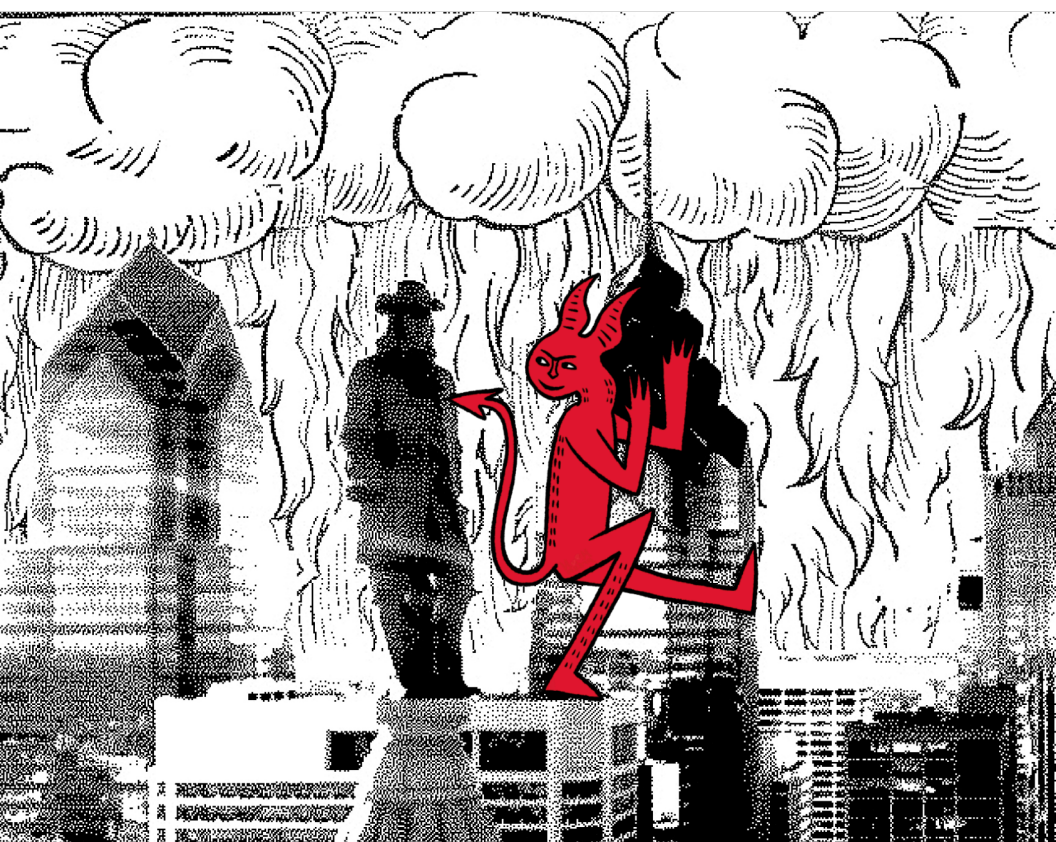


the philadelphia  
*citywide*



issue 1 : heat

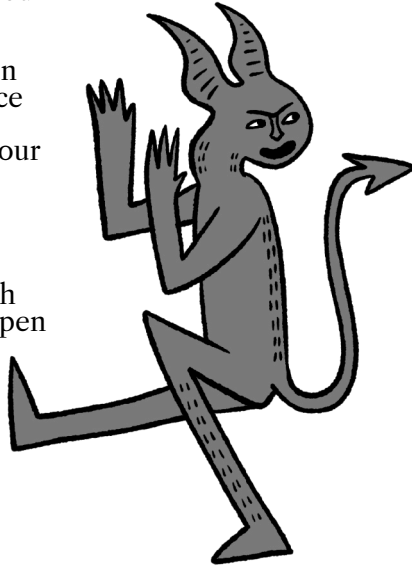
the philadelphia  
citywide

# MANIFESTO

You hold in your sweaty hands the inaugural issue of The Philadelphia Citywide, a brand new lifestyle rag printed with love for all Philadelphians. In this edition, we're talking about heat - hot people, hot weather, hot dogs??? Read on to find out! But first, allow us to introduce ourselves. We're the editors of the Citywide. By way of a manifesto, here's our very own Hot or Not list.

**HOT!** - Making friends, hanging out with your neighbors, making community happen

**NOT!** - the isolationist, empty, "cancel your plans and order UberEats, seeing friends is emotional labor" corporate hellscape dream



**HOT!** - physical media

**NOT!** - doomscrolling

**HOT!** - reading library books at the public pool

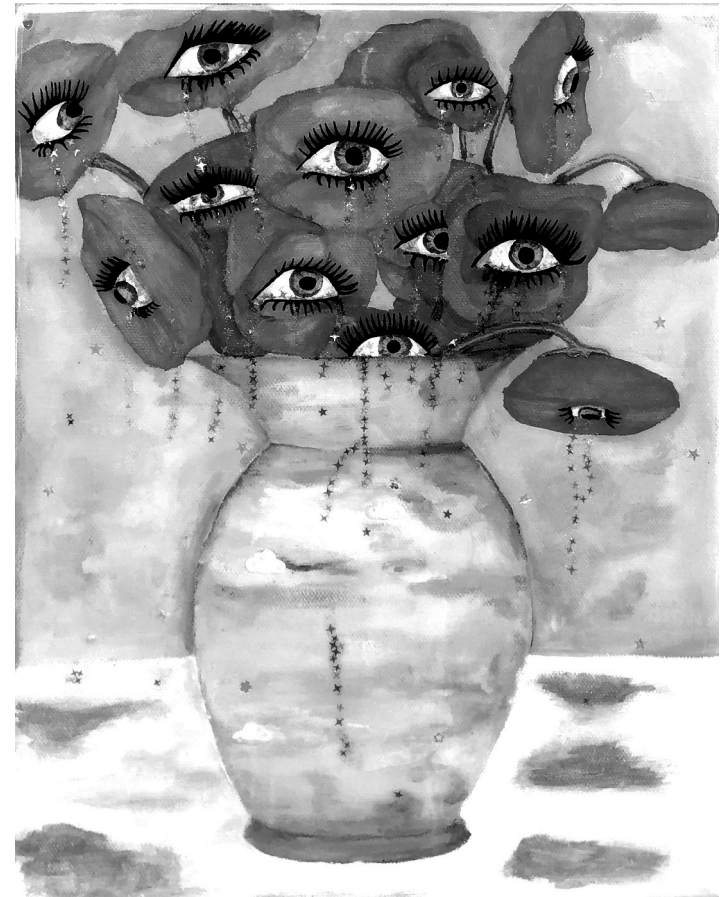
**NOT!** - underfunding the libraries and Parks and Rec

**HOT!** - Web 1.0

**NOT!** - AI-generated art

And of course:

**HOT!** - you, beautiful and vibrant reader. Thanks for picking us up. We're going to have fun.



*MIS3RY* BY SURXGIR

**overheard in Philly:**

"I hate knowing there was  
EVER a snake in that toilet"

"I'm like, you could have  
induced her two weeks ago!"

"Welcome to the big boy life"

"My mom had a pet raccoon  
growing up and said at one time  
it just wasn't a pet anymore"





PHOTO BY LOLA GONZÁLEZ-HERES

## HOT OR NOT PHILLY EDITION

BY ELEANOR NABHOLZ



SHAMCOW GRAFFITI

UNDERSTAFFING IN PPA

STREET CLOSURES IN CENTER CITY

PHILLIES (FOR NOW\*)



JOSH SHAPIRO

CENTER CITY SIPS

SEPTA PARKING LOT FEES



SWIMMING IN THE DELAWARE RIVER

\*EDITORS' NOTE: WE, THE EDITORS OF THE PHILADELPHIA CITYWIDE, HEREWITH ASSUME NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY ASSESSMENT REGARDING THE PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES' STANDING, WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE CHANGED RADICALLY BY THE TIME OF PUBLICATION.

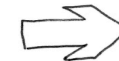
## PHILLY HEADLINES BY ELEANOR NABHOLZ

Ah, Philadelphia. The city of brotherly love where the love can be not so brotherly. Our city and its constituents have been in the news for both good and bad, and i've rounded up some of my favorites:

10. "NORTHEAST PHILLY CATHOLIC SCHOOL ACCIDENTALLY SOLD MOTHER'S DAY FLOWERS STUFFED WITH THONGS"
9. "PHILLY CELEBRATES AS 'CHICKEN MAN' EATS ROTISSERIE CHICKEN FOR 40TH STRAIGHT DAY"
8. "PHILADELPHIA PARKING AUTHORITY RESPONDS TO WOMAN'S PLEA FOR HELP WITH PORN"
7. "PHILLY WOMAN ALLEGEDLY TELLS CITY EMPLOYEES SHE NEEDS TO PEE BETWEEN THEIR TRUCKS, THEN STEALS TRUCK"
6. "DOES THE GOP HAVE A BEEF WITH PHILLY ELMO?"
5. "PETITION TO REINSTATE PHILLIES DOLLAR DOG NIGHT HAS FANS CITING A "GOD GIVEN RIGHT FOR ENCASED MEAT"
4. "MAN DENIED ENTRY INTO PHILLIES GAME FOR TRYING TO BRING HIS EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ALLIGATOR"
3. "IRS TO PHILLY WOMAN: YOU'LL HAVE TO WAIT FOR REFUND BECAUSE YOU'RE DEAD"
2. "BEACH BRAWL ENDS IN PHILLY MAN'S ARREST AFTER TELLING MIAMI COP 'I'LL BEAT YOUR A-- TOO,' POLICE SAY"
1. "HITCHHIKING ROBOT, SAFE IN SEVERAL COUNTRIES, MEETS ITS END IN PHILADELPHIA"

And finally, without further ado, my #1 Philly headline:

CATS WERE ONCE LIKE US...



COMIC BY AMANI  
CAVENDER

IG @FLESHY\_BEAST



UNTIL THEY FOUND A WAY  
TO GET RID OF ALL THEIR  
PROBLEMS.



# headhouse hunters

BY LARISSA SAPKO

The Headhouse Farmers' Market is located at Second and South Streets and open every Sunday morning. I am a regular and love it very much. There is no more rewarding way to explore your brutal animal nature than by a trip to this farmers' market. Headhouse is a genteel Thunderdome, a weekly battle royale where the city's well-heeled slug it out for donut nectarines and smoked garlic.

The whole market—vendors, tables, and customers alike—is squeezed between the narrow brick arches of the Headhouse Shambles. These provide shelter from the elements but also turn you into a sort of human mackerel, shuffling edgily along in a densely packed and slow-moving school of shoppers. It's a bubbling stew of passive aggression that threatens to erupt at the drop of a Brandywine tomato.

A woman with a BE HERE NOW tattoo between her shoulder blades cuts in front of me at a baker's table to dive at a stack of plastic-wrapped focaccia. Stressed-looking parents of young children maneuver strollers the size of Volkswagen Beetles through the crowd. Everyone is sweating, both from the heat and the strain of resisting the urge to strangle their fellow shopper. "Oh, is this where the line starts?" you might be asked by a chirpy old Unitarian who is beaming at you like a long-lost relative. Don't be fooled; look at the eyes. Look at the malice burning in them. It is not where the line starts and if you don't move in three seconds they will scratch you on the arm. It pays to have your wits about you.

Your prize, if you can summon the primal aggression needed to survive the market, will be a sense of Christlike moral superiority and some of the most gorgeous produce you have ever tasted in your life. It's especially good in high summer during peach season. Headhouse is situated in a beautiful old neighborhood and you can easily spend the entire day (and your entire paycheck) exploring the adorable wiggly-candle businesses that have popped up on the surrounding blocks. It's genuinely one of my favorite places in the whole city. Begin a Sunday there and you will not regret it. Unless you block the shishito peppers, in which case prepare for death at my hands.

P.S. This is neither here nor there, but once I visited the ATM right next to the market and the previous patron had left their receipt dangling out of the machine. Being of an inquisitive character, I cast an eyeball over it. The balance in this person's checking account was well over \$300,000.

# goth scribe reports on the 2024 oddities & curiosities expo

BY AYDEN MATEO HEROLD



Have you ever visited the Mutter Museum and thought, "my abode needs more disembodied specimens in jar"? Then boy do I have an event for you!

The Oddities & Curiosities Expo took place over two days at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center (an interesting name given its 20-mile distance from Philly) from August 17-18. The Expo acts as a traveling marketplace for alternative-leaning vendors selling everything goths and goth-adjacent folk could love. To give a few examples: art prints, dark clothing, colorful crystals, bone jewelry, antique funeral home supplies, lobotomy tools, taxidermized animals in kitsch poses, and previously-mentioned wet specimens preserved in aesthetically-pleasing glass globes are all among the many wares sold.

While most products contain a memento mori aesthetic, the vendor variety allows all flavors of alternative people to find something appealing and within their budget. The price range offered meant that even with my minimal funding I found an excess of gifts and trinkets for myself and my friends. With my preference towards the macabre, I was utterly and completely satisfied by this event. It was lovely to stand in a marketplace where, clad in all-black and coffin-shaped jewelry, I didn't stand out at all. Other Expo-goers were quite friendly, and several outfit compliments were exchanged between myself and attendees of all ages and genders.

If you missed this year's event, look for the vendors online. Most of them have social media where you can find their wares! I shall undoubtedly return next year, morbidly curious for more.



# SUPER CHUNK

## ALBUMS, WORST TO BEST

BY NATE JAFFE

12. *Wild Loneliness* – I have never listened to this album.

11. *What a Time to Be Alive* – I have never listened to this album.

10. *I Hate Music* – I have only listened to this album once.

9. *Come Pick Me Up* – “I don’t ‘get’ Superchunk. What’s the big deal?” Well you’re not gonna get “it” through this one. Some good songs (“1000 Pounds”, “Pink Clouds”), and yes, Ryan Adams borrowed his hit song title from this record. But there’s nothing special here. And they tried a naming thing where each song has a two-word title except for the last song. That’s the sort of thing you do when you are losing it creatively.

8. *Indoor Living* – This one was OK. The songs are all too long and slow. Mac’s vocals are all too high. Maybe skip this one.

7. *Here’s to Shutting Up* - This would have been their swan song had they not gotten back together. Getting back together is one of the dumbest things a band can do. This record rocks. “Art Class” might be the best song ever written. So what if all the guitar solos sound the same.

6. *Majesty Shredding* – Great album. Not entirely in the zone, but it’s close. So what if all the guitar solos sound the same.

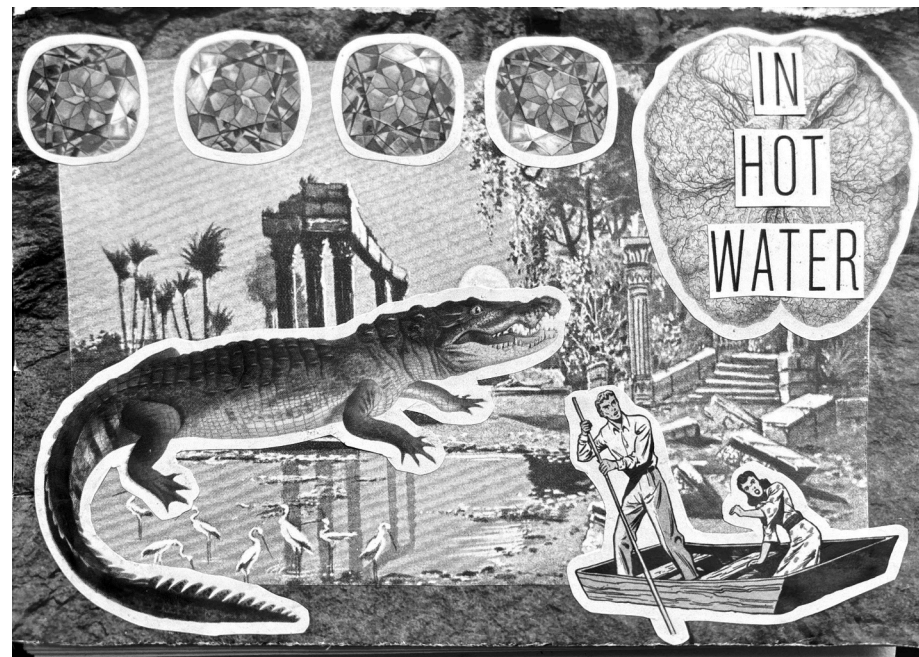
5. *Superchunk* – Now we are into the good stuff. Listen to this record. It kicks ass. “Down the Hall” is my personal favorite. Fast, heavy guitars, decidedly non-genius songwriting chops, a singer who can’t really sing. The perfect formula.

4. *Here’s Where the Strings Come In* – “Detroit Has a Skyline” might be the best song ever written. And it is pretty poignant: every time you are homesick, you are somewhere that someone else is feeling homesick about. Good stuff.

3. *Foolish* – At times very sad, exhausting, and a surprisingly weird record.

2. *No Pocky For Kitty* – Fun, fast, over quickly, never takes itself too seriously, and is full of lyrics that contain snippets of the ultimate truths of the universe. You just have to puzzle them out.

1. *On The Mouth* – This is the best one.



ART BY MEGAN JONES

### A brief review of Hot Seat’s latest EP, HIGH VALUE WOMAN:

Another incredible showing of an incredibly talented band out of Philadelphia. Merely a taste of their live performances (which involve rolling around the floor, laughing and yelling right in the audience’s faces, and an unmatched energy). Only two tracks, and the first short in length (less than a minute!), but they have that punch of sound that we’ve been missing. Their sound is gritty, classic, reminding you of the best of 80s and 90s punk rock. The Cramps-esque vocals and the unique forms, twisting and turning, whisk you the listener away to the tumultuous anger and delirium of their world, truly leaving you on the edge of your seat. If you like fast-paced, intense, wild music with rocking bass lines and the best mosh pits of your life, check out Hot Seat and their new EP.

### -REM Golden from Tragedy



# BODY HEAT

BY SUNHEE VOLZ



Heat is deceptive. It sneaks up on you.

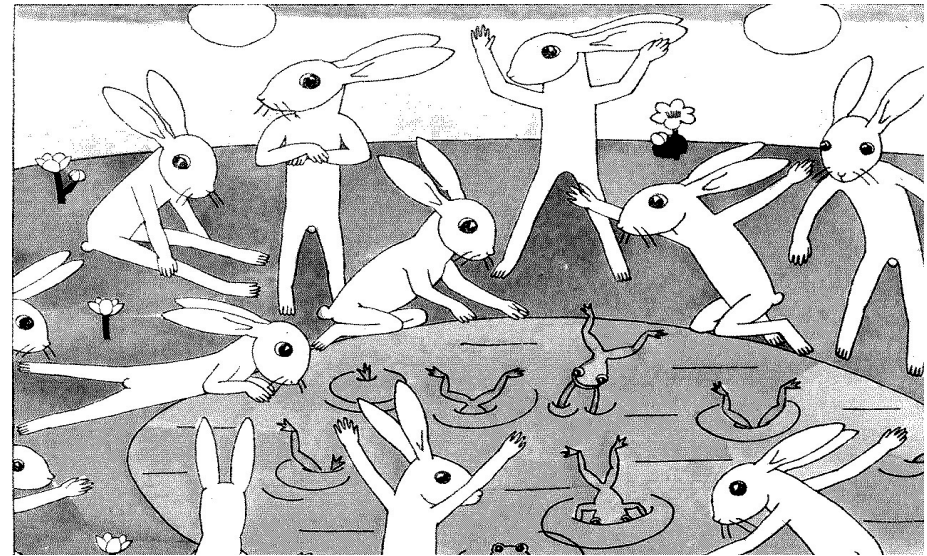
One day I went for a walk, something I try to do at least once a day as someone who works from home. It wasn't too hot, 81 degrees according to my weather app, so I was eager to get outside. And yet, after a few blocks I started feeling the heat on my back. The casual sips of my water bottle became more deliberate. I could feel the heat building. We cut our walk short, pausing under the occasional patch of shade from a sidewalk tree so I could catch my breath. We got home and I immediately laid down on the couch, peeling pieces of clothes off my body. My husband brought me a damp paper towel. I put it over my face and burst into tears.

"It's not that hot!" screamed my brain. Right around the average for June in Philly but also a cool reprieve coming on the heels of 90+ temperatures from the previous week. Temperatures so high that schools dismissed students early because our crumbling under-resourced schools don't have air conditioning. It was only 81 degrees and my body reacted like that. In that moment when the tears came, I felt the weight of it all. I felt the weight of what we're fighting for and what we're up against. The weight of the absolute trauma capitalism has inflicted on this planet, on all of us. It's hard to describe the despair and unfairness of it all that I felt in that moment, which I suppose is why my body reacted the way that it did. A body overheating from not only the heat, but the injustice.

I felt something I don't often feel, even as a climate organizer. Despair.

How do I go on when it's only going to get hotter and hotter? And not just that particular summer, but every summer, every season?

What do I do when the medication that levels my mind and gets me out of bed every day makes my body more vulnerable to the heat? (PSA: if you take SSRI's it can make your body more intolerant of extreme heat!) When a simple joy, taking a walk with my partner, becomes a test of my body's endurance? What about my mom, a letter carrier on her outdoor route, and all the other outdoor workers? Or those who are unhoused? Or those, like so many in Philly, living in those old AC-less houses where just trying to get a reprieve from the heat can feel like getting baked alive? The walk from the start of this story was two years ago. It's only gotten hotter. In fact, it's gotten so hot so fast that even climate scientists have been taken aback. That may be despairing for some to hear and that's okay. It's okay to have these moments.

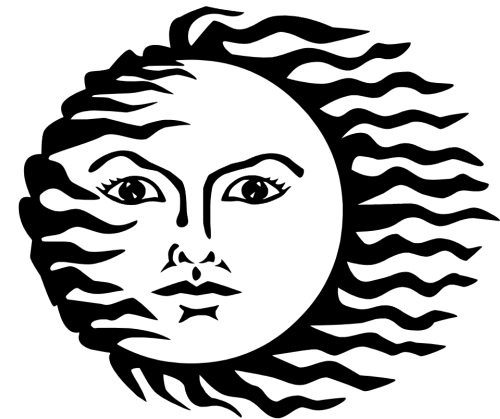


We're only going to get through this together.

In that moment coming home from the walk it was the help of my husband who brought me Powerade and a wet paper towel that calmed me down and got me through it. It's through community and care that we are going to not just survive, but thrive and build a better world for ourselves. We know who is responsible and we know what we need to do. Build the local networks of community care. Check in on your neighbors, on your elders, check in on everybody (and that includes yourself!) because we're four years into a pandemic and ten months into a genocide and everything is so much and we are all somehow just expected to keep going. And it keeps getting hotter.

I still take my walks. Some days are easier than others, and no, that doesn't necessarily mean the cooler ones. The world isn't going to end when we hit the 1.5 degrees of global warming that scientists warn us about, the 1.5 degrees that has set the standard for climate policy like the Paris Agreement. Every little tenth of a degree matters. Every little tenth of a degree means life or death for the most vulnerable among us. So I know that as long as I can take my walks, as long as I can fight, I'm going to keep going.

No matter how hot it gets.





# ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: NICOLE RODRIGUES



Nicole Rodrigues (they/them) is an artist and educator living in Philadelphia. Their work includes making comics, prints, illustrations, screen printed shirts, and ceramics about the connections we have to nature and our journey to self-actualization. Nicole's work can provide visual insights on how people could inhabit the world in their physical, mental, and imaginary states while navigating destructive systems. Often describing existential dread and despair within their work, Nicole will sometimes pair that thought with a hopeful avenue of possibilities.

Find more of Nicole's work online:

instagram: @lost.mirage

website: [www.nikkirodrigues.com](http://www.nikkirodrigues.com)



# TRANSIT CHRONICLES

BY ROXANNA LEIGH ALVINI

ART BY GNA



Rosie watched as the cars passed by from the 45 bus window. Their lights gleamed and shimmered off the raindrops. A dark gray mist clung around the city today, the type that made the skyscrapers disappear underneath its thick curtain. She could see the jostle of people as they clambered onto the bus, which had stopped at 11th and Washington Ave. It looked like a blob of people, stuck together, shoulder to shoulder, grabbing hold of any part of the vehicle that was readily available.

The bus jolted forward along with the mass that was clinging to shelter from the storm in their early morning commute. Rosie sighed, resting her head back against the window. Her breath curled into steam that clung to the clear pane. She brought her finger up to the condensed water she had created, tracing a line through it before placing her hand back in her lap. The bus skipped past the next few stops, not able to take on any more weight.

She could see people walking out to meet them before realizing the bus wasn't going to stop. She had waited for two buses herself before getting a lucky seat on this one. The rain pounded against the roof as they stopped at 11th and Catherine for the Palumbo High students. One by one they filed out onto the slick asphalt, making their way across the street to the large stone building. You could hear their shrieks and giggles as they ran into their school. The bus had cleared, letting some sit down for the rest of their ride.

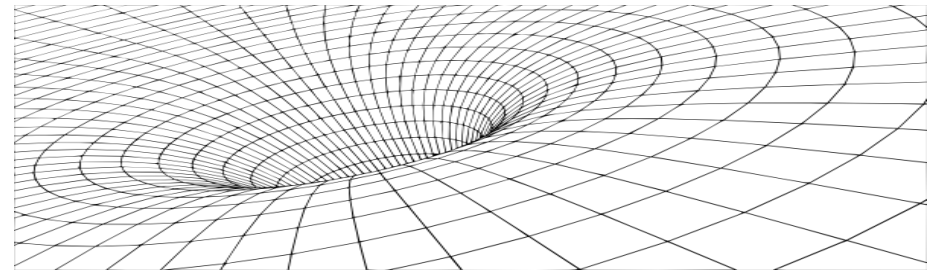
"Is it alright?" A man gestured to the open seat next to her now. She nodded and went back to her window gazing. She enjoyed the view of row homes flashing past when they'd pick up speed. The colors blurred together, until it would slow down again letting the images gain sharpness and detail once more. They passed the lemon-colored house on 11th and Waverly with its black iron rails. She loved that it illuminated itself against the slate gray clouds today. It reminded her of the way a flame could shine its orange and red hues against the black of night.

Her phone buzzed in her lap. She flipped it over to see a text from her boss:

*Hey Rosie! I decided to come in early today after all ☹️*

She pressed her phone to close. How did she know Melissa was going to do this? Because she'd done this before. Of course this information would've been helpful an hour ago, but she was already on the bus. What a waste, she thought to herself. She could've eaten breakfast at home, spent some more time with her dog before leaving for the day.

But now she'd have to find the corner of a coffee shop to huddle in for the time being. She saw 11th and Walnut approaching and pulled on the yellow rope above. The sign lit up to stop. As she rose to her feet to get off, the man that had sat down next to her only looked up at her with a smile. She looked at him, confused, until she felt her feet suddenly lose solid ground underneath. A bright violet light consumed her body, as she fell through a perfect circle into another dimension.



~

J.D. ran for the open doors of the L train. His heart was pounding against his chest from his sprint up the steps to the platform. The doors were shutting fast, but he was able to squeeze his way through before they sealed themselves. The train was completely empty. He walked towards the closest seat, feeling the sway of movement under his feet as the train picked up its speed. He slung his backpack off his shoulder onto the floor in front of him, reaching for his Bluetooth headset. J.D. felt around the bag, grabbing a hold of his water bottle then resting his hand on his copy of *Wuthering Heights* for his Brontës class. Come on, he thought.

As the train jerked and twisted, the sound of grinding metal filled his brain. He brought the bag to his lap and saw the glint of silver peeking out at him. The train stopped at Girard. He looked up to see no one entering his car. The doors shut again and the movement along the tracks started up.

He retrieved his headset and queued up a song. The train doors opened again at Spring Garden. The Ben Franklin Bridge to his right looked murky in the haze of clouds today. A man walked through the set of doors in front of J.D., taking a seat across from him. Childish Gambino's *Got to Be* started playing while they descended from in between I-95's north- and southbound highway strips to the dark underground.

J.D. leaned back, watching his reflection in the black windows in front of him. He thought about his noon class that was starting in half an hour. His professor had the most annoying quality of going on long tangents that would originally be related to the subject at hand and then devolved into some ego-inflating story about his own life and art. J.D. felt himself starting to dread his upcoming day.

That's when the man across from him suddenly stood up and moved towards him. The train continued bobbing downwards, but the man was still and smiling above him. J.D. felt himself start to panic when a violet light filled the whole car in its intrusive bright light. He saw his surroundings start to split apart and felt his seat shift beneath him, until he was falling through nothingness into a space unknown.



77

a dice game by bad & slaw

need: 2 six-sided die

optional: pen and paper

2 -4~ players. ( maybe more but four feels good )

goal: to get to 77 points ( or over! )

rules:

roll both dice.

if you roll doubles, get point total of number on dice.

ex:  $2 + 2 = 4$ ,  $3 + 3 = 6$ ,  $6 + 6 = 12$ . Exception:  $1 + 1$  (snake eyes) = 12.

If you roll and the total on die equals 7, get 1 point.

ex:  $3 + 4$ ,  $5 + 2$ .

If you get points, roll again. If not next person's turn.

When someone hits 77, or over, they almost win. lol Other players get one more roll to try to accumulate points and get to 77, if they don't get any, their turn is over. After that-person at 77 or over wins.

# LOSING MY VIRGINITY

BY BRIANNA BENOZICH

I was always a late bloomer ever since I was a little kid. While most girls were getting their first period, I was learning the truth about Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny. Then while I got my first period, the other girls were already getting pregnancy scares. I was 21 when I lost my virginity. At that point I just wanted to get it over with, still being a virgin felt like a burden. It felt like something that's been ignored on my to do list for too long, the equivalent of laundry.

It was Valentine's Day and now that I was 21 I decided to go to my first lesbian bar. I put on my nicest sweater and beanie, looking like Stuart Little, and walked to the Gayborhood. It was my first time in Gayborhood at night and I was in awe, I thought like I had just landed in Oz. There were sparkles in my eyes, both from all the sequins and from seeing other women who looked just like me for the first time. I walked into the Toasted Walnut, a pre-Covid lesbian bar, and immediately started downing drinks to gain some confidence. Instead of gaining confidence, I broke the seal and peed about three times before even talking to a girl.

I finally started talking to this emo girl who looked like she stepped out of a time machine from 2007, complete with the finest Hot Topic clothes from the back section of the store. "Let's get out of here," she said. I was so excited, I thought we were gonna go back to her place, but she instead pulled me into the supply closet. As I tried to unzip my pants while she took her shirt off, the mop fell over and whacked me on the head.

That's when the door opened. It was the owner of the bar, a short little old butch, wearing a heart-covered suit. "Ladies," she beamed, "I love the enthusiasm but get the fuck out of my closet." As I was seeing the humor of kicking a newly out-of-the-closet gay kid out of the closet, my date apologized and pulled me out of the closet. "I know somewhere else we could go," she said. Finally, back to her place.

Nope, we went into the bathroom of the bar.

Now, for a lesbian bar, it was very strange that there was only one bathroom for customers and it was a one bathroom room. As my date ate me out like a pie eating contest, I saw sparkles again. This is what pleasure feels like? This is what a real human feels like and not a vibrator that I bought from Spencer's once after school? As the sparkles floated around my eyes, there was a banging on the door. Me and my date quickly got dressed and opened the door. Outside the door was a long line of about seven angry lesbians who all had to pee. We sheepishly smiled at them as we left the bathroom. "Hey, your fly's down," one of the angry lesbians told me.

After leaving the bar, I walked my date back to her apartment. Finally, was this the moment that I would be invited up and things would really happen like they do in the movies? As my date walked up the stairs, she smiled at me and said, "Thanks for tonight, now I can cross bathroom off my bucket list. Get home safe."

Wow, I was just being used to cross off a list item just like how I was using her for the same thing. Is this what one night stands are really about? Being used and using others for pleasure? I guess so, but at least I crossed sex off my to do list.





PHOTO BY ANONYMOUS

## HOT TAKE: NO MORE FRENCH BULLDOGS.

Stop breeding them. Stop buying them. Please, for the love of all that is holy.

Did you know that each frenchie you see was born via C-section because skulls of French bulldog puppies are too large to fit through the birth canal? Did you know that many French bulldogs need surgical correction of their soft palates in order to breathe correctly? Did you also know that French bulldogs often suffer from heat stroke because they can't oxygenate themselves appropriately?

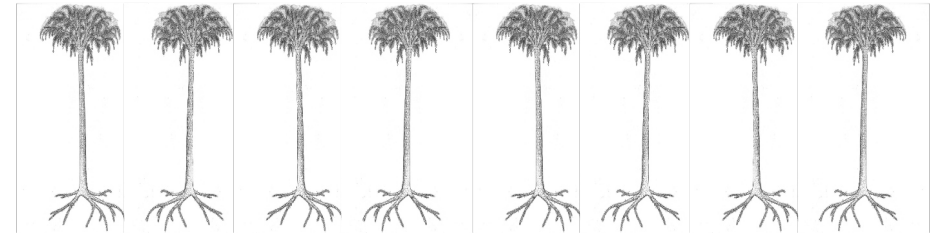
Now you know. No more French bulldogs.

*Disclaimer: French bulldogs that already exist, I love you. You're deserving of care, medical attention, and happy lives. It's not your fault. You deserved better. You quite literally didn't ask to be born. —MJC*



# I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I WANT TO DO WITH MY LIFE

BY GRANT L.



WHEN those ancient fish dredged themselves out of the brackish mire they did so without serious cause or consideration. DRIVEN to land by forces out of their understanding (one fin in front of the other, as it was), they unknowingly wrought the future of our conscious existence. BY the time their cold-blooded bodies transmuted and the lava plumes dotting the Earth grew tepid, it was too late. OUR fate as the unwarranted inheritors of the planet became set as soon as we differentiated ourselves from the wilderness; tools, spears, flames, clothes and an uncanny curiosity birthed the fundamental manifest destiny that necessitated humanity's global conquest. DESIRE for more – desire for absolute agency – desire for comfort and satisfaction, in whatever form that may comprise – these are things that all living beings likely covet, but the length to which we yearn and pine and strive and machinate in service of ourselves blows anything else out of the water (save for those fish – they began *walking*, remember?).

TO want is equal parts a biological necessity as it is an environmental imposition; it's so deeply ingrained that it's easy to assume that's the reason we're here at all. FIND, acquire, seek, locate, obtain, pursue, chase, gain, track, earn, secure, amass, gather, and otherwise *get our grubby little hands on whatever we need* is the underlying basis for everything we've ever done – it's driven the most tender of kisses and the most violent of massacres, those leading either charge just seeking separate spoils. "TRUE" want can overshadow all empathy, logic, and care for others; consider how greedy, selfish recklessness has driven the continual landslide-belly-up ruination that warms our oceans and leaves us with, ostensibly, the largest possible issue that could ever have been created. PURPOSE finds itself hard to purchase when funds and rivers run dry, all while the promise of a planet and a future withers under the thumbs of those who simply *wanted* more.

EXPECT to find yourself in the future reflecting on that which you've accomplished – how many achievements came from your own volition, rather than that depthless, covetous pit inside you? DISAPPOINTMENT often arrives in these moments of contemplation, where silent eulogies lament the years "wasted", and the time spent on aimless frivolities madden the senses – but what's frivolous or wasted are both self-defined, often causing undue distress. TO live is to want, yes – and to live is often to suffer for those desires (especially in this age of unavoidable comparison) – but there is also reason, joy, and satisfaction to be found outside of a constant pursuit for your next goalpost. FOLLOW the paths our ancestors forged as they wriggled atop the tide-swept sands, scales gleaming in the moonlight; wander deliberately towards that unseen future, but don't let your fear of the air stop you from enjoying the beach.

# LOCAL MUSIC:

## eX-TRADITION

REVIEW & PHOTOS BY VINCE BARRERAS



eX-Tradition - *The Holy Pervert*

It's been 209 days since **The Ire** played their last show at the **First Unitarian Church**. It was a bittersweet show filled with many laughs, cries, and friends all gathered to witness one of Philadelphia's best punk bands sent off into the sunset. What made The Ire special was their musicianship and their camaraderie. It's always fun seeing your friends play a gig, but when you can tell how tightly held together they are it creates an even more special experience. The Ire wore their influences on their sleeve but made something that was uniquely their own. I came to love The Ire throughout the years, and was lucky enough to see and photograph them countless times.

Out of the ashes is birthed **eX-Tradition**. The new post-punk/new wave band based out of Philadelphia just released their debut EP "*The Holy Pervert*" with new vocalist **Geoff R. Smith** (of **Haldol**, **The Spine**, and **Spiral Path**). Geoff solidifies this lineup that digs deeper into more poppy tunes with a more new wave slant than the Ire previously flirted with. "A Total Lifespan" is a banger, for lack of a better word. "The Holy Pervert" is my personal favorite. That twinkly guitar riff is so sick and iconic, I find it stuck in my head constantly. Geoff's vocals come in and out of each verse, giving each instrument a time to shine without feeling tired or forced. Instrumentally, it's deep and there's a lot going on, with different guitar textures interwoven. "The Rot (Of Wealth)" is probably the most exciting track because it feels like a different vibe entirely than the others. It maintains the band's identity, the context of The Ire, but more importantly expands the universe of what eX-Tradition can and will become and explore.



on eX-Tradition's First Show at Cousin Danny's (7/30/24)

Only a few days after **eX-Tradition** dropped *The Holy Pervert*, the band announced what would be their first show, at none other than West Philly staple **Cousin Danny's**. These are some of the most inspiring musicians in Philly, and following all of their bands is a must: **Haldol**, **Spiral Path**, **The Spine** (**Geoff R. Smith**); **Positronix**, **Cult Objects** (**Ande Ciampa**); **The Guests** (**Florence Lin**); **K.O.S.**, and **Dark Thoughts** (**Daniel Cox**) are some of the finest bands in Philly, covering a wide range of sounds. eX-Tradition banged through all the songs on their EP, plus a few more that could be released later in the year. One thing that is immediately apparent is the band's intensity when it comes to performing, and their presence. All business. They slapped through this set with authority and left the room really hype to have this band be a part of our music community. You should be keeping an eye out for this band—this is just the beginning.



# SLOUCHING TOWARDS BETHLEHAM: ABANDONED BY GOD AT THE HOT DOG SHOW



BY  
LARISSA SAPKO

*Content warning/reader beware: This story is disgusting and contains many references to vomit. It may put you off hot dogs for life.*

The 4333 Collective rocked the Philadelphia DIY community this summer when they announced their First Annual (?) Hot Dog Eating Contest and Hardcore Show. As the Citywide's Senior Field Correspondent it was my duty to cover this historic occasion, so on a balmy August evening I toddled on down to the Ukrainian American Citizens' Association to catch the action. The venue is down the street from a Ukrainian Catholic cathedral, which features a mural of Jesus Christ gazing placidly down at passers-by from above the doors. At the time this seemed like a good omen and I approached the Ukie Club with a carefree heart. But the Lord's presence was nowhere to be felt at the hot dog eating contest.

Before the main event began, I circulated in the crowd and interviewed a few of the competitors, including Jim E. Brown. I hated every second of talking to him. Despite appearing to be a full grown Philadelphian man, Brown is actually a nineteen year old from Manchester, UK. He said he wasn't very competitive, so I asked if he was there for the love of the game. He replied, "Not really. I don't love anything. I dislike myself." What a sad sack!

I went off to find Deacon, who seemed to be the crowd favorite - I overheard someone say "My mom likes Deacon more than she likes me." Deacon was accompanied by his manager Ryan, who seemed like a real industry shark. "I was 100% stretching the gut (to prepare)," Deacon told me. "I've been eating big for weeks. I got my technique down to a science: It's a dog every 45 seconds." Deacon was an adherent of the Kobayashi technique: "You take the dog out of the bun. You snap it in half, you eat it double-barrel. While you're doing that, you break the bun, dunk it in the water, and then you basically drink it."

Deacon, Ryan, and a third member of their organization then broke off into a tense tete-a-tete. The phrase "money laundering" was thrown around. I began to suspect that Team Deacon was not operating entirely aboveboard. In fact, the longer the evening went on, the more I detected the fetid odor of corruption permeating the whole affair. Everyone seemed to have placed bets on the outcome, for instance. When pressed on the issue, a representative of the 4333 Collective sniffed "4333 has no ties to whatever gambling may be happening in this competition." But if you ask me, the whole thing stank. And it was about to get stinkier.

Hot dog o'clock finally arrived. A long table was set up on the stage, with eight Home Depot buckets placed ominously below it. The crowd pressed forward in sweaty anticipation as hot dog-themed techno pulsed in the speakers. The contest's host, podcaster Brace Belden, leapt onstage to kick things off and whip the audience into a frenzy. "TONIGHT!" Belden howled. "We are taking gluttony OFF the list of Seven Deadly Sins! Tonight you will see EIGHT PIGS gorge themselves on WET HOT DOGS!" He called the contestants onstage one by one. Besides Jim E. Brown and Deacon, they were: Christian, a beige young man from Connecticut, Luther Vangross, the vampiric host of "Luther's Mid-Fright Snack," Jarrod McGee, who Belden introduced as "Philly's top drunk driver," an absolute tank of a man named Bobko, TJ from Soul Glo (the TJ stands for TJ), and Jesse "The Wildcard" James, whose ponytail, goatee and formal vest made him look like a waiter at a fancy restaurant from the 1990s.

The contest began and I wish it hadn't. The contenders hunched grimly over their wieners, stuffing their faces to a remix of the Action News theme song. Belden scampered back and forth behind them, making loud puking noises. I think it would be compassionate to draw a veil over the ensuing events. I will say two things: 1) the smell of those hot dogs (in particular, the yeasty, waterlogged buns) will haunt me until I die and 2) the puking started way earlier and was much more widespread than I had previously guessed. Also Luther Vangross took his intestines out (he had told me he might) and threw them into the crowd. The scene was gruesome on a Biblical scale, the kind of milieu a resident of Sodom or Gomorrah might enjoy. It was revolting. It was magnificent.

The first round ended in a tie and the contest went to sudden death. This was supposed to just be between Jesse and Jim E. Brown but Deacon maneuvered his way in as well. Jesse threw up after the first round but Jim and Deacon hadn't. This gave Jesse a strategic advantage, and he was able to finish his hot dogs first. Deacon finished second, followed by Jim. Then, a shocking twist: Jim shrieked "HE'S GOT HOT DOGS IN HIS BACK POCKET!" and spun Deacon around. His rival did indeed have several hot dogs concealed on his person, although he insisted that Jim had planted the franks. Belden demoted Deacon from second place to third as a penalty. In protest, Deacon launched himself headfirst into a large trash can that was sitting on stage. The image of his legs sticking out of the trash can, feet kicking impotently in the air, was as poignant a symbol of defeat as I've ever seen.

After the crowds subsided, I caught up with Jesse outside. The champ was clutching his trophy (looked like a bowling trophy with a fake hot dog attached to it) and basking in the warm glow of victory. I asked him whether he'd had an unfair advantage in the sudden-death round because he had puked in the first round. Jesse was unruffled. "If you're not cheating, you're not winning," he told me. He plans to compete again next year. In fact, everyone I spoke to did, except for TJ who seemed to be having some sort of acute moral crisis brought on by the experience. Deacon told The Citywide that he and Jim E. Brown have a score to settle. "It was rigged! Stop the count! Jim E. Brown took his British hand and he put it in my back pocket. (The British) colonized half the fuckin world and now they want to colonize my back pocket."

All in all, it was a totally depraved evening. A repulsive festival of underhandedness and degeneracy. Belden agreed. "It was one of the nastiest tableaux I've ever seen in my fucking life," he said. "The scent of the boiled hot dogs was bad enough, but then once the vomiting started, I was afraid it would catch on like some kind of Philadelphian plague, and everyone would start vomiting." He then took the opportunity to make some extremely disparaging comments about the city of Philadelphia which I will not repeat. I took my leave of the Ukie Club and walked off into the humid August dusk, utterly shaken by what I had seen. As I passed the Cathedral, I raised my eyes to Jesus, hoping for spiritual renewal, a promise that the next day's sunrise would cleanse us all of the moral stains we had accrued that night. Instead, I felt nothing.



# WARNING



IF YOU SEE THESE MEN, DO NOT  
GIVE THEM BEER. THEY ARE EVIL.  
AND ARE PROBABLY UP TO NO  
GOOD SHENNANIGANS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
VISIT [ROCKERSHOW.COM](http://ROCKERSHOW.COM)



*Bargain (2023, digital)* BY AMANDA K. RETOTAR

# COMMUNITY COLLEGE UNION ORGANIZERS REIMAGINING WHAT LABOR ORGANIZING CAN LOOK LIKE

**JEREMY KEIM-SHENK** spoke with two active members of the **Faculty and Staff Federation of Community College of Philadelphia (FSFCCP)** about their efforts to secure better outcomes for faculty, staff, and students at the only public, open-admission higher education institution in Philly. **Marissa (MJV)** is an English professor and secretary of the FSFCCP. **Charlie (CA)** is an adjunct, anarchist, and agitator who teaches English at CCP.

**2024 is a big year for many local public sector unions negotiating new contracts. What are the key demands which the community college union (FSFCCP) is fighting for?**

**MJV:** Our union represents full-time and part-time faculty, as well as classified staff, from secretaries to IT to housekeeping. Our key things include raises that account for inflation, and that's the hardest lift. With classified staff, we also are looking for better pay for experience and living wages for everybody. Currently the minimum is \$16/hour. For adjuncts, we want pay parity. We're also pushing back against a proposal that would effectively eliminate tenure.

**We want CCP to be Philadelphia's pride. We want the city to fund us fully and invest in our students.**

don't know you have a right to free classes, medical care. This is very much in keeping with the neoliberal model of the university since the 80s. So [as] a counter to that, we're asking for a common space for adjuncts to meet with students or even to socialize, the sort of third place that is required to have any sort of solidarity.

To speak briefly for classified employees—everyone who doesn't teach, e.g. janitors—there's a pervasive culture of management bullying them to the point where they leave or get reassigned to positions with even less pay. We're trying to get an anti-bullying clause that has some teeth.

There's also energy from students to be more involved in running the college. As far as we know, the board of directors lives on another planet. Management has a very different experience. They don't suffer the alternating arctic winds and sweltering air on campus. They think everything's fine. CCP's costs are to be paid 1/3 by the state, 1/3 by the city, 1/3 by student tuition. Guess which two of those have been truant historically.

**MJV:** In the past 40-45 years, we're probably short-changed around \$400 million. Community college used to have over 20,000 students; it has significantly less now. And 75% of those students are Black and brown historically. Over the past 45 years, while our faculty has gotten increasingly diverse and female, starting salaries for full-time faculty have decreased about 50%, accounting for inflation. We got an additional \$5 million from the City this year, but it may just be one-time. That \$400 million short-changing was paid for on the backs of students, [whose] debt has skyrocketed, and on the backs of faculty and staff.

**Could you talk more about how bargaining for the common good has factored into strategy?**

**CA:** The union decided to go with open bargaining, where you get as many people from

The fourth main thing would be our "bargaining for the common good" proposals. We want CCP to be Philadelphia's pride. We want the city to fund us fully and invest in our students. We have proposals for TransPasses for all students, and to provide childcare for students who need it.

**CA:** There's also stuff that would make it more pleasant to work at CCP. I'm an adjunct—we're easily the largest group, but also horrifically atomized. It's not uncommon for an adjunct to never talk to another adjunct, just come in, teach your class; you don't know you have a union, you

the union into the negotiation room as possible. There are ground rules: Keep your game face on, don't react to whatever provocations management gives you, pay attention. And you can pass notes up to the negotiation team, which allows for a more emergent quality to negotiations, as well as people seeing the not-at-all-veiled contempt that management has for workers. Students decided they wanted to come into an open bargaining session. Management did not want us to have open bargaining. The way we ultimately got it, after a lot of good faith efforts by our union co-chairs, was just showing up and making it so.

**MJV:** The argument for open bargaining was "this impacts their lives, they should get to be here." The students organized themselves and brought their friends. Management refused to come into the room when students showed up, and we were like, "Well, you're kicking them out, we're not kicking them out." And then the students were like, "Let's call the media." Our working conditions are their learning conditions. Open bargaining and bargaining for the common good are both somewhat newer union tactics that we have learned about, been trained in, and I think there's a lot more to be won through those tactics. [FSFCCP is] learning from what Chicago and LA teachers' unions have been able to do to expand the conversation.

**CA:** It also helps slow or prevent co-optation of union leadership.

**MJV:** Yeah, we're accountable to our members. And it helps combat disinformation and divide-and-conquer tactics which work really remarkably well all the fucking time. Within our three units, we have very different compensation, ideas of ourselves, so there are tension points and wedges. So we're trying to build solidarity across race and class lines, across education, and that's the hard work that unions must do. A lot of the current union leadership believe that bargaining for the common good and open bargaining are much more democratic and powerful, both for material gains and for community engagement. You never want to have leadership going in a direction that membership isn't. There's been a ton of member education; it's definitely different from the old service model of unionizing. It requires members to lead, more contributions from rank and file.

**Philadelphia has not seen us as a real college educating the most Philadelphians in the city.**

What the administration want us to believe is that there's this much of the pie and everybody's got to divide it—bargain against yourselves. And we're really challenging that whole model and saying the scarcity mindset is wrong. We don't have a board of trustees that's advocating for us; they want to play nice with the mayor and just have this on their resume and have a few token scholarship kids, and that model fails the vast majority of our students. We think the Catto Scholarship is great, but it largely only applies to students who can afford to attend full-time. Those who are being left out the most are predominantly Black women, 20s and older, who are going part-time, who get way too much student debt because they don't have the support they need. We want Catto for all.

Chronic disinvestment has hurt our students' outcomes, in addition to our faculty and staff who have dedicated our whole lives serving our city, essentially taking pay cuts the whole time. We do not have pensions. We also don't have any childcare built in.

**How can people support FSFCCP?**

**CA:** When we strike, donate to our strike fund and come down to the pickets!

**MJV:** Also, communicating to representatives, helping us raise our profile, telling Mayor Parker and City Council how important community college is. Philadelphia has not seen us as a real college educating the most Philadelphians in the city. Instead we talk about Penn and Temple and wherever else, and they're largely educating suburban kids, or others, nationally and internationally. To me it's such a blind spot of the Left to ignore community colleges, [which] almost half of the nation's undergraduates attend and where class is a key factor. I think community college provides such an opportunity for what the Left claims to want and be fighting for.

**Our working conditions are their learning conditions.**



# WOODMARE

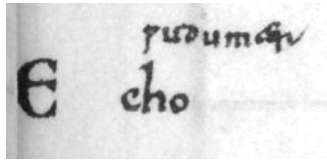
BY PETER WAKEMAN SCHRANZ

Volume I of Thomas Cockayne's *Leechdoms, Wortcunning, and Starcraft of Early England* informs us of the word constituting this essay's title, a word that has almost fallen entirely from the grasp of our mouths. What business that tome has in discussing the matter of Woodmares lies in its many recipes for use against evil spirits:

The only word I know in our language that still dons the living use of the suffix "-mare" is of course nightmare. Essentially, this usage of "mare" refers to a malevolent spirit -- sources I've consulted are at ease describing such spirits as elves -- whose livelihood it is to cause us mischief. Thus a nightmare is the visitation of a dreadful elf into our brains as we sleep, or rather, the elf itself, whose presence manifests as, in a recent personal example, the experience of an ascent on a roller coaster with exclusively broken seatbelts.



*Superst. Suppl.*



The image above is the entry for echo in the *Cleopatra Glossaries*, and its Anglo-Saxon translation: *pudumær*, which these days it is fair to render as woodmare. Note the handsome letter wynn (or pynn, or just *p*, derived from the rune *f*). Cf. *wuduward*, Anglo-Saxon for "forester," that is "wood-ward" or "wood-keeper." Cf. also *zmora*, Polish for "nightmare."

THE Jacob Grimm, in *Teutonic Mythology* (via the 1888 translation by J.S. Stallybrass), harvested and abbreviated quite a bit on this matter, recording, "AS. *wudu-mær*, both echo and *nympha silvestris*. The woodman calls fr. the wood, *Megenb.* 16, 20. Böcler's *Superst. of the Esths* p. 146 gives their names for the echo: squint-eye, wood's reply, elf-son's cry; Possart p. 163-4 says, the mocking wood-elf mets *halias* makes the echo (*Suppl.* to 480). Echo is the silvan voice of Faunus, *Picus* (conf. woodpecker and Vila), Klausen pp. 844. 1141; the Mongols take a similar view of it, *Petersb. bull* 1858, col 70. In the *Ir. märchen* 1, 292 echo is not 'muc alla,' but *macalla* or *alla bair*, Gael. *mactalla*, son of the rock, *Ahlw.* Oisian 3. 336."

Homage to whoever can find hide or hair of this curious bibliography, but praise belongs to Dr. Grimm for mapping the cries of elves in every copse from Ireland to Mongolia.

## *Scraefmare*

The Anglo-Saxon notion isn't unique, then, that echoes are the voices of elves in the woods mocking us. I'm not at all skeptical that echoes arise enough in the woods that the two elements at some point came to be associated, but it's curious to me that the Anglo-Saxon word for echo isn't something like "scraefmare," that is "cave-mare." For every one echo I've heard in the woods, I've heard ten in a cave.

But enough of all this about caves. Most pleasing of all is this category full of diverse mares. All that's needed for entry into the category is an illusory essence. Mr. Cockayne himself goes wild as he writes, "I have somewhere read of a gentleman, who must always sleep sitting in a chair, for as soon as he took a reclining position, he was attacked by a spectre skeleton which throttled him; even in the chair, he would sometimes in his sleep drop down, and was immediately attacked by his frightful sleepmare..." (!)

That the author didn't find nightmare suitable in this case is a wondrous phenomenon. Were it not for the recovery of at least one other word suffixed with "-mare," we could compare "sleepmare" to formulations such as "weatherstorm" and "foodlunch."

## *Digression*

Denizens of my city may be reminded of the Woodmere Art Museum, although "mere" and "mare" have entirely different meanings. In English "mere" generally denotes a shallow lake, pond, or pool, especially in England itself, where one can barely take a step without filling one's boot with mere-mud.

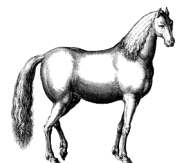
And may I never again confuse "mere" with "mire." A woodmire would produce absurdities: the ecologists divide wetlands into several varieties, some of the most notable being swamps, those wetlands capable of supporting woody vegetation; marshes, wetlands predominated by grasses; and mires, wetlands incapable of rearing any vascular plants at all, which must instead be content with mosses and other low worts.

## *Kenning*

I maintain that "Woodmare" is a kenning, that is a metaphorical two-word circumlocution. Another common example is "sky candle," for the sun. Borges in his discussion of kennings produced "sword water" for blood. I thought "bear hall" was good for a cave, but my girlfriend doesn't like it. I'm not a linguist, a poet, or a student of Old English, but all the same I insist that in "woodmare" we have another kenning. Its purpose is pragmatic: no native word was forthcoming, so native elf-lore was recruited to give a word to the marvel of the echo, until "echo" overtook "woodmare" as Middle English developed. In the author's opinion this was a catastrophe.

## *Mare as in Female Horse*

Completely unrelated believe it or not.



# HEATWAVE

BY BRIANNA BENOZICH

Growing up in Philly during a heat wave meant you only had a few options of what to do that day. You could either stay inside with your Dollar General bought box fan, find someone who had an above ground pool, or go down the shore. For my family, we had a fourth option, go to Bellmawr Lake. Bellmawr Lake is a manmade lake surrounded by a beach which has it all, from a bar with frozen drinks to dollar hot dogs to the most exciting thing to a kid, a diving board. As a ten-year-old kid, the diving board called my name like a mermaid calling the names of horny sailors. As I watched the teen boys all flipping off the board, I envisioned myself doing the same thing and everyone cheering me on.

"You can't do any flips," my older sister Aimee said. "You can't even do a cartwheel." I was going to prove Aimee wrong, I was gonna be the big shot of this beach of blue collared folks on their day off. Everyone would cheer me on and raise their koozie held beers in the air for me. The only problem was that the diving board was at the deep end of the lake, where you couldn't touch the ground. I didn't let that stop me, though. I swam out and as I swam, I stopped feeling the ground below my feet. *Boy, how far is this diving board?* I thought. The more I swam, the further the diving board seemed to be. That's when I realized I was too tired to swim any further. "I'm done," I yelled out to Aimee, "I can't swim anymore." Aimee, from across the lake, yelled out, "What do you mean you're done?"

I now felt myself sinking in the water. *Oh shit, is this what drowning is?* As I sank into the water while flailing my arms, I saw Aimee swiftly swimming in my direction. When she reached me, she grabbed hold of me and yelled, "Jesus, this is deep!" That was when Aimee realized she couldn't swim any further either. We yelled out for help until a lifeguard rowed over to us in a small canoe. We couldn't all fit in the small canoe so Aimee and I held on to the side of the canoe as the pimply-faced lifeguard rowed us back to shore. I was in shock on the way home that day, my older sister was willing to put herself in danger just to save my life. Did she love me that much or was that scared of telling Mom and Dad that I died under her supervision? Either way, I knew I would do the same for her, even if that meant embarrassing myself in front of a whole beach of people.



## BOOK REVIEW: *THE HEAT WILL KILL YOU FIRST* BY JEFF GOODELL

"When heat comes, it's invisible," writes climate journalist Jeff Goodell in *The Heat Will Kill You First*, his latest book on the dangers of our new, hotter reality. The title certainly grabs your attention, a lot like your climate organizer friend (hi!) grabbing you at a party to shout about wet bulb temperature. Goodell writes that his goal is to get us to think about heat in a different way, as "an active force, one that can bend railroad tracks and kill you before you even understand that your life is at risk."

Written in an easy to read narrative that, for example, explains the biology of how our bodies react and break down from excessive heat, the book isn't too heavy on jargon or hard science. Goodell talks about a range of topics such as how a warming world exacerbates the spread of future pandemics, the impact of heat on the ocean, and the intersection with labor safety for undocumented farm workers. I especially liked when he talked about how giving everyone an air conditioner is not the solution. We have tried and true methods of building and designing our homes, buildings, and communities to utilize air flow and shade. He doesn't say it, but you can connect the dots to a larger call for degrowth. Goodell doesn't claim to know the answers, but I hope the book succeeds in getting one to reconsider our relationship to the heat, which may be the first step, as Goodell says, to building "a better world if we want to."

- SUNHEE VOLZ



PHOTO BY AMELIA PITCHERELLA



LET'S COLOR!  
HERALD'S DANCE!

THIS SUMMER, THE SUMMER  
OF 50 FIRST DATES, I HAVE  
FELT SO HOT & POWERFUL SEX  
& CONFIDENT. MY TOP 10 HOT  
MOMENT, SUMMER 2024:  
SENDING NUDES, EXPLORING  
NEW PARTNERS BODIES, BEING  
VULNERABLE WITH THEM & TRUST  
ING THEM WITH MY BODY. MAKING  
OUT 1/2 OF MY SOBER, HOT  
FRIENDS AT ONCE SKINNY DIPPING  
HONESTLY SKIN ON SKIN CONTACT:  
CAKE HAND HOLDING, CONNECT  
ING CONVERSATIONS, EYE CONTACT  
GRINDING MY BODY UP AGAINST MY  
PARTNER'S & KISSING THEIR  
NECK, LIPS, NIPPLES, ALL OVER

ART BY ERICA



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*Wildwood (Digital, 2023)* BY AMANDA K. RETOTAR



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