear in the newspaper the next day.

Meanwhile, others gathered to watch the spectacle. Clifford, who took some of the most dramatic photos of the bridge and Coatsworth’s car before the collapse, attempted to retrieve Tubby, but he could get only a few steps beyond the east tower before the bridge’s wild movements forced him to return. Professor Farquharson, who did not believe the span could collapse until it actually began to break up, was there taking notes and snapping photos. He, too, made an effort to get Tubby out of the car. During a lull when the span briefly calmed, he carefully made his way to the car and thrust his hand in to grab the dog. The petrified pooch snapped at the stranger, nipping his finger, and the professor quickly retreated.

After nearly an hour of violent twisting, the bridge ripped apart. The Coatsworths’ car, with Tubby still cowering in the back seat, followed the broken center span, plunging into the cold, wind-churned waters 190 feet deep. In the back seat, followed the broken center span, plunging into the cold, wind-churned waters 190 feet deep.
Public sympathy engulfed

**Gerry. Offers of free Cocker Spaniel puppies poured in from across the country.**

In the wake of the catastrophe, while engineers, insurance companies, and politicians grappled with the bridge's failure, the Coatsworths moved on, beginning to adjust to life without little Tubby. Gerry found some comfort when, a few weeks later, the newspapers reported a plan to honor Tubby. Each year for several years prior, a local dog lover had awarded a canine memorial, and Tubby received the "Dog of the Year" award for 1940. In the spring of 1941 a painting of Tubby was dedicated at But­ton Veterinary Hospital, his name was inscribed on a bronze plaque, and the mayor of Tacoma, Harry P. Cain, gave a radio address to mark the ceremony.

Public sympathy engulfed Gerry. Offers of free cocker spaniel puppies poured in from across the country. The one she settled on was a black and white parti-colored female from Richmond, Virginia. The breeder shipped the puppy to Tacoma by train. When the pup arrived, Gerry was delighted and said she wanted to name her new dog "Little Bridge." Her father, who had had quite enough of bridges, vetoed the idea. They agreed to call the pup Cobina. She was well-loved in her new home, but, in less than a year Gerry graduated from high school and in the fall of 1941 left home to attend Washington State College (now Washington State University) in Pullman. Cobina became her parents' dog.

Following the great bridge disaster, Leonard Coatsworth was interviewed on numerous radio stations, and after World War II he appeared on several television programs. He died at the age of 61 in 1956, only months after his retirement from the Tribune. Gerry's mother never remarried and died in 1983 in a Seattle retirement home. Scuba divers have searched the swift tidal currents of the Narrows in vain for the Coatsworths' 1936 Studebaker. After 66 years, the location of the car (and Tubby's remains) is still a mystery.

Gerry Coatsworth eventually married and had four children. Her love for dogs has remained strong, and there has always been at least one in the family. In 1974 her husband died and Gerry entered the workforce. She retired in 1981 from a job in Texas as Gulf Coast director of a national health agency (Prevent Blindness) and moved to California. Today Gerry spends much of her free time volunteering as a dog behaviorist and trainer at the Marin County Humane Society, which is widely recognized as one of the top shelters in the nation. She also enjoys time with her children and nine grandchildren. Tubby is long gone but remains a cherished memory from Gerry's youth.³⁰

³⁰Richard Hobbs is an author and historian living on Whidbey Island. His new book is Catastrophe to Triumph: Bridges of the Tacoma Narrows, published by Washington State University Press (2006). Gerry Coatsworth Holcomb lives in Fairfax, California, where she shares her home with three dogs: Xena and Scarlett, both shelties, and a poodle-mix named Cha Cha.
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The German Occupation of Fort Lewis

World War II POWs in Pierce County

By Steve Dunkelberger

Few Washington residents realize that Pierce County was invaded by German soldiers during World War II. POWs first landed at Fort Lewis, Pierce County, in early 1942 when four Japanese, two Italians, and one German arrived from far-flung battlefields. These men were quickly transferred to other POW camps and then replaced by an all-German clientele. Only a handful of records mention Fort Lewis as a POW facility that held as many as 4,500 Germans in five camps dotted around the base. According to Fort Lewis Military Museum curator Alan Archambault, many of them came from Germany's armored Afrika Corps, led by the famous General Erwin Rommel, after being defeated in a 1941 battle against the British. The museum has a roster of all the Germans held at the camps, based on a 1945 report listing the Fort Lewis German POWs by name and unit. “Although a number of them were Afrika Corps, many were captured later in Italy and France,” Archambault said. “Looking at the list, I was surprised to find some were captured in the summer of 1944, during the breakout from Normandy.”

No photos are archived in the Fort Lewis Museum because photographing POWs was against the Geneva Conventions. The photo ban avoided any acts of retribution against families of POWs and limited the POWs’ value for use in propaganda films. Maps of the camps around the army base have also been lost to history because they were labeled classified to hinder escape attempts.

One noteworthy report of the POW camps has survived, written by Wayne Shoemaker, a company clerk at the Fort Lewis POW camp. He guarded POWs between 1944 and 1945, and served as company clerk simply because he was the only one who could type. Shoemaker recalled that there were three POW camps north of Gray Army Airfield, just inside
Glittering Prospect

THE ALASKA GOLD RUSH RECONSIDERED

Yukon-bound passengers and freight landing at Skagway on the southern Alaska coast.
Books on Parade

Photographer Marvin Boland snapped this image in 1925 of nine Lincoln High School students flaunting their reading choices. The Americanization of Edward Bok argues against the vote for women while Edna Ferber's novel, So Big, examines a young woman's determination to survive and thrive in Chicago. The students seem mainly to have selected books with serious themes.

The Washington State Historical Society owns over 60,000 negatives by Tacoma-based photographer Marvin D. Boland. His work beautifully documents everyday life and activities in Tacoma from 1912 to 1950. An unreconstructed Southerner, Boland wrote an alternative version of the Civil War entitled Reinterpreting History. He likely would not have appreciated Puddinhead Wilson, Mark Twain's satire on race relations.

The Historical Society gladly accepts donations of prints or negatives of regional historical interest to add to its photograph collection. (Please contact the Society before making donations.) Readers are invited to submit historical photographs for History Album. If a photograph is to be returned, it must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. For information on how to purchase a photo reproduction of the above image(s), or others in the Society's collection, contact Elaine Miller, research librarian, at 253/798-9513 or emiller@wshs.wa.gov.
on July 17, 1897, the steamship Portland, entering the Strait of Juan de Fuca inbound from the summertime ports of southern Alaska, met a flotilla of tugboats chartered by headline-hungry reporters for the newspapers of Puget Sound. The basic, and truly amazing, details were ready for printing by the time the vessel tied up that evening in Seattle. At least $700,000 in gold lay, by conservative accounting, in the Portland's heavily guarded storeroom. The passengers, moreover, stood ready to carry unknown additional amounts of dust ashore, concealed in baggage or about their unkempt persons. "There has never been," the Post-Intelligencer proclaimed in the first of several gold rush special editions, "anything like the strike in the Klondike since the famous days of California nearly fifty years ago."

Residents of Seattle, paying rapt attention to the stories told by miners debarking from the Portland, went "stack, starring mad on gold," or so claimed a visiting eastern journalist. Touring the docks, former territorial governor Eugene Semple described the waterfront as "crowded with knots of men so worked up over the news that they can scarcely avoid being run over by the cars." The talk, along with the subsequent history, focused on the sudden and unexpected opening of a new mining frontier in the frozen north. Alaska, claimed many of the wise men and women on the scene, would bring prosperity to the city. With the homeport docking of the Portland, Seattle was destined to become the leading city of the Pacific Northwest. The basic routes to the diggings, as well as the many obstacles to be overcome, were soon widely known. "The summer lasts only about sixty days," returnees pointed out in stressing the limited season for work, "and the ground is so frozen that the summer heat has but little effect upon it." Supplies might easily run short, especially if riverboats were delayed by accident or unfavorable water conditions.

Visions of gold triumphed over concerns of practicality, however, accounting for sustained interest in the northern mines. By 1893 Forty Mile Creek was, as a letter from the Yukon advised, "thoroughly prospected from one end to the other." New discoveries that year focusing on Circle City, another point accessible by river steamer, ignited a "rush to Alaska... in dead earnest." Vessels sailed from Puget Sound "loaded" to the "gunwhales [sic] with prospectors." Over the summer and in succeeding working seasons, a thousand miners labored on to an end the long economic nightmare known as the Panic of 1893. With the homeport docking of the Portland serving as a perfect symbol of the relationship, Seattle was destined to become the leading city of the Pacific Northwest by virtue of its natural monopoly of the Alaskan trade. Soon established as firm tenets in the popular conception of regional history, these assertions were, at best, gross exaggerations representing the triumph of myth over fact.

For one thing, the intrepid seaborne reporters had rushed to meet the Portland because of the news telegraphed two days before that another treasure-bearing steamship, the Excelsior, had already arrived in San Francisco. There was nothing new about the Alaska-Puget Sound connection. By 1890 at least five ocean-going vessels served a regularly scheduled route from Seattle and Tacoma, the cities selected by the federal government for the handling of all mail to and from Alaska. Canneries in the north shipped frozen halibut and cod to tidewater railheads in western Washington. At an early date Alaska also became a popular tourist destination for wealthy excursionists eager to view the fjords, glaciers, and other natural wonders. "Every visitor," a Seattle newspaper noted in 1891, "has returned an enthusiastic missionary, so that the...journey from Puget Sound to Alaska promises to become [the] most popular of all American recreative sports." Coming and going, travelers filled hotels, dined at restaurants, and patronized outfitters, all to the benefit of business enterprise along the shores of Puget Sound.

Persons more interested in the accumulation of wealth than in scenery were also drawn north to Alaska. Two hundred prospectors spent the winter of 1890 in the drainage of the upper Yukon River, the diggings about Forty Mile Creek serving as the focus of attention. Although early returns were somewhat disheartening, enough good claims were staked, according to one enthusiast, "to convince the most skeptical that Alaska is one of the most extensive mineral regions in existence." Miners returning to Washington state revealed "the secrets" of the Yukon—"that hitherto strange country"—to a receptive audience. The basic routes to the diggings, as well as the many obstacles to be overcome, were soon widely known. "The summer lasts only about sixty days," returnees pointed out in stressing the limited season for work, "and the ground is so frozen that the summer heat has but little effect upon it." Supplies might easily run short, especially if riverboats were delayed by accident or unfavorable water conditions.

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celebrated the “general revival which is always certain to follow a ... period of depression.” More building permits were issued in Spokane in March than for any month since the beginning of the depression. “Traveling men” returning from eastern Washington reported that sales were “better than they have been in five years.” Completing a long and complex reorganization process, America’s railroads hired 100,000 new workers in the spring and early summer.

umbering, the principal economic activity west of the Cascades, showed renewed signs of life in the first half of 1897, heavy eastbound shipments along the transcontinental rail lines reflecting the emerging status of the Pacific Northwest as the nation’s premier forest products region. Frederick Weyerhaeuser and other Great Lakes investors appeared on the scene, intent upon acquisition of increasingly valuable Washington timberland. On the far side of the mountains wheat ranching also exhibited unmistakable evidence of returning prosperity. Early season quotations were the highest in half a decade, and the railroads, in anticipation of the largest crop in Washington history, scrambled to assemble rolling stock. Mining recovered, with active camps in the Okanogan and in the Kootenay country north of the 49th parallel looking to Spokane for supplies and capital.

Manifest signs of this recovery accounted in large part for the caution urged by establishment voices in the immediate aftermath of the Portland’s arrival. “Those who know when they are well off will stay where they are,” a Tacoma editor advised in pointing to the already resurgent Puget Sound economy. Similar expressions appeared in the Seattle press. “All who go in search of fortunes do not make them,” the P-I asserted, proverb style. “Don’t let anybody lose his head because of the discovery of the new gold fields,” the Times pronounced. The Klondike diggings about Dawson were, after all, thousands of hard water and land miles distant. Those prospectors booking immediate passage would arrive before the first deep snow, but too late to stake claims. Gold hunters waiting until August to depart could expect to be stalled on the Alaskan coast until the spring of 1898, river navigation having ceased for the season. The recently charted direct trails by White Pass from Skagway and by Chilkoot Pass from Dyea would, in the meantime, have been choked by horrific drifts.

Individuals planning a trip north, therefore, ought to “think twice” and remember that ample wealth-

Klondike publications were bursting with ads for all manner of supplies and equipment aimed at prospectors outfitting for their journey north.

ABOVE: Seattle merchants dominated the supply trade to Alaska.
RIGHT: Steamers sailed from Puget Sound ports to Alaska regularly.
FAR RIGHT & LOWER RIGHT: Pamphlets, booklets, and a variety of other print pieces offered advice to Klondike-bound prospectors.

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A mind-set common to all gold rushes explained the general failure to heed initial cautionary advice. “The more reports are circulated about the hardships and perils of the country,” one onlooker pointed out, “the more intense the desire of adventurous men and women to go to the front.” For some, the prospect of wilderness adventure triumphed over reason. Worn out by the depression, many sought instant financial redemption. The majority would undoubtedly fail to find gold, but a few could expect to obtain riches, a lottery-like calculation sure to overwhelm rational analysis.

Prospectors clearly intended to make the journey in 1897, so Washington residents might as well profit from the hysteria. Arguments stressing the dangers of the trip and the wisdom of waiting at least for spring were quickly set aside as expressions of commercial disloyalty. The hazards, the Post-Intelligencer belatedly revealed, were in truth “astonishingly small.” The Alaskan working season turned out to be, upon close counting room inspection, much longer than previously reported, coincidentally verging on year-round status at the most promising sites. The only genuine threat to life and limb came from possible pirate attack on south-bound gold ships. “Wintering,” in a further happy measure of revisionism, was “not as unpleasant as might be supposed.” Difficulties should be anticipated, but “they may be overcome by individual effort, requiring neither capital, machinery, nor organized labor.”

Mercantile enterprises of all kinds sought to make money from the exodus. Pacific County firms sent fresh Willapa Bay oysters, packed in five-gallon cans, to Alaska for transit across
Steamers which have for years been in the 'boneyards' have been repainted and hastily refitted.

The passes to delicacy-craving Dawson gourmands, Puget Sound and Grays Harbor sawmills shipped vast amounts of lumber to Skagway and Dyea for construction of wharves and buildings. Outfitting, though, was the easiest means for stay-at-home Washingtonians to benefit from the gold rush.

"When it is considered that an outfit includes sufficient necessaries to last at least one year," a commentator noted, "it will be seen that the business...will increase enormously." Self-appointed experts advised that each miner take, in addition to clothing and tools, 1,000 pounds of provisions, including 400 pounds of flour, 100 pounds each of beans and sugar, and 10 of coffee. When not quarreling among themselves, all Washington supply points insisted that the lowest priced and highest quality goods were obtainable on Puget Sound, rather than in Alaska or the Canadian Yukon.

Chauncey Griggs, the managing partner of the St. Paul & Tacoma Lumber Company complex on Commencement Bay, reported "doing about two or three thousand dollars of Klondike business daily" at his firm's waterfront general store. The attention devoted to Alaska was therefore an easily comprehended phenomenon. The advertising pages in a single issue of the Port Townsend newspaper reflected a region-wide preoccupation. Waterman & Katz, a local emporium, claimed "to make it a specialty fitting out Klondike gold-seekers." Grocers and boot-makers proffered food and footwear "for the Klondike!" Wright's, another Port Townsend store, held in stock 1,000 "complete and accurate guides, giving the distances between points and maps of the Klondike and Yukon." The Townsend Awning Company had tents "and all kinds of Canvas" ready for sale "at short notice" to departing "Klondikers." Establishments specializing in items of minimal utility in the north worked gold rush themes into their ads. "Some Say 'Ho!' for Klondyke!," proclaimed a bicycle seller. "We Say 'Ho!' for a Good Bike—Cheap!"

Because miners could not find gold without first getting to Alaska, transportation was another obvious source of profit. The "tremendous demand for passenger and freight room" created truly golden opportunities in the first weeks of the rush. The large Washington sawmill concerns, longtime operators of subsidiary shipping fleets, sold off "old hulks" at unexpectedly lucrative prices. The same lumbering firms also served huge fees from charters, the Port Blakely Mill Company, for instance, earning $40,000 from a single voyage to the mouth of the Yukon River. Schooners and other sailing craft, vessels previously regarded as unsuitable for Alaskan waters, were also pressed into service, decks piled high with unstable cargo. Puget Sound yards, meanwhile, set to in earnest constructing steamships and riverboats for the Alaska trade.

Given the money-making opportunities, dreadful abuses were an inevitable feature of the maritime business. Traveling aboard the Seattle-owned Humboldt in August 1897, inexperienced easterners found that the fine print on their tickets required them to work the substandard vessel all the way to the Yukon River. The humbugged passengers at least arrived safely, a luxury often denied Alaska-bound prospectors. "Steamers which have for years been in the 'boneyards'...," a contemporary investigation revealed, "have been repainted and hastily refitted." Federal surveys supposedly guaranteed the "safe condition" of all ocean-going vessels, a reassuring declaration compromised by the willingness of corrupt inspectors to exercise thorough nondiligence. The ancient and federally

BELOW LEFT: Prospectors used traditional means to pan for gold along the Yukon River.

BELOW RIGHT: Harsh weather made for difficult conditions of life and work in the Yukon country.
approved Eliza Anderson, rotting on the tide flats after four decades of heavy duty on Puget Sound, sailed in September without lifeboats, eventually ran out of coal, and wound up on the beach well short of its destination. Overall, three ships were wrecked on uncharted rocks, a fourth exploded, and a fifth was abandoned by its fearful crew.

Willing to abide all manner of perils and frauds, Seattle merchants retained the leading place in the exploitation of Alaska. Recognizing that “it is a difficult task to divert the trade when it once sets strongly in one direction,” local business interests worked hard to maximize existing advantages, including connections to three transcontinental lines—the Great Northern, the Northern Pacific, and the Canadian Pacific—and possession of the central Puget Sound post office. The chamber of commerce spent $2,000 a month promoting Seattle in eastern newspapers and magazines. Close to 100,000 copies of the special Yukon editions published by the city’s newspapers went to train stations, libraries, and other public facilities across the nation. Thus laying claim to three-quarters of the business, local outfitters credited “the old-time spirit of Seattle push.” Competing towns grumbled instead about “the old arbitrary spirit which long sought to rule the entire state of Washington.”

Urban competitors up and down the Pacific Coast, though lagging behind Seattle, also adeptly engaged in “blowing their Klondike horns.” San Francisco interests published maps depicting Alaska as but a few hundred miles north of the Golden Gate, with no ports in-between. Portland claimed to offer both the lowest prices and superior representation in Skagway. Tacoma tried hard to match Seattle in chamber of commerce promotionalism. “The opportunity that is presented is one that very seldom comes,” a local editor affirmed, “and it behooves this city to make the most of it.” Victoria and Vancouver entered the contest from across the border, sending agents to meet incoming trains in Seattle in an effort to divert miners to British Columbia outfitters.

Energetic schemes came as well from Spokane, where leaders of opinion had initially argued against going to Alaska. In addition to the extreme dangers of the trip north, a “food famine” supposedly loomed in the Klondike, with mass starvation sure to follow. Belatedly realizing that dramatic advertising might generate profit from the rush, Spokane merchants soon changed course and began touting their inland city as “the natural starting point for American prospectors.” Heavily promoted as the old Hudson’s Bay Company trail, a wagon and packing route supposedly led to the upper Yukon drainage, where miners could easily construct boats and rafts for the final descent upon Dawson. The road was open in winter, avoided all mountain ranges, crossed well-watered regions abounding in fish and game, and was, without doubt, the best “poor man’s route.” Unfortunately, expeditions sent out to locate and mark the exact line turned back in the face of harsh weather and unsurmountable wilderness conditions. Adept in defeat, Spokane resuscitated earlier predictions that Alaska’s inevitable failure would, in the end, work to the advantage of the interior Pacific Northwest as ruined prospectors by the score settled in eastern Washington.

Compromised by association with self-interested purveyors of optimism on the one hand and death-proclaiming pessimism on the other, the “frozen truth” of the Klondike was nonetheless revealed to a substantial extent by the end of 1897. Food was dear over the winter, available only at astonishingly high prices. Accounts from Dawson indicated that the provident and the improvident—those who had come with and those who had come without adequate supplies—prepared for weeks of conflict over provisions. “The speedy rule of the hard law of survival of the fittest” prevailed, claimed a wintering Oregonian. Preachers swore like drunken teamsters, and pack animals reportedly committed suicide rather than be driven across the mountain passes. Faith and honor were prime casualties of the gold rush, a development reflected in the federal government’s decision to cancel a planned relief expedition amidst general conviction that the stories of famine were a ploy devised by Washington state merchants intent upon over-supplying the soldiers.

Returns from the north for 1897 certainly fell short of frenzied expectations, confirming the advice earlier proffered by persons familiar with the seasonally limited nature of Yukon adventure. Alaska was, to be sure, “a land of gold and mystery...sweeping north to the shores of the Arctic sea,” but the wealth could not easily be removed by poorly equipped prospectors arriving at the end of summer. Newspaper publishers spent $6,000 chartering vessels to meet the second return of the Portland, only to find that the famed treasure steamer carried little gold and no intelligence regarding new discoveries. Army officers stationed in Alaska reported that only 7 percent of the miners reaching the Klondike in
1897 had found enough dust to cover expenses. Few observers doubted, however, that the excitement would resume in the spring of 1898. "Nine out of ten" might be doomed to "make a failure" out of the mines, a Seattle newspaper reflected in explanation, but the exact composition of "the lucky one-tenth" could not be "determined in advance."

Summing up the results of the initial feverish summer, thoughtful Washington residents concluded that Alaska was, at the very least, responsible for "the waking up of our people," of the Pacific into "an American lake." Thanks to what one commentator described as "the rotundity of the earth," Seattle and Tacoma were, after all, closer to most Asian ports than competing export centers on the West Coast.

Conveyed aboard regularly scheduled steamers, direct trade with Asia commenced in earnest during the earliest years of statehood. Of particular importance, flour shipments to China held steady through the years of depression while those to Japan mounted at an impressive rate. Four Seattle mills ran 24 hours a day, producing exclusively for cross-Pacific consumers. The ports of Seattle and Tacoma, meanwhile, exported steel rails and rolling stock manufactured east of the Mississippi to railroad and minor contractors in China and Japan. Though times were "at their darkest" during the Panic of 1893, Washington was, according to contemporary analysis, "saved from complete stagnation" by the rapid growth in international trade.

America's victory over Spain acted as an accelerator to preexisting trends. In August 1898, 150 trading vessels set sail from Elliott Bay alone—six times the figure for the same month in 1891. Dispatched in large part through Puget Sound, American exports to Asia had, by one accounting, "increased nearly seven-fold" in the same span of years. Seattle and Tacoma together shipped $9 million worth of flour in 1898.

Washington-based industrial enterprises sent special envoys abroad to drum up more business in Chinese and Japanese cities. Meanwhile, Hawaii took on new economic importance as an American territory. Military construction, among other burgeoning activities, created a demand for building materials and profit-making mercantile ventures.

Even in Seattle, the self-declared capital of the gold rush, these were the truly important events that took place in the final years of the 19th century. Precious metals from the Klondike and Nome were best regarded as "mere incidents," the Times asserted, when compared to the wealth generated by "the new Pacific trade." America's orientation appeared to be shifting, and quickly so, from Europe to Asia. Settlers and investors—people interested in building homes, industries, and cities—were on the way to the Pacific Northwest. "Rivet your attention upon the Pacific ocean," the P-I cried. "About the shores of this new Mediterranean will cluster all the wealth, the activity, the thought, the dominance that made the old Mediterranean the market and pleasure pavilion and the treasury of the earth." Occupying the vital spot upon the sea of the future, Washingtonians were destined beneficiaries of a "prominence and a prosperity of which the most sanguine now would scarcely dare to dream." Set against this glittering prospect, Alaska was, indeed, a secondary albeit adventurous theater of operations.

On the BANKS of the Mid-COLUMBIA

This story begins with the physical and human worlds of the Mid-Columbia River, a nine-mile stretch where the great waterway crashed and thundered over Miocene basalts at Celilo Falls and coursed downstream through the walled chasm of the Long and Short Narrows—deep, turbulent channels where the water moved with great velocity. Before dams altered its flow, this section of the Columbia descended 81 feet at low water and 60 feet at high water. When Lewis and Clark floated downriver in the fall of 1805, the rugged and spare but visually spectacular Mid-Columbia between Celilo Falls and the present-day city of The Dalles provided the best fishing sites in the entire Columbia system.

Such constricted places—created by ancient geological forces that carved basalt rock formations in the river—provided unique obstacles for salmon, enabling humans who came from near and far to take advantage of the annual bounty of migrating fish.

To Wasco-Chinookan people, the site at the head of the Long Narrows (or Five-Mile Rapids) was known as Coyote’s Fishing Place and the narrow downstream channel, Coyote’s Canyon. According to George Aguilar (of the Confederated Tribes at Warm Springs), “The rich people owned all the good fishing places along the main stream and Coyote, out of the goodness of his heart, built the race so poor people would have a place to take fish.” He explains that the larger meaning of Coyote’s Canyon is lost with the older generations who have passed on. Generations of human memory, however, attest to the fecundity of those special places.

The Dalles on the Columbia River was once a series of waterfalls and rapids with an 81-foot drop at the low water stage. Celilo Falls, at the head of the narrows, dropped 20 feet.

Exploring the Cultural Significance of Celilo

BY WILLIAM G. ROBBINS

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and what the river meant to the tribal people who had fished its waters for several millennia. Wyam Chief Tommy Thompson, who lived beyond the century mark and died shortly after The Dalles Dam inundated miles of fishing grounds, believed that salmon returned voluntarily as a gift for the people.

Although heavy and concentrated Indian fisheries were established at Kettle Falls, Priest Rapids, Cascade Rapids, and other locations on tributary streams, the stretch of river from Celilo Falls through the Long and Short Narrows supported several permanent villages. During the peak of the salmon runs, several thousand visitors traveled to the Mid-Columbia to trade and socialize. According to historian William Lang, the section of the river from Celilo Falls to The Dalles was a place of great cultural and geographic significance. It was at such places that fishing and other lifeways fit into broader explanations about the meaning of everyday life. Passing upriver in 1811, Alexander Ross of the Pacific Fur Company described the country around the Long Narrows as “lone, gloomy, and the surface rugged, barren, and rocky.” Despite those seemingly stark and austere surroundings, the middle Columbia from the Snake River downstream to the Cascade Rapids was a remarkably productive water environment, represented by the prodigious annual runs of salmon.

Several seasonal and permanent Wasco villages and fishing stations were located on the south side of the river between The Dalles and the Long Narrows. Wasco fishers moved along this section of the waterway—generally in an upstream direction—adjusting to the seasonal rise and fall of the river. Fishing began in March just as the Columbia was beginning to rise with snowmelt. When the river began to subside in late June, fishers would occupy familiar family-used rock outcroppings to ready themselves for the salmon runs that peaked in the autumn. Writing from Wascopam Mission at The Dalles in 1840, Henry Brewer reported that the Indians lived four miles above the mission during the summer and moved nearby to subterranean dwellings for the winter.

This essay takes a broad look into the history of the Mid-Columbia over the last 200 years, with special attention to native fishers struggling to protect their cultural and physical worlds from ambitious outsiders who were arriving in ever-increasing numbers during the 19th century. Of special note is the language of the colonizers who eventually transformed a wild and turbulent river into a rationalized, engineered, utilitarian phenomenon. The writings of Lewis and Clark, the Astorians, and others who traveled the Mid-Columbia in the first half of the 19th century are filled with the aspirations and material interests of those who were in the early stages of attempting to dominate the mid river and its native people. Given the several millennia that humans have lived along the Mid-Columbia, the literary publications that brought this section of the river into the modern consciousness literally began with the Lewis and Clark narratives of 1805-06.

“Distance from Europe,” William Dietrich writes, “made the Northwest coast of North America one of the last to be charted.” Once the river became known to the non-Indian world, however, the lives of the tribal people on the Mid-Columbia began to change. Lewis and Clark, in effect, turned what had been distant speculation about the Columbia River country into practical geography, a knowable place—and thereby opened the floodgates to the ever-restless westering push of white Americans.

The newcomers carried with them an almost transcendent, righteous belief that progress could be achieved through the social manipulation of Native American people and dominion over their natural world. To better understand the intersection of the lives and cultures of Indian and non-Indian worlds, historical geographer Donald Meinig reminds us that early fur-trading posts and Christian mission establishments such as Wascopam Mission were “visible declaration(s) of the power of the Europeans to intrude upon the territories of others. They were political as well as economic outposts.”
The physical and cultural worlds of the Columbia River country are truly vast and complex, with the human cultures and history of this extensive landscape reaching to numerous local places and particular cultural settings. Except for the people who have inhabited the region for several millennia, however, the Great River is relatively new to the American imagination, literally a distant corner of an expanding American empire that was gradually made known to its citizens over the course of the last two centuries. Until very recent times, the local places and particular cultural citizens over the course of the last two millennia, however, the Great River of an expanding American empire that was gradually made known to its residents Captain Robert Gray headed in over the foaming bar and history began on the River of the West.... The story of the river begins with Gray.

Unmentioned in Holbrook's blustery prose—although depicted in an artist's rendition—is any reference to the several Indian canoes that paddled out to the Columbia Rediviva to exchange fur pelts for European trade goods. The flaw in Holbrook's mythical account erases the living presence of Native Americans as active players on the lower Columbia. It is also a reminder of the need to challenge conventional notions of discovery and exploration. In William Cronon's words, "In the act of separating story from non-story, we wield the most powerful yet dangerous tool of the narrative form." Historical discourse on the Columbia River falls victim to this conceptual trap, especially when it neglects the presence of others, when it contributes to shaping a narrative that fits the objectives and interests of those who came to dominate the waterway. A brief but eloquent letter to the Portland Oregonian in 1990 made this point: "Words have great power to shape our thinking and to persuade for good or ill."

The Euro-Americans who increasingly dominated the Columbia following Gray imposed their languages (tools of thought), their religions (ways of making sense of the world), and their notions of private property (processes to control land,}

The Euro-Americans who increasingly dominated life and culture along the Columbia imposed their languages, their religions, and their notions of private property....

To catch salmon at Celilo Falls, native people manned wooden platforms on rock outcroppings. Long-handled dip nets were the most effective and preferred tool for netting upstream-migrating fish.
Long before the gates were closed at The Dalles Dam on March 10, 1957, fencing and the construction of some 20 fish wheels placed severe restraints on the Indian fishery.

Fish wheels, placed at strategic locations on the Mid-Columbia, literally pumped salmon from the waterway. Owned by non-Indian fishers, these devices often prevented Indians from occupying traditional fishing places.

When Lewis and Clark passed through Celilo Falls and the Long Narrows between October 22 and 24, 1805, the Sahaptin and Chinookan speakers greeted the Corps of Discovery with considerable interest but far short of the conventional stereotype as awe-inspiring gods. Anthropologist David French suggests that to Mid-Columbia Indians the party’s most attractive features were its trade goods and the music played around evening campfires. Local villagers proved hard bargainers when it came to trading foodstuffs, especially salmon. Until the establishment of the Methodist mission at Wascopam in 1838, Wasco-Wishram exchanges were primarily with other Indians and with Astorian, Northwest Company, and Hudson’s Bay Company traders. Like Lewis and Clark, the fur traders wanted peaceful passage through the waterways of tribal villages and occasionally Indian services in portaging goods around the Great Falls and other rapids. William Clark reported that Indians assisted in carrying heavy articles with their horses when the corps traversed Celilo Falls on October 22. He also observed the basalt-rock islands in the river as well as “at and about their Lodges (where) I observe great numbers of Stacks of pounded Salmon...neatly preserved.”

The timing of Lewis and Clark’s passage from the Snake into the Columbia River in October 1805 coincided with the critical fall season in the lives of the people who lived along the great waterway. Coursing downstream during the next several days, Clark sketched in his journal a remarkable story of abundance, much of it centered in the impressive number of fish taken by the Indians. In their passage down the Mid-Columbia, Lewis and Clark counted more than 100 fishing stations, and on one remarkable fall day they passed 29 mat lodges where Indians were preparing and drying fish. Clark also reported trading for roots and “Acorns of the white oak, those Acorns they make use of as food.” At Celilo Falls he counted “5 Large Lodges of natives drying and preparing fish for market, they gave us Philburts, and berries to eate.”

The Corps of Discovery was passing through a difficult but striking environment where fishing stations lined the rugged riverside, and skinning and drying racks and mat lodges stood on its northern and southern banks upstream from The Dalles. It was obvious to the captains that the drying fish were being processed adjacent to where they had been netted. The mere size and heft of the “pounded” salmon was impressive.
Packed in blankets lined with dried salmon skin, Clark observed “12 baskets of from 90 to 100 w. each (basket) for a Stack.” Preserved in this manner, the villagers told Clark that the “fish may be kept Sound & Sweet Several years.” The captains were also informed that great quantities of the fish—prepared in an ideal hot and arid environment—were traded with other tribal people who visited the Mid-Columbia.

We know today, of course, that Lewis and Clark brought more than disinterested curiosity to their reportage about the Great River. Like the Europeans and others who were cruising the waters of the North Pacific, Lewis and Clark viewed the Columbia landscape through a cultural lens that differed markedly from that of the Indian salmon fishers they encountered. The Corps of Discovery and fur traders such as the Astorians were traded with other tribal people and others who were cruising the waters. The captains’ journals “will no doubt be...interesting to us.” The Philadelphia Register noted that the Indians on the Columbia River were “peaceable” and “the winter was very mild.” According to the widely circulated National Intelligencer, the country was rich in fur-bearing animals. The New-York Gazette added that the Columbia and its tributaries “abound in salmon. The timber is pine, maple, ash, poplar, and oak.” Those who followed Lewis and Clark would further embellish stories about the natural abundance of the Oregon Country.

Among the fur traders who plied the Columbia's waters in the wake of Lewis and Clark, Alexander Ross was one of the most perceptive observers regarding the bounty and richness of the greater Northwest and the spectacular Mid-Columbia fishery. Clerking for John Jacob Astor's Pacific Fur Company, Ross headed upriver from Fort Astoria in 1811, referring to the “salubrious and dry” Willamette Valley as “the most favorable spot for agriculture,” with a climate well-suited “to ripen every kind of grain in a short time.” Farther up the Columbia, Ross was attracted to the abundance of salmon, a fish “as fine as any in the world.” Because Indians caught the fish in great numbers during the summer season, Ross believed that salmon held great prospects: “Were a foreign market to present itself, the natives alone might furnish 1,000 tons annually.”

This 1890 salmon can label seems to imply that Native Americans were somehow involved with the product inside the package—in reality, the exact opposite was true.

As many as 3,000 tribal people gathered along the section of the river known as the Long Narrows. Although the population dwindled considerably during the winter months, Ross pointed out that Indians gathered in the area “for gambling and speculation; for trade and traffic, not in fish, but in other articles.” In an oft-quoted statement, Ross remarked that the Long Narrows was “the great emporium or mart of the Columbia,” with Celilo Falls the most spectacular fishing place on the river.

While fur traders were plying the Mid-Columbia, people from more distant points—especially from the growing American republic—began passing down the river in the mid 1830s. What began as small parties of missionaries and an occasional naturalist turned into a torrent of settler-farmers in the 1840s, most of them heading for the green valley of the Willamette. In quick order, the boundary settlement with England in 1846 and the creation of Oregon Territory in 1848 further energized the restive Americans. To accommodate the white immigrants’ quest for free land, the United States Congress passed the Donation Land Act in 1850 and commissioned Indian agents to negotiate treaties with Northwest tribes to “extinguish” their title to land and to confine the various tribes to reservations. With the creation of Washington Territory in 1853, Congress appointed...
The overall benefits to the Pacific Northwest from a thorough-going development of the Snake and Columbia are such that the present salmon runs must be sacrificed. Isaac Stevens in Washington and Joel Palmer in Oregon to carry out the treaty/removal process.

Stevens and Palmer forced most of the Northwest tribes, already reduced by smallpox, malaria, measles, and other exogenous diseases, to sign away huge areas of land in a series of treaties negotiated between December 1854 and December 1855. "The great end to be looked to," Stevens wrote to Commissioner of Indian Affairs George Manypenny, "is the gradual civilization of the Indians, and their ultimate incorporation with the people of the Territory." For Indian people, personal experience put the lie to Stevens's statement. "In the year 1855," George Aguilar writes, "by a simple thumb print,... the River People were forced from their homeland by a treaty that ceded millions of acres to Whites...."

The Chinookan people's relocation to the Warm Springs wastelands can be compared to a funeral death march. From the first population count in 1856 until the early 1900s, the number of enrolled members on the Warm Springs reservation remained static, reflecting the ravages of disease, inadequate federal dietary assistance, and the abysmal failure of reservation agriculture. At the same time, the expanding white settlements along the Mid-Columbia—at The Dalles and other locations—began to curtail the ancient Indian fishery on both sides of the river.

By the late 19th century the growing white settlements and a burgeoning non-Indian commercial fishery made conditions for the Indian fishery even more difficult. Slowly, incrementally, and against great odds, however, the Wasco and other Northwest treaty tribes engaged in a long series of legal battles to assert their right to fish. Of the early legal cases to reach the United States Supreme Court, United States v. Winans (1905) affirmed the Indians' right "to fish in their usual and accustomed places," privileges that could not be diminished through state law. Ultimately, treaties preserved in federal law—and Indian memory that regarded treaties as specific entitlements to certain rights—began to prevail in the courtroom. "The combined effect," Alexandra Harmon writes, "was to give the agreements a surprising durability." While non-Indians believed the treaties were temporary agreements, necessary to bridge the full assimilation of tribal people into American society, the signatory tribes retained through individual memory and storytelling the importance of their rights and privileges spelled out in treaty clauses.

The 1855 treaties, however, had little effect on the federal government's efforts to turn the Columbia River into an industrial leviathan, internationally famous as one of the world's foremost hydropower streams. As the 20th century advanced, a growing market for electricity, a failing industrial economy during the 1930s, and more than 30 years of foreign crises conspired to reconfigure the hydrology of the entire Columbia River system. Those engineering feats included the stretch of river between The Dalles and Celilo Falls. A new celebratory body of literature accompanied the growing passion for "harnessing" the "untamed" power of the Columbia. Those increasingly ambitious blueprints for the river gained credibility during the Great Depression when President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal administration viewed river development projects as a way to put people back to work and to right a faltering economy. Based on earlier Army Corps of Engineers 308 Reports, the Roosevelt administration released funds in 1933 to begin construction on Bonneville and Grand Coulee dams.

Although the politics pushing the great public works projects on the Columbia River have not been central to the argument in this essay, it should be obvious that the political discourse paralleling the construction projects of
the 1930s followed familiar themes, all of them praising the virtues of controlling and managing the Great River for human benefit. For the Wasco tribe—and their kinsmen on the Yakama, Warm Springs, Umatilla, and Nez Perce reservations—the narrative flows in a different direction. First, Indian fishing sites at Cascades Rapids were lost to the waters behind Bonneville Dam in 1938. The loss of fishing sites—or salmon for that matter—was no worry for some federal officials, with one Bureau of Reclamation administrator confiding in a 1947 Interior Department memo, “The overall benefits to the Pacific Northwest from a thorough-going development of the Snake and Columbia are such that the present salmon runs must be sacrificed.”

Following the dramatic Columbia River flood of 1948, Congress appropriated the funding for The Dalles Dam, and construction workers completed the project in early 1957. The Dalles project obliterated the most significant Indian fishery on the river and annihilated an economic and cultural place of some 10,000 years’ standing. At least 20 years of superheated patriotic Cold War rhetoric served as a further catalyst, driving the completion of McNary, The Dalles, John Day, and the other main stem dams. Engineers had finally achieved what one federal official described as putting all of the Columbia River’s waters “to useful work for the Northwest.”

Despite the flooding of the Cascades Rapids behind Bonneville Dam, the highly productive tribal fishery between The Dalles and Celilo Falls had lived on after World War II, with as many as 2,000 Indians—some of them displaced from the Cascades—still fishing in their traditional ways. As negotiations related to The Dalles Dam moved forward, the tribes strongly opposed the dam project and made unsuccessful attempts to seek redress through the courts. Charles Wilkinson expresses “great sadness” about the “passivity” of the larger society that stood by and watched the developers have their way. America was in a hurry, he observes, and wanted immediate results. From William Lang’s perspective, through the act of flooding the great Mid-Columbia fishery, the engineers were in the business of willfully destroying the past.

For their part, federal engineers promised to mitigate the harm to the fisheries through an expanded hatchery-production program extending the length of the Columbia below Chief Joseph Dam. Most of the hatchery production, however, was on the Columbia River and its tributaries below Bonneville Dam. Operating under the Columbia River Fisheries Development Program between 1946 and 1980, the federal government funded the construction and expansion of 26 hatcheries to compensate for the construction of Mid-Columbia River dams. All but two of the hatcheries were below The Dalles Dam. “This spatial bias,” Cain Allen writes, contributed to “a basin-wide decline in salmon production,” with special damage to the treaty Indian fisheries immediately above The Dalles Dam. In brief, the mitigation program benefited non-Indian fisheries on the lower river and did even further damage to upriver Indian fisheries.

In the long run, the dams and the increasing ocean catch of Columbia River salmon contributed to the drastic decline in naturally spawned fish on the Mid-Columbia, with several stocks of coho, chum, and sockeye extinct, threatened, or endangered. In the new biogeography of the river, only 44 percent of returning fish originate above Bonneville Dam.

Before the coming of non-Indians to the region, estimates suggest that 88 percent of returning salmon originated above Bonneville, including Kettle Falls and some 1,100 miles of spawning ground above Grand Coulee Dam.

More than 15 years ago one of my graduate students wrote that she would give up luxuries and creature comforts if she could “see the Columbia River before it was dammed to servitude.” Molly McFerran’s comment parallels William Dietrich’s observation—the sense of loss, regret, and dreams about an undammed Columbia “bucking and roaring and steaming with muscle, thrashing salmon leaping against its foaming tide. So if I can dream Coyote dreams for a moment,” he observed, “it would be about the disappearance of a... dam, The Dalles; the one that silenced Celilo Falls.” For poet Elizabeth Woody, an enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, the flooding of Wyam—Celilo Falls—marked a critical moment in tribal memory: “It destroyed a major cultural site and rent a multidimensional relationship of a people to a place.” Celilo Falls, “the heart of our homeland,” she writes, is remembered “like a mother, nourishing us, and is remembered as a place of great peace.”

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The Columbia River has changed dramatically in the two centuries since Lewis and Clark followed its course to the Pacific. The falls and rapids they encountered have been stilled by the Army Corps of Engineers, whose numerous dams transformed the mightiest salmon stream on the Pacific Rim into a series of slack-water pools filled with exotic species and hatchery stock. Perhaps the strangest of the new arrivals is the bipedal “boardhead.”

Where salmon once leapt roaring falls, these anthropomorphic amphibians now jump monstrous swells on fiberglass sailboards. Like the salmon, they engage in seasonal migrations to and from the Columbia, drawn to the same stretch of river as if by instinct. Though SUVs and Subaru Outbacks speed their passage, the long journey and the requisite equipment can exact a heavy financial toll. Fortunately, the average boardhead has ample stores of fiduciary fat to sustain it through the long summer season.

Raised in the sprawling redds of the city, the boardhead spends much of its early adult life in the competitive pools of the professional world. After accumulating enough capital and expertise, it travels to the Columbia River Gorge on weekends or, in the case of the strongest species, remains in residence the entire summer. A steady diet of health food and microbrew keeps it strong, and its only known predator is the slack-water barge. This lumbering beast, also a relative newcomer to the Columbia, has not stopped or even slowed the explosion of the boardhead population. Far from endangered, this neoprene-clad creature has become an integral part of the regional economy and a source of pride for local boosters. At the same time, however, some established residents have questioned the long-term consequences of reliance on this new denizen of the river.

The sport of boardsailing, better known as windsurfing, represents a worrisome windfall for rural communities such as Hood River, Oregon, and White Salmon, Washington. Although boardheads have brought new enterprises and opportunities to the Columbia Gorge, particularly in the form of tourist dollars, they have also challenged older economic and cultural orientations based on agriculture and extractive industry. Widely touted as a panacea for ailing timber and fruit-growing towns, windsurfing has generally created less lucrative service jobs heavily tied to outside investors and consumers. Meanwhile, the sudden influx of affluent exurbanites has greatly inflated housing prices and property taxes in some communities, making it more difficult for lower-income families to live there. Development has fueled fierce debates over land use and regional planning, while the changing character of urban spaces has stirred fears of gentrification and declining quality of life. “Hood River and White Salmon are a long way from ‘Aspenization,’” state the authors of Planning a New West (Carl Abott, Sy Adler, and Margery Post Abbott), “but dollar signs and dread compete in local dreams.”

Because the transition from traditional industries to tourism and outdoor recreation remains incomplete, the rise of windsurfing and associated “extreme” sports presents an excellent opportunity to examine the dialogue among board-
Boardheads have transformed themselves into “locals” and altered the demographics of Columbia Gorge communities. Members of the regional “growth coalition” welcome their presence, but not everyone likes what the wind blows in each summer. Unsettled by changes on the water and in town, many long-time residents have responded with a critique of recreational culture and its impact on their communities. Defending an older sense of place rooted in manual labor, they depict boardheads as spoiled outsiders bent on turning the area into an urban playground. Thus, like skiing in the Rockies or mountain biking in Moab, Utah, windsurfing in the gorge highlights competing visions of the American West at the dawn of the 21st century.

The Columbia Gorge became a Mecca for windsurfers because of its distinctive climate and geography. En route to the Pacific Ocean the Columbia River cuts directly through the Cascade Mountains, which block the moist marine air to the west and cast a rain shadow across the semiarid plateau to the east. As the sun heats the high desert, rising thermals produce a barometric pressure differential that draws cooler western air through the natural funnel of the gorge. The greater the temperature difference between east and west, the harder the wind blows along the water. In the warm summer months, wind speeds routinely reach 15 to 35 miles per hour, and 40- to 45-mile-per-hour winds are not uncommon. On truly “epic” days, they may top 50 miles per hour. When these gusts meet the river current, pushing west at a steady three to four knots, six-foot swells and blinding spray (dubbed “Liquid Smoke”) erupt in the prime sailing locations.

By manipulating the opposing forces of wind and water, skilled sail- and kiteboarders can cruise back and forth from a single launch site while engaging in the windsurfing equivalent of extreme skiing. Ripping across the waves at up to 40 miles per hour, the sport’s elite carve high-speed turns, pull 30-foot jumps, and spin dazzling forward loops. Gorge winds often vary and sometimes fail completely, but they typically provide at least 20 good sailing days per month from March to September. When the winds do stop blowing on the river, boardheads can usually find good conditions at the Oregon Coast or take solace in the many other outdoor activities available nearby, from sedate hiking and trail running to extreme sports such as mountain biking, rock climbing, whitewater kayaking or rafting, and downhill skiing or snowboarding.

Windsurfers discovered the recreational paradise of the Mid-Columbia during the late 1970s when a few hardy pioneers tested the waters near Hood River. As they developed equipment and techniques to match the gorge’s challenging conditions, the buzz surrounding its “nuclear” winds and “radioactive” swells spread among the sport’s growing body of devotees. By 1984, the year of the first Columbia Gorge Pro-Am competition, Hood River and its environs had become the focal point of a
global boardsailing boom. National media attention attracted surfers by the thousands, and specialized businesses sprouted up to serve their needs. By 1985 Hood River boasted seven sailboard shops, three board manufacturers, and a sail and wetsuit maker. Two years later the United States Windsurfing Association relocated there, effectively completing the orchard town's oft-proclaimed transformation into "the boardsailing capital of the continental United States." Searching for a suitable analog to this new status, commentators invariably called into play the premier skiing resort in North America. "It's the Aspen of windsurfing," declared The Oregonian in 1986, "the new 'must' stop for jet-set daredevils and the Beautiful People of Sport."

Such comparisons have more than convenience to recommend them, for windsurfers and skiers share a similar demographic profile. A 1987 survey revealed that 70 percent of American boardheads also participated in downhill skiing (since complemented by snowboarding). Besides a love of speed and outdoor activity, both sports require sizable amounts of free time and disposable income. In 1985, Northwest Sailboard magazine estimated that serious windsurfers spent more than $2,000 (roughly $3,550 today, adjusted for inflation) to outfit themselves with the necessary equipment. Five years later, that figure had climbed to $5,500 ($8,180 in current dollars). More than 80 percent of American boardheads travel domestically to sail, and at least half take more than 30 days of annual vacation. Many have the means to visit more exotic locations in Baja, Hawaii, Australia, Europe, and South Africa.

"There are a lot of wealthy people involved," noted Tom Bissell, national sales manager for Neil Pryde Sails, "and it can make skiing look like a poor man's sport." Boardsailing also claims its share of financially-strapped surf bums, of course, but in 1989 the average boardhead netted a household income of $40,000 (roughly $62,350 in current dollars) or more. Overwhelmingly white and male, devotees tend to be single, college-educated professionals between the ages of 25 and 49. The sport reached maturity with the term "Yuppie," and yuppies have consistently comprised the single largest school in the pool.

Their growing presence and considerable economic clout soon ignited conflicts on land and water, pitting those who used the gorge for work against those who wanted it for play. The indigenous peoples of the region were among the first to feel the impact. Columbia River Indians—already locked in a long, bitter struggle to exercise their treaty fishing rights—now faced competition from windsurfers seeking thrills. On shore, boardheads filled parking areas and thronged beaches where tribal fishermen launched their boats and dried their nets. On the water, windsurfers occasionally damaged nets by sailing into them and becoming entangled. Some Indians lost their gear entirely when boardheads cut it loose to free themselves or make way for racing events. During one confrontation at Doug's Beach, a popular sailing site, a group of windsurfers justified such destruction with the ironic declaration, "We were here first."

Since the mid 1980s, the Columbia River Gorge Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) and the Columbia Gorge Windsurfing Association (GGWA) have worked with considerable success to educate boardheads about treaty rights and tribal fishing seasons. CRITFC patrol boats and tribal fishing crews have also fostered goodwill by rescuing windsurfers in
distress. Still, some boardheads oppose the creation of additional in-lieu fishing sites that could reduce river access, while Indians resent the periodic near-misses and equipment damage that occur on an increasingly crowded riverscape. Occasional war whoops and racial slurs hurled in their direction do little to ease nerves frayed by the seemingly endless erosion of tribal treaty rights and religious freedom. "I am tired of seeing our people taking a step backwards," said Klickitat-Yakama fishermen Warren Spencer during the fight over the Lyle Point development (see sidebar at right). "We don't have room to take steps backward any more. If we take another step backward, we're going to be in the water, and that'll be the end."

Indians and windsurfers alike have tangled with the barges that haul freight on the Columbia River between Portland and Lewiston, Idaho. The shipping channel cuts straight through numerous sailing locations, and boardheads have a bad reputation among tug captains for taking unnecessary risks. Barges create large blind spots and throw their own wind shadows, which can rob careless sailors of the means to escape an oncoming rig. Weighing in at 10,000 tons or more, a fully-loaded vessel takes up to a mile to stop and holds a distinct advantage in any collision with a sailboard. Most windsurfers respect the "Law of Gross Tonnage" and clear the river when they see barges approaching, but some novices and daredevils have caused close calls. In one incident, a windsurfer bounced off the side of a barge but managed to swim away.

The prospect of hitting someone terrifies tug crews; besides the human tragedy involved, an accident would result in suspension without pay pending a full investigation. "I am worried about killing a windsurfer," Captain J. D. Fletcher told a CGWA observer during a trip downriver. "But what is stressful to me is that the windsurfer is not worried about being killed." Accordingly, many river pilots frown upon the wet-suited "clowns" who make their job difficult. "They are going to send me to an early grave," complained veteran pilot Steve McDowell in an interview with journalist Blaine Harden. "When it first started, I thought it was just a passing fad. I never believed it would turn into the nightmare that it is now." This animosity even extends to shore. "I went into what used to be my favorite bar," continued McDowell, "and one of these weirdos asked me to sign a petition. It called for an immediate ban on bargeing in the Columbia." Many tribal fishermen would probably support such a ban, but they would also agree with the bargemen that windsurfers are a nuisance to people trying to make a living. Work and play have not always mixed well on the river.

Some boardheads, like the "weirdo" in the bar, assert a superior right to the river based on their perceived role as stewards of nature. Many describe themselves as environmentalists, and windsurfing publications often speak of sailors becoming one with the elements. "Nothing comes between the sailor and the environment," professed a popular gorge guidebook. "Indeed, the sailor is an integral part of the sailing machine." Having tested the power of wind and water against human muscle, windsurfers claim a more enlightened and intimate relationship with the elements.

The Battle for Lyle Point

The struggle to stop the development of Lyle Point highlighted competing visions of the Columbia Gorge in the wake of the boardsailing boom. A 40-acre peninsula situated at the confluence of the Klickitat and Columbia rivers, the contested terrain lies within the city limits of Lyle, Washington, and is therefore exempt from land-use restrictions imposed by the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area Act. Henry Spencer, a wealthy investor and transplanted windsurfer from Boston, bought the property in 1990 and promptly advertised it as a potential destination resort boasting "the best windsurfing in the world." After fielding queries from as far away as Taiwan, he submitted his own proposal to build "Klickitat Landing," a 33-lot subdivision complete with a swimming pool, tennis courts, and a launching site for sailboards. Klickitat County approved his plan in 1993, but a coalition of Columbia River Indians, environmentalists, and local residents quickly mobilized to protest the development.

Native resistance reflected an array of cultural, religious, and legal concerns connected to Lyle Point and the Columbia River. According to Chief Johnny Jackson, a leader of the off-reservation Indian community, the peninsula had once housed a Klickitat village and now contained the graves of people killed by European diseases. "It's a sacred site," he said. "I feel that ground should be left alone, left to rest, and those people who are under that ground should be left to rest." Their descendants still used the point for ceremonial and commercial fishing—a right reserved by treaty—and tribal members worried that the subdivision would block access despite Spencer's promise to keep open a 100-foot wide strip of riverfront. As fisherman Warren Spencer explained, "We're going to have to deal with 33 individuals saying 'we don't want that in our back yard.'"

After local Indians set up a tepee encampment on the development site, the Yakama Nation and the Columbia Gorge Audubon Society filed separate lawsuits to overturn the county's permit. Although the tribes later settled and a judge dismissed the Audubon case, protests continued until the project's investors sold the property to the Trust for Public Land in 2000 for $1.9 million. The tiny town of Lyle has since moved to expand its urban growth boundary in other directions, showing that the issues raised by the controversy remain a vexing feature of the gorge's changing face. ★
with the Columbia. This sense of connection informs both their concern with water quality—a concern they share with Indian fishermen, who have no desire to see the swells become truly radioactive—and their criticism of those who exploit the river for economic gain.

Barges serve the agricultural and military-industrial interests that pollute the water, endangering the health of fish and wildlife as well as windsurfers. Indians are natural allies in that sense, yet some boardheads still criticize “thriftless” tribal fishermen for allegedly abusing their treaty rights and depleting the salmon runs in the name of profit. According to a windsurfing chiropractor from the Midwest, whom author Robin Cody met while canoeing the Columbia, “Some of these guys make $80,000 a year. They don’t manage it well. You see how they live. They buy a new boat and strip it, scratch it up. They should follow the treaty, but they don’t.”

Testifying to the prevalence of such ideas, Umatilla fisherman Daryll Thompson scoffed at the notion that tribal members get rich fishing in an era of shortened seasons and declining runs. “Well, which Indians are they,” he wondered. “I want to meet them. I want to go fishing with them.” While CRITFC and CGWA publications do their best to overcome the twin legacies of prejudice and misinformation, old attitudes and entrenched stereotypes can rear their ugly heads when tempers flare on the water.

The environmental rhetoric employed by windsurfers expresses genuine concerns but also engages in a selective reading of the Columbia’s history and their place within it. By juxtaposing their benign use of nature with images of corporate greed and tribal excess, defensive boardheads assume the moral high ground in the battle for a contested space. “I consider windsurfing to be low impact,” explained Mark Nykanen, an avid sailor and former reporter for NBC News. “We kill no salmon. We dump no heavy metals. We spill no oil.” Such statements convey the impression that windsurfers merely wish to enjoy the river in its “pristine” state, whereas barge lines and tribal fisheries seek to monopolize it for their own selfish purposes. “As for the claim that urban yuppies are taking control of the river,” continued Nykanen, “that is complete bullshit. I don’t doubt that the perception is there, but it is the perception that industry wants the public to accept. Extractive industry in the Northwest engages in very effective spin control.”

But so do boardheads. Though they routinely describe the gorge as a “natural” windsurfing paradise, the ideal conditions there are equally the product of human engineering. Before the construction of Bonneville, The Dalles, and McNary dams in the mid 20th century, much of the Mid-Columbia was too narrow, rocky, and turbulent for either barging or boardsailing. The rapids, falls, and fluctuating water levels that made the Cascades and Celilo prime indigenous fisheries made them equally poor windsurfing locations. The sport relies—just as the barges do—on the slower, wider, and more predictable river created by the Army Corps of Engineers. Therefore, in order to present their pastime as a perfectly pristine alternative to extractive industry, windsurfers effectively naturalize the dams and deny the fact that their use of the river depends on its transformation into an organic machine.

The decline of agriculture and extractive industry in the gorge gave boardheads an ambivalent audience for their economic and environmental posturing. Although the area has hosted tourists for decades, windsurfing offered a fresh whiff of hope to communities that have seen better days. In 1985 the Oregon river counties of Hood River, Wasco, and Sherman all posted unemployment rates of 16 percent, more than twice the national average. The Dalles had recently endured the closure of an aluminum smelter, while Hood River had lost a hardboard mill and the Diamond Fruit Growers cannery. On the Washington side of the river, the recession of the early 1980s afflicted Skamania and Klickitat counties with falling timber revenues and low crop prices.

As mills shut down and tax rolls shrank, the looming threat of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area convinced some residents that the region would never recover.
"You enact this legislation and you make current unemployment permanent," charged Joseph Wrabek, a member of the Cascade Locks city council, "You may even make it worse.... I think [this] legislation would hinder the towns by reducing the economic base upon which services depend." Despite critics who doubted the replacement value of tourism, the creation of the national scenic area in 1986 gave local communities little choice but to embrace the industry. Nevertheless, many residents harbored lingering suspicions of a metropolitan campaign to "lock up" the gorge for recreation, placing them at odds with both the incoming boardheads and the local boosters who saw in them the solution to the region's problems.

Even before the scenic area act passed, the appearance of affluent windsurfers seemed fortuitous to members of the regional growth coalition. Citing annual returns of $10 million or more, county commissioners, city officials, local business leaders, and newspaper editors rushed to welcome the newcomers into the gorge. Bill Kline of Hood River Windsurfing predicted that the sport's impact would be "much like the growth of skiing in Colorado," and he urged shopkeepers "to create a certain flavor of a resort-type community." Meanwhile, Washington towns worried that their larger rival across the river would steal all the loot. "If the promise of wind and wave holds true," warned the editor of the White Salmon Enterprise, "the Columbia will prove great enough of an attraction to benefit both Hood River and Bingen-White Salmon, but we should not be content to let Hood River's early start develop into a commanding lead." Eager to help his struggling constituents, Dean Sutherland, a Washington legislator, promised to support enactment of this legislation and you make current unemployment permanent."

The price of doing business with boardheads became apparent as their numbers increased. During busy summer weekends, locals found heavy congestion and few parking spaces on the formerly quiet streets of Hood River. "It's fun to be a destination for sailboarders from all over the country," quipped the local newspaper, "if for no other reason than to learn about the strange driving practices in other places." Traffic jams also plagued the Hood River toll bridge and Washington's Highway 14, where surfers seeking access to the river clogged the shoulders with their vehicles and gear. One local woman complained of naked sailors standing along the road while they changed clothes. Walters asked her fellow residents, "Are these people so important to the economy of this area that we must put up with their indecency, rudeness, and lack of consideration for others?" Margie Loomis of Hood River didn't think so. "Three years ago," she wrote in 1986, "this looked like a new start, a fresh crop of income. Local opinions have vastly changed."

Though Loomis overstated the extent of public disaffection, her words reflected the growing ambivalence of researchers from the University of Oregon estimated total boardhead expenditures at $7 million to $15 million dollars. Three years later a follow-up study projected potential returns of $24.4 million. Hood River, the self-designated "windsurfing capital of the world," continues to receive the lion's share of the revenue because of its accessible waterfront, superior services, and spectacular setting. Since the mid 1980s, though, the migration of sailors to new locations has invigorated the service sector of the entire Mid-Columbia region. Windsurfing shops and outdoor retailers profit most directly, but boardhead dollars also enrich area restaurants, motels, grocery stores, gas stations, and souvenir vendors. "The windsurfers have given us a boost to where it makes us think things are happening again," said Bette Walters, the owner of a popular breakfast spot in Hood River. "It's nice to look down the main street and see lots of cars, and people walking. Main Street had kind of died on the vine." Today, no one could mistake Hood River for Aspen, though some lovingly (or forebodingly) refer to it as "what Aspen used to be like." Yet, to long-time gorge residents, the changes of the past two decades seem quite remarkable. Whether they are purely for the better remains a subject of some debate.
many natives. Especially for those on the fringes of the new economy, the costs of recreational tourism seemed to outweigh its benefits. “There are reasons why we have chosen to live here for 60 years,” cautioned one long-time resident of the Hood River valley. “We believe those reasons of quality of life, beauty, affordability, a rural environment, and a diversified economy are in jeopardy.”

The greatest changes and the gravest concerns arose from the quickening pace of development and the rising cost of living. The Hood River port commissioners wrestled with proposals to build windsurfing schools and resort condominiums on waterfront property zoned for light industry. New construction threatened residential neighborhoods and rural areas, igniting heated disagreements over density, views, and the preservation of farmland. Vigorous opposition halted some of the most controversial projects, including the exclusive windsurfing subdivision slated for a tribal fishing site near Lyle, Washington (see page 27 sidebar). However, as boardheads and other exurbanites attracted by the area’s new cachet muscled their way into the housing market, their beefy equity contributed to the rapid inflation of housing prices and property taxes in the central gorge. Between 1984 and 1994 appraised property values in Hood River County shot from $446.3 million to $890.2 million. Prices in Bingen–White Salmon increased an average of 50 percent as windsurfers, retirees, telecommuters, and second-home buyers bid for properties overlooking the Columbia River, Mount Hood, and Mount Adams. While the newcomers generally grabbed bargains (at least by their standards), less fortunate local buyers faced a shortage of affordable housing. By 1990 the median price of a home in Hood River had climbed to more than twice the median family income. Property taxes followed suit, forcing some people out of town or into apartments and trailer parks. Boardheads do not bear sole responsibility for this escalation, but their sport did put the area on the map, making them an easy target for disgruntled natives.

Friction between natives and newcomers infused a broader struggle to define the identity of gorge communities. Pushing a recreational vision of the future, boardheads parried local complaints by portraying themselves as the economic saviors of a depressed region. In a letter to the Hood River News, transplant Brian Larsen posed the rhetorical question, “Where would Hood River be without the river and windsurfing?” “Without windsurfing,” he answered, “Hood River would still be a tiny orchard town. One must ask, if it wasn’t for windsurfing and the people that it brought to Hood River, would I have a job?” Mark Nykanen put it more poetically: “What people around here don’t realize is that this area was dying from a kind of economic leukemia long before the windsurfers showed up. There has been a degeneration of vital fluids, caused by the timber industry, pulp mills, Hanford [Nuclear Reservation], and hydroelectric dams.” From this perspective, outdoor recreation and tourism represent the cure for the gorge’s manifest economic and social ills—although the medicine might have some undesirable side effects, the locals should take it for their own good and thank the doctor for prescribing it.

Natives who objected to the treatment became known in windsurfing circles as “ugly locals.” Drawing on familiar rural stereotypes, defensive boardheads caricatured their detractors as gun-toting rednecks with big trucks and small brains. This unflattering image, picked up and circulated by the national media, drew its inspiration from...
the very real antagonism some windsurfers encountered in the gorge. "When I first moved here," recalled Nykanen, "I remember people driving past me and flipping me off. Obviously, [I] looked different; I wasn't local." By the mid-1980s stories of upraised middle fingers had become almost as legendary as the gorge winds. Some natives poked fun at their poor reputation with a line of "Ugly Local" T-shirts featuring the Latin motto "In hoc loco ibernamus... We stay the winter." Others worried about the potential economic backlash and complained when reporters publicized unfavorable views of windsurfing. Taking issue with a CBS feature story on his hometown, the editor of the Hood River News griped that most of the footage had actually been filmed across the river:

For the proper "hayseed" shots, they found the people they wanted in a Bingen restaurant-tavern. That’s where the filming of local people gave the impression of total antagonism toward the new wave of visitors. "Give us our beer, you can keep your boardheads," That kind of thing.

"If there is some grumbling by the locals," he asserted in an earlier column, "it is by far outweighed by the expression [of] the individual who liked the 'feel' of busy streets and bustling activity." Boosters allowed the odd "grouch" in their midst but identified the ugliest locals with other places and outmoded ways of thinking. In doing so, proponents of windsurfing attempted to minimize the concerns of critics and move them to the margins of public debate.

Ugly locals, in turn, contested the claim that boardsailing saved the gorge from poverty and despair. Though most long-time residents accepted the rhetoric of progress, many resented the self-promoting talk of the newcomers and their native allies. Timber and fruit form the true pillars of the community, skeptics insisted, and windsurfers had best learn their place in the order of things. "Boardsailing in our gorge is great frosting on our economic cake," chided Nancy Moller, a member of the Hood River Residents Committee, "but it won't make number one! So just tie down those masts on your dazzling gorgemobiles and settle into a healthy fourth position [behind U.S. Telephone]."

Responding to Brian Larsen’s counterfactual question, an indignant orchardist asked, "Who is he to think that windsurfing is what made this community? He shouldn’t speak with a mouthful of apple—he may choke." Some locals adopted a take-it-or-leave-it attitude toward outdoor recreation and its economic benefits. Tired of the implication that their towns would die without regular infusions of tourist cash, they articulated a vision of place in which boardheads held little significance. "Windsurfing is not our only recreation," declared Janet L. Davis of Hood River, "nor is it our only source of income. Windsurfers shouldn’t feel as if they are doing us a favor. Many locals feel quite the opposite." Ron Harder counted himself among that crowd: "Where would we be without windsurfing and now the moun-

Tourism in the Columbia Gorge

The Columbia Gorge has long served as a regional tourist attraction and playground for outdoor enthusiasts from nearby Portland. Starting in the 1880s, steamboats carried sightseers upriver from the city to The Cascades or The Dalles, where rocks and rapids blocked further passage until completion of a canal in 1915. The Columbia River Highway opened the same year—a winding scenic route that enabled motorists to take in the spectacular scenery between Portland and Hood River. The United States Forest Service set aside 14,000 acres along the road as a public park, and by 1920 Eagle Creek, the agency’s first campground, was attracting swarms of campers, anglers, hunters, and picnickers. The City of Portland acquired parks in the gorge through donation and purchase, culminating in the construction of Multnomah Falls Lodge in 1925. Simon Benson, the timber baron who donated the land surrounding the falls, built an even grander hotel in Hood River to host sightseers at the end of their driving tour. Today, summer guests enjoying the hotel’s famous Sunday brunch can see windsurfers tacking to and fro across the waves far below. The priorities of tourists and transplants have often clashed with those of established gorge residents, but the income generated by tourism and outdoor sports has become more important than ever to local communities. For better or worse, conclude the Abbotts and Adler, the transformation of the gorge is "part of the process by which the New West is turning parts of the Old West into new and different sorts of places."
tain bikers? Believe it or not... we would be just fine."

Harder and his fellow critics rejected the notion that the Columbia Gorge should serve primarily as a playground for tourists and the extreme sports set. Invoking a history of labor on the land, discontented locals frequently expressed their anxiety about metropolitan control through a critique of recreational culture. Work created gorge communities, they contended, and working people had a more authentic claim to those places. The Eighth of July, a coalition of Mexican farm workers and lower-income residents, expressed this view in a 1991 petition for affordable housing:

We strongly believe that people who work in Hood River County have the right to live in Hood River County. Our goal is to attain—in the City and the County of Hood River—sufficient, decent and affordable housing for all low and moderate-income people who have worked and retired in Hood River County, for those who are working now, and for those who will work in Hood River County in the future.

Mexican immigrants are also newcomers, and some long-time residents hold equally strong feelings against them, but their commitment to work and their connection to the traditional economy make them more welcome than boardheads in the eyes of some locals. When the owner of a Hood River trailer park moved to evict its primarily Hispanic population, native Polly Hendricks spoke out in their defense: "These people live here year-round, while the windsurfers are only here once in a great while." Anglo and Latino community members shared the fear that they might be forced out entirely by the economic and demographic planted windsurfers had remade themselves as locals through the medium of recreation. In subtle but significant ways, they distinguished between a subgroup of resident boardheads and the hordes of visiting sailors who invaded the area every summer. For Jim Skakel, a Windsurfing Magazine reporter, it seemed as simple as acquiring a pair of flip-flops, the local footwear of choice: "My white winter feet were disturbingly stark against the black straps at first. But I knew over time they would become the tan, gnarled feet of a discerning native." Discerning natives know the location of the best bars, restaurants, and sailing shops. More importantly, they know where to find the strongest winds, largest swells, and least-crowded beaches.

Intensely proud of their expertise, even to the point of arrogance, they revel in mastering the gorge's challenging conditions and cultivate a healthy contempt for the "bennies" (tourists), "gremmies" (beginners), and "hodads" (posers) who get in their way. "As ultra-fit Americans, reveling in their superiority over the flab-covered masses," observed fellow windsurfer Temira Wagonfield, "Gorge extreme sports enthusiasts tend to think of themselves as near immortal. In their minds, Mother Nature's theoretical worst is no more troubling than the buzzing of a fly." Resident boardheads often win the premier sailing events because of their experience with the river, and area newspapers reward them with the honorary designation "local." Unlike the older and uglier locals, however, boardheads and other transplants tend to define themselves and their communities in terms of leisure. Hood River especially is no longer identified as a rural market town but as a "hip exurban outpost" and "the funky capital of a premature outdoor sports region." By changing the economic and social landscape of the gorge, windsurfing has helped create a breed of neo-natives with a sense of self and a sense of place rooted in play rather than work.

Of course, work and play are neither mutually exclusive
nor the property of a single group. Long-time residents also enjoy traditional outdoor activities such as hunting and fishing, and most transplants have jobs to pay for their expensive hobbies. The difference lies in the types of work and play these constituencies prefer, and in the relative value they assign to those pursuits. For many boardheads, play is the priority, work merely a necessity. “As the epicenter of wind, water, and waves,” noted the 2006 Gorge Guide, “the Gorge has become a thriving recreation destination and a place to call home for many of the world’s top athletes. It’s no wonder that people who prioritize their leisure time have figured out a way to make a living here—as a result, the local communities have hundreds of artists, builders, and entrepreneurs who are happiest ripping across the Columbia River at Doug’s Beach on a windsurfer, challenging themselves to the rapids of Washington’s White Salmon River, or using wind to loft their bodies high into the air using a kite.” A lucky few can afford to dispense with work altogether in order to indulge their true passions. Framing it as a choice open to anyone, surf shop owner Lars Bergstrom recently boasted of his decision to quit all of his jobs and spend more time in “Never Never Land”: “The point is, I love windsurfing. And I am tired of squeezing it in between ‘real life.’ Real life is going to have to fend for itself…. So, you pick a day and a place. I’ll be out on the water and we’ll go play. To hell with real life.”

In real life, though, the cost of living in Never Never Land is pretty steep, and those less able to afford it remain skeptical of the changes windsurfing has effected in their towns. While time and familiarity have eased tensions between natives and newcomers, the Columbia Gorge remains a contested space where differing definitions of community and nativity compete for dominance. When true natives challenge boardhead claims to local status, transplants fall back on more conventional definitions of community membership. Eager to prove themselves good neighbors, they emphasize home and business ownership, public service, and their affection for the gorge and its people. Many no doubt joined in the chorus of protest against the Warm Springs tribe’s proposal to build a casino on trust land near Hood River, which critics claimed would destroy the town and the scenic splendor of the gorge. Steve Gates, an avid windsurfer and co-owner of Big Winds sailboard shop, became Hood River’s first boardhead mayor in the early 1990s. “We absolutely love it here,” he told The Oregonian. “It’s a very nice small community.” Asked about local fears that his sport might ruin it, he dismissed them as old-fashioned stubbornness: “There are some folks who will never accept change. Windsurfing to them will always be somewhat threatening. I’ve also met a lot of old-timers who are glad windsurfing came.”

For better or worse, outdoor recreation and tourism have come to stay in the Columbia Gorge and across the American West. These new industries have brought many benefits to declining rural towns, including economic revitalization, thriving artistic scenes, and more diverse populations with more cosmopolitan views. In the process, however, recreation and tourism have changed many western communities forever—sometimes in ways the old locals come to regret. As Hal Rothman noted in his seminal study of western tourism, Devil’s Bargains, the rhetoric of progress associated with it “masked harsh choices for residents, obscured the pace of change, overshadowed the ways that the opportunity to develop fractured the fiction of community in so many places. It also threw the question of what was real up for grabs.” In the Columbia Gorge, where the debate between the Old West and the New West still echoes beneath the buzz of activity, natives and newcomers continue to search for definitions of community that can accommodate their competing ethics of work and play. Everyone agrees that they live in a special place, but what makes it special, and can those qualities be preserved? Can people with such different perspectives and priorities learn to share the coveted space of the Columbia Gorge? As Bob Dylan said, “The answer is blowin’ in the wind.”

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On May 15, 1907, the headline of the Olympia Daily Record read, “Great Crowds Throng Big Horse and Auto Show.” Although horses dominated, automobiles made a strong showing as proud owners exhibited their new machines. The event, the first of its kind in Olympia, proved a resounding success. The Record reported that auto races were scheduled for the evening, “The principal one will be an obstacle race, in which the contestants will have to describe the figure eight on a large scale, running between barrels at the points of curvature and crossing. Novel requirements are that the start must be made with a dead engine, a half glass of water must be placed on the hood, the driver is required to put various colored hoops over similar colored sticks extending from the barrels, while his companion is required to thread a needle and sew on a button. The one making the best time and performance gets the prize.” There were only two entries, and Ivan L. Creed won the contest.

Other prizes were awarded for automobile exhibits. C. J. Lord (whose home is now the site of the State Capital Museum) took the prize for the best exhibit among Thurston County cars with his Pope “Toledo” touring car like the one pictured below. The silver trophy above (made by the Meriden Britannia Company of Meriden, Connecticut) was recently donated to the Washington State Historical Society by Meryl E. Hughes. She received it from Mable McBain Whitmore, who said her father won it at this event. The cup is about 9 inches tall and 11 inches across, including the handles.
The Man Who Built Seattle’s Paramount Theatre

By Judith W. Rosenthal

The gala opening of the Seattle Theatre lit up the corner of Ninth and Pine on the evening of March 1, 1928. Described as “a palace of splendor,” the theatre had seating for approximately 4,000, opulent furnishings, state-of-the-art facilities for stage, vaudeville, and silent films, fireproof construction, and a $100,000 gilded Wurlitzer organ. At the time, there were only four other theatres in the United States that equaled or surpassed it in terms of size, cost, and luxury.

In 1930 the Seattle was renamed the Paramount Theatre, thereby indicating its connection to New York City’s magnificent theatre of the same name. It closed temporarily during the Depression and again in the 1960s, and through the years its programming evolved (from vaudeville shows to film, concerts, live entertainment, and productions by touring companies). Although the Paramount was placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service and the United States Department of the Interior in 1974, its financial problems were mounting and its interior was in dire need of repairs, updating, and restoration. By the early 1990s there was talk of its demolition. But the Paramount Theatre is a survivor; since undergoing extensive renovations in the mid 1990s, it has remained an important Seattle landmark and a premier performing arts center.

Today it is hard to imagine that at one time the southeast corner of Ninth
and Pine was considered too far from the Seattle metropolitan area to be of any commercial value. A Seattle Times article described the property as “a great hole in the ground,” “the site of a deep ravine where a creek once ran into Lake Union.” In 1877 August and Joseph Schoenbacher purchased this property for $225; over time it changed hands and increased in value. Then along came Lewis Newman Rosenbaum, a New Yorker, who represented a syndicate of influential easterners. Included among their many real estate purchases in Seattle was the property between Pike and Pine on the east side of Ninth Avenue for approximately $240,000.

Rosenbaum—or LN, as he was called by family, friends, and business associates—had persuaded movie mogul Adolph Zukor, president of the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation, and W. S. Hammons, head of a banking house of the same name, to build a theatre on this property, leasing it from Rosenbaum and his associates. Seattle’s newspapers published article about L. N. Rosenbaum, the properties he and his syndicate were buying in Seattle, and details of the plans for the “de luxe” theatre. All of this must have astonished those who had previously known him. Broke and threatened with disbarment, Rosenbaum fled Seattle in 1914, only to return a millionaire in 1927 and a business associate of numerous wealthy and influential easterners.

Lewis Rosenbaum was born in 1881 in Ungvar (also known as Uzhhorod), a city in Austria-Hungary (now the Ukraine). His parents, Fani and David Rosenbaum, had nine children—some born in Ungvar and some in New York City. The Rosenbaums emigrated to the United States in 1887 and, like many other Jewish immigrants, settled in the lower east side of New York City. They became United States citizens in January 1892. The family was poor, especially after David abandoned Fani and the children. To help support their mother and younger siblings, the older children went to work as soon as they could find employment. LN apparently only stayed in public school for two years; his first job, for which he earned two dollars a week, was as an office boy for William Sulzer, a lawyer and politician.

Once he had saved enough money, LN purchased a train ticket and headed for Nashville where one of his uncles, Edward Rosenbaum, was a supposedly wealthy cigar manufacturer. LN hoped to find his father there and to work for his uncle. Neither of these aspirations was realized. Instead, LN obtained work as a legal assistant for Nashville attorney Moreau Estes. Estes paid LN three dollars a week and allowed the young man to sleep in the office, study his law books, and help in his law practice. After a year or so of working for Estes, LN was considered qualified to practice law. He was 19 years old when admitted to the Tennessee Bar on March 4, 1901.

How often LN read the Jewish newspapers while living in Nashville is unknown, but a brief announcement in an issue of the American Israelite apparently caught his eye and eventually brought him to the West Coast. The American Israelite carried news of interest to Jewish Americans and also gossip—engagements, weddings, Bar Mitzvahs, university graduations, trips abroad, and so forth—from Jewish communities across the United States. In the June 6, 1901, edition, at the very end of a column describing Seattle goings-on, was the following announcement: “Among the graduates of the University Law School is Miss Bella Weretnikow. Miss Weretnikow received her bachelor’s degree only last year.” LN wrote to Bella to congratulate her and inquire about Seattle; she wrote back describing the wonders of Seattle and Puget Sound. The correspondence continued, and soon LN was on his way to the Pacific Northwest.

LN took up residence in Seattle and began courting Bella. His first Seattle job, which was at the Railway Exchange Building on the southwest corner of
Second and Cherry, paid six dollars a week. In 1903 he was admitted to the Washington State Bar and opened his own practice. He represented clients in the Justice Court and the U.S. District Court and sometimes worked with another Seattle attorney, Burton E. Bennett.

Bella Wcretnikow, the young woman whom LN would marry, was the daughter of poor Russian-Jewish immigrants who arrived in Washington in 1893 after residing in Winnipeg, Manitoba, for 11 years. In 1901 Bella was one of two women in the law school’s first graduating class. After admission to the Washington State Bar, she promptly went to work in the law offices of young Seattle attorney Frederick R. Burch. From 1901 to 1904 Bella is listed in the city directory as a lawyer. It is not unusual these days for a woman to become a lawyer, but in the 1903 Seattle city directory only two names in the list of 413 lawyers are those of women, and Bella’s is one of them.

Bella and LN wed on March 19, 1905, in the home of Bella’s mother, Eliza Marks, at 917 East Jefferson Street. By then, several members of LN’s immediate family also lived in Seattle: his mother Fani, his sister Dora, and three brothers—Edward, James, and William. Bella and LN’s first two children, Adrian and Joseph, were born in Seattle in 1905 and 1909, respectively. In 1912 Bella, LN, and their children were living with Eliza Marks in the Jefferson Street house.

Apparently not content with being a lawyer, LN’s interests turned to investment and real estate. The city directory business listings between 1907 and 1913 indicate that he was president and manager of Lewis N. Rosenbaum Company, Inc., an investment company dealing in municipal and corporation bonds, as well as a lawyer, notary, and financial agent. Then, abruptly, the 1914 city directory states that L. N. Rosenbaum & Company, Inc., had relocated to 80 Wall Street in New York City; not surprisingly, there is no 1914 listing for an L. N. Rosenbaum residence in Seattle.

Rosenbaum’s early ambition evidently surpassed his success. As later reported in the Post-Intelligencer, “Rosenbaum struggled ineffectively in Seattle from 1901 to 1914, attempting to rise as a real estate man. He admits now that he did not know real estate then. Real estate, he says, is a science to be mastered by study and travel, travel with eyes wide open.” LN also had become “greatly discouraged with his progress in practicing law in the State of Washington.” In fact, in addition to his financial problems, Rosenbaum was threatened with disbarment.

It seems that in May 1910, LN had signed an agreement with the Syverson Lumber and Shingle Company of Montesano, Washington. Acting as “attorney and bond broker” he was to sell, on Syverson’s behalf, $50,000 worth of bonds for which he would receive a $200 attorney’s fee as well as a 1 percent commission on the bond sales. In addition, LN was paid $50 to travel immediately to Portland, Oregon, to negotiate a temporary loan of $10,000. In the March 29, 1912, “Motion for Disbarment” filed against Rosenbaum by the State of Washington, H. Syversen, manager of the Syverson Lumber and Shingle Company, alleged that LN had deceived and attempted to defraud the company and its officers by indicating he had gone to Portland when in fact he had not. John F. Murphy, the prosecuting attorney representing the state, asked the court for an order “forever disbarbing and removing said defendant [L. N. Rosenbaum] from the practice of the law...for reasons of...the commission of an act involving ‘moral turpitude, dishonesty, and corruption.’”

Represented by attorney Lionel A. Michelson, LN denied “each and every allegation.” Unfortunately, Rosenbaum did not have the financial resources (an estimated $500) to defend himself in court against the motion to disbar; furthermore, he would have had to remain in Washington during the proceedings. Acting on the advice of attorney Thomas P. Revelle, LN resigned as “an attorney of the bar of the State of Washington” on November 14, 1912.

Three months later, on February 20, 1913, the action against Rosenbaum was dismissed. However, his reputation was by then already sorely tarnished. His friend, T. J. Moore, Seattle ticket agent for the Great Northern Railway, “staked him” to the train ticket he needed to head back east. Rosenbaum left his family in Seattle and, according to a late 1920s article in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, found passage into a family scrapbook, “borrowed $100 in New York and started in the loan business, renting desk room at 80 Wall Street at $25 a month, and taking a little cheap room on the East Side.... With no money of his own, Rosenbaum sought people who needed money and did not know where or how to obtain it, and then persuaded capitalists to supply their wants, charging such
brokerage as they would pay for his services.” This time, Rosenbaum’s business thrived. Bella and the two boys followed LN back east, and between 1915 and 1919 three more children were born: son Francis and daughters Ruth and Doris.

From his office on Wall Street, LN somehow befriended a number of very wealthy businessmen—attorneys, bankers, and capitalists—and provided them with advice about businesses and properties in which to invest their money. The same P-I article noted that between 1914 and 1926 LN handled $100 million worth of investments, including the purchases made in 1925 of the Flatiron Building in New York City, the Coca Cola and New York Life buildings in Kansas City, Missouri, and the Transportation Building in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Yet, despite his newfound success as a millionaire and financier in New York, LN was preparing his triumphant return to Seattle.

An unusual display ad appeared in the July 20, 1924, Seattle Daily Times. It indicated that L. N. Rosenbaum & Co., Inc., of 130 West 42nd Street, New York, was “in the market to purchase large or small office buildings and business properties—which require constructive management, remodeling or rejuvenation—provided price, terms and conditions are inducing.” The ad went on to state, “Our recent purchases include the 12-story Metropolitan Life Building in Minneapolis and the 10-story New York Life Building in Kansas City.”

The overall response to this advertisement is unknown, but one Seattle realtor, Henry C. Ewing, apparently wrote to LN and made a winning sales pitch. Ewing recommended the purchase of the Railway Exchange Building (today called the Broderick Building—the same building LN first worked in when he came to Seattle in 1903). Rosenbaum not only bought and remodeled the Railway Exchange Building but made it his West Coast business headquarters for a time. He also moved Bella and their five children back to Seattle, buying a home at 2834 11th Avenue.

As for Ewing, he became LN’s confidant and friend, and according to a 1925 article in the Pacific Northwest Business Chronicle ended up selling him “39 other distinct and separate parcels of Seattle realty of value of roundly $3,000,000.” Rosenbaum and his backers believed that “Seattle has greater development possibilities than all the other Pacific Coast and Northwest cities put together,” according to the May 31, 1925, Seattle Times. Local papers ran news articles about Rosenbaum and his syndicate’s real estate ventures, and they carried numerous advertisements about properties available for purchase, long-term lease, rent, or development through the office of L. N. Rosenbaum. His syndicate bought heavily in Seattle and Spokane. LN had cards printed listing his offices in the Flatiron Building in New York and the Railway Exchange Building in Seattle and stating: “This office negotiates loans and financings in amounts of one million dollars and upwards for realty and industrial projects.”

Rosenbaum, now president or treasurer of a number of corporations, was appointed honorary trustee to the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project and listed in Who’s Who in America for the first time in the 1930-1931 edition. The Rosenbaum family moved again, this time to 1000 E. Garfield Street.

Like the rest of the nation, Rosenbaum and his associates were oblivious to the impending economic “downturn” that was just around the corner. The crash of the stock market on October 29, 1929, was just the first indication of the financial woes that were to beset the United States and countries across the globe. Banks collapsed, mortgages were called, and businesses failed. Despite the fact that some of the syndicate’s properties went into foreclosure (for example, the Flatiron and Coca Cola Buildings), real estate proved a much better investment than the stock market. Quoted in the Seattle Times, LN stated, “And when you consider that many foremost stocks selling a year ago for 100 are now down to 25, but that well selected realty has suffered virtually no depreciation in price, it is not to be wondered that I am a strong advocate of realty investments in Seattle.” A few months later, in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, he continued along the same line: “I have absolute confidence that 1931 will reaffirm our economic stability and growth and that Seattle is destined to achieve a great place in [sic] American cities.”

Even so, Rosenbaum took his business and his family back to New York.
City. He opened his main office at 60 Wall Tower, with a branch office in Los Angeles. His advertised services included “loans,” “mergers,” “insurance company financing,” “private financing,” and “consultant work undertaken in financial, corporate, estate, and individual problems, of substantial proportions, for rehabilitation objective.” In reference to the impact of the Depression, Rosenbaum claimed in a 1933 interview that real estate “represents more than one-half of the total wealth of the United States.” “The frightful damage suffered these past three years has been due primarily to the utter breakdown of our credit system. When it is impossible to get credit, loans, or financing on more than one-half of the nation’s wealth, we do not need to talk about other facts of demoralization.” With LN’s office now on prestigious Fifth Avenue in Manhattan, and his home a Park Avenue penthouse apartment, the Rosenbaums came through the Depression seemingly unscathed.

Known as a “financial wizard” and a “business troubleshooter,” LN remained involved in both national and international business deals. He helped reorganize the “financial structure” of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle—buying up two competing newspapers in the process and merging them into the Eagle—and in a landmark legal maneuver, leased from the Pennsylvania Railroad the “air rights” over the Journal Square passenger station in Jersey City so that he could develop the space over the railroad tracks and Hudson River tubes for business and retail use. He visited the White House several times and provided financial advice to President Franklin D. Roosevelt and other Roosevelt family members, was mentioned “as a possibility by President Roosevelt” to serve as ambassador to Poland, and allegedly attempted to “secure the appointment as Ambassador to Russia.” He knew and socialized with politicians and other prominent individuals, including Charles A. Lindbergh and Albert Einstein.

Although LN lived out the rest of his days on the East Coast, he still had unfinished business in Seattle. His mother, Fani Rosenbaum, had died in 1910 and was buried in Heral Memorial Park. Now that he was wealthy LN, having been devoted to his mother, donated $7,000 to Seattle’s Heral Congregation to build a chapel in her memory in Heral Memorial Park.

Dedicated on September 12, 1937, the Fani Rosenbaum Memorial Chapel, designed by B. Marcus Priteca, remains in use today.

The other Seattle matter involved repairing the damage to LN’s reputation by his alleged disbarment. Despite the fact that he was not disbarred and all charges were dismissed against him in 1913, LN applied in 1939 to the board of governors of the Washington State Bar Association for reinstatement. The petition presented by his attorneys states that the petitioner, L. N. Rosenbaum, “has found as the years have gone by that the matter of filing this disbarment proceedings has been referred to continuously and more so at the present time by different people as a serious blot upon [his] character and reputation”; therefore, the petitioner “files this proceedings for the purpose of clearing his name and his record for all time, setting at rest the unjust accusations contained in the motion for disbarment....”

The petition was accompanied by numerous letters from well-known rabbis, lawyers, judges, bankers, publishers, and the like from cities across the United States, all attesting to LN’s integrity, excellent character, honesty, success in business, and to his role as a husband, father, and family man. As a result, on June 22, 1939, LN was reinstated to the Washington State Bar.

Reinstatement was not enough, however, to remove the hint of scandal that accompanied LN and his achievements. It was alleged that he misrepresented and omitted “material and factual data in preparing his reports to clients on proposed loans,” and that “his analysis of his client’s business would always recommend actions which would net him [Rosenbaum] the greatest fee possible.” Furthermore,
Only L. N. Rosenbaum could envision that the corner of Ninth and Pine would someday be part of busy downtown Seattle.

while “considered to be a very shrewd businessman” he supposedly completed “many questionable deals.” Some of the shadier matters are described in an FBI investigative report over 100 pages long dated March 30, 1953, much of which was based on reports made by “confidential informants.”

Part of this FBI document is concerned with L. N. Rosenbaum and his eldest son (and partner), Adrian, and their business relationship during 1940 and 1941 with a Russian company called the Am-torg Trading Corporation. The latter was interested in purchasing cranes, railroad cars, oil refineries, airplane motors, propellers, and other heavy-duty equipment, and having the Rosenbaums broker the deals. According to an FBI interview with LN held on June 11, 1952, Rosenbaum insisted that he sought permission from the U.S. State Department as well as the advice of others to ensure that such transactions were “legal and permissible.”

The real concern of the FBI, however, was determining if LN was engaged in “espionage activities” or had been a member of the Communist Party or “any Communist front organization.” After “tailing” LN (and Adrian) and investigating LN’s entire life and business dealings, as well as looking into the lives of Bella and the five Rosenbaum offspring (and their spouses), the FBI concluded there was “insufficient evidence to warrant a conclusion that the subject [Lewis N. Rosenbaum] is a person who has knowledge of or has received an assignment in the Espionage Service of a foreign government....”

Bella and LN eventually purchased a home in Rye, New York. Their daughter Ruth lived down the street with her husband and two daughters. LN lived to celebrate his 50th wedding anniversary, but less than a year later, following illness and surgery, he died at home in his sleep on January 9, 1956.

Bella, who early on had given up her own law practice to devote herself favorite dessert was chocolate soufflé. He smelled of garlic from the cloves he ate daily for medicinal reasons. Also an art collector, he filled every inch of wall space in his Rye home with paintings. His grown children recalled that LN was popular with the ladies and bought his wife expensive jewelry to compensate for his infidelities. LN failed however to achieve his ambition of “making the Rosenbaum family in the State of Washington what the Astor family [has] been in New York.”

Bella stood by him through every adversity. LN did not “brood over errors,” she recalled, nor did he show any distress to his family when a business deal failed or he “lost a considerable sum of money in speculation.” While others might disagree, Bella described her husband as having “a reputation for honesty and integrity.” Whatever he was, for better or for worse, Lewis Newman Rosenbaum lived the American dream. With almost no formal education, he became a lawyer, financier, millionaire, real estate giant, business consultant, and friend of politicians and people of influence.

He had a special affinity for Washington and the Emerald City, where he met and married Bella. Many of his business ads extolled the virtues of Seattle—its growing population, booming industries, bustling port, mild climate. Only LN Rosenbaum, back in the early 1920s, could envision that the corner of Ninth and Pine would someday be part of busy downtown Seattle. The thriving city and its magnificent Paramount Theatre confirm that LN’s vision—that Seattle would become one of the greatest cities on the West Coast—was not mistaken.

Judith W. Rosenthal is a biology professor at Kean University in Union, New Jersey, and granddaughter of Bella and L. N. Rosenbaum.
the Fort Lewis main gate. Another was erected just east of the field and housed disruptive POWs and Nazi Party members. The fifth camp sat near the Logistics Center, along what is now Interstate 5. The Logistics Center sign is still visible through the barbed wire fence. Each camp had its own fences and guard towers. No weapons were allowed inside these compounds. Guards had to call for help from soldiers outside the security line. Each camp largely operated as its own city, containing mess halls, supply depots, beer halls, barracks, barber shops, and libraries within the fences. The POWs also ran their own newspaper.

The camps were judged to be strict but fair by International Red Cross inspectors. The POWs stayed in the same style two-story wooden barracks used by the American soldiers. POWs were paid 80 cents a day, which they could use to buy recreational equipment or spend time in the camp's watering hole. POWs either worked at maintaining the camp or labored outside the barbed wire at logging, clearing brush, mending uniforms, or harvesting foodstuffs in the surrounding countryside. Few tried to escape because they knew they had no place to go once they left the compound. The camp provided safety, food, and shelter and was far from frontline fighting. By and large, the POWs received better food and shelter than they had in the German Army. Even a successful escape back to Germany meant a return to the war and certain danger.

Shoemaker recalled that he met routinely with a group of POWs for coffee and cake every morning. They always shook his hand, and it was their habit, he noted, to raise their hands and snap their belts in a Nazi salute every time they entered or exited a room. This was meant to show that their military discipline remained intact despite their confinement. The young soldier's initial fear of the POWs shifted to friendship during the passing months as they talked over coffee day after day. The German bakers surprised him with a birthday cake on May 21, 1945. It was a Sunday and the 21-year-old GI initially thought the cake might be a trap. The prisoners won him over and shared a six-layer sponge cake with cherry and pineapple filling. On another occasion, Shoemaker recalled getting a haircut at the camp from "Desert Fox" General Erwin Rommel's (former) personal barber. He paid for the clipping with a pack of cigarettes.

For the most part, time in the POW camp passed uneventfully for Shoemaker. One day, however, prisoner Kurt Zimmerman escaped by hanging under a truck while it was driven from the camp. No one noticed his departure until he turned himself in to Seattle police and asked to be returned to Fort Lewis. Zimmerman later told military investigators that after sneaking out he lived with a Seattle woman for two weeks. When the two of them had an argument, she kicked him out. With nowhere else to go, he gave himself up and returned to captivity. In his absence, the POWs hid Zimmerman's escape by keeping an empty space in a back row during roll calls. A fellow prisoner would run to the space after he had been counted by the clerk passing through the rows. The same POW, by being counted twice, hid the fact that one of his comrades was missing.

Shoemaker wrote about the time that he attended a "wedding" inside the camp. The marriage was not between inmates but between one POW and his fiancé's glove. The bride then had a similar ceremony on the same day in Germany with the soldier's helmet. The POWs celebrated the occasion with alcoholic beverages they had distilled from raisins, cherries, and grapefruit. Shoemaker, his sergeant major, and a lieutenant inadvertently got a bit tipsy from sampling shots of each of the three flavors, suggesting that the German brew was relatively high octane.

When Shoemaker was later assigned to Florence, Arizona, word of the impending transfer soon reached the POWs. They wrote him a letter to give to the German POWs at the Arizona camp if they caused him any trouble. The letter, which described Shoemaker as fair and honest but strict, was signed by each of the POWs Shoemaker guarded. They offered to send a petition to his commanders in a bid to keep him at the camp, but he declined the offer, opting to go wherever the army sent him.

The Fort Lewis camp remained in operation until 1946 when the Germans were repatriated. All but a few of the buildings have since been torn down. A handful of POWs who died there of disease, illness, or from injuries suffered before reaching the camp are buried in the Fort Lewis cemetery.

Steve Dunkelberger, of Steilacoom, is editor of the Business Examiner, where he has worked since 2001. He is active in a number of historical associations, including Historic Fort Steilacoom Museum Association, Steilacoom Historical Museum Association, and the Lakewood Historical Society.
The Novels of William Attaway

By Peter Donahue

"Day-o, day-ay-ay-0 / Daylight come and me wan' go home." These may be the most recognizable words penned by William Attaway, who cowrote the lyrics to "The Banana Boat Song," made famous by Harry Belafonte in 1957. However, Attaway first caught the public's attention nearly two decades earlier with the publication of Let Me Breathe Thunder (1939), a dramatic Depression-era novel set in the Yakima Valley.

Born in Mississippi in 1911, Attaway moved with his family to Chicago as part of the Great Migration of African Americans escaping the segregated South. After discovering the works of Langston Hughes in high school, he determined to become a writer. To gain experience of the world, he left home for two years, working various manual labor jobs throughout the country. It is most likely during this period that Attaway ventured into the Northwest.

In the mid-1930s he returned to Illinois and joined the Federal Writers' Project, where he befriended writer Richard Wright. In 1936 he graduated from the University of Illinois and published his first short story. Shortly thereafter he went to New York City to begin work on his first novel, Let Me Breathe Thunder.

The novel's main characters are two young drifters, both white, named Step and Ed. Like thousands of others during the Depression, they rode the rails "looking for a job of work." The novel opens with Step and Ed on a "hobo Pullman" out of New Mexico where they encounter Hi Boy, a nine-year-old Mexican boy separated from his family because of troubles, it is suggested, stemming from their status as illegal immigrants. As they head north the two men adopt Hi Boy, who speaks little English. In Seattle, looking to have a "hot time," Step gets into a scrap in one of the "underground dives," and the two men, with Hi-Boy in tow, flee the city, spending their last few dollars for seats on an eastbound train.

Attaway describes the mountain pass—"the rim of a gorge...great jagged shadows...each successive range more cloudlike than the one before"—with dutiful awe. In the diner car, Step and Ed are recruited by a man named Sampson to work on his place in the Yakima Valley, where he grows apples and raises sheep. They arrive in "sunlit Yakima" and quickly note, "The girls here mostly wore pants, drove their father's trucks into town, and took steps like men."

Step soon looks up an old friend, Mag, who is a former prostitute. While Attaway's main characters are white, Let Me Breathe Thunder is deeply concerned with issues of race. Ed is shocked when he meets Mag, who is "fat and black as a tar ball." Having lived in Yakima many years, Mag knows, "It ain't like the South." In Yakima, she declares, the law will "run white out of town as well as black, once they get riled."

The distinction between the Northwest and the Jim Crow South also arises when Step and Ed meet a black hobo outside of Yakima who remarks how "guys on the road ain't got prejudice like other folks," and recalls the girlfriend down South he's going to send for and marry once he finds work, since he can't imagine "raisin' colored kids in Alabama." Yet, as if to anticipate Wright's Native Son (1940), Let Me Breathe Thunder culminates with the alleged rape of a white woman by a black man in Yakima and the lynching-mob reaction that follows.

Attaway would more forthrightly confront the ugliness of racism in his second novel, Blood on the Forge (1941), about three black half-brothers who escape their brutal life as sharecroppers in Kentucky to find work in the equally brutal steel mills of Pennsylvania—a novel the New York Times warned "is not for those who shun the unlovely aspects of human nature."

The issues addressed in Let Me Breathe Thunder, while distinctly American, are particular to life east of the Cascades. The black hobo Step and Ed meet reminisces fondly of having "knocked apples" near Yakima. Meanwhile, Sampson epitomizes the hardworking orchard owner, a man devoted to his apples. "I love my orchards like another man loves a woman," he tells...
Step, and adds, “An apple sure is a beautiful thing.” Even with the price of apples falling, he remains committed: pruning his trees, irrigating the desert, breaking ground for auxiliary trees, and making sure his crop is crated and shipped to market.

Throughout the novel, Attaway’s characters share a simple, lyrical appreciation for the landscape of central Washington. Admiring the desert, Ed says, “The purple and green of the thistle and sage, the stretches of cactus, mesquite and tumbleweed make it sort of a big back yard.” The mountains, within “hock-and-sputting distance,” are ever-present, especially Mount Rainier. The novel’s title derives from an Indian legend recounted by Sampson of the mountain as a tormented old god that “sometimes breathes thunder.”

Let Me Breathe Thunder captures the literary naturalism of writers such as Willa Cather and Eugene O’Neill, two authors Attaway admired, according to his daughter, Noelle Attaway Kirton. Attaway, who died in 1986, went on to serve in World War II, march with Martin Luther King Jr., and publish two nonfiction works, Calypso Song Book (1957) and Hear America Singing (1967). However, for devotees of vintage Washington state literature, he will be most remembered for his sharp-eyed depiction of Yakima and the Yakima Valley in Let Me Breathe Thunder, which was reprinted in 1955 (as Tough Kid) and again in 1969 (with original title).

As the novel closes, Step and Ed hop another freight train to flee the mess they have made of their situation in the Yakima Valley. As they cross eastern Washington, Ed recognizes the opportunities he has squandered and becomes fixated on the clack of the wheels, which mournfully sing to him, “Ya-kim-a, Ya-kim-a, Ya-kim-a.”


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**Additional Reading**

Interested in learning more about the topics covered in this issue? The sources listed here will get you started.

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**Life and Death at the Tacoma Narrows**


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**Glittering Prospect**


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**On the Banks of the Mid-Columbia**


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**Invasion of the Boardheads**


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**L. N. Rosenbaum**


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**The German Occupation of Fort Lewis**

“The Fort Lewis POWs,” Fort Lewis Military Museum Association newsletter, Banner (Winter 1993).

World War II veteran’s monograph about his time as a prison guard at a Fort Lewis POW camp, by Wayne Shoemaker. Unpublished manuscript, Fort Lewis Military Museum, 1992.

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Madison House
A Novel
Reviewed by W. Clinton Sterling.

Though common enough, successful historical novels can be hard to write. It takes confidence and skill to introduce historical figures, present them as more than ornamentation, and then introduce them to fictional characters. On the more successful end one thinks of works by Gore Vidal and E. L. Doctorow. On the other end, historical novels can succumb to what Joe Klein has called the "Oh, look, there's Walt Whitman" problem. Madison House, by Peter Donahue, falls somewhere in-between.

The Madison House is a boardinghouse on Denny Hill in Seattle run by Madison "Maddie" Ingram, who purchased it around 1900 with a stake she made in the Klondike. The cast of characters includes her boarders: Clyde Hussler, an albino jack-of-all-trades, half Makah Indian and half German; Ray Gruhli, an aspiring professional photographer; James Colter, a Black muckraking newspaperman who publishes his Seattle Sentry from the carriage house, where he also lives; Chiridah Simpson, a budding actress; and Loye Atchison, a student at the University of Washington.

Over the span of a decade the characters are superimposed against the background of the great Denny Regrade, a project conceived by Seattle's business elite who saw in the steep grade of Denny Hill an impediment to northward expansion of the city and hence to "progress." Under the mantle of "Seattle Spirit," the city leaders affected a plan to completely remove Denny Hill out from under the homes and businesses of the middle class community. Although the city council held a public hearing before it passed an ordinance mandating the regrade, the fix was in. Opposition was ignored and before long enormous hydraulic water cannons were "tipping into the earth like giant fangs," washing the slough into Elliott Bay. Even worse, property owners were expected to pay for the regrading of their lots on an ineloquent assurance that their property would grow in value five-fold. A few held on to their homes, but as the hill was leveled around them these structures were left perching precariously atop "spite mounds" before tipping inexorably into oblivion. The fate of Madison House is never in doubt.

As the inevitable is played out, the boarders go about their lives. Following them on their rounds, the reader discovers a long-lost Seattle. This is Peter Donahue's great achievement, and his attention to detail is impressive. Through his intermediation we meet such historical figures as photographer Asahel Curtis, city engineer Reginald H. Thomson, and novelist Henry James, but we are also introduced to the salt of Old Seattle—street sweepers, police, socialists, Native Americans, and even the workers who physically leveled Denny Hill. The reader is also treated to a tour of some of the attractions that made the city so alluring to its inhabitants and visitors: Luna Park, Lake Washington, the waterfront, Home Colony, and the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, not to mention a variety of nascent neighborhoods familiar to today's inhabitants. Particularly pleasurable are the flashback chapters describing Maddie's experiences in the Yukon.

Madison House is not without flaws, including occasional errors of fact. For instance, a ship sailing to Alaska could not stop to replenish its coal supply in land-locked Prince George, British Columbia—Prince Rupert is more likely. Furthermore, the period detail occasionally seems forced. These, however, are minor impediments. On the other side of the ledger, Donahue's comfort with Seattle history and his depth of understanding are artfully revealed through irony and sly wit, such as when Asahel Curtis remarks that he took almost as many photographs in the Klondike as his brother Edward.

One-time Seattleite Peter Donahue is currently professor of English and teaches creative writing at Birmingham-Southern University in Alabama. His very accessible first novel should appeal to readers who like to see history come alive, particularly those in the Pacific Northwest, and they will look forward to Donahue's next effort.

W. Clinton Sterling is senior reference librarian and assistant professor of law at the Gonzaga University School of Law in Spokane.

Keep A-Goin': The Life of Lone Star Dietz
By Tom Benjeoy. Carlisle, Penn.: Tuxedo Press, 2006; 356 pp., $32.95 cloth.
Reviewed by Mike Russell.

The Washington State Cougars. The Rose Bowl. For fans of PAC-10 college football, these two phrases taken together seem contradictory. Contenders at the Rose Bowl in 1931, 1998, and 2003, the WSU Cougars were three times the losers. Some Cougar fans have heard about a Rose Bowl game, forgotten and lost in the distant past, where WSU actually won. It was at the 1916 game that the Cougars prevailed, under the stewardship of coach William Dietz. Keep A-Goin': The Life of Lone Star Dietz is an homage to that winning coach and much more.

Born in 1885, "Lone Star" (as William Dietz liked to be called) suffered an identity crisis throughout his youth. As he got older Dietz embraced his Native American heritage, and his self-image evolved into the persona that characterized him throughout his adult life. Dietz began an early career as an artist, and the book is peppered with many of his drawings. He played college football at Friends University in Kansas and Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania. At Carlisle he was a teammate of the legendary Jim Thorpe and eventually rose to the position of assistant football coach.

Because of the Carlisle football team's success in 1915, Washington State College offered Dietz the Cougars' head coach position. He received the second highest coach's salary in the Northwest Conference that year and did not disappoint. Dietz's team finished the season undefeated, including an important win over Gonzaga—at the time called the Fighting Irish, not the Bulldogs. As Northwest Conference
champion, Dietz's team was invited to the 1916 Tournament of Roses in Pasadena to face Brown University. The Cougars won 14-0 and amassed 313 rushing yards, a record for many years.

Sadly, Lone Star Dietz's life was not exclusively a "Tournament of Roses." A failed movie career, a divorce, federal indictments on draft evasion, and accusations that he had fabricated his Native American ancestry all assailed Dietz within only three years of his Rose Bowl victory. Fired from WSU, he coached losing seasons at Purdue in 1921-22 and at Wyoming in 1924-25. Several other short-term coaching appointments evidenced greater success. Dietz returned to prominence for a time as coach of the Boston Braves—later the Washington Redsking—in 1933 and 1934. Some say the name change from Braves to Redskings occurred as a sign of respect toward Dietz and his Native American heritage, though both seasons were only .500. He returned to Reading, Pennsylvania, and coached at Albright College through 1942. Experiencing financial difficulties in his later years, Lone Star Dietz died of cancer in 1964.

This is a good book. Benjey crafts a tale of one man's controversial life story—a man with many facets to his life who strove to excel in all of them. The Washington Redskings and Native American activists still battle in court over the accuracy of Lone Star's ancestry and its relation to the appropriateness of the team's name.

Mike Russell is an assistant professor of history at Kansas Wesleyan University. His earned his doctorate from Washington State University.

Brokers of Culture
Italian Jesuits in the American West, 1848-1919
By Gerald McKevitt. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2006; 448 pp., $60 cloth.

A Favored Portion of the Vineyard
A Study of the American College Missionaries on the North Pacific Coast, 1857-1907
By Kevin A. Codd. Doctoral dissertation presented to the theology faculty of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium, 2007; 488 pp., $40 paper.

Reviewed by Eleanor R. Carricker.

The field of Pacific Northwest religious history has always been thin at best; so to receive two books within several months of each other is, let us say, heavenly. One author centers his attention on Italian Jesuits in the American West; the other looks exclusively at diocesan priests who emigrated from Belgium to the Pacific Northwest.

Father Jerry McKeivitt's Brokers of Culture is certainly the more accomplished of the two books. His focus is on 400-old Italian Jesuits (the common name for religious men of the Society of Jesus, an order established in 1540 by Ignatius Loyola) who escaped to America from the anti-Catholic and anti-Jesuit hostility that accompanied Italy's movement toward national unification. A significant number of Jesuits from southern Italy relocated to present-day New Mexico and Colorado; other Jesuits moved from northern Italy to the society's Rocky Mountain Mission, which included Washington Territory. McKeivitt consulted a dozen Jesuit archives in America and Europe to warrant his conclusions, and he certifies his findings with over 1,000 endnotes. His four best chapters are those that concentrate on the education of Jesuit missionaries, the art of Indian conversion, the travails of Native American education, and the foundation of five colleges, including Gonzaga University and Seattle University. McKeivitt updated some of his material from earlier articles in the Pacific Historical Review and the Catholic Historical Review. Brokers of Culture is as much about immigration history as it is about religious history. It is both analytical and narrative history. McKeivitt, the professor of Jesuit studies at Santa Clara University, knows how to teach and how to write. The book benefits from expert editing and professional presentation of illustrations and maps. This is an essential book for Pacific Northwest historians.

Kevin Codd, a priest from the Spokane Diocese, recently completed his doctorate at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in Belgium and his dissertation research for A Favored Portion of the Vineyard reveals a story that is every bit as compelling as McKeivitt's and even less known. Codd centers his attention on 109 Belgian priests who took up residence in the Indian missions and parish churches of the Pacific Northwest during the last half of the 19th century. Post-Napoleonic Europe offered few opportunities for priests, yet there were still young men who felt drawn to that vocation—if not in Europe, then in America where bishops eagerly waited. Beginning in 1857 the American College in the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven trained Belgians for just such assignments, though the men still had much to learn once they reached the shores of far-off Oregon, Washington, and Vancouver Island.

Codd, an administrator at the American College, had exclusive access to the college's archive of detailed, painfully honest, and insightful letters written by the alumni to their home base in Belgium. Consider that in 1875 the Belgians—commonly referred to as Louvainists—filled 70 percent of the religious assignments in the Archdiocese of Oregon City. Six priests from Leuven became bishops in the Pacific Northwest, and at one time, between 1879 and 1885, they administered all three North Coast dioceses of Oregon City, Nesqually, and Vancouver Island. Moreover, between 1859 and 1907, Louvainists supervised the construction of 60 new churches, founded 42 parishes or missions, and established 10 schools. As a dissertation, Codd's work is a contribution to scholarship. It suffers a little from its lack of professional editing, but, still, the writing is lively.

There was a time between the 1930s and 1960s when Dr. Clifford M. Drury, a dedicated Presbyterian minister, biographer, and historian, almost single-handedly wrote and edited the Protestant missionary history of the Pacific Northwest. It has taken Catholic historians some time to catch up, but in the last several months two priests have helped to even the coverage. They have generously improved the historiography of Pacific Northwest religious history.

Eleanor Carricker is co-editor of two microform projects on Jesuit missions and co-author of three guides to Jesuit missionary activity in the Pacific Northwest.

Address all review copies and related communications to:
Robert C. Carricker, Columbia Reviews Editor
Department of History, Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA 99258
And There I Was...

I happened to stumble into the State Capital Museum one day. I was looking for an image of the Legislative Building for a stone-carving project I was working on. Without much thought, I glanced through your November 2004 legislative building commemorative issue (“Mission in a Monument: Rehabilitating the Washington State Legislative Building in the Wake of the Nisqually Earthquake,” by Ruth M. Anderson). To my complete surprise and exhilaration, there was looking for an image. In your November appeared in the Winter.

Here is the text referred to in the Anderson article, which appeared in the Winter 2003-04 issue of COLUMBIA:

Some of the original stones used [to repair the dome] after the 1949 seismic event cracked in the 2001 quake. In February 2003 master carver Keith Phillips of Tenino carved replacements from the Wilkeson quarry. He also carved new decorative stones to replace those that had been damaged. John MacIver and his associates (stone carvers who worked on the original construction) would have found Keith Phillips a worthy colleague.

Correction

On page 42 of the Spring 2007 COLUMBIA, a name in the caption was misspelled. It should have read Nick Baranovich.

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