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ISSUE
FUCKING

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IN EDMONTON

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eyes

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PUNK
FLYERS

@spywhales



MAD
BOMBER
SOCIETY

#YEG UNCOVERED

TEENAGE BOTTLE ROCKET
THE HISTORY OF PUNK JENNY WOOD
ak-7478

@BROKE_IN_EDMONTON



Letter from the Editor

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Issue 38
December 2024

This zine is published whenever I feel like it, which isn't often.

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This zine was created on an expired copy of Adobe InDesign CS6 provided to me by my regular employer.

A few months ago, I was thinking about how I hadn't been to a movie theater in a few years (last time was for *John Wick 4*). To be honest, I hate movie theaters. A friend got back from a visit to the UK, and one of my most pressing questions to him was "What movies did you watch on the flight?" So the idea to return to Edmonton was initially inspired by the thought of watching movies. Will *Deadpool* and *Wolverine* be on the flight? There are so many I haven't seen.

I also realised that, in the last 20 years since December 2004/January 2005, every single one of my return visits to Edmonton has been in the late spring or summer. This has instilled in me a markedly artificial perception of my hometown as a land of mild warmth, 17 hours of daylight, and outdoor patios. So even though it may sound incredibly masochistic, I figured it was time for me to experience an Edmonton winter again. I don't know what to expect: will there be snow on the ground yet? Will I experience the wildfire conditions and heavy smoke that have made global headlines in recent years? How well will my clothes stand up when it gets its coldest?

My original idea was to keep this trip a surprise, and just show up at my parents' home unannounced. This quickly fell apart, so I'll probably leave the Skinhead Santa costume behind in Korea.

As I've had to face the march of time, it left me wondering what my future with this city could possibly be. My parents are both in their 70s now, and while they probably have many years left — who knows, maybe more than me — it is increasingly disturbingly possible to imagine a future where I no longer have any close living relatives in Edmonton. In 20 years from now, will I still visit? I'm not ready to make predictions.

This issue has a lot of the hallmarks of the zine, including the survey questions answered anonymously, the "Dog People or Cat People" quiz, the Bimonthly Bootfuck (derived from the Burlap Sack, a still-ongoing feature in a local publication I used to write for), and the Choose Your Own Adv-I Mean Path" story, which begins at the bottom of this page. Fight your way through zombie apocalypse-era Edmonton and see if you can survive, or possibly even destroy the human race yourself.

I made a list of people I wanted to interview, and the ones who replied in time are all featured in this zine. I hope it presents various perspectives on the city, looking both back into the past and also outward, tracing down people who like me have escaped from Edmonton.

This zine has a long history of Christmas issues, for whatever reason. You're reading Broke in Edmonton 2, but I'm counting it technically as the 38th issue of Broke. The first Broke in Edmonton was released on my last visit in summer 2023, and it consisted mainly of content of direct interest to Edmonton-based readers that had already been published in previous Broke in Koreas. I decided from that visit that I would really like to put together a more proper zine, filled with original content, to do to you guys what I've been doing to Korea. 2025 will be this zine's 20th anniversary, and I'm planning to reach issue 40, keeping up with the 10th anniversary when I hit 20 issues. There will probably, hopefully, be a third Broke in Edmonton, although it may take a few years. On the bright side, I already have the cover ready for that one.

Jon Twitch

Interviewees' response times

Sheri: 3 hours

Rob: 6 days

Rich: 7 days

Jenny Woo: 41 days

Darren: 43 days

Eric: 44 days

780punkflyers: 48 days

The History of Punk: 81 days

YEGuncovered: 95 days

I've started publishing interviewees' response times to interview questions, not to shame them but to frighten the next people I interview. Note that Eli doesn't get counted, and he was proactive in getting me to talk live across a 17-hour time zone difference. Also, I won't name the ones who missed out completely. They probably have their reasons, and may still appear in Broke in Edmonton 3 sometime years later.



81 days

95 days

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADV-I MEAN PATH: ZOMBIE WALL

You've been out in the woods, camping alone for the past week, blissfully unaware of whatever

the hell's been happening around the world. You haven't even seen any other campers around.

On your last day, you pack up your campsite and hike back to your car carrying all your stuff.

When you're almost there, you spot the first human you've encountered since you started this camping trip. He's sitting, slumped against a tree, and doesn't seem to have noticed you yet.

As you get closer, you can see a red stain all down his shirt, looking like blood coming from his neck or possibly head. Is he dead?

No, he's definitely moving a

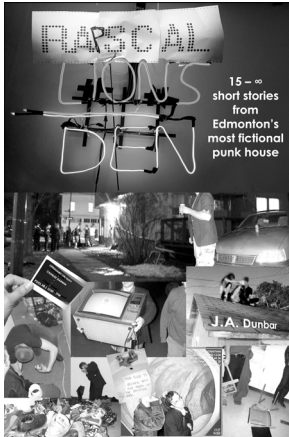
little. Maybe he's in pain. You have a first-aid kit in your pack. Do you want to help?

Of course. GO TO PAGE 3
No. GO TO PAGE 4

Yes, Broke is not just a zine, but also a very small publishing company.

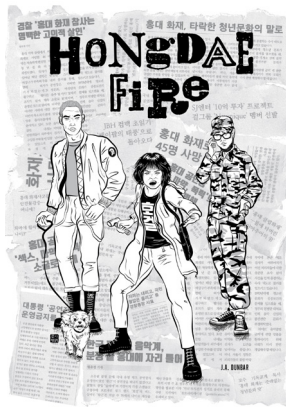
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1. RAPSCALLION'S DEN

A collection of short stories set in a punk house in Edmonton. Also has a "Choose Your Own Adv — I mean Path" story where you're a cop trying to shut it down.



2. HONGDAE FIRE

A novel set in Seoul in the 2000s. Survivors of a catastrophe struggle to get justice for their friends and try to keep the punk scene alive.



3. YANGBAN NATION

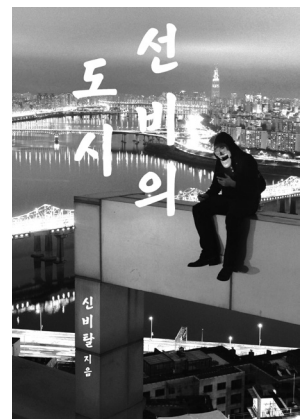
Photo book by Yangbantal, an anonymous urban explorer. Cranes, abandonments, subway tunnels, drains, and rooftops.



4. CATS ON KEYBOARDS

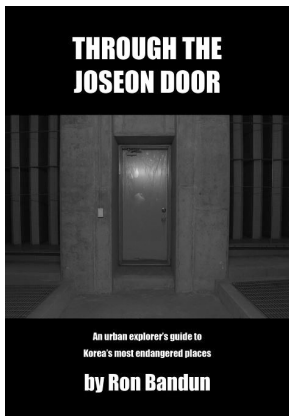
A paper zine written mostly by cats. Why is this our best seller?

(₩10,000 or 1 can of cat food)



5. SEONBI CITY

Photo book by Seonbital, a formerly anonymous urban explorer. He does the same thing as Yangbantal but with a worse attitude.



6. THROUGH THE JOSEON DOOR

A collection of 48 essays and one short story on adventures in the forbidden areas of urban Korea, written by Ron Bandun who's definitely a real person.



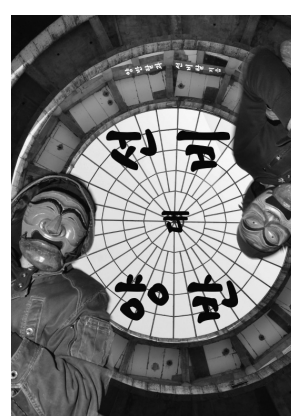
7. Bune's Home

Bunetal gets her own photo book, but it's all about the domestic setting. Is that a bit sexist?



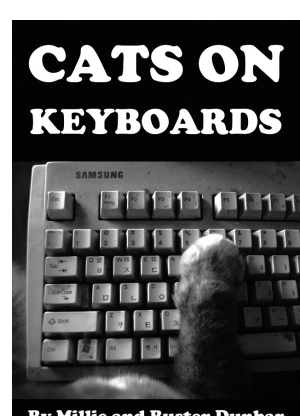
8. YANGBAN'S KOTE

The next Yangbantal book is an ode to Insadong KOTE. It was distributed at an art exhibition held there. They probably haven't found all the copies hidden all around the place.



9. YANGBAN VS SEONBI

Yangbantal and Seonbital are back, and this time they're at each other's throats.



10. CATS ON KEYBOARDS

Everyone kept buying the little paper zine, so I made this into a full-size book, you cat-enabling weirdos.

"Hey there, are you OK?" you say as you approach the stranger. You touch his neck, feeling for a pulse.

Lightning-fast, he grabs your hand and bites into your arm. "BRAAAAINS!" he wails. Have you ever wondered how

long you'd survive in a zombie apocalypse?

About 30 seconds, or maybe a full minute, if you're a slow

reader.

Maybe you should've tried reading an easier zine, one with more pictures and fewer words,

and that makes all the decisions for you.

THE END

Broke in Edmonton 2023

Jon Twitch AKA Hubbard

This originally appeared in Broke in Korea issue 35 (Christmas 2023) intended for Korea-based readers.

Only a year has passed since my last visit to my hometown, the shortest interval since 2004. Before that, my previous visit had been in 2017, leaving a five-year gap until the pandemic cleared up enough for me to return in 2022. This year, my parents didn't want to come all the way to Korea, so they tempted me to go back for another visit.

Last year I had checked off almost everything on my bucket list, so I figured this year I would be able to relax at home and spend time around my parents. But it didn't exactly work out that way, as the post-pandemic reopening meant there was a lot more going on and I was able to see more of my old friends.

Prior to my voyage, I published Broke in Edmonton issue 1, which I'm treating as equivalent to Broke in Korea 34, and kicked off the @broke_in_edmonton project.

Last year when I landed in Edmonton on 20220805, the temperature was 13 degrees Celsius when I stepped outside around 6:30pm. This time, 20230818, when I came out of the airport it was 9 degrees, although a fairly heavy rain could be blamed for that. For my first week there, it never went over 20 degrees.

My hometown is a flat city, and any views of things in the distance, such as tall buildings on the horizon or a lookout over the River Valley, can be tantalising.

Untouchable Crew

On 20230819, a Saturday, my first day back, I went to the city's main IMAX theater for a screening of "Untouchable Crew," a documentary about my hometown's early breakdancing scene. The film was produced as part of the Telus Storyhive's Black Creators Edition, a project to give a platform to talented people representing underappreciated sides of the city's history.

This film was directed by Arlo Maverick, who was a grade behind me in high school. I remember seeing him performing in the school gym once, but I have more vivid memories of his tour to Korea in 2017, when he performed at Zandari Festa. We reconnected

You skirt around him, carefully letting him mind his own business and not wanting to get any of his blood on you. Maybe he's someone dangerous, or dangerous people did this to him. You can't be too sure in this conservative world we live in.



Legal Canadian marijuana, 20230822. and I got to meet a lot of his crew, including Natalie Meyer, a talented makeup artist who handled the photography for the film.

I went with my dad, who's not a fan of hip-hop but certainly was able to appreciate the film. Unfortunately we sat near the front, so the whole time it felt like we were squished up against the cheek of whoever was on screen. The film was easy to enjoy just from listening to the stories of these middle-aged guys talking about forming an unbeatable b-boy crew in the 1980s. There was very little archival footage, because in those days there wasn't much handheld video recording equipment, but also because they kept their moves closely guarded. Breakdancing was a visual art form that propagated in a pre-visual media world. Video footage of breakdancing moves was highly sought after, and also treated as a trade secret.

Lobster Man

On day 2, a Sunday, I had supper at the home of my grade school best friend, Greg. He lives with his wife and two kids in a nice three-storey house, the top floor of which is approximately the same size as my own apartment.

Read more about this on page 26.

After supper, Greg and I did what we did so much in our youth: wandered into a ravine. At some point, we came across those Lime scooters and he was able to activate two for us. We had a fantastic ride into the River Valley, at which point my own scooter died and I had to walk out. Would have been a great revenge scheme by Lobster Man.

On Tuesday, I visited Aaron, who had been a highly trusted show promoter back in the day we all called Jebus. I'd seen him last year, and left him with a bunch of things including my books. I had given him a copy of Rapsallion's Den last year, in which there is a character

As you pass, you hear him mumble what sounds like a name. Brian?

You stop and look at him, and he gazes right back, not making eye contact but staring as if his vision is piercing into your skull. "BRAAAIINS!" he wails.

that is obviously somewhat based on him called Moses, who is landlord of the main characters and an unlikeable hippie. I explained to him that the intention was not to make a parody of him, but to make a character he could play in a TV show. This was not a Lobster Man situation.

Last year he seemed to have gone kind of low-key, but this year he was more active in promoting events, and it was good to see him in action. He even showed me a documentary about Edmonton's scene history, which ended up focusing mainly on how amazing he is.

There was a shooting situation at West Edmonton Mall, the megamall not far from my parents' home. It turned out to be a gang-related shootout in the parking lot. Last year, I'd passed through the same area, and remarked on the sign pointing the way to the shooting range, where a friend had died violently years earlier. This time (Wednesday now), I came back and saw that same sign saying "Hey! Turn back around to try out real firearms!" and suddenly it had a completely different meaning.

Another superhero

That night, I went to the Edmonton Fringe Festival, where another one of my superheroic friends was performing. Kamal Alaeddine, as he's known now, put on a one-man show in which he relived his sometimes traumatically confusing childhood. I had always known him as Matt, when as a half-Lebanese kid he'd been white-passing. When he was in high school (same grade as Arlo), he became a superhero, and he shared a great deal about that experience too (you can find a great deal about that republished in Broke 6). When I first heard there was a superhero running (well, waddling) around my high school, I decided to step into the role of a journalist and find out more. Twenty-five years later, and I'm still careening down that path, and I always cite him as the guy who pushed me down the path of journalism (or at least my version of it).

So in my first week back, I'd already met at least two real-life superheroes, plus Jebus.

I'm not even counting the Push-Up Guy, a former street performer known for, you guessed it, doing a lot of push-ups. He used to like

Oh shit, this guy's been zombified! You leap back and start running down the path toward your car.

The parking lot's up ahead, and you can see one one else is there, no other cars except your own. You're wearing a big backpack,



With Kamal Alaeddine before his Fringe play, 20230823.

hanging out at high schools, and when I ran into him in the line for Powerman's show, he mentioned he knew a former mayor of the city, back when the guy was in high school. He then said how he was a consultant to the government, and he'd predicted the day when Russia would invade Ukraine, being so accurate that even his government contact was left with jaw dropped. Which is entirely believable, I suppose.

While I was in line with this weirdo, my friend Ester arrived, and I tried to block her from having to listen to this dude (who I hadn't identified yet). Instead she seemed enthralled to be in his presence. Ester is really into urbanism in the city, running the FB page YEGuncovered.

There's an art installation at the side of a bridge on a busy mess of roads. It's just a pile of metal balls known as the Talus Dome. Earlier this year, some guy had figured out that the thing was sort of hollow, and he managed to squeeze inside, becoming trapped. Rescue workers had to cut him out,

and the whole incident made international news. Now, four months later, I was in time to see them placing a big canopy over the dome so it could be repaired out of the public eye. I don't give a shit about this thing – I think it's stupid, and only exposes the stupidity of the city's car-based culture. But when Ester said this, I told her I'd have to quote her: "I love the balls; I think they're great."

My sister flew in from Vancouver on the Thursday, and we both partook in legal drugs. She likes talking to my parents when she's high, but I guess I'm not used to it, being only used to Canada before legalisation and South Korea. Last year, I visited her in Vancouver, but for this visit I wanted there to be fewer moving parts, so we all got together in Edmonton where we wouldn't have to worry about transportation or housing.

Purple City

For my second full weekend back, I managed to score free passes to Purple City, a music festival I'd say is comparative to Zandari Festa or Block Party. It was three days long,



From right, Jebus with Eric of Open Eyes and Karlie, 20230825.

and you can't easily look back to see if this is one of those fast zombies, like the ones from World War Z.

It could be right behind you, for all you know.

You get your car keys out of your pocket, but you won't be

able to get inside the car quickly while wearing your backpack.

I'll dump the pack and jump in. GO TO PAGE 6

I'll take the time to bring my stuff with me – it might be useful later. GO TO PAGE 8

and way more expensive than those two Korean events. This year's festival featured over 60 acts at eight stages within a two-block radius, although it's worth noting that the venues were nice as hell.

I volunteered as a photographer, and they asked me to cover the Downtown Edmonton Community League venue for the first two nights, and the outdoor stage in the afternoon on day 2. I didn't have to stay glued to those places, but I had to get everything there, and I could run to other venues in between. I made it, but my camera ran out of batteries during the last band on day 2 at DECL and I shot the rest on my phone.

Purple City is named after a weird ritual that appears to be unique to the city, in which people (probably but not necessarily high) go to the Provincial Capital Legislature grounds at night and stare into the powerful orange floodlights. After about a minute, if you look away, all the cityscape around you appears purple.

The festival gave me a lot of surprises, both in terms of old friends I ran into and bands that I liked.

One person I finally met was @780punkflyers, a somewhat anonymous figure who has been posting show posters from back in the day on Instagram. I had actually shouted her (I mean them) out as one of the main inspirations for @broke_in_edmonton so it was nice to meet, and be able to hand over a tangible object giving her (I mean them) a shout-out.

One of the highlights of the festival was BatScratch, a hardcore band with a seven-year-old singer. But he only sang the first couple songs, and I showed up too late. Apparently this act was what convinced Off! (Keith Morris of Black Flag/Circle Jerks) to play the festival. I stayed long enough the first night to see the local oi band Kroovy Rookers, and saw a bit of the band Bootlicker then left, as I had to drive myself home due to my sister backing out on the first night for whatever reason.

One thing I really didn't like about Purple City was the timetable. They just provided a bunch of lists, rather than an actual timetable that lets



The Nurple, mascot of Purple City, 20230826.

you strategise where you'll go. It took a little extra mental labour to figure out where I had to be next. I later showed them examples of some of the Korean festivals' timetables, so hopefully next year they'll improve that.

On the second day, I showed up bright and early in the early afternoon with my sister, and we were there through the entire outdoor stage performance schedule. I remember meeting one of the main festival organisers, and remembering his face from over 20 years ago — I'm pretty sure I used to bootleg alcohol for him.

When the festival broke for supper, my sister took me to Fu's Repair Shop, a Chinese restaurant "speakeasy" where you have to enter through a contrived secret door. These have apparently been showing up in Korea too, and I have to admit, I think they're kind of stupid. Especially since I've been in bars in an actual speakeasy situation during the pandemic. They had soju cocktails, and when I asked what kind of soju, the (white) bartender started listing fruit flavours of those macro-sojus. I told him those aren't soju and ordered something else.

When we returned for the rest of the festival, the highlight was at the free stage, for the hardcore band Open Eyes. This trio contains members from various bands I remembered from back in the day, including the Operators, Nevertheless,

and Misdemeanor. I took so many photos, my camera died, leaving me unable to photograph one more band after, for which I used my smartphone.

Local UE

On Sunday, 20230827, the final day of Purple City which I totally skipped, a very beaten-up car arrived at my parents' suburban driveway to pick me up. This was driven by one of the local urban explorers. He whisked me off to a restaurant on the far side of the city, where about six experienced explorers from around the province, I believe all of whom I'd met on my 2017 visit, were assembled. We didn't try exploring anything, deciding just to meet up, hang out, and catch up. I later noticed that the mini-mall next door seemed abandon, but we didn't attempt anything.

The urban explorers in my



At the End of the World, 20230903.

home province work hard for the few locations they can get. If I had spent the last 20 years in this environment, I don't think I could have hacked it as one of them.

There were a lot of restaurants last year and this year that I wanted to try out, mostly for nostalgia, and after this year I got through a satisfying amount of them. I tried Arby's for the first time since 2010, and actually it exceeded my expectation. The one disappointment was they no longer served peach juice. I also had a Baconator at Wendy's, and I can see why people in Korea obsess over its time here decades ago.

Phillies vs Black Dog

For my penultimate day, I went to Whyte Ave, Edmonton's version of Hongdae, where I met up with Jim, the former main owner of Phillies in HBC, and his wife. He had moved to Edmonton a month or two previously, during which he had been accompanied by a lot of other Phillies owners/investors. Some of them had told me that during their visit, they found Edmonton boring, but when they went down to Calgary they found it more exciting. I asked Jim about this, and it turns out he lives in St. Albert, which is sort of like the Ilsan of Edmonton, a satellite community right outside city limits, and these guys visiting hadn't ever gone in and seen Edmonton up close. Calgary does seem to be pretty fun these days, but Edmonton didn't get a fair chance.

We went together to Black Dog, a fairly well-known local bar, and at that point I realised it was basically the Phillies of

Edmonton. It has a nice big open window where you can sit looking out, and a basement where there are shows. While we were there, a metal show was starting in the basement. I poked my head in to see what was going on, and all the younger people inside looked at me like I was some kind of narc. Anyway, your loss, chumps.

End of the World

On my final full day, I ran some errands with my dad, dropping a spare car off at a shop for some repairs and then picking it up after. As I drove home alone, I stopped by the University of Alberta, one of the few final stops I hoped to make.

On leaving, I was stuck in gridlock traffic in a fairly narrow road. So I pulled a Hyoja-dong detour, turning left, and sped ahead, merging back in on that road further ahead, probably saving myself 45 minutes.

I also stopped by the End of the World, a scenic former site of an elevated road that brushed past the River Valley. This had been depicted in a story from "Rapsallion's Den," in which two main characters go here looking for someone possibly suicidal. They clamber down all the way to the riverbank, and then manage to climb up. Looking at it now, I'm pretty sure this would be a remarkable athletic feat to pull off.

When I got home, we went out for a farewell dinner at Sorrentino's, a local Italian restaurant. I had actually worked here as part of a student work experience program around 1994. During that time, I stuck my finger in an industrial cheese grater which sliced the tip off. My fingertip still has scars to this day. Somehow I was overcome with fatigue, almost like a pre-emptive jetlag.

And then the next day, 20230901, I began the long journey back to Korea, back to two hungry 17-year-old cats, an RAS Garden Party, a disturbing new underground space in the city center, a native Korean urban exploring community I'd never heard of before, an electric scooter, two pages to fill a week, and a lot more.

When is or was the Edmonton scene's golden age?

(All answers contributed anonymously by interviewees featured in Broke in Edmonton 2)

The KD Lang / Junior Gone Wild / Flashback era. But to me it's always Mod night at Likwid Lounge that was killer.

1996

Was it back then? Or happening right now? Or is the Edmonton golden age all happening at once?

The mid-80s were great for punk, hardcore, college rock, goth and new wave, so that was a really cool time for gigs. But the Bronx era of the 90s had an explosion of bands and opportunities for those bands to play with international acts, so that was amazing as well. Seeing a lineup like SNFU with Jr Gone Wild and Jerry Jerry & the Sons of Rhythm Orchestra showed that we all got along.

There was no divide in the scenes or sub-cultures: goths would be in the pit with the crusty punx and the mods. :)

2000-2003

For me was that late '90s, early 2000s era. Everyone was firing on all cylinders and we

were all going to each other's shows... supporting one another. Our all-ages shows in this town were bonkers! You don't see that now, sometimes you get a glimpse but very few and far between.

1998-2003

Right now. So get involved!

You never did like that mall. Anyways, as you're heading for downtown, you see more and

more zombies along the roadside. There are more and more along the roadside, even on the road.

As you're passing through Glenora you see up ahead a whole crowd of zombies

effectively blockading the road up ahead. What will you do?

I'll try to find another way. GO TO PAGE 13 Ramming speed. GO TO PAGE 14

What bands do you miss most in Edmonton's punk history?

Insurrection
Poseur

Chupacabra (technically Calgary but they were better than any band in Edmonton and I know saying this will piss people off)
Godawful

SNFU, Euthanasia, early Jr Gone Wild, Cruces, Edgware Road, Imaginairs, Hippychick

The Franklins, The Wednesday Night Heroes, Les Tabernacles, The Operators

Strangled, No Problem, the Whiz Kids

Energetic Action, Switches, Slates, Latcho Drom, Rebuild/Repair

The Operators even though they weren't punk and Old Reliable who were country punk. I really miss the scene around Old Reliable even though they were all older than me and some of them were completely creepy the generation before me was always extremely my shit.

I'm sad that I was too young to see KD Lang back in the day that would have been extremely my shit.

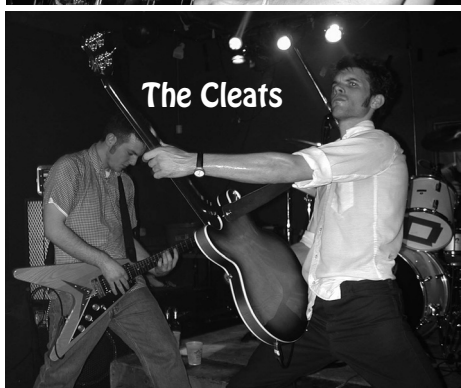
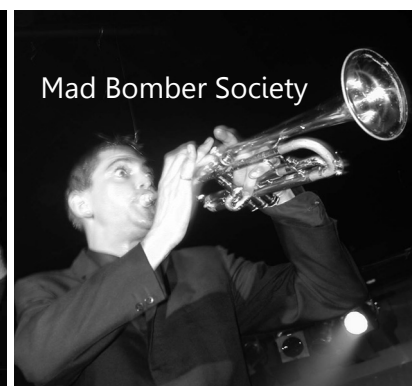
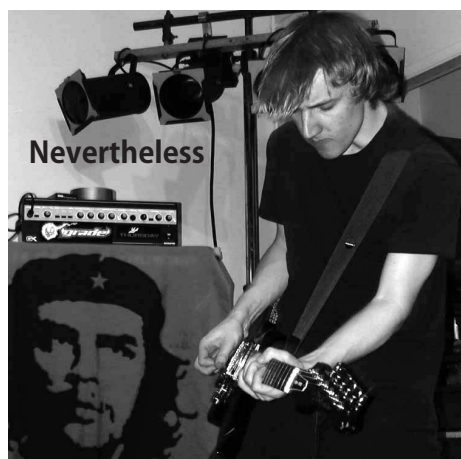
Strength In Solitude!
Generation Condemned!
Runic! The Cleats! Mad Bomber Society! Wednesday Night Heroes!

I was a huge Nevertheless fan.

You know, I was thinking recently, actually, about how fun the Bombers were. That was Mad Bomber Society. I also have rekindled a soft spot in my heart for, well, I guess there's not really a band, but the artist Division & Wellesley, that I started a record label for to put out their album. They were like a folk solo artist. This guy, Jeff Wickstrom. I would say that's up there.

THE FRANKLINS
OUR MERCURY
WEDNESDAY NIGHT
HEROES
NEVERTHELESS
THE JOHNSONS
SNFU

SNFU, Blindside, Hippychick, Unsound. The smalls. The Glorystompers. Disciples of Power! Jr. Gone Wild.. but they are still going strong. That was the first band I ever saw live as a kid. Ford Pier blew my mind playing keyboard with an orange mohawk. I was 10 and had just moved to Edmonton. Life changing. That was my gateway to punk.



You dump the pack and dive at your car, stabbing the key right into the lock and opening it. Sliding in behind the driver's seat and slamming the door behind you, you fire up the engine.

Then you look back, and the zombie is still back where you found it, leaning against that tree,

looking like it's trying to get to its feet.

Maybe not every decision is so life-and-death, after all. You get out of the car to retrieve your backpack, and then drive off.

As you drive away, heading back to larger roads, you start to see signs of some kind of

disaster. A car or two in a ditch, here or there. You pass by a tackle shop with all the windows smashed and a fire smouldering inside. Absolutely no one is around, living or undead.

What are you to do in a time like this? Going back to your campsite seems like a bad idea,

now that you've run out of marshmallows and hot dogs, so you'll have to find somewhere else to take shelter in the event this is a real zombie apocalypse.

As you reach the highway, you could turn left and head into the city, or right and go out toward whatever's out there.

Do you want to go into the city, where you could possibly warn people and receive protection yourself, or stay out here away from all the population density?

I'll go into the city. GO TO PAGE 9

I'll stay away. GO TO PAGE 10

Old Wives Bottlerocket

Jon Twitch

One time I was talking with my friend Jeff, co-owner of the Seoul label World Domination, Inc. (WDI), telling him that I'd like to figure out a band from my hometown for him to collaborate with somehow. I was rattling off bands I had connections to, and after a few he probably wouldn't have cared about, I said "Teenage Bottlerocket." He was not expecting that. Thus began Operation: TBR.

So far, it resulted in getting TBR drummer Darren's Edmonton band Old Wives on a WDI four-way split. That ended bad, when the Korean band on the label, Gumiho, had a bad breakup, spoiling the mood around the album. But it's great, so everyone should have a copy.

Darren is one of the people I knew before moving to Korea. I saw him play many times with Les Tabernacles and the Kasuals, the latter of which convinced me that pop-punk doesn't simply mean softened mainstream music. After I left, he formed Old Wives, and then ended up in TBR in 2016. If you're an Edmontonian, you probably knew this, but it still feels fresh to me, having spent barely more than a month in Edmonton in the last eight years.

Broke: Let's start with what will hopefully be the hardest question: can you list all the bands you've been in?

Darren: Let's see if I can pull this off... I'm bound to screw it up it's been a long time...

TBA
Dirty Gonch
The Chewkas
Johnny Puke
The Heartbroken
Les Tabernacles
The Kasuals
Deadbeat Dads
The Knee Jerks
Billy and the Lost Boys
Frosted Tipz
Old Wives
Teenage Bottlerocket
Fire Next Time



Darren drums for the Kasuals at A&B Sound, 20020625.



Old Wives play at the Backyard, 20220812, while a guy with a shopping cart watches through the fence.

Iron Eyes
King Thief

I'm sure I missed something there.

I recently played on the new Riptides record... not a member of the band.

Broke: Follow-up question: which one have you enjoyed being in the most?

Darren: Each one has had its unique character and chemistry. The earlier bands made me a drummer/musician and that results in me getting to do rad shit today.

Broke: How and when did you get into the scene? Can you remember your first show?

Darren: I had played "shows," but I don't think I started getting into the scene till 2000 or so. I wasn't playing as often as I wanted and I answered an ad to be in a pop punk band with influences of all Lookout! Records bands. That ended up being the Heartbroken. We practiced a lot. And I think that's how I got noticed.

Broke: Were you one of the denizens of the Royal Palace?



Darren: I was not! I saw a handful of shows there... and I lived about 3 blocks away.

Shows were great, pretty outrageous. I'd say my best memories of the Palace are blurry at best. Never played it... I don't think?

Broke: One of my favourite Les Tabernacles memories is the time To Serve and Protect showed up. You guys even appeared performing in the show. Do you have any memories of that?

Darren: I didn't till recently. I checked it out on YouTube and I was like oh yeah that night. I think Ted pissed behind his amp that night but that might've been another night altogether. Of course cops were bound to show up, everyone was drinking inside and out of those shows... and mostly underage. Good Times!

Broke: Old Wives have gone through some major lineup changes since the beginning. Are you still close with your former bandmates?

Darren: Old Wives is still going... and yeah it's had some changes over it's time. I have no ill will towards any former dudes. I even pull duty for Ted's band Iron Eyes when I have the time. Liam & I have chatted a handful of times.

Broke: Why did Old Wives

any problems with it.

Broke: Everyone knows the sad story about how Teenage Bottlerocket lost their original drummer, but when they were looking for a new drummer, how did they settle on you?

Darren: Ray was the first to see me play. He was in Edmonton working and he came to a Riff Randell show and the Wives were opening. I guess he liked my drumming... and then the next time Bottlerocket came to town we opened for them. They both were stoked on how that show went.

When Brandon passed, Ray reached out. I went to audition and here we are today.

Broke: What are the logistics of being in Teenage Bottlerocket like?

Darren: Everyone has family and work so not a lot of time to rehearse. Do your homework, have your stuff together so when we do get together it's not a shitshow.

TBR is a priority so yeah, sometimes drop what you're doing and go. We also respect each other's lives enough that we make sure the schedule doesn't get too crazy. I fly... a lot.

Broke: Has TBR made you rich?

Darren: Touring with TBR is great, but I in no way have any wealth. We are fortunate enough to have a following in many parts of the world but that doesn't equate to any riches. Touring the US is great... younger I was fascinated with touring there and I still can't believe I get to do that.

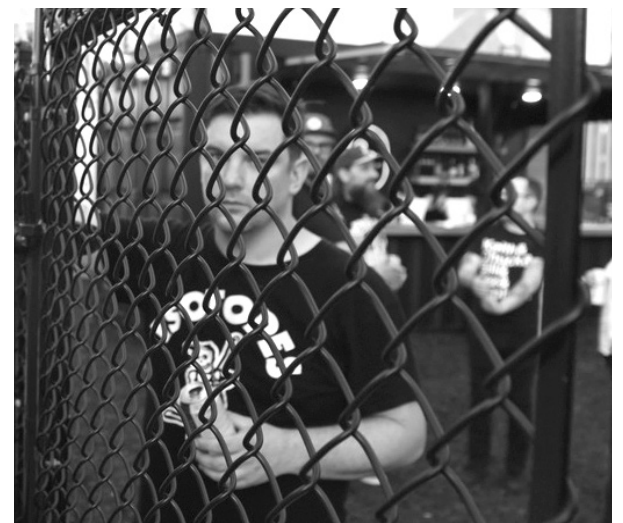
Broke: Any chance you'll ever fit Korea into an East Asia tour? Either with Old Wives or TBR, or both. Pretty please?

Darren: Korea almost happened recently... I can see it being a possibility. I'm currently on my way home from an Australia / Japan tour. It was a killer trip.

come up with that name? It's really not fun to Google. Any worries about being criticised for not being PC enough?

Darren: That name is my fault. When Liam and I started the band we needed a name and I thought of ourselves as bickering old men arguing about everything under the sun. I flipped it and thought Old Wives had a better ring to it... an angle also to "Old Wives' Tale." Whatever. Kinda dumb name for a band.

It's a name, we've never had



Darren peers through the fence at the Backyard, 20220812.

Listen at oldwiveslrr.bandcamp.com, visit fb.com/theoldwives/ and follow @oldwives780 on IG

You drive to the mall. Even today, the parking lot is almost entirely filled with cars. Maybe that's a good sign.

You pass by one entrance

where a car has been set in fire right in front of the doors. That's definitely not a good sign. It seems every entrance has been blockaded somehow. You spot

one entrance where a glass door has been shattered, so you decide to try your luck at getting in here.

Entering, you find signs of a barricade that had been built to

keep someone out, but no one is here now. Maybe you should rebuild the barricade, or perhaps it would be better to explore the mall first.

I'll rebuild the barricade so no zombies can follow me inside. GO TO PAGE 11

I'll look around first. GO TO PAGE 12

From Clone to Open Eyes

Jon Twitch

Eric was one of the people I was most looking forward to interviewing. I'd known him before leaving, and his history with the Edmonton scene dates back a few significant years earlier than me. Plus he's been in a ton of great bands of various genres, both as a major member and a bit more of a mercenary. When I returned in summer 2023, I saw him play Purple City in his new hardcore band Open Eyes, which also features Leith (long ago of instrumental hardcore band Nevertheless) and John (formerly of Misdemeanor/Our Mercury when I first knew him). First I wanted to talk history, then we moved on to Open Eyes, which just released a new album, "Illuminated."

Broke: Can you list all the bands you've been in?

Eric: I joined my first band on my 13th birthday – Blistered Flower (lol).

Cult of Pez, The Clones, Dread Not, Mad Bomber Society, Mad Banger Society, The Operators 780, The Cleats, Our Mercury, SLATES, Real Sickies (honourary Sickie! the invisible organist)...

Open Eyes – this is what I've been doing for the last few years, guitar/vocals.

Broke: How and when did you get into the scene?

Eric: I moved to Edmonton the summer of 1990. I had just turned 10. I made a friend and we got into skateboarding, heavy metal and learning to play guitar. I'd watch the Pepsi Power Hour on MuchMusic and buy those Metal Maniacs magazines so that's how I got exposed to underground music.

My first show was an all-ages Sunday matinee at Spruce Ave Hall in Edmonton. Must have been 1995? MDC, Submission Hold and Severe Beating.

Our circle of friends would skip class and go hang out at Freecloud Records, and all go to the Westmount Hall all ages DIY shows on the weekends. It's a real kindred feeling to still be connected and have friendships with the kids who I met during that era of Edmonton all-ages shows 30 years ago!

Broke: The first ska band I ever saw was the Clones, and it changed my life (minutes later I saw Mad Bomber Society, and then Planet Smashers). What are your memories of the Clones?

Eric: We formed at the start of high school. Sean Foster and I became instant friends and we wanted to start a band together. Our friend Father John played bass and was friends with Nick (DJ Rerun) who had the drum kit and garage to jam in. We were all discovering ska and reggae – the Harder They Come soundtrack, Desmond Dekker, The Specials and 2 Tone, Op Ivy, Rancid. Moon Ska and Stomp Records were emerging at that time and we were also getting into punk and skinhead subculture.

The Clones first shows were You reach the car and unlock the driver's door. Taking off your backpack, you throw it into the



Open Eyes plays at River City Revival during Purple City 20230826.

the Underground Battleground at Spruce Ave Hall, then Westmount Hall and The Ritz Diner on Stony Plain Road circa 1996.

Our 4-piece band naturally progressed from our hybrid punk-ska sound to adding a horn section. The Clones were often on the all-ages bills opening for Mad Bomber Society and whatever touring ska band was coming through. I remember playing on opening for Fishbone, Planet Smashers, Kingpins, and looking too cool at the high school battle of the bands. We recorded a demo tape at the art college, so that's how we met Nik7 (Nik Kozub).

We recorded a 4-song 7" in 1999. I recorded it on a Tascam 8-track cassette recorder. The sleeve was cut/paste collage of photos and text. Very DIY. It was all kinda cheesy but also really cool that we did what we did as a bunch of ska teenagers.

Broke: In some ways, the Operators seemed like the Clones 2.0, ironically. How positively do you remember the Operators these days?

Eric: The Operators started by accident but there was intent to get a new band going. Brad was always at the Clones shows and we met up in university and hung out all the time. I still had that Tascam 8-track so we (me, Brad & Mike Garth) packed it up that summer of 2001 and just made a bunch of freestyle ska/reggae styled songs. Friends (like you, Aaron Getz, Eli, etc) got copies of that "Lakeside" recording and assumed we had a new band. I think Brad met Ian on Napster (lol) and we heard our friend's younger brother Chris played bass, so then suddenly we were a unit.

We had this hybrid punky reggae sound that was unique from the other 'ska' bands at that time. We were exploring our sound and fusing dancehall, dub and punk. I got really inspired by those early Soul Jazz Studio One comps. I think a lot of it

right-side seat.

But it turns out that, yep, this zombie is a fast one, and it

also came from Edmonton and playing with the street punk bands in the scene.

Our first show was in 2002 opening for The Kingpins & Chris Murray. A few months after that we had big dreams realized opening for The Slackers. They really encouraged us. We did an EP and a full-length album on Longshot Music. We played Victoria Ska Fest. We opened for SNFU. We toured across Canada, and played New York City. It was friendship and adventure.

I decided to exit the band in 2004 right when The Operators were cresting. The band was all-consuming – we lived together in this 100yo haunted house, partied together, rehearsed all the time, shows nearly every weekend, doing our own recordings. I don't know, I had some mental health problems and was hiding my inner conflict at that time. It was getting harder to be the one on the mic and I felt lost. It felt like the right move at the time for me although it surely disappointed my bandmates and the fans alike. I held myself responsible for ending the band and alienated myself for a few years while trying to reconcile with myself.

We did 2 reunion shows in 2008. In many ways those shows re-established our friendship and gave the thing closure that we all needed.

I look back at that time positively, there were a lot of milestones and coming of age moments. Being in our early 20s and doing what we set out to do with the band. People still talk about the Operators 25 years later, so that's really cool. It was a really special band, special friendship and special time.

I just realized that operators780.blogspot.com is still up and all the mediafire links are still active!

Broke: When I was in Edmonton, I developed a bias against ska-punk, and I used to say that "ska-punk is neither ska nor punk." I still resent ska-punk

catches up to you before you can get into the car and lock the door.

Considering this wise decision,

for having whitewashed ska, and continue running into people who think ska is like the white descendant of Jamaican reggae. How have attitudes about ska and ska-punk prevailed in Edmonton over the last couple decades? Do I sound like "old man shouts at clouds" or is it still a common attitude over there to look down on ska-punk?

Eric: Warped Tour skate rock with horns had the live energy but was never really my thing. It lacked the attitude we found in the 2 Tone bands or the authenticity of a band like The Slackers. But that's just me and in the context of that time. Who are we – in Edmonton of all places – to act like some authority on ska or whatever cool music? So yeah quit shouting at the clouds. I don't think it's cool to look down on ska-punk or whatever. Lift others up if you like what they're doing. If it doesn't ... just move on and put your energy towards whatever resonates with you.

As I'm writing this though, I am preparing for a 'bands as bands' gig playing organ in "Faux Doubt" with some pals. Silly to be a hater because of that band's mainstream success. Tragic Kingdom is an iconic album. And No Doubt really went all-in with the dancehall influence, which I appreciate.

Broke: I've noticed you've gotten pretty deep into kung fu, to the point of being part of martial arts performances and visits to China.

Eric: Kung fu is my true passion and led me towards the authentic version of myself.

After I left the Operators, I needed a reset and to try something completely new and different from the band thing. I had been sitting around alone watching old kung fu flicks and listening to Wu Tang, and then I had the revelation (re smoking weed) that I should quit feeling sorry for myself and find somewhere to start training like Jackie Chan. Kung fu gave me

this hungry zombie probably won't get much of a meal out of what's inside your skull, if that's

that spark of excitement, much like when I first discovered music. To reflect back on 20 years of training, growth and milestones with my kung fu brothers and sisters, I had no idea what I was getting myself into at the time.

I started January 2005. I've been all in since the first class at Chiu Lau Kung Fu College. After I started training, things started working out and opportunities started coming, in big and small ways. I stopped being afraid. Life still had challenges, but kung fu gave me the confidence, leadership and health to address life head-on.

I received my black belt from Sifu Chiu Lau in 2010. I have trained at the Shaolin Temple in China with the monks. I trained several times in Hong Kong with my Sigung Chau Lin Fat and finished the Ving Tsun system. Sigung gave me an instructor certificate and permission to call myself "Sifu." I also coach our school's Dragon Dance team.

I am forever grateful for the rich lineage, tradition and kung fu culture I am part of. My teachers have both passed away now, so we are the next generation of this kung fu legacy. So I have a responsibility to my teacher's and lineage to share the art; I will teach anyone who will commit to training. That is my joy now – teaching. Seeing my students succeed, change and perform beyond what they thought they were capable of, that is the reward but with that comes responsibility. It's not even about fighting or self-defense anymore, that's only on the surface. I'm really passionate about wing chun and how it changes the way people can adapt and move through life.

Broke: When I moved away in late 2003, I don't remember you having so many tattoos.

Eric: I always wanted tattoos and set off on this journey in the right spirit. Like the kung fu (and started around the same time), I didn't know what I was getting into! I just kept at it, getting tattooed steady for years. It is very much part of who I am, it empowers me and allows me to express life.

My full body was tattooed first, before the hands and neck – so I've been a tattooed freak for half my life. I worked really hard to make a good reputation and have credibility before the tats became visible and the ink started leaking out of my clothes. I positioned myself so I wouldn't have to worry about setbacks in the work world, if anything the tattoos have helped me stand out and become my calling card (in the engineering world). I'd hope I am remembered firstly for doing good things and being a genuine person. Tattoos aren't really that special to anyone beyond oneself.

I love the process of it all. The concept, the placement, the collaboration, interpretation and symbolism, the anxiety, the pain and courage, the healing, the commitment. All of it. The experience.

In life, so many things are any consolation.

THE END



Open Eyes plays at River City Revival during Purple City 20230826.

temporary. A tattoo is permanent. That's really what I love most about it. I am all in, committed. I have no coverups and no regrets, now I'm making new layers and new stories. Truth be told, my tattoos will never be finished and there will always be a space found for a new one. The more recent ones I've squeezed in have been some of my favourite. I'm having so much fun with it.

I've collected most of my old stencils from the past 20+ years, so maybe one day I'll put together a photo book to share my journey as "Colouring Book".

Broke: Tell me about Open Eyes.

Well, I left SLATES in 2011. I chose my kung fu path and to focus on my engineering career, take a pause from playing in a band. I still enjoyed playing music and did lots of it, but informally during that hiatus.

In 2019 I went through a big and sudden shift in my life and had to rebuild. It felt like the right time to get back into a band and breathe life into my music - I had a number of song ideas and guitar riffs but had been suffering from a serious writer's block leading up to Open Eyes. I suppose life was going great (or so I thought) before 2019 and felt like I had nothing important to say or sing out loud about.

My old pal Leith and I crossed paths and spent an evening drinking beers and waxing about what a new band might look like. I had been jamming with John Watson (drums) casually over the years after Our Mercury but it was loose, freestylin', smokin' joints hangouts. Leith was the spark that required us to structure riffs and actually write songs. It also caused me to output the lyrics and get on the mic again. It started to flow naturally and I guess I found something to say and be honest with myself about. I'm still working on my confidence as a singer.

I also bought this red Gibson Firebird off Uncle Ted Wright from the Les Tabernacles days. The guitar itself was very inspiring. Uncle Ted reminded me sometimes whole bands are formed around a new guitar.

We play every couple of months in Edmonton, but it can be hard cause we're all cats

Listen at openeyes.bandcamp.com and download ancient mp3s from operators780.blogspot.com

You turn left, going into the city.

Even though it's a massive city and you're outside its limits, you can already see the downtown core. It looks normal so far, with

in our 40s and scheduling life around band opportunities can be tricky. But overall I'm really happy and proud how the ideas and band have come to life and I'm grateful for the friendship and creative outlet I get to express with John & Leith.

Open Eyes is very personal and that's what makes it so important and satisfying to me. Plus I get to hang out with Leith & John often, they are 2 of my most favourite people and our music keeps me motivated and inspired.

We recorded a full-length album in spring 2023. We've got a couple singles released online and the Open Eyes debut album "Illuminated" finally drops on November 15, 2024 on all streaming platforms. Vinyl in 2025, god willing!

Broke: How did it get that name?

Eric: We had a hard time finding a name. We liked the aesthetic and phonetic of "Open Eyes," perhaps a bit hesitant because it seemed generic, another "Eyes" bands, etc

I had started studying Italian and listening to lots of music from Italy (including great old hardcore from the motherland) to compliment the classes. There was an Italian hardcore band I discovered when I was a teenager called Sottopressione - I got this mixtape called "Stop The War" at an anarchist bookstore when I first discovered punk. Their song "Apri Gli Occhi" (Open Eyes) was always one of my favourite hardcore songs and often listened to, so one day the song came on randomly while we were still undecided on the band name. Then we got our first show offer, so we had to make a decision and I took the Sottopressione song as a sign.

But hey we snagged the "openeyes.bandcamp.com" url!

Broke: Between the three of you, is it objectionable if I call it a "super group"?

I mean the 3 of us - me, John, Leith - have all been consistently active and visible in the Edmonton punk scene since we were teenagers. We're just a bunch of lifers haha but also just a bunch of 40-something dudes. Hardly a super-group, I guess will see after the album drops

no smoke from fires or anything like that.

But as you enter the city, you can see the aftermath of chaos all around you. Houses are torn open, and cars are out in the

next month!

Broke: Bandcamp calls it "punk hardcore grunge rock." If you can speak at greater length, how would you describe it?

Eric: Open Eyes is a power trio. We strive to sound way bigger than just 3 people. The way we play and sound is influenced by all that awesome old punk, thrash and grunge music we discovered as teenagers: the bands that inspired us to pick up guitars and be in a band, the bands that got us through the growing pains and the soundtrack to our glory days. Those "punk hardcore grunge rock" bands were our lifeline to help us get to this point in life. So all that, re-amped through the 'eyes' of a couple of mid-40s cats.

Open Eyes is about reflection-growth-empowerment and support for one other.

Broke: Now that you're in your 40s, is this how you saw your life turning out? Did you think it was possible to reach this age and still be playing in bands? Or did you think back then that this is something you'd outgrow eventually?

Eric: Sorry I have to laugh... is this how you saw your life turning out?? That's a loaded question. Are you my psychologist?

If we could see into the future and know how this lifetime is going to play out, and how it ends, what the hell is the point of going on? It is the unknown and curiosity of what tomorrow will bring that frankly, saved my life on several occasions and keeps me pushing through life every day. You gotta ebb and flow with the gift of life. Sometimes it's boring, sometimes exciting and sometimes life can be so fucking dramatic that there would be no way to prepare yourself for that surprise fork in your timeline. But I digress, I'm sounding like a time traveller and my favourite Iron Maiden album. But life-death and the space in between fascinate me and inspire a lot of the lyrics I've been writing with Open Eyes.

Much like my kung fu is my recipe, music is my lifeline. I will always be playing music and I will always be a band guy. Music is my language and it allows me to connect with myself and with others beyond the limitations of words.

Broke: Any chance of Open Eyes doing an East Asia tour with a stop in Korea someday?

Eric: Eh maybe, that would be amazing! I think we'd need to get some airmiles in Canada first but who knows, getting out there as a band has new possibilities compared to many years ago when you had to tour across the prairies in a van.

Open Eyes played our first out of town show this summer at Moments Fest in Siksika Treaty 7 land. That was really special. Let's see how 2025 goes with some more out of town experiences.

streets. Here and there, you can see a body lying in the street, and you're not sure which are corpses and which will spring into action if you get too close.

Years ago, you heard of plans

What are Edmonton's current best active bands?

HALF DEAD.
OPEN EYES.
HOME FRONT
ARTS MAJER **REAL SICKIES**
EVERYTHING I'VE EVER LOVED
MIDNIGHT PEG
LUSH CLOT

Rebuild/Repair
Wax Duplex
Hex/beat
Feminal Fluids
L.A.M.S (fuck yeah tav kebpin it real bro)

I don't have a fave right now.

the rivieras.
if you know
you know.

Real Sickies,
Homefront,
Chairman

Home Front - I absolutely love seeing their arc and stompin across the world. They are one of the hardest workin' bands reppin' Etown.

Languid kicks ass and when I hear "Oblivion" I feel like the Kool-Aid man. I also really like Half Dead and LaCerator.

Aladean Kheroufi is making amazing soul music. Wares (Cassia Hardy) writes incredible songs and is an absolute killer on guitar.

Real Sickies!! But I'm biased cause I shredded some organ for their new album coming out next year.

Home Front, False Body, Obra Skai, Half Dead, Midnight Peg

To [the immediate above] list I'd also include Real Sickies, Counterfeit Jeans, and Bad Buddy!

(I am aware of) Very little. Basically what I see through Instagram. I'm aware that there is a scene that there's bands playing and there's shows happening. Well, except for Open Eyes, who I do really like.

to build a massive zombie wall somewhere, so maybe you can find that.

On the other hand, not far away is a large shopping mall, where you might be able to take shelter.

What's it going to be?

I'll look for this zombie wall. GO TO PAGE 5 I'll take shelter in the mall. GO TO PAGE 7

So long stinktown!

Jon Twitch

This interview is about as unhinged as a typical conversation with Rob Nuclear (who I was introduced to originally as "SNFU Rob"). I reconnected with him in person relatively recently in Vancouver on my way back to Korea in 2022. In our time living in Edmonton, I never knew him to be in any bands, but now he heads the band AK-747s, which might best be called a mix of sludge, punk, doom, stoner music. I'm sure multiple people reading this zine will be annoyed that he's included here, and that's fine, but I don't have a strong opinion. You'll probably hate read this anyway.

Broke: I don't know if people know this about you, but what's your opinion of Edmonton?

Rob: A frozen, bleak wasteland and a haunted house that acts as a waste lock for the desire to be seen, loved, and understood in the worst way possible. A charnel house of contradiction and self-abuse, with a million strong unloved secrets and petty vanities built upon a desire to be a big fish in a small pond. An amalgam of aspirant fools who would cut off their own nose to spite their face rather than to remind someone of where they think their place should be. A place with no memory besides the society-wide excuses and rationalizations for the abject failure of the colonial project on any human level, outside of acting as a staging ground for the rapine and extraction of the very earth itself. The least immoral act that one can undertake would be to sell soap to a place enmired in so much desperate filth of the spirit and the body. Where each and every boondoggle and theft of the public purse is venerated as a necessity because it will give some plucky, bright-eyed pink thing the ability to rend low his fellows under the yoke of a median savings account of 500 dollars.

Preentious of a landed gentry under the guise of effortless class distinctions rigidly enforced as social codes at every single level as the snowflakes fall from the sky later and later in the year but the meth shards continue to bubble and form in whatever featureless industrial bay off of 66th street is producing the font of the stuff for the white supremacists and the cops alike to watch as vast swaths of the entire society shake rattle and roll to each and every social event which is nothing more than another slow motion horror show of grief and apology for the spite eyed sins of the Nazis Stalin couldn't kill who came to settle and let their cruel little sons and daughters beat the boys and girls who looked different because they were finally on top after what they saw as an mistake history took their boys out of the equation. A city that has a monument to a Waffen SS commander in its environs, and everyone smokes another puddle

You turn right, heading away from civilisation. As you come out of the woods, you discover that there's more of the city this far out. You had no idea the



AK-747s / Filched from FB

on the way to gainsay and shit talk at a house party where a fight always breaks out.

One of the most shockingly violent human landscapes I have ever encountered, where criminality pervades almost every single aspect of life. The vast majority of the kids I went to junior high school with are either dead, were on the cover of the sun paper for killing somebody, themselves, dying in a house party fire, or for selling a fuck ton of coke and guns. Many have also become hair stylists and accountants. Truly an incubator for psychotic abusers on a civilizational scale, its penchant for the demarcations of human worth extends to every single province of human existence. If it cannot be bought or sold in the city of Edmonton it is not only without value but unworthy of life itself.

A stretch of gravel from the taint of Satan's bungalow to and through the loser-lap circuit of gladiatorial destruction of mind and spirit at the gibbering abattoir that is social engagement: a threshing maw of substance abuse, demented narcissism, domination, and a blandness that comes from being the northernmost population center on earth. One that fills its days, nights, and weekends with levels of expressing personal and familial hatreds as a Hegelian monument to the nadir of what a freedom of what boot you can lick can offer.

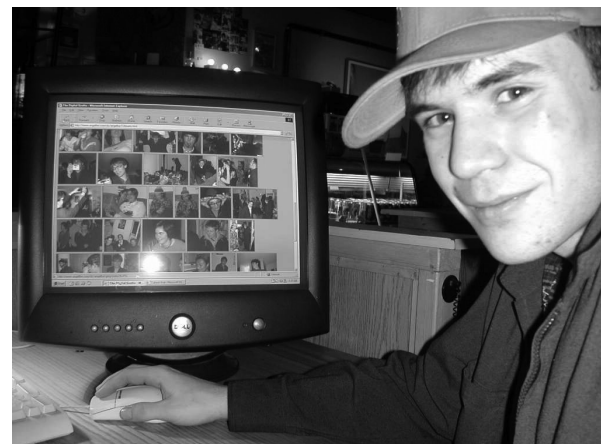
In terms of urban planning it is a Lovecraftian aberration of a stunted abortion made up of too many eyes, teeth in the wrong places, and tentacles that grew knotted. An outward expression of the anti-logic that is possessing a governing class made up of violently untreated alcoholics with a fetish for cruelty my hometown can only be described as a series of annexations that bely the gammon fistled grim fatalism and completely unmerited sense of smug superiority among its upper middle class scions of generational wealth and nouveau riche alike.

If it isn't an investment boondoggle, because the dentists and doctors would rather walk into the bathroom, break a glass in the sink, and swallow the

suburbs have expanded this far from the city center.

The city has been hit by a zombie apocalypse, and no one is left alive. There are

pieces one by one than allow any segment of society that doesn't "live, laugh, love" its way to smiling meekly at their ultimate badass humblebragger spawn who move to the west coast for a few years and never shut the fuck up about the stint they put in at PHS as if that is the moral underpinning of what a human being could do with their time. And if it isn't that dodge, it's a passion project where we aggrandize ourselves as punk rock messiahs to third-world countries so that we can hold court at the bars about how we are the real culture creators. Every hobby shop another squandered inheritance, and the fauxhemian working-class affinity is just a codependent marriage away as we tattoo and dread-wax ourselves into name-dropping oblivion while the worthless dredges who didn't come from the east to work drink half a decade away as their second family grows up to hate them while they pass their bastard sons in the Costco aisle unbeknownst. Their one true love buried cocaine up their nose to punish themselves for doing the least-worst thing because they were the last moral agent in a country that couldn't get tired of congratulating itself for keeping the racism to a dull roar after the real grim work was complete. A monument to the servants quarters of Mammon. A blight.



Rob looks at the predecessor to Daehanmindecline.com at a PC cafe in Edmonton, December 2001.

some zombies, are few and far between. As you go up and down the streets, you spot a police station that has lights on inside.

Further up the street, you see

Broke: When and why did you leave the city?

Rob: Which time? 1997 when I was an insane drug addict and moved to Vancouver to self destruct? 2003 when my heart got broken so bad by a girl who told me they were pregnant with my kid and it turned out to be with some dentist's son with a hobby studio who had the physiognomy of the kid in that Mask movie with Cher? When I thought moving Montreal to write short stories and get fucking wasted was a good idea like every other douchebag 23 year old white guy? (the stories were pretty good one of them is about my friend getting stung by a jellyfish on his honeymoon and having to pee on himself he later became the first bass player for ak747s they hold up, Patrick henaff even illustrated a bunch of covers for them 'these are not shit rob. I say this to you as a Frenchman, and we are a people who hate young male writers but we also love them when they are not shit. this is not shit." he went on to make Hedge Fund the award winning comic fucking check it out) You're talking about the last time. 2007. Day after Christmas I put my shit into a van and said "So long Stinktown!" for the last time. I was fucking done. Just fucking done. I decided to do what I always wanted to do, which was go back to school. starting a band was the furthest

another house that looks intact. There's a couch out on the lawn, and you can hear loud music coming from inside.

Which one will you go to?

fucking thing from my mine. Absolutely furthest fucking thing.

Let's face it. We all grew up at the same time and anyone wanting rose colored glasses about the collection violent bullying alcoholic psychopaths and the arch mean girls woke offs of old the fights the literal fucking Nazis the drug dealers the scumbag Thursday morning villains and the soccer shoes with the fake fucking British accent pretending to be working class bullshit was fucking insane. We all cruised into our twenties trying to look the other way and pretend it all didn't happen and that it really was all about being king of the ashtray and seeing how much we could get away with and if you spoke up or spoke out you better have been ready to throw down. And we were supposed to be the good guys. Fucking bleak.

Broke: A few years ago, there was a festival in Korea featuring bands from BC, and two of the acts I interviewed had members from Alberta. Is BC really that much better than Alberta?

Rob: Yes.

You want a list?

Our drummer Craig Wigby. Craig is as much a driving force of this band as I am and has been there for the vast majority of this strange saga. Sure the band was active for about three years before Craig joined. But it was with Craig that AK-747s made their first and second full lengths. And it was with Craig that I had a night party. And it was with Craig over the course of I dont know how much fuckiness and bullshit and a fucking pandemic made movies and i love what youve done with the place. Craig isn't just an incredible drummer he's an incredible friend. The guy has been there for me through thick and thin on a lot of stuff. He's watched me go through absolute hell and we've had some fucking crap to contend with over the years and he's stuck by me all the way. People ask me where I found Craig and I tell them I found him at the Craig store. They don't have one of those in Alberta. You have to go to BC for that.

I would never, ever have been able to do what I did out here in Alberta. And I wish Alberta would keep its gainsaying backbiting narcissistic incestuous career bar star psychopaths who for some reason think music is some weird fucking cut throat social dodge out here to the extent it is back home. Happy to say that a bunch of the weasels from my generation have really sputtered their last sputter. The kids are all right and the trash takes itself out, some of it just takes longer than others. Don't treat people like shit be a straight shooter and don't horse trade shows and you'll do fine. The worst tragedy is watching Edmonton expats come out here and start hanging out with other Edmonton people who tear them to shreds in their perpetual game of Mammonic crab bucket keeping up with the Joneses

I'll look for help at the police station. GO TO PAGE 19

I'll take my chances with whatever's going on with the loud music. GO TO PAGE 20

that is encouraged through a loose networks of star chambers and outtakes from mean girls operating atop house parties and mutual admiration societies.

The weather. 25 Albertan winters were enough for me. Fucks sake.

People bitch but it's an embarrassment of riches out here. You can throw a show out here and people are into it. Do something rad and help your friends out. Never ask permission to create art. The cliquy rich kids are always going to do their thing (you can't be in unless someone is out blah blah) and the collections of dirtballs selling coke to each other and masquerading as a music scene are gonna do that too. Create your own space and your own vibe. Vancouver reinvents itself every 10 years at every social level. Maybe some people succeed in getting a sinecure created where they can point out the obvious to everyone else who is just tired after a long day's work. Suppose that's their path.

Broke: I don't recall any bands you were in prior. Is AK-747s your first band? Have you been to others before?

Rob: Unpaid Debt we played Underground Battleground at Spruce Ave Hall. Me, Jesse Morrison who later went on to play in a bunch of Edmonton bands because he was the only dude whose mom would let him have a pair of drums, Andrew Pratt (the tall Edmonton mohawk guy) Corey Baldwin (hope you're well bro still think about jacking that bass amp from the music room of wagner fuck em you gotta get what you need in this life) and Ed Trela on guitar too. We were terrible! Chris from punk and junk was supposed to give a prize of some recording time and he didn't lol the lambs were on that bill that's how I met tavis just a top shelf human being love that man been friends ever since.

Broke: The name AK-747s is perfect. How did you come up with it?

Rob: Like three days after 9/11 I was walking from the Black Dog and I said "AK-747s would be the raddest band name" to my friend and he was like "Hahahahaha too soon man too soon!" and I was like "Yeah but seriously that's the raddest name." Then years later me and Owen Lukawesky later of Red Hot Gospel started the band which was originally called 'grevenwicht' which was a portmanteau of two Dutch and German words (which makes no sense) that can either mean "the greatest weight" or "a vexing and annoying creature". But because was playing an amplified acoustic at first and people had trouble pronouncing it I said well how about this band name while we were walking at Kingsgate Mall and I remembered it and Owen was like "that is fucking awesome...that is FUCKING AWESOME"

Other people didn't think it was so cool at first. Would have people say things like "is that like a joke name for your little band" and all the mean things that people say when they're being mean and they're getting a little drunk. Be a liar if I said



Why don't more interviews end like this? During a reunion in Vancouver 20220816.

it didn't get to me. especially considering these were people whose shirts I had worn. Was just trying to have some fun while I was in university. I never got to have that experience and I just wanted to do it, you know. Go to school, be in a band, put on some shows and stuff. I went back to school later in life and started this band out here later in life too. I was like 28 so a bunch of people I knew were of that age and really into being in a band and at first I thought it was a little friendly competition but then things started getting weird and nasty pretty quick. I wish I could say that Edmonton has sent its best over the years when it comes to the expat music community. its fucking amazing the lengths people will go to be mean over shows with like 30 or 40 people at them. If anyone is wondering if it hurt getting fucked over by guys saying shit like "you know rob its not that your friends aren't cool...but I want to get invited to the cool parties in vancouver" i'll say it did. It hurt hearing that. It hurt realizing that I'd let someone like that into my life again. It hurt hearing people having a laugh about it. I guess my part in that was feeling that hurt real hard. Too hard.

But then things got kind of fucky, and it went beyond some band shit. Suffice to say over the pandemic some of the ultimate cool guy brain trust out there did a bit too much coke those nights and some shit was done that fucked with my professional and personal life stemming over some petty band music scene politics shit. And that fucking pissed me off. Had to go a little HAM and it fucking sucks when this stuff which is supposed to be about sharing our experience in a loud way becomes some resentment factory of feuding. On that I'll say this:

You treated me as a dog before thou hadst cause. But since I am a dog know that I have fangs. The Duke shall Grant me Justice. I see Shylocks part in a lot of things and he went too far in the end and he is punished for that just as it could be argued I have. Though I've not become a Christian under duress as he. Some of us need our pound of flesh. Unlike Shylock I feel as though I have had my bond and hey everyone still has all their parts though their pride may have taken a bit of a face wash in the snow and what could be more

Edmontonian than that. It's over. I'm still here.

Broke: The AK-747s love what they did with what place?

Rob: Ryan (our bass player) jokes that these are my 'Dewey Cox' moments. It's a comment on the result of the narcissistic diffusion of responsibility that is the resulting brutality of the boomer political project of empire and the alcoholic father that is North America in its psychotic abuse of the rest of the planet. Our excuse is always that the other guys would do the same thing but I see the other guys exercising restraint in the interests of preserving their people on civilizational levels hitherto inexperienced. On balance we have to look at who is starting the wars, who is baiting people into starting wars, and who is engaging in naked imperialism and letting the mask fall right to the floor with a clunk. At least the other guys will give you an aspirin and a pay on the shoulder in their system and not bankrupt you and your family over it while burning babies in their tents.

Broke: What fuels you in AK-747s?

Rob: Mainly spite at first. But that's too simplistic. It's decades of grief and loss and sorrow and pain and longing and a wish no matter how impossible to want to set things right as best I can and the keen of lament that comes with knowing so desperately and so truly that you might not be right but you also weren't wrong and being able to doing nothing about it. The primary drive of all human beings is to be seen, understood and loved, that's all anyone wants. So those are the primary motivations. I lost seventeen people close to me in one year. I found my family, several members of which subsequently engaged in a sweeping mechanism of psychological manipulation, abuse, gaslighting, and assaults on my basic humanity that on the admission of one were effort to drive me to suicide up to and including having the police perform weaponized welfare checks on me. In the meantime I was under incredible professional pressures while engaging in a process of recovery while other members of my family were also rendering themselves from the beast of addiction and we were simultaneously supporting each

other independently a province apart. All of this as I get sober for the first time in thirty years as a way of coping with abuses that a professional has stated should have led to me becoming some kind of Hannibal Lecter type person but instead am merely deeply unpleasant for bad people to be around. The upcoming record we are writing deals with all of these themes of conflict, necessity, impossible duty, hope, tragedy, life, death, and the real concerns that impact the lives of individuals here in the heart of empire. What others can handwave away from their place of privilege or smugly refer to as first world problems I ask that they do so from the amp they are leaning on as they furiously bite into their 5th rancid IPA before they slip away to do all of someone else's bag and argue with a waitress. I lived fuckers, and you told me to share. So here it all is. It's the acid blood from the thing from alien and I'm pouring it out on the floor like it went to therapy and it's gonna melt through the hill that's what's up

Broke: About your vocal style, I hear what sounds like falsetto, like a jaded, more hopeless Jello Biafra, or a death rock version of Gordon Downie. How did you harness such a voice, and how would you rather I describe it?

Rob: Very kind and generous of you to say. Gord Downie is rad. He faced death with bravery and grace. Hope I have those eyes when the time comes. Was truly stirred when I watched the farewell concert on tv. Nautical Disaster is a great song. I saw them play in 1996 in Edmonton.

I don't rather you describe me as anything. That would be the hallmark of an insecure douchebag who is unwilling to hear the good faith interpretation of how someone is experiencing their work. Thank you for sharing my perspective. I've got that vibrato going I've been told by a lot of people and to be compared to icons like jello and goes Downie is a heck of a compliment. Poooooolllll pootttt....poooooolllll poooooottt!!!!

Broke: Just noticed your band name is "Rob Nuclear."

Rob: The last name of my foster family rhymed with it for one, and I didn't go by my real name at the time. Long story. I also worked for General Fusion as a research analyst in the early days of the band +they're building a fusion reactor in Burnaby to save the world) so it just kind of clicked hahaha. There's also my temperament. People have described me as intense over the years though I have a fuse that goes around the block. I've faced a lot of issues over the years where someone will throw their weight around and I'll let it slide, they keep doing it and I have a private chat, they fuck around even more, and I repond proportionally. At this point it becomes a question of baiting the other side into overreach. For a long time I just would not put up with that manipulative behavior that the first whiff I got of it I would just go Defcon 1 right away. "Skipping to the end" I've called it. What sucks is that when your anger is

justified and you go the distance you're gonna get a rep either way. Not to say I haven't made mistakes. I have and I've paid for them and tried to make amends as best I can. But when you fight with monsters you have to do some monstrous stuff sometimes. So I'd go a little nuclear, and I'd see it through. And I guess that's just the way it is.

Broke: When I first met you, you were introduced to me as "SNFU Rob," a name I get the impression you tried to get rid of. Can you tell me a bit about that nickname?

Rob: I fucking love the band and like all teenagers who had been horrifically abused as a kid who had just been released from a secure mental health youth detention centre and sat next to Dion from fifty cents on the bus his second day at school after getting out and was invited to a ten foot pole show at Eastwood hall and the ladder day Saints I was looking for a band that spoke to my utterly destroyed mental health, confused sexuality, history of major physical and psychological trauma stemming from extreme and sustained sexual and physical abuse, and fascination with irreverent pop culture. SNFU fit the bill perfectly. I was obsessed. Of course this made me a wonderful target for being made fun of so I decided to embrace it and own it for a long time. Then of course as you get older people will remind you of moments when you were smaller and weaker and more native and will then remind you of those moments in an effort to keep you in your place or at least where they think your place should be. Would be a liar if for a time I didn't try to distance myself from that moniker because heyx when all the cool kids get it in their head to be mean to you again you just kind of want to liv your life you know. So I put the shirts away for a while. And some of my light went out. It did. And that was a dark time. You can call me snfu Rob anytime you like because being that zany kid wanting to emulate and he likes someone who saw the world so differently and was able to inspire so much joy and the idea of a more colorful and eclectic approach to expression of yourself is a great honor.

Ken and I became close friends over the years when I moved out to vancouver. I always felt it was the height of classlessness the way that so many people talked about his struggles with mental health and substance abuse with this barely concealed glee. It's that disgusting tall poppy syndrome that characterizes this company town of a country so much. So eager were people to laugh and say "oh he's cleaning toilets at pub 340" when really he was making his art and surrounded by his friends and coping with his pain as best he could. I loved you so much kenny.

Broke: Any future plans for AK-747s you can announce? What are the chances of AK-747s doing an East Asia tour?

Rob: We are writing a new record. Sorry it's taking so long. We are recording this winter. Jon let's make it happen bud.

Broke: Any future plans for AK-747s you can announce? What are the chances of AK-747s doing an East Asia tour?

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Listen at ak-747s.bandcamp.com and follow @ak747s on IG

You start pushing boxes around to close off the smashed-open doorway. Whoever had started

the work before clearly needed to get it done, and failed.

Just as you lock everything in

place, someone comes out of one of the stores, maybe to help you or to make sure the coast is clear.

No, it's a zombie. And you're locked in here with it.

Before you can do anything, he

bites you on the neck.

THE END

Now that's some Mad BS

Jon Twitch

Rich was one of those scene elders when I started getting into punk, and especially when I got into ska. As the leader of Mad Bomber Society, which seems to still technically exist, he played a big influence on my musical taste. As the owner of Freecloud Records, he fuelled my vinyl addiction which helped expose me to various other kinds of music. He's still basically doing the same thing, and I've probably seen him on every return visit, due to making visits to the record store. It was obvious I'd have to catch up with him in this zine.

Broke: How and when did you get into the scene?

Rich: I went to high school with The Malibu Kens and "Wow, they made a record!" I went to an outdoor gig at Borden Park in 1981 where local underground bands played, including The Draggnetts (edifiedmonton.com/culture/performing-arts/that-time-london-called-the-kinsmen/). Thought that I could have fun doing that too so I started my first band in '86.

Broke: What is the current status of Mad Bomber Society? I get the impression it's still together, but plays very very infrequently. Possibility of a reunion ever?

Rich: Yes, possibilities.

Broke: Additionally, how was the name chosen, and have you ever come to regret it, especially after 9/11? (I have a few selfies of myself wearing MBS shirts while on airplanes post-9/11, which I tried to do every time I flew until I outgrew the shirt)

Rich: The name is an homage to all the great anarchic characters on 1960s-80s TV cartoons: Boris Badunov, Natasha Fatale, Wile E Coyote, Hugo A Go Go, etc.

However, there's no apostrophe (as in the incorrect: "Mad Bomber's Society") to put a twist in the name: signifying the horrific trend in power politics of using massive levels of violence to achieve one-sided political goals at the expense of innocents. We live in a "mad bomber society" but the craziest mad bombers are leaders, politicians and bureaucrats.

Our name may be interpreted



Rich refrains from throwing a bottle at me at Freecloud, 20220810.



Rich plays with Mad Bomber Society at the Power Plant, 20021110.

as sensitive to some people and it is supposed to be thought-provoking, like a long line of great bands: Dead Kennedys, Bad Religion, Anti-Flag, Against All Authority, Dayglo Abortions, Pussy Riot, Napalm Death, etc..... Plus isn't Barenaked Ladies totally offensive now????

Broke: How do you feel about ska bands and suits? Proud tradition, or something that fell out of fashion (or practicality?)

Rich: 50s jazz, 60s soul, 70s mod-style WILL NEVER BE OUT OF FASHION!!!!

Broke: I found mention online that you guys were originally inspired by "60s lounge, classic Jamaican ska, and The Tick cartoon series." Can you elaborate on the latter? I remember the show very well, even today, but never drew a connection.

Rich: No elaboration, you have to rewatch the series to be in the know. ;) ;)

Broke: Growing up in the Edmonton scene, I ended up with a strong bias against ska-punk ("neither ska nor punk"). I'm curious if that kind of attitude has prevailed in



The Evil Midnight Bomber What Bombs at Midnight

Edmonton over the decades, or if ska-punk has more scene cred there now.

Rich: Operation Ivy laid a great great legacy that most ska-punk bands can't challenge successfully. We're more of a 2-Tone/late-70s punk influenced style of ska so the bias doesn't affect us too much. Scene cred is mainly based on how good your band is – genre doesn't matter. Practice, practice, practice.

Broke: In the time when I was around, I thought MBS was one of Canada's best ska bands, but it was unable to really grow thanks mostly due to a lack of support, probably attributable to a lack of interest/slots courtesy of Stomp Records. What did MBS need to go farther than it did, and do you hold any grudges/resentment that it never became a national name up there with Planet Smashers and Kingpins?

Rich: We needed professional management, booking agencies, producers, promo departments, etc – all of which are better served in Eastern Canada than in the West, to Westerners' sorely missed opportunities. But I

have no grudges, we had so many great shows around Western and Northern Canada where the Eastern bands didn't get to play.

Broke: After bringing the Slackers to Korea in 2007 (probably the time in my life that I peaked), the truth came to me that internationally touring ska bands are difficult to work with because they just have too many damn members. Has this been a negative factor on MBS?

Rich: Yes, yes, no, yes, no, yes, no – oh shit, we don't have unanimity. Keeping people happy and focused on goals is a challenge for any organization. Not negative to MBS once we learned how to communicate.

Broke: There was that one Sandbar party where you threw a bottle at me, and after that we just kind of made it into a running joke. I'd like you to explain it to my readers, who (at least in Korea) can sometimes be defensive of me.

Rich: I am equally defensive of you and consider your role in preserving the images of Edmonton's scene to be of immense value and importance.

That instance, we had just finished playing a gig (I'm still sweaty in my suit in the photo) and was having a beer at our roadie's house (The Sandbar) when FLASH FLASH FLASH you strobed me with a camera. I asked you "ever-so-politely" to refrain and your response was FLASH FLASH FLASH again, with a sly grin on your face. My response was captured in the photo HOWEVER I would never hurl a bottle at anyone with any force and did not do so towards you – it was a mild toss that you easily caught. It made for a great picture and years of similar-themed photos (Mick Sleeper attacking you too!) that might be losing some context now. We would castigate you, Jon, we would bawl you out, we would snark at you BUT we would always defend you if someone threatened you in any way!!! Like a little brother.

Broke: Have you been the Freecloud guy right from the start? And how is that business going these days?

Rich: Worked at Freecloud since the late-80s. Owned it since '92. Records are cool, man!!!

Visit fb.com/MadBomberSociety and follow @freecloudrecords on IG

You've arrived on the second floor overlooking the skating rink. Down below, you can see people skating on the ice. They're all pretty bad at it. Then you notice they're not skating poorly, but

staggering around in a zombie-like trance. Zombie-like? They are zombies!

Then another zombie shrieks and points at you. This one is on the same level as you, across the

rink. All the other zombies below look up and see you.

You better run! Turning around, you see other zombies crawling in through the smashed door behind you.

Thinking quickly, you slip through an employees-only door, into the back hallways of the mall. You lock it behind you, but there are already zombies banging and scratching on the other side.

What now?

I'll look for a hiding place in the basement. GO TO PAGE 15

I'll try to make it to the gun range. GO TO PAGE 16



" I think he really hates me. What the hell did I ever do to him? I tried to apologise, but he wouldn't listen, and he raised the price on the records I was looking at."



"If you see Rich walking down the street, put your foot on the gas pedal. If you're on a bike, roll over his feet. If you go to his record store, leave without paying, and if you



see his band play, don't applaud. Someday, somebody will come along brave enough to stand up to people like Mr Bigshot Musician."*



*Absolutely do not act on any of this belligerent ranting.



It just so happens that the turnoff for Groat Road is half a block behind you, so you turn around and head down there.

are all basically pedestrians, and there's not much luring them down Groat Road into the River Valley.

Great thinking! These zombies

there are zombies driving around in cars down here, and they aren't very good. It's basically like a demolition derby down here.

A zombie driver rams into your

car and pins it against the side of the road. Another car hits you head-on, totaling the front section and activating your airbag. You struggle to get free, and climb out one of the

windows. You try to make a run for it, but another zombie car flies out of nowhere and runs you down.

THE END

Would you encourage people to move to Edmonton?

Yes and no. Yes if they are looking to have space to create with a lower cost of living, and to meet other creative, interesting people. No because, while the music scene continues to thrive, it's a dead end city otherwise and winter fucking sucks.

I WOULD, DEPENDING ON WHAT ELSE THEY ARE LOOKING FOR IN LIFE.

Edmonton is very welcoming and there are many friendly, inspiring, resilient people who work hard to make art and music happen here. It's hard to find vegetarian food after 9pm but there is a 24hr access to donairs, liquor stores and weed.

depends on why they would want to come here!

It really depends who they are and what they're seeking to get there.

I would recommend people move to Edmonton for live music, sure. I know that there's still a scene there. short answer is yes, I would recommend it. I know politically it's not the most attractive place to live...

As someone who is not antithetical to the concept of life itself and does not wish to insult it: no.

Absolutely, but be smart and buy real estate. We could have all afforded a mortgage on our punk houses as roommates back in the day.

NO, NOT REALLY. NOT THE WAY IT IS RIGHT NOW. I DON'T WANT TO GET INTO SPECIFICS BUT IT'S NOT WHERE I WANT IT TO BE.

You press down the pedal and drive into the horde of zombies. A few of them bounce off your hood and slide off, and you can hear the sickening but satisfying crunch of zombies being crushed under your tires. As you keep going, there are more and more zombies, and their guts are starting to clog up your tires. You're starting to slow down, and there are still more zombies ahead. Just as you don't think

Teenage bedroom wall for modern era

Jon Twitch

Of course I had to interview the mysterious, sometimes-anonymous person behind 780punkflyers. This is one of the inspirations behind @broke_in_korea, so when I met the person behind that project, I knew I had to do an interview.

Broke: When I was introduced to @780punkflyers, I was under the impression it was anonymous, and your real identity seemed closely guarded.

780punkflyers: It was anonymous at first, and is still semi-anonymous. For the first two years of the account my identity was closely guarded, and I wanted it that way. It was fun to have a little secret. People would message me asking who I was and giving their best guesses, which were always men (hint: I am not) and usually dudes from bands. In the summer of 2022 I had the honour of being a special guest on CJSR's The History of Punk with Brittany. I put together an awesome playlist of late '90s/early '00s golden era Edmonton punk, we chatted about the scene, and she didn't use my real name until the very last moment of the show. Since then, I've returned to The History of Punk, appeared on the 50th episode of the Nowhere Fast podcast, handed out 780 Punk Flyers pins and stickers at gigs around town, and co-presented last year's edition of Zuk 'Til You Puke (stay tuned for ZTYP 50). All of that to say, if you're paying attention, you know who I am. But I still don't openly advertise my identity on Instagram or YouTube.

Broke: Why did you create @780punkflyers?

780punkflyers: It was the summer of 2020, the first summer of intense pandemic lockdowns. Not satisfied with anxiously walking up and down the street in front of my house and couch lock from watching countless hours of old TV, I did the next best thing and started organizing my basement. Opening box after box of childhood memories, I came across a stack of handbills from Edmonton punk shows long past, alongside my old photo albums. As a sucker for nostalgia, I was thrilled. Memories of simpler times and wild weekends getting drunk behind community halls came flooding back. I had so much fun reminiscing with my now husband about all of the old bands and the long gone experience of going to hall shows. As I kept digging through boxes I found more flyers and posters, and wondered



how best to preserve them. I've always loved documenting things through writing and photography, and decided to start an Instagram page for the posters. I workshopped the handle for a bit, came up with 780 Punk Flyers, and made my first post in September 2020. At the time I had no aspirations for it and really didn't think I would gain more than 100 followers. I just thought it would be cool to post them so I could see them all in one spot. It's like my teenage bedroom wall for the modern era. My motivation to continue this page four years later is to document and share an important part of Edmonton's music scene history, no longer only for myself, but for everyone who follows the account. It's important to remember where we came from, and if the account can make someone smile or laugh, I've succeeded. I also love it when people comment on my YouTube videos after rediscovering a favourite band from 20+ years ago that they thought they might never hear again.

Broke: Where do you source the posters from?

780punkflyers: I have a couple hundred 11x17 posters and smaller handbills of my own, and have access to my husband's collection as well. When the account started gaining a few followers, people reached out to

me on their own accord, sending photos of their collections, with some of them taking the time to photograph 50 to 100 flyers. Any contribution, big or small, is essential to keeping this project going. Kenny from The Franklins donated a huge stack of posters, and others have lent me collections to photograph. I've never solicited donations or photos, and am super grateful to everyone who has taken it upon themselves to share their collections with me. I'd also like to shout out anyone who has given or lent me CDs or MP3s to add to my YouTube channel, where I upload my golden era Edmonton bands with corresponding gig flyers.

Broke: How and when did you get into the scene?

780punkflyers: I started junior high at Vic Comp, Edmonton's arts school, in 1996 and hadn't gotten into punk yet. Prior to that, my cousin had given me his "old" Nirvana shirts and CDs, and my mom's boyfriend had made her a mixed tape with Rock The Casbah by The Clash on it. My new junior high best friend's brother gave me NOFX's White Trash, Two Heebes and a Bean on cassette, and I was in. Vic was (and still is) next door to Freecloud Records, so I spent a lot of time hanging out there instead of going to class, buying cheap

punk 45s, tickets for gigs, and collecting handbills from the counter. The school was also full of creative freaks who were free to express themselves, so I was immediately plunged into a new world. Looking through my Victoria School yearbooks is like a who's who of Edmonton punk royalty. Kids in my grade were part of Screwy Louie, so one of their shows was most likely my first. At some point around 1997 or 1998 I started going to shows at Eastwood Hall, Riverdale Hall, and all-ages shows at The Rev. Viccy from Runic blew my young mind with her ferocious voice and energy. It's still a huge dream of mine to somehow facilitate a Runic reunion. I even threw a few hall shows in 2002 and 2003, including The Dirtbags first show.

Broke: Has gathering and sharing all these posters led you to make any strong conclusions about the Edmonton scene that are worth republishing, or further research?

780punkflyers: Edmonton punks have incredibly detailed memories from gigs that happened 20, 25, and 30 years ago. I am amazed at some of the stories people share under the flyers I post. The Edmonton scene has been going strong consistently since the mid-'80s and it shows no signs of letting up. People here are extremely creative and put their talents to use in any way they can. I think the mediocrity of a city like ours lends itself quite well to imagination and creativity. Make your own fun. None of us could do our art or documentation without each other. Bands wouldn't succeed without people in the audience, buying their tapes or t-shirts. 780 Punk Flyers wouldn't succeed without people following the account, connecting with what they see, and contributing their own flyers. The bonds we have made growing up in the Edmonton punk scene are unbreakable.

Broke: Probably every scene has room in it for a similar flyers project. Do you have any advice for anyone in any other part of the world considering doing so?

780punkflyers: Honestly just go for it, but the most important thing is to maintain it. I've seen a few similar pages come and go on Instagram. Whoever runs them seems enthusiastic at first, but after a few months they tend to fade away and stop posting. It's more than just sharing photos of flyers. There needs to be a personality and a voice behind it.

Follow @780punkflyers on IG and visit linktr.ee/780punkflyers

you're going to make it, blood and guts starts to decrease a bit and you break through to the other side. The road is relatively clear on the other side.

Up ahead, you can see a large wall, about 10 meters high, with a big, closed gate. You drive your car right up to it, hoping someone will open it in time, because the non-smushed zombies are ambling after you.

The gate slides open and you

drive inside, into the dark. Then it closes behind you. A light comes on inside, and you find yourself surrounded by people aiming various firearms at you.

"Welcome to the zombie wall," one of them says to you. "In order to enter, you must follow a few certain rules."

"You mean prove I'm not a zombie?" you say.

One of the gunmen opens your car door and gestures for you

to step out. Your car is covered in zombie blood and guts, but you're surprisingly still clean. As they escort you away, they start hosing down your car.

"In order to stay within the zombie wall, you must wear our special ZZE - zero zombie equipment," the gunman says.

They hand you a pair of manacles outfitted with heavy mittens to keep you from scratching anyone, and a large

cape you're supposed to wear over your head to prevent you from biting people.

"You want me to wear this?" you ask incredulously.

"For seven days, until we can be sure you're not infectious," the gunman says. "If you don't like it, you can leave."

OK, fine. GO TO PAGE 21
No way, I'll die before I give away my freedom. GO TO PAGE 22

Pitching Woo worldwide

Jon Twitch

Jenny Woo is another Edmontonian who is out in the world doing things. In 2018, I brought her to Korea on the tail end of a Japan tour, and we had three fun shows in two cities.

It's been six years since I saw her last, and things have changed a lot for her. She since started a new band, Choices, and a family, and then today I just found out she started another band, the ska band DiveTones. This zine seemed like a good time to catch up.

Broke: Can you list all the bands you've been in?

Jenny: That is a tough question indeed! Ok so going ALLL the way back they would include:

- 1998: Jake's Revenge
- 2000-2003: The Runs
- 2003-2005: The Gun Bunnies
- 2005-2008: The Pervs
- 2007-2009: Kroovy Rookers
- 2007-present: Jenny Woo Project (acoustic solo and full band)
- 2009-2012: Birds of Prey
- 2012-2014: The Jenny Woo band (Russia-based)
- 2014-2018: Jenny Woo's Holy Flame (Italy-based)
- 2017-present: Rebels Rule (Russia- and Canada-based)
- 2019-present: The Choices (France-based)
- 2023-present: The Divetones

Broke: How and when did you get into the scene?

Jenny: I first got exposed to the underground punk scene when I was in Grade 10 and going to highschool at Strathcona Composite. I had previously been into more mainstream punk bands such as Rancid and Operation Ivy, who had had some success and radio play during the 1990s in North America. However, my first entry into the underground punk scene came after my love-at-first-sight moment with the Queen of punkrock herself, Beki Bondage. I was 15 years old and I saw a picture of Beki taped inside the locker of one of my classmates, and I was blown away by the image of a woman covered in spikes with blue hair screaming and playing guitar. I spoke to my classmate, who lent me a Vice Squad CD and a few other CDs from bands such as Toy Dolls, The Clash, Ramones, and Cocksparrer and I never looked back.

I learned from her about local all-ages gigs happening in community halls around town. My first underground show was a local punk gig in Edmonton a month or so later. At that time, in the early 2000s, the gigs were very accessible in that the entry fee was approximately \$5 and usually there would be 4-5 bands playing on a bill. At that time, the first bands I saw were Runic (whose members went to my high school) as well as The Dirtbags.



Jenny Woo plays to a rapt audience in the tiny Seoul venue DIP, 20181013.

Broke: Over what period did you live in Edmonton? When and why did you leave, and where are you now?

Jenny: I lived in Edmonton from when I was born until I was a teenager, and I left in 2003 when I had the opportunity to move to Montreal to pursue higher education. I had always wanted to go to university to broaden my horizons, and when I was accepted to McGill University, I could not turn down the offer. Getting into this school was a dream come true for the quality of their education, as well as the opportunity to move to one of Canada's biggest cities with a thriving punk scene. Twenty years later, I am back living in Canada's capital city, Ottawa.

Broke: What is Subculture Spirit?

Jenny: Subculture Spirit is a fanzine that I started back in 2006 and ran until 2012. I released 6 editions in paper format, interviewing several bands from that period as well as having a special edition dedicated to skinhead girls and women and bootgirl power. The fanzine exists only in print copy as at that time blogs and webzines were not very popular, and also because I believed in creating a tangible underground artefact. I do still have some paper copies that I can hand over to you next we meet!

Broke: Way back in 2018, you were one of the few Edmontonian musicians to tour Korea. Can you share some of your memories of the tour?

Jenny: I was blown away by the local talent in Korea, such as Seoul Dolmangchi and Talkbats, as well as the female duo Billy Carter. I was lucky enough to play some shows in Seoul and Cheonan at the Look Beyond Festival. Seeing the energy, enthusiasm, and unity of the scene in Korea deeply touched me and it was also a very unique space for Koreans and expats to come together. One of my favorite memories from the tour was climbing to the top of

the Korea Times building and looking out over Seoul from the rooftop – such a huge and beautiful city! I felt so far away from home, and yet so lucky to travel and to have the chance to experience something so unique, and a community so welcoming to those from afar.

Broke: Do you remember when we considered planning a Jenny Woo North Korea tour?

Jenny: I sure do! I remember discussing whether there was a real possibility to even travel to North Korea, and what the music scene would be like there. Needless to say, we never made it but it would be incredible to know whether there are lovers of punk music over there.

Broke: Why did you go from being a soloist to forming Choices?

Jenny: Well, to be fair I have both the solo project and my band The Choices now, so I have the best of both worlds. I also currently have an 8-piece ska band in Canada called The Divetones which is my current most active band. I enjoy playing solo in the sense that it is nice to have the freedom of moving around, making my own booking and creative decisions, and not having to worry about

packing a lot of gear with me. However, it is also very nice to have the companionship of a full band and also to have the security of traveling with a group of people. Additionally, I always wanted to play in a 1977-inspired punk band, which is obviously best done with a drummer and bassist, and therefore I started The Choices to capture the sound that had originally inspired me to become a punk rocker.

Broke: Why is it called "Choices"?

Jenny: Ironically, the word "The Choices" is very difficult for the French to pronounce, and seeing as everyone else in the band is French except for me it is indeed a strange choice. I think we chose it because everything we do in life and everything we experience is predicated on the choices we make (with some rare exceptions). So naturally the name and concept itself felt like the basis for a new chapter, and a new band.

Broke: I know you were at Rebellion Fest in August 2024. How did it go?

Jenny: Actually my first Rebellion fest that I attended was in 2008, and the first time I played was in 2013, then



Jenny Woo is the Beyond Meat in a Billy Carter sandwich at Club SHARP, 20181014.

again in 2019 and then in 2024. I absolutely love this festival because it brings so many people from all over the world together, and additionally because the lineup is unbeatable. The bands that truly inspired the origin story of punk are mostly all present and accounted for at this festival – and it is such a wonderful thing to be able to see Charlie Harper on stage and in the crowd raising a glass with the rest of the public. In August 2024 I played a solo acoustic set as well as a set with my band The Choices, which was brilliant and we had a lot of positive feedback. Unfortunately, there were some right wing protesters outside of the festival which led to the doors being barricaded for a certain period of time. All I can say is that these rioters have absolutely nothing to do with the festival, and nothing to do with our scene. I truly hope that England finds a way forward from these troubles and I would like to underline that in the punk scene, there is no place for hate.

Broke: I noticed your post right around when you would have been at Rebellion, when you remarked on how, now that you're a mother, a lot of people do ask you when you will give up music, something you said men are unlikely to be asked.

Jenny: It came to my attention at the Rebellion festival that many people were coming up to me and asking me when I was planning to retire. Ironically, I am not yet even 40 years old and most of the headlining acts of the festivals are in their 60s and 70s (and are also male). I found this really strange, and I understood that although there is more place for women in punk than ever before, there are still few if any headliners that include female musicians in these large punk festivals. Oftentimes, women are playing in opening spots or on side stages. Additionally, due to sexist double standards many women do not continue for decades and decades in the punk scene (with a few notable exceptions). Body shaming, ageism, sexual assault are much more prevalent for female than male musicians. As such, there are not a lot of precedents for middle-aged or senior-citizen female musicians to be on stage, unlike their male counterparts. I think that there is also still a concept out there that once a woman gets to a certain age and does have children, then all of her additional activities should stop and she should devote herself entirely to motherhood and hide herself from the public sphere. Generally speaking, the sentiment is that beautiful women are young women and only beautiful women deserve the spotlight. This is very problematic and also mirrors the sexism of mainstream culture, which punk rock is intended to challenge.

Follow @jennywooi on IG and listen at divetones.bandcamp.com

Don't go into the basement! This never works out in horror movies. But for whatever reason, you're going through with it.

Winding your way through the back corridors, you find a staircase

that takes you all the way down to the basement. You've been to this mall hundreds of times, but never gone down to the basement. There are many mysterious, hidden spaces down here.

Ahead, you see something surprising. It looks like there's an LRT train parked here. Boarding the train, you are surprised to find everything in working condition.

The door to the operator's cabin

is open. Peering in, you can see a person in uniform slumped over the control panel. Is he dead? No, you can see him breathing. Do zombies breathe? And you can hear a slight groan coming from

him.

What now?

I'll help him. GO TO PAGE 17
No way, I'm not getting tricked this time. GO TO PAGE 18

Punk's loudly evolving history

Jon Twitch

One of the interviews I was most looking forward to was with the two hosts of CJSR's "The History of Punk." I've been on the show twice, both times which Brittany hosted alone, and after being interviewed for their show, I wanted to turn the tables.

Broke: How did the show start, and how did you two come together to do it?

THOP: The show aired for the first time on Monday, September 22, 2014. A year later, Brittany volunteered for the FunDrive episode which is when she met Rylan for the first time. A week or two later, Rylan invited Brittany to be a co-host outside a show at the Starlite Room and the rest is history!

Broke: Is it contradictory/weird to focus on the "History of Punk"?

THOP: If it is, then that's okay! The weird and contradictory pops up all the time when you look back at the history of punk! And it's actually the name of a history class that pre-dates the radio show. Starting as a history course with The Edmonton Free School, the History of Punk looked at issues related to punk history, activism, and culture. Each class had a playlist, and out of those playlists the radio show was born. Historical topics can be broad, exploring questions like "what is punk?" or "where did punk start?" or focused in on particular times and places such as the Vancouver punk scene at the turn of the 1980s. Digging into the Vancouver punk scene at that time opens up the world of activism at that time, and concerns over the harms still more pressing today than ever, including the heteropatriarchy, the war industrial complex, and climate change.

Broke: How did you get into punk originally?

Brittany: I can't recall a pivotal moment, but I think I was drawn toward it as I began to develop my own values and passion for justice. Punk always felt like home in my heart, raging against injustice and sounding cool as hell while doing it. I grew up in a super small town in Saskatchewan (300ish people), so my mom drove me three hours to Saskatoon to see My Chemical Romance for my first show. Not the most punk story, but it's still a super sweet memory to see live music for the first time — I was thrilled.

Rylan: From the start for me, punk was integral to community. It was the music my friends and I listened to, talked about, and used



Jon Twitch meets Brittany at CJSR, 20170703.

to decipher wider political and social issues. And locally, going to see friends play a gig usually also meant getting to attend a fundraiser, or showing solidarity for particular causes. Similar to Brittany, my first big punk show was all thanks to my mom too! I'm from Red Deer, and in grade 11 me and a bunch of friends all piled into my mom's Ford Windstar, and she drove us to Calgary to see the Offspring. The Vandals at Jughead's Revenge were supposed to open, but their plane got delayed so local Calgarians Chixdiggit got the honors of being the first band I got to see live outside of Red Deer!

Broke: Are you a musician? Or do you do things like host a radio show because you're compensating for not being a musician?

Brittany: I have been wanting to start a band for the longest time, but sadly there just aren't enough hours in the day to do all the things I'm interested in. I love singing and I play drums poorly, so maybe one day those shoddy skills can be put to good use in a noisy band. I grew up playing the piano, but drums were always what my heart called out to. The things that keep me away from playing in a band are finishing my degree, working a youth justice job, volunteering at CJSR, and trying to rest whenever I can.

Rylan: Sometimes I get to jam with a bunch of pals who are all INCREDIBLE musicians. It's like a superband, plus me. Members of Slates, Rebuild/Repair, and Real Sickies. And then somehow me too. It's so fun. We've never played a show and I'm not sure we ever will, but if it ever happens, I'm going to have trouble singing through the giant grin on my face the entire time!

Broke: I seem to recall the show won an award for the Women of Hardcore episode. What have been your most popular/successful/award-winning shows

to date? How close have either of my guest spots ever come?

Brittany: I'm still so proud of that show — women in hardcore forever. Time for an updated version! Sadly I think one of our other most popular shows is our tribute to our friend Ben Sir, who passed away in 2023. He was such a beloved human, and so it only stands to reason why the episode we did celebrating his life has so many listens.

Rylan: It's so cool getting feedback on shows from listeners, because you never know which show is going to connect with someone in an important way. Some of my favorites are shows where we have a co-host on who has never been on the radio before, and spends the show talking about the music they care about and sharing that music with our listeners.

Broke: In my two guest spots on your show, the points I tried to hit for you were (1) gentrification and punk, (2) crossovers of punk and folk music (sometimes Korean gugak folk music, and (3) women of punk. How close did I get to your main focuses/recurring themes?

Brittany: I've never really considered the show to have outright recurring themes, but if I had to sum up the History of Punk thematically I would definitely echo Rylan's initial intentions: to share information freely with support from the community, promoting local music and the scene as Edmonton's history of punk unfolds around us, and to touch on historical moments in punk music as they intersect with social justice, or just scenes that had some killer bands that deserve to be heard by CJSR's stellar listeners. Run-on sentences and shenanigans being the most overt themes... hopefully Rylan agrees :)

Rylan: I agree 100%!

Broke: Are there any topics you've covered that you thought would hit harder, or that you

really would like to push harder, but don't seem to get enough audience reaction?

Brittany: Not sure how to answer this one as we don't necessarily get audience feedback on every single show we do. I think anytime we speak about gentrification, the encampment sweeps in Edmonton, or LGBTQ2S+ themes, I feel most strongly that we cast a wider net and folks hear what us or our guests have to say about the topic. We are both super passionate and loving people and it means a lot that folks listen to the show at all! If that means they hear a new perspective and think about the world a bit differently, that's a bonus!

Rylan: It's funny cause since the advent of social media and digitization, access to information about punk and localized subcultures has become much more accessible. Less than twenty years ago if you wanted information about a local punk scene, you typically had to either know scene participants, or go to a physical archive and/or somehow track down primary sources. Nowadays, you can just type something in google! Which is so cool, but I'm still amazed when we cover topics on the show that benefit from that groundwork that early researchers, fans, and participants did to get that story out in the world.

Broke: Other than just as entertainment, what's there left that's redeemable about punk these days? Is it still a force for resistance and radical change? Does it do enough for the sake of inclusivity and acceptance? Or is it just as bad as mainstream society, or is it even more toxic in any ways?

Brittany: I think of all genres, punk is still the place for folks on the margins to participate. There are still subgenres that gatekeep cough hardcore cough. It's a place for those of us who give a shit about the world to scream about the ongoing injustices we're all collectively facing. The energy has to go somewhere and punk is still the perfect receptacle for emoting in certain ways, or even just engaging in art in less-than-acceptable ways.

Rylan: I think it's just as much of a force for social change as it ever was, but it can also be a microcosm for ongoing wider social issues related to race, gender, class, and more. Which means participating in the punk scene is an important way to work directly on these social issues!

Broke: It's 2024. When I go to punk shows in Korea, the average age is over 30, and I get the impression it's similar in

Edmonton too. What does punk still mean in this day and age?

Brittany: I think it depends on the show, but honestly the last few punk shows I've been to in Edmonton have been filled with younger folks, and it's super exciting to see. I've officially aged out of the most pit there are so many young femme kids in there taking up the torch. It rules. I think punk will be alive as long as the spirit of youthful rebellion exists. It may change shape from generation to generation, but isn't that the point of punk? To loudly evolve?

Rylan: One thing I've learned as I've gotten less young is that the issues I cared about when I first got into punk haven't gone away. Racism is still here. Police violence is occurring in spaces I never thought I'd see it, like against racialized undergraduate students at the quad on University of Alberta campus. Fascists and misogynists are getting more brazen. So I think punk today means to keep participating, keep learning, and keep sharing knowledge, whatever age you happen to be right now! We gotta keep supporting each other!

Broke: What's it like being on CJSR these days?

Brittany: Of the 9 years I've been volunteering with the station, I would say my involvement has shifted as a result of spending 6 of those 9 years on the board, which kind of changes my perspective on this question. I think at this point in time, having just wrapped my presidency, I feel confident in the direction the station is going. We're seeing a ton of new shows filling up the schedule, and have space for new staff members and, always always new volunteers. I just started a new drum and bass show with the Northern Alberta Drum and Bass Community, and that's been really cool to learn from them and be part of a whole new scene as a result. CJSR is still doing what it does best, which is to operate by the community for the community. It'll take a lot for me to want to stop volunteering at the station at this point!

Rylan: We just wrapped our annual FUNdrive fundraiser, and raised a record amount of donations for the station! That's just one of many ways the community shows it cares about CJSR in its 40th year on the air. Radio didn't really become popular until after the 1918-1920 pandemic. So broadcasting our way through the first pandemic since radio became mass media is quite remarkable! If shows are still being made and listeners are still tuning in through challenges like COVID-19, then nothing can stop us!

Visit linktr.ee/thehistoryofpunk and listen at mixcloud.com/thehistoryofpunk or cjsr.com/shows/the-history-of-punk

The mall is filled with zombies, but they're all too slow to catch you. You make it across the mall and over to the gun range without

much difficulty.

When you enter, you find all the guns you were hoping for. But there are also zombies here

holding guns. Maybe they were killed while trying to fight off the zombies, and didn't put the guns down before they zombified. Or

maybe liking guns doesn't take a lot of intelligence.

These zombies still know how to use firearms, somehow. They

shoot out your kneecaps so you can't get away, and then bite you.

THE END

K-pissing into the wind

Jon Twitch

When I was back in Edmonton in summer 2022 after over five years away, one of the few people who was around and willing to meet up was Sheri, founder of online radio station KPISSFM. Though her messages to me left me unsure if she wanted to meet up or was taunting me somehow. She did show up, with a shirt saying "On my way to fuck your dad." As luck would have it, my dad was on his way to give me a lift, and we know he fucks – just look at me.

I like interviewing people around the scene other than musicians, because let's face it, musicians don't always have the most interesting things to say. There was a lot about her life story that I hadn't had straight in my head, and this helped quite a bit. She's lived a migratory life, coming from an army brat background, and it's surprising that she doesn't totally forget about Edmonton whenever she leaves.

Broke: When I first saw the name KPISSFM, I figured it was some K-pop thing and I was going to add it to my K-Iceberg. Obviously it has nothing to do with Korea, but how did you end up with the name KPISS?

Sheri: I've always wanted to go to Korea because of the spas. The funny thing about zines is they're very personal so you're literally the only person that would have made that association. I rented a tiny studio that smelled like piss for the first incarnation of kpiss as a radio station and community space. I had a professional change the walls and cleared the smell out but a friend suggested WPISS because it sounds like you're making fun of call letters and traditional radio, plus it also did smell like piss but then another DJ put it together that since we're streaming live, it's the Golden stream. So the name was a collaboration but KPISS is better than WPISS. Also when you say the letters individually instead of one word you realize we're just taking the piss out of Radio, including hipster radio which is typically a very



Sheri pets her cat during a going-away party in Edmonton, dated to February 2002.

precious place.

Broke: How and when did you get into the scene? Was there a breakthrough moment or band that led to your conversion? Can you remember your first show?

Sheri: At Vic comp high school there was something called the punk hallway and I started dating a total character who was really into 50s and 60s music as am I, we would dress up like someone's grandparents and he took me to punk

shows but we were both very contemptuous of the scene. We were genuine freaks who needed something subversive but we weren't that into the scene itself. I can't remember my first show but the earliest I remember was the legendary Evaporators show. Conversion sounds very religious but that's an apt word.

I saw too much hypocrisy in the scene as a woman to really get into it and honestly I love the idea of punk but it wasn't



Sheri models her "On my way to fuck your dad" shirt with my dad in Tavern on Whyte, 20220811.

Visit kpiss.fm to listen and follow @kpissfm on IG

You put a hand on the man's shoulder, and he jolts upright.

"Brains!" he wails.

"Oh no, they've got you too!" you exclaim.

"No, brains is just what the people chasing me were saying," he assures you. "I'm totally alright."

You look around. "Where are we?" you ask. "What is this?"

"Oh, this is the secret LRT line that was built underground all the way out to the mall," he answers.

"That's real?" you say. "I thought it was an urban myth."

"It made the construction of the Valley Line West line a little redundant," he admits. "But anyway, how would you like a ride downtown? We can hide behind the zombie wall there.

I couldn't make the trip on my own, because I need someone else working to keep the train going."

"Doing what exactly?" you ask. "I don't have any particular skills related to LRTs."

"I need you riding shotgun," he says.

While you're staring back at him confused, he hands you a



Her own logo reveals her American birthright, a gun, seen at her farewell party.

until the Mod nights came around that I finally found soul music and Brit pop and people I was genuinely interested in, but I liked the punk crossover. And even though I wasn't that into the music, I was infinitely inspired by Liv and Eli's organization and entrepreneurial spirit at such an early age.

They were such pros and so autonomous.

Broke: I met you through the punk scene mostly, which is a typical conduit to connect a lot of people into various other types of underground music. How would you describe your particular music vibe?

Sheri: I'm just really into yacht rock, oldies, 70s NY independent music. I like Jim Carroll but it's hard to understand how he fits into the punk scene same with Mink Deville. I have a country kick. I love oldies reggae. I love early Canadiana like Edward Bear. I really dislike hardcore, metal etc unless it's hair metal.

Broke: I think you left even before I left, but you've been back a bit more. Can you elaborate on this a bit? What brought you down to the US/ New York, and where is your life centered?

Sheri: I don't have a center, I was a military brat and I was adopted by someone from Edmonton and I was never supposed to be here. I've been deeply affected and struggling with that my entire life but nobody cares which is both depressing and liberating at the same time.

Broke: What would you say is your hometown, and do you still feel like an Edmontonian? Are you more American or Canadian?

Sheri: I have three hometowns

and I feel very connected, have family, paid taxes, have baristas who remember me in Rosh Pina, Israel. Brooklyn, NY and Edmonton. I was born in Flushing Queens and have lots of family that are Fran Drescher esque.

Broke: After having lived around in other places, how do you view Edmonton now?

Sheri: Edmonton is going through a down period which is always great for the music scene but terrible for society in general. I hope it gets back up on its feet someday but I don't know. There's so much repressed energy here.

Broke: What was "That's What I Call Hits"?

Sheri: My first zine. It was brilliant and terrible and opened a lot of opportunities for me. It was also necessary to have because no one was processing the scene from my perspective at the time. I even managed to break a lot of bands to people which was very cool but something you could only do before the internet ruined all of that.

Broke: KPISSFM is, I'm assuming, not currently an FM radio station. Can you explain it to me? What's the concept? And also, how popular is it? Is it a profitable thing?

I am not explaining it. If you're interested go to kpiss.fm and just listen and enjoy it. It's truly fantastic.

Broke: Do you have any prior radio experience, such as CJSR?

Sheri: Yes I was banned from CJSR, fuck CJSR. But also thank you CJSR there's no Kpiss without it.

Broke: Also, are you looking for new shows? How does one become a DJ? I may consider it worth doing a Korean underground show for you at some point, if it looks worthwhile.

Sheri: You should TOTALLY do a show from Korea. Anyone interested just needs to listen and spend time with the website and station and decide independently if it's for them or not then email me Sheri@kpiss.fm and we will go from there.

another zombie smashes through the window and grabs your other arm, giggling in with its dirty fingernails and piercing your skin.

Fortunately you managed to get the shotgun loaded.

I'll shoot my own arm. GO TO PAGE 23

I'll shoot the zombie. GO TO PAGE 24

So your band wants to tour Asia...

Jon Twitch

In the interest in helping more Canadian bands – especially Edmonton bands with members I know well – I put together this guide about how to bring a touring band to Asia.

I've put on various shows over the last 21 years, but I've only brought overseas acts to Korea three times (all pictured on this spread). The only circumstances in which I would consider bringing a band over myself are if there's no one else who can do it, it can be done for cheap, and/or I know them personally. I'm not a great promoter, and most of the time I prefer someone else handles it. I've learned from various errors, and I also know who to ask to bring a band over, or at least know who would know who would ask, for any of the following countries. If you're looking to tour anywhere in Asia, you're invited to contact me directly for further advice, connections to local promoters, or even for direct assistance.



The Chris Murray Combo visits the Korean War Memorial 20080918.

and it doesn't really support underground tours well. Everyone wants to welcome foreign bands, and there's a lot of enthusiasm, but it's just not that profitable a venture.

I would estimate Edmonton's punk scene is roughly the same size as all of Korea's.

Most of the venues are DIY, owned by friends in the scene who are probably losing money monthly. Rental agreements can be weird, and while everyone is generally pretty honest, there is still a risk of a promoter losing several hundred dollars if not enough people turn up.

Korea's scene used to be concentrated in one neighbourhood of Seoul, but these days there are smaller scenes in some of the farther cities. It's reasonable to expect a good crowd (50ish) if you tour to Gwangju, Cheongju, or Daegu, and you could get a larger crowd in Busan, and you might even find smaller but still rewarding shows in other cities like Jeonju, Daejeon, Ulsan, or Geoje, places that rarely get shows. And sometimes there are skatepark shows in Cheonan which are amazingly fun and bring out a surprisingly young crowd. But you won't play all these

cities in one tour.

Typically a tour would operate between Thursday and Sunday, and it's not unheard of for two of those shows to be in Seoul. The Saturday show has to be in Seoul at one of the main live music venues, because that's how you'll make the most money.

It's highly recommended to plan a tour for milder months, such as fall (October–November) or spring (March–early June). Since you're probably a Canadian reading this, I can add that Korean winters are not very cold (rarely falling below -10), and while it's nicer to experience Korea in warmer weather, it's also nice to escape Canada's deep freeze. You might lose some audience if it's really cold, but I've also seen some pretty major shows in February.

You may notice Korea has some major holidays – Lunar New Year in late winter, and Chuseok around the time of Canadian Thanksgiving. Both of these are three days long, but don't be lured into taking advantage: the first and third day are for commuting to one's hometown. If you tour on either of these, you'll be playing to smaller crowds of mostly foreigners. Christmas

can be a great time to play, and there are usually a lot of good Christmas shows, while New Year's is usually more toned down, for whatever reason. Halloween has been a good time for shows, but since 2022 I'd advise against it here. Around May and early October there are a lot of smaller one-day holidays, and it's usually fine to put on events on these days.

JAPAN

Of all of Asia, Japan is the most popular touring destination for musicians of all kinds. It's probably the safest, most convenient with the most infrastructure, and most profitable to tour.

Japan has one of the oldest punk scenes in the world, one of the few places where it started in the 1970s. It is incredibly diverse, and if you like any particular niche of music, there are probably dozens if not hundreds of bands specialised in it.

It is always incredibly busy, with shows possible any day of the week, even in smaller cities. So it's possible to be there for seven days and play seven shows in seven cities, if not more.

There are some downsides to this. Touring bands are kept so busy that they don't

really get to experience much of the local culture. And Japanese bands won't be too excited about a touring band, when just yesterday they saw Discharge, and Bad Manners is coming tomorrow.

You can find various people in Japan who can help you set up tours. It's probably best to go based on similar sounding bands. I would probably find it easiest to advise and provide contacts for streetpunk/oi/skinhead/ska bands and pop-punk bands looking to go there, but it wouldn't be hard to scrounge up contacts for any niche.

CHINA

China's scene is young, slightly younger than Korea's, and there is a huge amount of diversity and innovation. The country is so much larger than anywhere else, so if you have a ton of spare time, you can spend it roaming all over by train playing shows all over the place. There may be sudden unannounced restrictions on where you can go, as China does monitor internal travel and it tends to make life difficult for people who, say, want to visit Xinjiang.

If you apply for a visa to tour the country, you'll probably get it denied.

You back away and leave the LRT car. Eventually, it sounds quiet upstairs, so you venture out onto the ground floor again.

But you were wrong, and the

zombies start swarming on you. There's no way out. Then, you have one final, desperate idea: there's a blood pressure testing machine out there along the mall

corridor.

You slip your arm through the cuff and hit the button to begin. The cuff inflates, just as the zombies reach you. They grab you

from all directions and tear you away from the machine, severing your arm. As you're being devoured alive, you can hear the machine flashing the message

"Testing — remain still."

That was a pretty stupid move, wasn't it?

THE END



The Slackers pack their gear into the van at the end of their Japan/Korea tour, 20070401.

It's easier to just show up and tour without official permission. China's state surveillance takes a very wide, broad view, but it doesn't see up-close details, at least until it needs to.

There are a lot of foreigners involved in China's scene, and this includes people who bring touring bands in. I have a few contacts there I would swear by.

HONG KONG

Let's treat Hong Kong's scene as different from mainland China's. It is complicated to pass between the two. Hong Kong's scene is also a lot more multicultural and English-speaking. It would probably be pretty easy to contact all the music venues in English and receive answers back. Getting in might be complicated, but still I think not as weird as going into China. And you'd probably only be there for a show or two.

TAIWAN

I know relatively little about Taiwan's music scene. From what I've heard, it's similar to Korea, with limited opportunities to play shows and limited appeal. There have been Korean bands that have toured there, including recently. It seems they usually go over for a festival, but if you have the contacts, it's possible to tour around and play shows in regular venues in the cities.

SINGAPORE, MALAYSIA, INDONESIA, THAILAND, VIETNAM

All these countries have

scenes, some of them pretty big and well-developed, and some of them that have been around for quite a while (I think Vietnam might be the only one whose scene is younger than Korea's).

Although most are known as poor countries (not you, Singapore), they're also affordable, and there is a lot of infrastructure and even seemingly money to support international touring acts. Even if you lose money, it probably won't be very much. Plus, travel between most of them seems pretty easy.

Korean bands have toured most of these countries, and it wouldn't be hard to get their contacts.

PHILIPPINES

I separated the Philippines from those other Southeast Asian countries, because even though it's known for being much more English-friendly, it also has a worse crime rate, including major crimes, like shootings and abducting foreign visitors. I know significantly less about any Korean bands that have toured, or who to trust in the scene there.

Of all the countries, it wouldn't be my first recommendation, but if you figure it out or know more than me, it would probably be highly worth visiting. Most touring musicians go through Manila, the capital, but there's room to tour more remote parts of the archipelago nation, including Cebu.

CAMBODIA

Cambodia is a different place. It's not quite as

developed, but it's part of the world, and there is a lively, globally welcoming music scene. They have a lot more metal than punk, but any touring band there would probably be welcomed. I'm unaware of any Korean bands that have toured there, but I know a guy I could ask.

MYANMAR

Following the 2021 military coup, I'm going to recommend against touring here. But yes there has been a scene.

NORTH KOREA

Touring North Korea has actually been a thing that's been discussed. It is highly unlikely, and the most you could expect would be to go as a tourist and fit in some side-performances at local tourist bars or karaoke restaurants. Could make some amusing videos from that, but you won't be playing to locals, other than servers.

Laibach played there in 2015, and while nothing particularly bad happened, North Koreans really weren't into their music. This appeared to have closed doors for later acts. I was once involved in inquiries about sending a reggae act to Korea, but the North Koreans, not knowing what reggae is, apparently looked it up in their reference book which told them it's a type of rock, so, not wanting another band sounding like Laibach, they said no.

I suppose this could change someday, but I certainly doubt I'll be the one to take such a chance.



Jenny Woo arrives in Korea, 20181013.

FURTHER RESOURCES

uniteasia.org

This website is run by Riz, lead singer of the Hong Kong hardcore band King Ly Chee. The website's goal is, as the name says, to unite scenes across Asia. It publishes news and updates about bands in Asian countries, as well as other bands coming to tour Asia. It also maintains a database of promoters in each country, although I see a lot of names are notably absent, and I'm also unsure if they update when someone stops actively bringing in overseas bands.

uniteasia.org/promoter-database

DIY Booking Asia FB group

The guy who started this group has long since moved away, and it isn't active anymore, but it has years of posts, and you could probably dig up some potential contacts that are still active there.

fb.com/groups/743358255766133

Me

I can answer questions, as mentioned, and I might intervene more actively in bringing bands to Korea.

jon_dunbar@hotmail.com

Your own friends

Do you know anyone who has toured Asia? There are at least two people interviewed in this zine who have been over here, and if you're close with them, you can probably get the best information and contacts through them.

The front door is barricaded, so you have to push it open. On the other side, you find yourself

facing a squad of redneck cops, all aiming guns at you. "Zombie!" one of them shrieks.

"I'm not a zombie," you retort. "That's exactly what one of them would say!" the cop replies.

They shoot you full of lead. At least the zombies didn't get you, but even during a zombie

apocalypse, ACAB. THE END

Talking to Eli's hand

Hubbard

The last issue of *Broke* in Edmonton contained mention of Eli's speedy recovery. Eli, a former promoter of shows in Edmonton, had suffered major trauma from a bike accident on May 13, 2022. After tons of surgery, he relocated to Vancouver where he continues his rehabilitation.

This interview was done face to face online, the only person I did this with for this zine. I didn't know what to expect, but he was in high spirits, very much the same friend I remembered. We started with some easy questions, and overall his memory and cognitive functions seemed pretty good. Especially keeping in mind we were talking mainly about things that happened 20-30 years ago.

Eli: I live in a group home for adults with brain injuries, so we run the gamut of light injury to major life-changing injuries.

Hubbard: How is it? Is it an okay place to live?

Eli: Yeah, it's a great place to live. There's about six of us here, and it's as close to independent living as I'll get living with nursing care. They're caregivers who live here, or they don't live here, but they come and go, and there's about six of them, so six of us, excuse me, six of us, six of them, and the staff just rotate on a schedule, and I just live.

Hubbard: Sounds convenient.

Eli: It is convenient, and Vancouver's beautiful, so it's a great place to live.

Eli: Sorry, I have a spasm, a spazzy hand, and it's just showing up to say hi now.

Hubbard: Hi, hand.

Eli: It's just, yeah, it's just hi hand. What do you want? What do you want? It just wants to claw at my face right now.

Hubbard: When I first heard about you being in this stage of your life and everything, after coming out of the coma, I remember the first trace I saw of you online was spy whales. I was very curious about that.

Eli: Oh, it's just an inside joke with myself. I think the idea of a spy whale is hilarious. And I followed the

There are zombies milling around in the street, but they seem to be giving this house a wide berth for some reason. They barely look at your ripe, tender



The left picture of Eli at Humpty's in Edmonton 20010922 was used for an Indecline banner. The right photo, courtesy of him, shows modern-day silver fox Eli.

story of them catching it very closely. Like, I followed all the evidence, and I followed the nature group that leads on his adoption in Norway. They're called One Whale, and they're very, like, passionate activists about beluga health. And they post lots of funny videos of them just, like, waxing poetic about this whale that they love so much, who just died recently.

The spy whale. The spy whale. Vladimir died. Voldemir. Hvaldimir. Sorry. It's a portmanteau of the Norwegian word for whale, which is hval. Hvaldimir. But, yeah, I just became kind of obsessed with this idea of a spy whale, and I thought of this being a funny name for a band, because it would be a great punk band. And then I made this Instagram account without ever assuming I would ever make any music called that, but now I have it there in case I do. I bought a drum machine in this last year, so I'm waiting for that to speak to me, and then I'll make some music and put it up.



Hvaldimir is the focus of @spywhales. 20190617 image from Norway stolen from Wikipedia

skull as you park in the driveway of the house.

The front door is unlocked, so you let yourself in. The music is coming from the basement, so

Hubbard: Are you a musician? I don't remember.

Eli: I'm not. I've never been a musician. I don't play anything. I sing, but that's not, I don't sing with anybody or any purpose. Mostly just sing to myself.

Hubbard: How did you get into the music scene originally? Do you remember that?

Eli: You know, it was people like my uncle. It was people like my uncle, Peter North, who were working in the scene already in Edmonton, and my family too, because they were in theatres, right? So I saw, I worked in, I volunteered in lots of theatres, and I spent time with Myer Horowitz, which I heard just reopened after a renovation. Have you seen it?

Hubbard: No.

Eli: My uncle was just there the other night. He said it looks great. But people like him really kind of brought me in and showed me that there were places for people like me to work. I was a teenager, but he was like, you could do this. You could haul towels or you could lift cases of water to a dressing room. No problem. I was like, I could do this. So I would help him with shows sometimes at the Myer Horowitz or other places, little community halls, and I just sort of saw that the infrastructure was there to support this, but for me. So I just needed to make the contacts that I knew were there. I just needed to make them.

So for that first show with the Kingpins, I reached out to Rich Liukko. I said, you're the only other ska band that exists, so do you want

you head downstairs. Down there, you find a punk band playing to an audience of about 20 people. You recognise one of them from somewhere, so you go over.

to play with this other ska band from Ontario (editor's note: Montreal)? And he was like, yeah, okay. And Mad Bombers played that first show of mine with the Kingpins at the Likwid Lounge. We did two shows and we did an all ages afternoon show and then a night show. And I lost a bucket of money on those shows.

Hubbard: Now, if I remember correctly, you came up with the name Black Dot. And that was like your label. Can you tell me a bit more about Black Dot?

Eli: We did over a hundred shows as Black Dot. Black Dot as a name is a reference to censorship. It's a reference to how sometimes in old pornos, there's the place where the tongue touches the penis is covered by a black dot.

Hubbard: I never realized it was a porn thing.

Eli: Yeah, it's a porn thing. It's a porn joke.

Hubbard: Who else was it run with?

Eli: It was me and Liv. And right from the beginning, it was always the two of us. And the problem was, well, not necessarily a problem, but I ended up, and this is just the sexism of the scene, I ended up getting all the credit for it. And she definitely fell into my shadow and didn't like it there at all. And I tried to pull her out as much as I could and center her in conversations and in media. Anytime we were covered, as a duo. You know, Sandra Sperounes loved our story of two high school kids who started doing shows. And she started writing about us very early in the conception of

"We found out zombies hate punk music," he tells you, "so as long as we keep the party going, we can keep living."
"Great," you say...

Black Dot. So I always tried to put (Liv) forward in those interviews and try to get her recognized as much as I could.

Hubbard: Another thing that you guys did was, what was it called? I forget the name of it right now, but it's on the tip of my tongue. You had a CJSR show.

Eli: Yeah. So Liv, well, I had my own show, and then Liv had a show called Youth Menace. That was like a punk rock show where she interviewed young offenders.

Hubbard: You weren't part of Youth Menace? It was Liv's thing?

Eli: I was. It was Liv and I. But it was her relationship that brought that to the front because she worked with the artist Wallis Kendall, who ran iHuman (Youth Society). Wallis Kendall and her dad were good friends. And so Wallis was connected to the Youth Criminal Defense Office, and we met a guy named Mark Sherrington, who still works there to this day. And he was the one who had the idea for Youth Menace. And we were like, yeah, we can do this. And then we started, it was really by the seat of our pants in the beginning, but it was good. We had these kids in, and they would do their scrappy little research between episodes, and come and present their research findings. Funny kids.

Hubbard: And if I remember correctly, did that count as community service for some of them?

Eli: It did. It did count as community service for them, for the kids. Because we were, because CJSR is a not-for-profit, and they would volunteer, so they would do 12 hours of research, and then three hours on the day of the recording, they would come to the station and spend a couple hours there, and we'd hang out with them. I remember lots of really good talks with kids about how they ended up in their situation, and shitty parents, or just they grew up poor, or bad neighborhood, or whatever. They had lots of reasons why they ended up in front of me.

But it was an interesting, it was an interesting way to look at Edmonton, was through the eyes of these

"Got anything to drink in this place?" GO TO PAGE 25

"Do you guys need another musician to play with?" GO TO PAGE 26

kids.

Hubbard: I remember one thing. There was an article that the Edmonton Journal was writing one time about violence in the West Edmonton Mall, and they relied initially on an interview related to your show, and then the mall got a whole bunch of stuff censored. Do you remember that? Eli: No. The mall got the article censored?

Hubbard: Yeah, there was some mention about the gun range and stuff, and they got quotes with whoever was participating from Youth Menace Cut, and in its place was a comment from the mall.

Eli: We actually recorded an episode in the gun range. We went to go fire guns one day, because we got challenged. Once we started working with iHuman, we got all these anti-gun people coming to us, and so they would come to us, and one said, if you're so against guns, have you ever fired one? And they said, no, actually, I never have. And they said, okay, well, we challenge you to go to the gun range. I said, well, fuck yeah, let's do it. And it was terrifying. It was one of the worst experiences of my life. I hated it. I hated every second of it.

Hubbard: I've still never fired a gun.

Eli: Well, I mean, I suggest it, just to say you've done it, but it is power that nobody should ever have. Like, I was standing in the mall holding this gun thinking I could end so many people's lives right now. It just was a sickly amount of power that came to me.

Hubbard: I think there must have been a journal story right after that, and you guys were cut from it. I don't remember those details.

Eli: I wouldn't doubt it. Yeah, even though Liv and I were press darlings, our show wasn't.

Hubbard: So one thing I wanted to ask also, switching topics slightly, I remember it was actually Greg who got me into the punk scene. And as soon as I started to feel comfortable there, Greg moved on to the rave scene. And my impression is kind of you guys did also. Black Dot, was it always promoting punk or was it doing other stuff?

Eli: Black Dot never did dance music. I've never put on a rave. No, those scenes very much ran parallel for me. There wasn't a lot of crossover between them, both in people and in, like, there's a few people I can think of that were definitely



Eli hosts a New Year's show at CJSR, 20020101, and Liv hosts a CJSR Fundrive show, 20010928.



in both. But the professional side of it was never the same. Like, rave promoters were not putting on punk shows and punk promoters weren't putting on raves. But the scenes kind of just coexisted because eventually we started using the same spaces. Raves started using Orange Hall and they started sort of biting and biting our style of where we were putting on shows.

Hubbard: I always remembered there were a lot of people who were saying, when the rave scene was threatened, people in the punk scene should have cared and things like that. But yeah, you're right. There was virtually no crossover at all. I was looking through my pictures recently and there was that rave in front of City Hall. I don't remember all those details.

Eli: DJ Rap played that. That was a big deal that she was there.

Hubbard: When did you leave Edmonton and why?

Eli: I moved to Toronto in 2000 I think. I think it was 2004, it might have been 2003, but I moved to Toronto to work in the music industry. I had a friend who ran a record label and she knew that I'd been working in live music for the past five years and thought that I could maybe lend my talents to a touring department of her record label for handling low-key, small bookings. So basically being an agent, but on a very small scale just for her artists. And, I moved out there and six months later she laid me off. It's a long story, but her husband was an ACTRA member and ACTRA went on strike that year. And suddenly she had no income for me to draw from the company. So, I couldn't get back, she wasn't able to pay me,

so she had to lay me off. And I just sort of toughed it out. I wanted to stay in Toronto, I wanted to stay working in music and this opportunity at the agency group surfaced working with Rob Zifarelli, who was the VP at the time and really one of the lead agents in the whole country. And he was really creating this farm team of indie rock artists and nobody else was touching that at the time. He signed Broken Social Scene and he signed City and Colour and Alexis on Fire and that sort of screamo, the end of the screamo scene. Which was interesting because then I was able to get back in touch with, like, putting on shows with Jebus from Toronto.

Hubbard: So yeah, I wanted to know how much you want to talk about what happened to you, like the accident and everything.

Eli: I'm happy to talk about it.

Hubbard: I understand it was a bike accident.

Eli: Yeah, so I was riding my bike in Toronto and I

wasn't wearing a helmet. I'll say that, I'll confess that right off the bat. And I was doored by a parked car. You know what that means? Like they opened their passenger door and I hit it from the outside and went sailing over their door and landed on my head on the road and I shattered my skull. It absolutely shattered.

My whole frontal lobe was just mush, just turned into absolute paste. And as I lay there on the road, I had a stroke. It was sort of triggered by the impact as far as I can tell. Because I hit my head pretty far and hard on the road. And then I had a stroke. So I'm assuming one led to the other. And they peeled me off the road and took me to the hospital and I've basically been in hospital since, now is almost three years ago.

Hubbard: I do remember you were in a coma for quite a long time.

Eli: I was in a coma for a while. Well, I had a brain bleed. I think it lasted like three or four days and they were finally were able to relieve the pressure and that brought me out of the coma.

Hubbard: Do you remember the accident?

Eli: No. I remember my first memories are in the hospital and they're of recovery, like getting lots of needles and getting lots of bandages and like my body was pretty fucked up from the crash.

I didn't break my arm, but my left arm. You can't see it. But when you saw my goofy fingers, like the nerves between my brain and my arm were shot. Like I think my left arm does not work as it should. In fact, my physio exercise this

week is picking up marbles and putting them in a jar.

That's my entire exercise. And it is so hard. I posted it on my Instagram story actually yesterday. You can go watch me.

Hubbard: Yeah, it reminds me of crane machines or claw machines, you know, it is kind of like a claw machine.

Eli: It is like a claw machine.

Hubbard: Which some people pay for it.

Eli: That's true. I'm a human claw machine.

Hubbard: So do you have, are there any lessons that you want people to learn from your experience about this?

Eli: Like wear a fucking helmet?

Hubbard: Obviously that. Eli: And just to know how quickly life can change. Like, you know, I was, I was living my life.

I was a fully, fully functional adult and I had a job and had a relationship and was working and suddenly it all got swept right out from underneath me. So I think if anything, I'd say, you know, celebrate those around you or whatever. And it sounds hokey, but you know, be grateful for what you've got and honour it. Because, you know, you never know when it's going to get taken away from you. Like it was me. I mean, I'm lucky enough to get, have to have received most of it back. I've got most of my, most of my skills are back. My dexterity is still coming back. Obviously like I can't, I got no dexterity in this hand. I can't pinch anything. But it's coming slowly coming back slowly. So it'll be three years, it'll be three years in May. Just feels like a long time, but.

Hubbard: By the way, I have to appreciate you for somewhat accidentally giving me a new nickname, Hubbard.

Eli: The typo. I love that.

Hubbard: I love things like that. It was just such a like committed response. Like, Hubbard.

Hubbard: And I was like, new name. I loved that your reaction when you saw that that was my screen name on Instagram now.

Eli: That rules. So yeah, when you first launched Broke in Edmonton, I was so tickled to see some of these old photos. It really jogged some very positive memories from my youth. So I appreciate, I appreciate you doing that.



The origin of "Hubbard"

You agree to their terms, and they strap you into their ZZE, then let you into the walled city

center. It sucks, but you suppose it beats the alternative. After seven days of wearing these

mittens and this head cage, you finally get it removed.

Now you're free to live out the

remainder of your life behind the zombie wall. It's not all bad, and it's not like your previous life

was all that great.

THE END

ACAB 363 days a year: Cops at Pride Parades

Jon Twitch

I hear in recent years that there is controversy in many North American cities, including Edmonton, about including law enforcement in Pride Parades. When I first heard this, my response was "But who keeps the Christians from attacking?"

It turned out, the debate was over allowing uniformed cops to march as actual parade participants, not on duty holding back the gnashing, frothing-at-the-mouth Christians. It's because of the historic use of police forces to oppress sexual minority communities.

For me, the Seoul Queer Culture Festival's Pride Parade is one of the few days of the year when I am actually glad to see cops (other dates include other queer events, as well as Halloween weekend in Itaewon). SQCF typically gets around 100,000 people out (2024's count was 150,000), but the Christians also hold similarly huge rallies intended to surround the festival, drowning it out with loud Christian music and fire-and-brimstone speeches.

A similarly large force of riot police is deployed to keep the two sides separated, and to escort the parade safely through the streets, past wailing Christians holding signs displaying hateful messages. In some years I've witnessed all sorts of attacks on the parade, usually people who run in front and try to halt it from starting. Once I saw about 100 boys in their 20s run and lie down in a big pile in front. I've



Riot police conscripts form a human barrier to keep Christians from intruding on the Seoul Queer Culture Festival, 20150609.

also heard of Christians hurling literal shit at participants.

When there aren't enough police, tragedy strikes. The inaugural Incheon Queer Culture Festival in 2019 didn't have enough cops, and the Christians attacked, overrunning the festival, assaulting participants and trashing everything.

These conflicts actually begin weeks earlier, when the festival organisers have to register their events with the local government and the police. Registration is only possible up to a certain period in advance, so on the first day that registration is possible for the desired date, the organisers find themselves competitively lining up against the Christians, booking their own events to block the festival.

In 2023, it worked. The anti-LGBTQ mayor, who was also somehow declared a "champion of inclusivity" by the OECD, seized on the false narrative that the SQCF is not suitable for all

ages, so permission was instead given to a Christian youth event to be held in Seoul Square. You can guess how empty it was, while SQCF was held along a street a few blocks away. The trend persisted this year, when they held a nonreligious book reading event in the square. Betting none of the books were queer. Also, it looked like it was pretty hard to read with all the Christian noise torture going on right across the street.

The Christians over here are especially in an uproar over a long-proposed anti-discrimination law, fearing that its passing would result in their bigotry being punishable. They also share these messages wherever possible. After the 2022 Itaewon Halloween disaster, there was an overwhelmingly touching memorial ceremony outside Itaewon Station exit 1; just a few meters away, Christians were singing Christmas carols on loudspeakers in front of a sign



Police work to remove a human barrier of far-right Christians blockading the Seoul Pride Parade, 20180714.

saying "Homosexual love is Sin! Believe Jesus!" At the end of the disastrous 2023 World Scout Jamboree, participants showing up for the farewell event in World Cup Stadium all had to pass by elderly Christians protesting against them, displaying signs saying "Homosex is sin! Repent!"

Overall, the Korean public is sick of all this shit, and has lost patience with the Christians — as well as LGBTQ rights. The conflict has yanked the Overton window in a certain direction, getting all the normal people to conclude "Koreans don't approve of LGBTQ." Literally everybody in the country who opposes sexual minorities is out there in the Christian rallies; everyone else might be unsettled by the idea of same-sex attraction, but they are hardly likely to lift a finger against it. And we are lucky that these tens of thousands of riot police, mostly conscripts, are there to dutifully defend these

public gatherings.

Just because I like to say "ACAB 363 days a year" doesn't mean I'm going to disagree about cops at queer events. Cops really aren't your friends. Their historical and current-day role in oppressing sexual minorities is very real. Same with Christians. All I'm suggesting is that Christians be added to the banlist, or at least tell them to leave their robes and miniature novelty execution sticks at home.

And I don't want to hear about how the hateful Christians are not real Christians, and your Christianity is better. It's 2024, and your Christianity lost. Christianity is now a bigoted megalomaniac in a red hat signing Bibles made in China. If you want to impress people that you're one of the good Christians who ignores all the homophobic messages, why not go a step further and become an ex-Christian?

K-pop and fast food, the perfect pairing

Jon Twitch

Want to talk about K-pop? Let's go to McDonald's. What's that, you don't like hamburgers? Don't worry, they also have burgers made with beef.

There's all the variety you can hope for here, literally something for everybody on the menu. You can even get chicken burgers, shrimp burgers, and various combinations of all those. It's hard to imagine anything that isn't on the menu.

If you're still not satisfied, we can go across the street to Burger King, or into the subway station for Lotteria — a great choice if you want to show how patriotic you are (to a Korean-Japanese conglomerate).

Somehow whenever people start talking about K-pop, my mind drifts to fast food. Particularly McDonaldisation, the process of industrialising the food service industry.

"You can tell your Prime Minister Justin to shove it, because I'm not giving up my rights," you say.

"I'm sorry you feel that way, but also suspect that you're doing us a favour by not entering," the gunman says.

He shows you back to your

car, which has been cleaned and gassed up, giving you a chance to survive rather than die right outside their big stupid zombie wall.

They stand clear and open up the gate again for you to leave. You drive out again and head off in another direction, hoping

and molded people. The idol academies choose the finest children, often selected before puberty. They are from that moment on raised for one purpose: debuting. Nothing else matters, just that one future path they've been put on, being shaped into a perfectly formed puck of generic meat.

To get back to McDonald's for a second, I recall a couple decades ago, McDonald's boasted that it selected its cows from the top-quality ranches. A friend familiar with the agricultural industry confirmed this to me; she also added that McDonald's chooses only the sickliest cattle from these top-quality ranches.

Who are McDonald's true customers? They're not the music-listening consumers — you, or more likely if you're reading this zine, your kids or their kids. The customers are corporations, because McDonald's is actually one of

the world's largest real estate companies. The music-listening public are the workers behind the counter, toiling away to survive, performing for their corporate masters for the honour of serving burgers in exchange for a pittance.

K-pop is of course entirely different. The fans are forming online communities, where they do their own kind of performance for the honour of supporting their favourite idols. They get to form meaningful community connections, while also serving the benefit of the entertainment agencies, who have their own customers to satisfy: corporate sponsors and government agencies, which is where the real money behind K-pop comes from. You didn't think it was from EP sales, did you? Even the superfans buying up dozens of the same album of their favourite acts know they're not putting food on G-Dragon's table, just gaming the scoreboard.

At the end of the day, the big companies become even bigger, the people get something to while away their otherwise meaningless time, and the burgers/K-pop idols get eaten up.

Just like McDonald's represents American cultural soft power, so too does K-pop drive Korea's soft power diplomacy, and the effects are palpable. And it is also certain that K-pop has done wonders for representation in American media. At the end of the day, the ultimate goal of K-pop is to attract and influence affluent white Americans, the people with higher international sociopolitical power, and positively impact Korea's diplomatic and economic goals.

And it seems to be working. So order a bulgogi burger, and think of K-pop while you choke it down — are burgers really supposed to taste this sweet? I also recommend the 10 Chicken McNuggets, the official McDonald's meal of eight-member band BTS. Why 10? I

lecter drag costumes," the trucker replies.

"Right on, brother," you reply. "We should do something."

"Like what?" asks another trucker.

"I say we drive to Ottawa and give the government a piece of our mind," you suggest.

The truckers look horrified at the idea. "Let them eat our brains?" one asks.

"No," you say. "More like a protest."

And with that, the convoy protest begins.

THE END

...Does whatever a Lobster can

Jon Twitch

I've had the good fortune of having met several actual real-life superheroes. Within 2023 alone, I met with four of them: Powermann, two Spider-Men of varying merits, and Lobster Man.

Of all these, you're least likely to have ever heard of Lobster Man, and if you are familiar, it's probably my fault, for which I apologise.

My very obvious best friend for my life prior to moving to Korea was a guy named Greg. I still give him the title of one of my lifelong best friends.

We met shortly before kindergarten, when my mom sent me out into the back alley and I wandered along until I found another backyard where kids mostly my age were digging a pit beside a house, with the intent to install a semi-basement side door. That was the home of Greg, and for the next 17 years we would always attend the same school together.

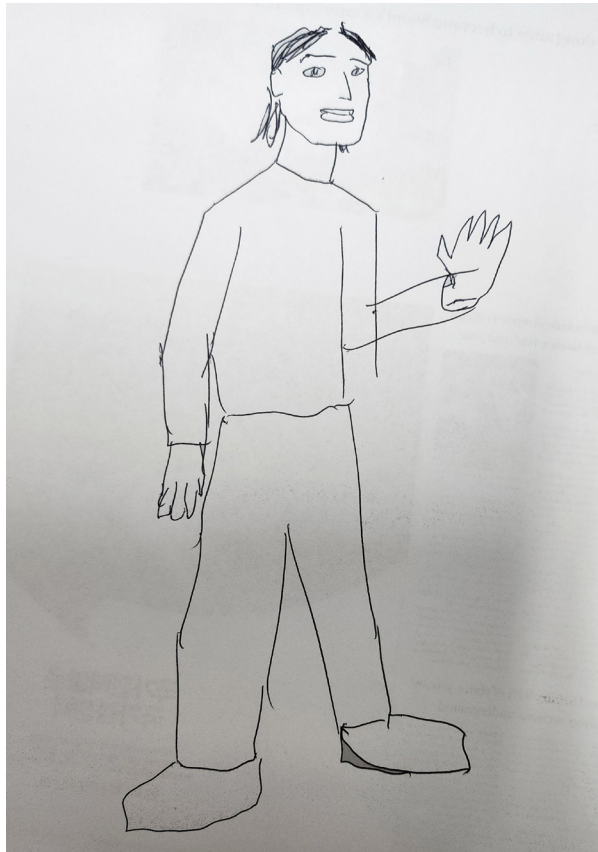
Greg was a lot of things I aspired to be: smart, cool, and brave. I was there once when they hooked him up to a brainwave machine, and it started beeping like crazy, indicating a lot of electrical activity inside his head. I know both our IQs, and his is at least 10 points higher than mine, even the figure I currently round mine up to. He was always less of a spazz than me, more relaxed, better at socialising, better with girls. He got into music faster than me, he did more drugs than me, he was more open to new experiences. And through it all, he always maintained some kind of innocence or purity about him, somehow.

I learned a lot from being around him, and I often envied him. Some of the things I did to him were certainly out of envy, and could easily be classified as tearing him down. I wouldn't call it bullying, but it likely contributed to getting others to bully him.

Sometime in junior high school, probably grade 9 when we were in the same class, it became known that his face would turn red whenever he was embarrassed. Someone, I'm pretty sure not me, called him Lobster Man.

At the time, he had a bruise on his forehead, and it sort of made a W shape. I think it's more likely this was my doing, adding to the legend that he was an alien from the Cassiopeia constellation.

At some point, I think in high school when we were subjected to way less bullying, I decided to make a Lobster Man comic. It was about the actual Greg, set in our contemporary surroundings, who would undergo a Hulk-like transformation whenever he was embarrassed, becoming Lobster



This recent sketch is basically what he looked like. When he transformed, his skin became red and he had a W on his forehead, and his hands became crab claws, much easier to draw. But this zine is B&W.

Man. Lobster Man was an alternate personality, not really Greg but more like a passenger who would take over in times of need. Lobster Man was drawn in bright red with a redder W on his forehead, and he had lobster claws. Lobster Man was generally someone who would bring in an outside perspective and solve problems, sometimes with lethal methods. Maybe less Hulk and more Etrigan.

I drew it in an 8-panel grid on the back of class handout paper. Each issue would be around maybe 20 pages.

Lobster Man comics were done in pencil, but I used a red pen for everything Lobster Man — his skin, as well as his speech. The character had a mullet, which was Greg's hairstyle for a brief formative time in the character's inception in my mind, and he also always had kind of duck lips, because I thought of him as always having that innocent, naive expression.

I recall the first episode starts with a space ship crashing. Greg happens by, and when he goes for a look, something happens and he becomes host to Lobster Man.

Shortly after that, within one of the first pages, he sees someone with long hair from behind, and thinking it's a girl, he grabs the person's ass, only to discover that it was our friend Ben, who had long hair. I also believe at some point in this exchange, I referred to gay people as being "sexually

confused." All of this is awful enough that my memories after so many decades are not positive. Anyway, the embarrassment of this prompts him to transform into Lobster Man, I'm pretty sure for the first time. In retrospect, the only person this reflected poorly on was me.

Lobster Man's main arch-enemy was someone who I'm not going to deadname, another kid who wore plaid every day, so everyone said this kid was the leader of the Plaid Army. In grade 8, the two of them were friends in a class together, but grade 9 threw the three of us together and we had a complicated dynamic, in which I think the Plaid Army leader was competing with Greg for my friendship.

Each time I would make a Lobster Man issue, I'd distribute it one at a time to each member of my social group, sitting there watching them read and noting their reactions. Greg was excluded from this.

Eventually, there were so many Lobster Man issues that I put them all in a big ring binder, which in the little notecard in the spine, I wrote the name Bertha, just because it sounded like a fat woman name. We later found out that that was the name of Ben's mom, although she acknowledged her name has its connotations.

I believe I made around 40 issues in total. I can only remember the special ones now, once I started playing with the

formula. I made an issue 0 set when we were young. There was another one written in French where we were all inexplicably French speakers, even taking an English class at school which we hated. After I went to New York, there was an issue based on my experiences, in which Greg follows along with me somehow.

In one of the weirder issues, I had been practicing how to draw Peanuts characters, so I came up with the theory that Peanuts characters and anime characters were interbreeding, and their offspring was the stereotypical grey aliens. I can't remember any more than that, and I also suspect I might have gotten it wrong, and it might have been another two that were parents to the third.

In one of the later issues I did, I practiced drawing He-Man characters, so I sent Lobster Man to Eternia. I like this one a bit more because the libel is a little more fantastical. Early on, the Sorceress takes a liking to Greg and wants to get impregnated by him, which she ends up doing somehow in some nongraphic but still very rapey way. Skeletor and his henchpeople show up, including Clawful who is a fellow Cassiopeian. While they are attacking, Lobster Man decapitates one of them (I think a throwaway character I invented), leading to all the Eternia characters being traumatised at the sight of death (something that didn't ever happen in the original cartoon). I also seem to recall drawing Evil-Lyn crying.

There was at least one issue set in the future, which opens on Greg, with longer hair than he had at the time, mowing the lawn in front of a futuristic cityscape while apes whip him. It turned out that was just his job or something, and the rest of the issue was pretty standard predictions about what we would be like in the future.

At some point, midway through producing these comics, probably closer to the beginning, my friends and I were having fun making home movies. So I created a Lobster Man movie. Greg himself starred as Lobster Man, while I played some of the antagonists, including the leader of the Plaid Army. The main antagonist was Boo Bear, a blue stuffed bear I'd had from a young age (with that name) that was maybe almost a meter tall. It was voiced by Ben, and had the ability to go into people's dreams and put them in comas. Even in this, Greg wasn't really fully in on the whole joke.

The act of creating Lobster Man stories pushed me to really think hard about depicting fictional characters, and I strongly suspect I owe a lot of my current writing ability to this project. In a lot of fiction that I write, there's often a

Greg character, someone who has solutions that are useful for the main character, although is more appreciated than the real Greg.

But filling such a large binder full of these stories was also unforgiveable. As I aged and distanced myself from my high school social group, I started to feel guiltier and guiltier about having subjected Greg to such an extensive form of literary abuse.

After one of my Edmonton visits, I think in the 2000s, I discovered that Bertha was still stored at my parents' place. Feeling increasingly shitty about it, I decided the only way to atone was to surrender the whole binder to him. I recall his first reaction being something like "There's a lot more than I thought."

He now had the only copies that existed, as I never made other copies (photocopiers wouldn't take the red Lobster Man ink and I wasn't planning to spend any money on this).

Afterwards, for years I wondered if I made the right or wrong choice by exposing this much to Greg. It didn't give me a clear conscience, and letting Greg read it may have additionally abused him.

I saw Greg in 2013, and at this point I'm pretty sure he had Bertha by then, but we never discussed it or what it meant between us. Due to his own travel plans during my summer visits, I didn't see him again on my 2017 and 2022 return visits, but saw him in 2023.

He invited me to supper at his home. We went to the supermarket together, and while there it triggered memories from long ago of similarly going to supermarkets with him, usually in the early course of an evening. I felt a lot of the old chemistry I hadn't experienced in decades, since before I left Edmonton.

He lives with his wife and two kids in a nice three-storey house, the top floor of which is approximately the same size as my own rooftop apartment in Seoul.

During dinner, one of his kids broke a question that had been apparently bugging them for years: "Who is Bertha?"

I told him the story about Lobster Man, although I left out a lot of details for their sake that Greg probably knew. Who knows, maybe they snooped and read a lot of it.

Greg told me he held onto the binder for years, never looking inside. He brought it with him when they moved to a new house. But when he moved into the current house, he finally threw it out. I said "Good."

It turns out, Greg did have superpowers: withstanding adolescent me's toxic weirdness, parenting, and being able to live a good, stable life.

"I'm sorry, it's too late," he says, and takes out another gun which he shoots you with.

THE END

You press the shotgun up against your arm, grit your teeth, and pull the trigger.

It hurts like hell, but it doesn't blow your arm off. Were you

really expecting a shotgun to be able to sever an entire arm? Now your arm is really fucked up. On the bright side, it did shake the zombie loose, and it loses its grip

and falls away into the tunnel.

By now the LRT has picked up speed going through this tunnel deep underground, and there are no more zombies to worry about.

You make your way back to the driver's cab. When the LRT driver sees your shredded arm, it's no secret what happened to you.

Uncovering all things YEG

Jon Twitch

I was looking forward to interviewing Ester, operator of the FB page YEGuncovered. A lot of stuff she covers reminds me of the sort of things I take interest in in Seoul, sort of a critical and community-based view of a big city. This was the last interview received in the zine, so I crammed it in here on this page.

Broke: Before looking ahead at the next questions, why do you think I wanted to interview you?

Ester: I have no idea... we've known each other a long time and I am very Edmonton-y...

Broke: The correct answer was YEGuncovered. Or wait, YEGuncovered. I remember I suggested you lowercase that U.

Ester: Ah, that makes sense! You were the one to suggest that, that's right. I have never regretted taking your advice. I don't need YEGU in my life.

Broke: Why did you decide to start YEGuncovered? Feel free to talk about your interests that led to this as much as you want.

Ester: I honestly decided to start YEGuncovered because I was posting so much Edmonton-related content on Facebook and figured it wouldn't hurt to have a dedicated space for it all. Being

able to reach non-friends was an early bonus. It has evolved a lot over the years, initially starting as a support to a blog, but then it took off as its own beast. I'm a huge Edmonton booster and I always like having new ways to talk about my city.

Broke: Has it been rewarding?
Ester: I really like it! I have met some interesting folks through the page, and it speaks to my interests in social media, as well as my city and sense of place.

Broke: Sell me on the Talus balls.

Ester: The Talus Dome (real name) is amazing! I genuinely love it. Think of it as a metallic version of what are natural formations along the North Saskatchewan river (talus domes). To truly appreciate it, I recommend taking a walk up to it on a nice day — and bring your camera. It's very cool.

Broke: Can you characterise Edmonton's food scene?

Ester: Diverse and expansive beyond what I have been able to experience so far. While it isn't my focus in Edmonton, it's probably one of the coolest things about our city.

Broke: Edmonton is slightly larger in area than Seoul, but has



Ester wanders around near the Coliseum, 20220813.

less than 10% the population. What do you think about the city's extreme urban sprawl?

Ester: Yikes.

Broke: Ever hear the urban legend about the secret LRT station in West Edmonton Mall's basement?

Ester: I've never heard of that one! I have, however, heard about the one that was built, sort of, underneath the courthouse. I'm guessing the WEM station is a myth because it's so far off the original LRT route, but now I'm going to have to investigate this story for the fun of it. (Fun related fact: there is a new LRT

station though going in where the old bus terminal was/is going to be again.)

Broke: What's something Edmonton has lost?

Ester: As we expand further and further out, with true suburbs that only really started around the turn of the millennium, I think we are losing a bit of our small town vibe. Also, it's alarming that rent has gotten so high, so younger people don't seem to be able to congregate in areas like Whyte Ave anymore - they seem, in my experience, much more

spread out across the city. I worry that will affect the arts scene.

Broke: Have you ever considered moving somewhere else?

Ester: Sure! When I was growing up, I hated it here and couldn't wait to move to either Montreal or Vancouver. Of course there were times in my young adulthood when I considered moving, too. But really, this is my home.

Broke: In the last few years or whatever, Facebook has been preventing anyone in Canada from viewing news on its platform. How has that affected what you do?

Ester: It affected things quite a bit actually. I used to post primarily news articles about things happening in the city. Obviously that isn't an option anymore, so I have to go more to the source these days. Rather than post an article about, say, something Arts on the Ave is doing, I now have to share the content directly from Arts on the Ave's social media. I went through a period of time where I was posting a lot of screenshots of articles, but that was cumbersome. It has been a ride.

Visit fb.com/yeguncovered for more

What are the things that make Edmonton a great city?

We're extremely unique and stylish and know how to party. Everyone I know is like an overeducated Redneck which is a funny combination. I love everyone's obsession with the malls. I love how much we tried and did our own thing even if parts of it failed spectacularly. Didn't someone bring like Alton Ellis here for a show or something? Wtf we did it we really did it, so I love that.

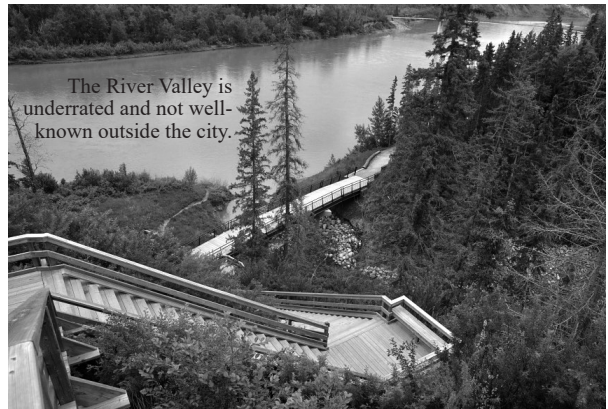
Chinatown, Little Italy, 107th Ave, Stony Plain Road – these are my favourite parts of Edmonton. The multicultural, gritty, real parts of my city. I've made a lot of footprints in these areas growing up. I take pride in these areas, I just wish our City Council would too.

Tattoo scene. Edmonton has a long tattoo tradition and a lot of excellent shops. Did ya know Pat "Picture Machine" Martyniuk opened up the first tattoo shop in Edmonton in the 1960s?! A lot of great, understated tattoo masters are working quietly in Edmonton.

We take great pride coming from this city... we wear it like a badge. I guess that's a good thing. We love our hockey team... maybe too much. I love the mall, everyone thinks I'm insane for that. I have to come to an age where I'm really enjoying the sites from our river valley

Music scene – a lot of remarkable and inspiring bands and musicians (not just punk) have repeatedly come out of Edmonton.

It's cheap (ish) to live here, there's a great arts and culture scene with lots of festivals, but also severely cold weather.



The River Valley is underrated and not well-known outside the city.



Yes, Alton Ellis performed here, at a hall show no less: Ritchie Hall, 20020215.

The more time I can spend in the River Valley the better!

The people, and the support we give each other.

The Aviary

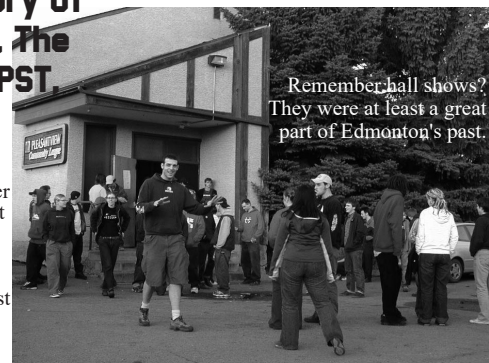
One of the things that I miss the most, I'd say, is the valley system. Biking through the river valley is something I miss so much. Biking through Mill Creek, I really, really, really miss that.

I don't know that I would ever get to do that again, but that's absolutely the thing I miss the most about the city.

The active punk scene, history of hall shows, The Oilers, no PST, WEM

The river valley, the river itself, brutalist architecture, having a fantastic arts scene, and West Edmonton Mall!

Nik Kozub', 780 tattoo



Remember hall shows? They were at least a great part of Edmonton's past.



Even the mall made the list.

Instead of trying to amputate your own arm with a shotgun, you stick the barrel in the zombie's face and pull the trigger.

The zombie scratches you badly as it lets you go and falls off the side of the LRT.

By now the LRT has picked up

speed going through this tunnel deep underground, and there are no more zombies to worry about.

You make your way back to the

driver's cab. But what do you tell him?

Nothing. I'll hide the injury. GO

TO PAGE 27

I'll be honest, even if it means he might have to kill me. GO TO PAGE 28

Reverse culture shock in Edmonton

Jon Twitch

Everyone expects a bit of culture shock when they go abroad, so you're already prepared for it. But reverse culture shock is much more unsettling, mainly because you're not expecting it. You're back home, and suddenly it no longer feels like home.

After four years away, I anticipated feelings of reverse culture shock when I returned to Edmonton in June 2013.

I decided to keep a close watch on these feelings, what specifically triggers them and how reverse culture shock manifests. With these observations, I could learn more about not only myself but also my lifestyle in Korea.

Here are some of the issues I had visiting Canada.

1. Everyone looks the same

You always hear non-Asians who aren't very experienced travellers whining that all Asians look the same. I've gotten used to the type of diversity you find in Korea, but when I went back home it felt harder to tell people apart. I would look at one person who was a stranger and I would recognise someone else in their features. This one started as soon as I got on the plane. I thought I saw an old friend on the plane who would've had no business being there, and I even called out "Matt?" Now I kind of understand Koreans when they tell me I look like Tom Cruise.

I think this feeling cleared up after a few actual reunions with people I genuinely remembered.

2. It's so flat

As my plane banked to approach Edmonton International Airport, I was overwhelmed by how flat the land was below me, and how rural it all looked. And then I realised we were passing directly over the heart of the city.

Edmonton isn't quite as in-your-face as Seoul. In Seoul you can always see buildings and mountains and it orients you, gives you a spatial relationship with the city. Due to Edmonton's prairie terrain, as well as the lack of tall buildings, the scope of city you can see is much, much smaller. You can't see any mountains and you often can't see taller buildings in the distance. Most of the time, all you can see are the houses and buildings immediately in your surroundings. What's behind them? It's kind of hard to tell.

While in Edmonton I often found it hard to remember that I was in a city, and it left me feeling isolated. Sometimes it didn't feel real at all, like I was visiting the set of a movie or TV show I was familiar with, or a reconstruction of a city I used to live in.

Sick of the flatness, I spent a lot of time in the River Valley. It reminded me of the many mountain peaks of Seoul, but instead of starting at the bottom and hiking up, you start at the

You wander back upstairs to get a drink. When you open the fridge, you grab the last beer.

While you're drinking it, more punks come into the kitchen



The flatness of Edmonton, seen from the former City Center Airport, 20220813.

top, go down, and then have to hike up at the end. Once I had a pleasant conversation with a guy I met in the River Valley, and I had a bit of a surprise when he referred to it as "urban" even though from where we were we couldn't see very many buildings at all.

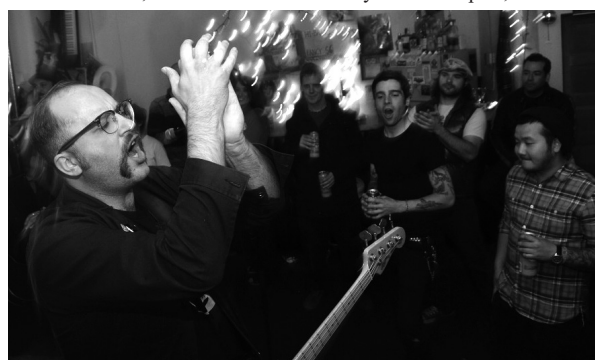
3. Urban sprawl

Edmonton is a fairly large city in its own right. It's actually larger in land area than Seoul (684.37 square kilometers to 605.21 square kilometers), despite having roughly a tenth the population. The difference is, one is a super-dense urban metropolis and the other is sprawling suburbs with a small downtown core.

On a drive through the outskirts of the city I saw many more suburban projects ready to pop up out of the ground, with the same flawed urban planning strategy that's led to this massive urban sprawl. The houses on the outskirts are big, sure, but they're aesthetically offensive and soul-crushingly uniform. It's strange going out there, seeing where people expect to live so distant from everything. On first coming to Korea I'd look at the tall, thin highrises and wonder how people could live in them; now I've completely flipped around and now wonder how anyone could live like this.

I saw that many Edmontonians are also bothered by the direction of suburban urban development, and an interesting campaign was started to create a Zombie Wall around the city, "the rationale being that a more compact, densely built city is more easily defended, and maintained, than one that is sprawling."

Sounds crazy, but here are the very rational questions they



What's with all the foreigners? Am I in Itaewon? Vicious Cycles at Baby Seal Club 20130607

address:

How will YOU support the development of communities as opposed to new neighbourhoods?

How will YOU encourage infill development and curb urban sprawl?

How will YOU encourage transit ridership, bicycle ridership and walkable neighbourhoods?

How will YOU support locally owned businesses, locally grown food and locally made goods?

How will YOU support downtown vibrancy?

I solved most of those problems by returning to Seoul.

4. Dependence on cars

Living in Edmonton, you're dependent on cars. If you don't drive, you rely on people to drive you around. Public transportation isn't much of an option unless you're central, and taxis are extremely expensive even to go a couple blocks. Due to the urban sprawl, living in the suburbs is inconvenient, with residential and commercial zones isolated from each other. From my parents' home, it's at least a 15-minute walk to the nearest convenience

store and the nearest restaurant (both in the same mini mall).

Compare that to Seoul where the nearest convenience store from my apartment is less than a minute away, and the second nearest is just across the street, and you're always surrounded by restaurants.

In Edmonton at times I felt like a prisoner trapped in whatever part of town I was in.

5. Unfamiliarity with streets
Probably due to the lack of high-visibility landmarks, Edmonton has an efficient address system. You can see how the streets and avenues are laid out in a neat grid, only disrupted by the topography. And it's great because if you have an address you can find anything (provided you're driving).

But during my stay, I was totally alienated by this system. People would talk about "24th Street" or "ninth" as if they were places with distinct character, but to me they were just numbers. Hearing them spoken of but not having any feelings for them made me feel like an outsider. It also kind of reminded me of that recurring Saturday Night Live sketch "The Californians."

And the places in Edmonton which have more character, most notably Whyte Avenue (which I would compare to a smaller version of Hongdae), are oriented to long, straight roadways. In contrast, in Seoul culture radiates in all directions in places like Hongdae and Gangnam and Itaewon, which are all mazes of roads and alleys and pedestrian paths. It may be confusing to get around in, but it fosters interesting communities.

6. No umbrellas in the rain

OK. GO TO PAGE 31

It's a zombie apocalypse. We have more important things to focus on. IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE THAT WAY, WHY

I happened to be in Edmonton while it was going through an uncharacteristic rainy season, and I don't recall ever seeing anyone with an umbrella. It rained every day I was there, and there was even a tornado warning for the city. But how I observed people reacting to the rain was totally contrary to what I'd survived in Korea's rainy seasons. If it was raining, people would just tolerate it until it went away. I even saw one woman pushing a baby carriage without any rain protection during a light rain shortly after the tornado warning had been moved north.

It weirded me out because I'm used to torrential rain, having to worry about carrying an umbrella, getting my shoes and even my scooter ruined, and having plans cancelled.

Another obvious reason that Canadians don't carry umbrellas when rain is forecast is that we spend less time outside. During the tornado warning, we got into the car in the garage and drove to the mall, where I had to walk ten meters outdoors through the rain. The only time spent actually outside was going between the car and a building.

7. Art in the washroom

It was nice having access to a bathtub again, but my mom quickly pointed out that I had to keep the washroom fan on all the time, or the humidity will ruin the painting hanging in there. Hold on, art in the washroom?

I guess it's made possible by that fan, as well as shower curtains, let alone having an actual bathtub, but still. Who hangs a painting next to a toilet? There was even a discussion at one point about finding a frame for one of the washroom paintings. All of this just feels fundamentally wrong to me, that it's disrespectful for the painting as well as unpleasant conditions.

8. Paying in a restaurant

For years I've been used to the Korean way of doing things, while also remembering the Western way. Case in point, restaurants. In Korea, you don't tip, and rather than waiting for a server to bring you your bill, you usually get up and go to the cash register. There are foreign restaurants in Korea that accept tips, but for the most part the two sets of etiquette were neatly separated.

My first time in a Korean restaurant in Edmonton I had a bit of trouble. When the bill arrived, I got up to go pay the bill, before realising that I could probably just wait at the table for them to come to me. While I was wondering whether to go over, sit back down, or stand where I was, I also wondered whether they'd accept a tip. The two decisions collided, and I was left standing there for a few seconds in a panic, completely unsure what was expected of me. It turns out they did come to collect the money, and they did readily accept tips.

DON'T YOU JUST STOP READING THIS ZINE AND RETURN TO THE MUNDANE HORRORS OF MODERN-DAY REAL LIFE?



Edmontons without umbrellas during a tornado warning, 20130612.

looking for beer. There's a bit of confusion spreading now.

People are worried, starting to panic, about what will happen next without more beer to keep

the party going.

"You have a vehicle, right?" one of them asks you. "Do you think you can take us on a beer run?"

Dog people or cat people?

The game is simple. I asked most of the people I interviewed whether they are dog people or cat people. Now you must see if you can figure out which are which.

Answers are on the crossword page.



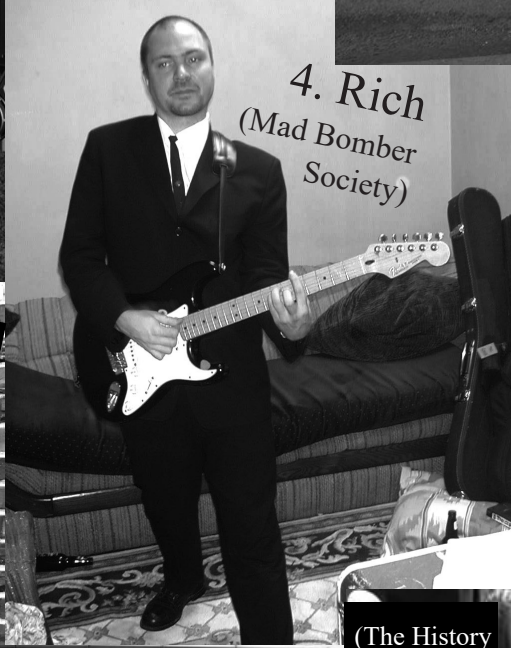
1. Darren
(Old Wives, TBR, etc.)



2. Rob
(AK-747s)



3. Sheri
(KPISSFM)



4. Rich
(Mad Bomber Society)



5. Eli



6. Karlie

7. Eric
(Open Eyes)



8. Jenny Woo



(The History of Punk)

10. Brittany

9. Rylan



11. Greg
(Lobster Man)

12. Jon Twitch
(this zine)

13. Aaron
(Jebus)

14. Ester
(YEGuncovered)

BROKE
CROSSWORD
ANSWERS

ACROSS
1 FREDPERRY
6 SHERI
9 MACAW
10 INDECLINE
11 NEVERTHELESS
15 LOL
16 AMPERSANDS
19 GRINKLECUT
20 TMI
23
YEGUNCOVERED
27 FREDCLOUD
29 SERVE
31 CHOKE
32 OPERATORS

DOWN
1 FEMINAL
2 ESC
3 POWERMANN
4 REICH
5 YTD
6 SUCKS
7 ERIC
8 IBERIA
12 VELCRO
13 LYRIC
14 EDITOR
17 PALAU
18 ALTAVISTA
21 MADNESS
22 FANPIC
24 ENGCE
25 CADRE
26 HERO
28 ODO
30 RHO

It turns out you're a musician, and one of the bands needs someone like you to join them.

As the current band ends their set, the band you've joined

starts to set up. You can hear the zombies groaning outside, coming closer.

Then as soon as you start playing, you can see through a

basement window as the loud music drives them back. It really works!

As you guys are playing, suddenly the power goes out,

turning off all the music and plunging the room into darkness.

Oh shit! Now nothing's holding back the zombies!

What will you do?

I'll try playing acoustic. GO TO PAGE 29

I'll try to fix the power source or look for another source of music. GO TO PAGE 30

Do you remember Indecline?

Dial up internet drama.

Indecline was fucking brilliant. We invented social media. My favorite and least favorite at the same time was when I went on tour w City Streets and we all decided to prank the scene by saying in a tour diary that we had got in a huge fight which was just a joke. People read that and took it seriously and went full hater like "oh it was only a matter of time, fuck that bitch etc." So it was a bit unnerving when it was like oh hey amm that was just a joke. But then we got in a huge fight for realies! I'm in my fuck everyone phase but Indecline was truly brilliant.

I remember it as being a website that I spent a lot of time on. But I remember just how essential it felt to the scene at the time it was at its peak. I remember how essential it felt, because we didn't really gather, like, we gathered at shows, but we didn't really gather to talk. And it does really give us a venue to do that, and talk about the scene and talk about bands. And just to communicate, really, like, for lack of a better word. It would just give us a space to talk. And so I have really positive memories of that, especially, you know, I love Scotty, who started it. I still talk to him every now and then.

my favre memories were learning about local gigs and thinking that that was the max use of the internet for all time.

I wasn't as frequent a member as many were, I'd just read the gossip most of the time but never reply to most of it. It was the first real message board that I joined up till then so it was always exciting to see people respond to your posts.

It was Facebook before Facebook and a great way to keep in touch. My most enduring memory was while we were on tour and reading that Edmonton radio was announcing that a local band had been in a serious accident while touring. We knew the Wednesday Night Heroes, Corb, Les Tabs, Choke (maybe?) and a couple other bands were touring. The feeling of emptiness/hopelessness/anxiety while waiting to find out which of our friends/acquaintances/band buddies/compatriots had been killed was overwhelming (I can feel it while typing this today). It was finally posted that members of Compromise had been killed by a drunk driver while in the States. An indelibly sad day.

Favorite: Impotent death threats directed at me. Least favorite: Impotent death threats directed at my friends.

I was (on Indecline), but I wasn't deep in it. I can't even remember my username. It seemed dramatic and cliquey.

I 100% completely missed Indecline!

I DO NOT KNOW WHAT THIS IS!

You tug down your sleeve to hide your injury.

"Everything OK?" the driver asks.

"Yep, no more zombies," you say.

The train makes its way to the end of the line at Churchill Station, behind the zombie wall

that had been set up to protect the downtown core from the hordes.

When you both leave the LRT, there is a military checkpoint. You let the driver go through first.

"Name?" the soldier asks him.

"Orville J. Hargrove," he says.

"Have you been exposed to any contagion?"



"Nope." They let him through, and then it's your turn. "Name?" you're asked. You try to tell them your name, but the words aren't coming out of your mouth. "Did you say Brian?" the soldier asks you.

"Braains!" you wail, sinking your teeth into the side of his head. The other soldiers run over to subdue you, but the one you bit turns fast, biting his comrades. Soon, you're leading your own army of zombies out into the downtown core, breaching the

zombie wall security. Looks like humanity is about to be overrun. That's bad. But you did it! That's good...probably? Maybe not for humanity, but zombie you seems pretty happy with all the brains. THE END



Urban explorers stand at the Edge of the World in 2017, prior to its reopening.

Urbex Edmonton

Jon Twitch

Growing up in Edmonton, I engaged in a lot of activities that could be described as urban exploration. I didn't know that name yet, as is common for many urban explorers.

My summers in late elementary school, late 1980s and early 1990s, were spent wandering the wastelands near my neighbourhood of Summerlea. To one side Summerlea was in the shadow of the mall, and on the other side was a brownfield zone we called the "Green Forest." We would often find furniture and other objects dumped there.

Over time, we began to observe housing construction there. They built condos around the horribly polluted

pond, and my friends and I explored all around there. Sometimes we had to hide or run from construction workers.

I recall one time, probably the last summer we engaged in this hobby, when one of my friends brought a new kid along, and the kid ended up setting fire at one construction site (I believe to be Tennyson Apartments or The Californian, right north of the Waterford retirement home where my grandmother probably lived at the time. Workers appeared immediately out of nowhere and put the fire out, and we scattered. Afraid of the especially bad consequences, we thought and thought about how to escape and make it back home. Nothing ever came of that.

Later, probably around 1994 or 1995, some of my friends found an abandoned farm on the outskirts of town, I believe now somewhere a little closer in from where the River Cree Resort is today. I only ever went a couple times. We rode our bikes out, all aged somewhere between 13 and 15.

There was a barn that wasn't in bad shape, with a loft that was about as clean as you could expect a barn to ever be. One of my friends pinned up a bunch of pages from a porn magazine or something, and it was a clubhouse.

At a smaller shed or something nearby, two of us found a litter of dead kittens, no explanation. The other guy loaded these kittens up on a platter and brought them back to the others, presenting them

as a feast. I'd probably be more disturbed by this now than I remember being back then; maybe I wanted to fit in, even if it meant approving of psychopathic behaviour.

There was a farmhouse, and it was badly vandalised. I went inside one time, and saw how the walls had been slashed open in what seemed like senseless vandalism. Maybe it was, or possibly scavengers looking for copper wire.

While at the house, a car pulled into the property, and I dove into the tall grass, where I was separated from my friends and my bike. The people in the car stayed about half an hour, and it felt like they were looking for us. But if that were really the case, they probably could have found us. Two other friends were in the barn, and

another one who'd been with me at the house made it back to them. They had no idea where I was. Only after the car left did I return to them.

These activities were good for a thrill, one of the basic highs one might pursue in becoming an urban explorer. Later, I would refine my techniques, my ethics, and my overall philosophy of why such derelict places continued to interest me.

In the last *Broke in Edmonton*, I detailed the weird story of how I first learned about urban exploration while on my first year in Korea, and pretended to be an elite Edmonton urban explorer as part of an attempt to figure out a suspicious online persona. Someone else got to it first, but anyway, I had learned about urban exploration.



On the way to the End of the World in 2017, prior to its reopening

You roll up your sleeve, showing the driver the scratch marks.

"You got scratched?" he says. "Hold on, kid."

He pulls out a first aid kit and

puts a tourniquet on your arm tightly to prevent any zombie infection from getting to you.

Then he speeds up the train, and within a few minutes the train makes its way to the end of the

line at Churchill Station, behind the zombie wall that had been set up to protect the downtown core from the hordes.

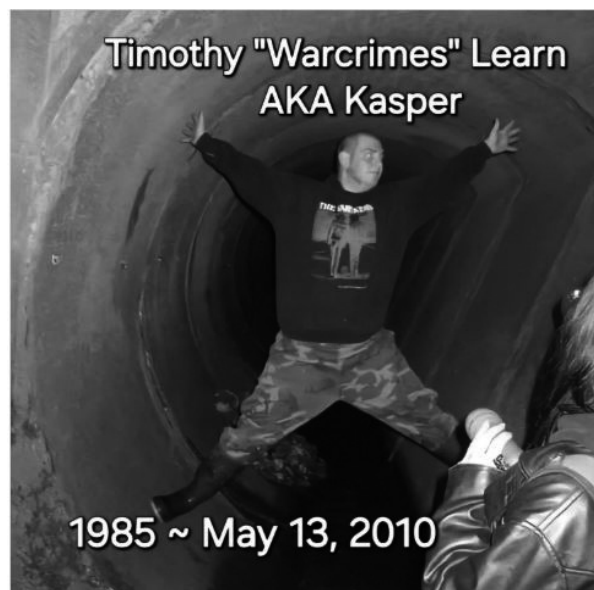
There, doctors are waiting for you. They amputate your arm, and for the

next seven days you're kept under strict observation. It's horrible, but you never transform into a zombie.

I guess they amputated before the infection spread. Or you weren't ever infected, and you

had your arm amputated for nothing. Oh well, the goal was to survive, and you did, if not with all your limbs intact.

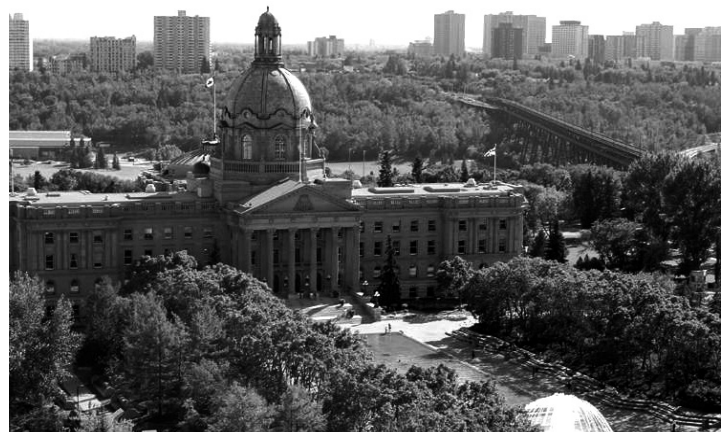
THE END



I never met this guy, but only knew him online. His death (not exploring-related) shocked us all. Still missed.



Probably the most serious urban exploration I ever did in Edmonton, way back in 2008. And it was done with permission.



Here's a hint about that location pictured above: I also took this picture from the roof.

Sometime after, I heard from multiple people about urban exploration opportunities in Korea. To build all the high-rise apartment complexes everywhere, they have to uproot an entire neighbourhood all at one. I have since visited about 200 of these sites, over the past almost 20 years.

In 2007, I found a Dutch website mentioning an abandoned amusement park on an island pretty far away from Seoul where there was an abandoned amusement park. I made a handful of memorable journeys down there. Since then, I have visited about 18 abandoned amusement parks in total. At the most recent one in 2023, I encountered a live tiger that had been left behind in a closed zoo.

In 2008, I heard about rooftopping, and began visiting roofs whenever possible in order mainly to scan the landscape looking for more abandonments. I also saw other people on the website UER engaged in climbing construction cranes, and I climbed my

first crane in 2010.

In 2009, I learned about Seoul's many underground rivers, former streams that had been buried underneath roads, and began journeying into them. Not long after, in 2010 I discovered a subway tunnel under construction and began exploring every segment of the line. I have since gained access to several more subway tunnels, both under construction and active, probably more than six but maybe no more than 10.

I've seen so much. I curate a location database that lists 756 Korea sites, most of which I've visited. The claim has been made that I may have entered more individual abandoned structures than anyone else in the world. Keeping in mind that of those about 200 abandoned neighbourhoods, I probably enter on average at least 10 buildings at each one, sometimes way more, rarely less. I've proposed this claim, and other explorers in Korea haven't disagreed. There probably is someone else out there who has done more, but I have yet to find

anyone. A scavenger in Korea who has been visiting abandoned neighbourhoods at a more sustained pace than me? It seems a little unlikely anyone would be at it for so long.

And through it all, the hardest thing was finding others to explore these sites with. Only in 2023 did I connect with a new, burgeoning domestic Korean urban exploring community, and suddenly I'm learning about abandoned buildings all across the country, more than I could visit in a lifetime.

Edmonton has had an urban exploring community for much much longer, and for most of that time until sometime earlier this decade, it had more active community members. When I came along, there was the UEA website and 5100 zine, all older and certainly more elite than me. They all seem to have moved along, either in life or out of the province, and I've gotten to know the younger generations of explorers in my hometown. And the most experienced of them probably hasn't

seen 1/10th of what I've seen (at least in and around Edmonton).

I'm really, honestly not writing this to brag. At least, not about myself, maybe more about the bountiful opportunities I've had.

I've had it easy, way too ridiculously easy.

Edmonton urban explorers are tough, way tougher than me. They do tons of research, they manage communities like they're underground resistance units, they drive long distances to investigate potential sites, and they face way worse potential consequences for being caught. To accumulate their experiences, they've had to work so much harder than I ever have.

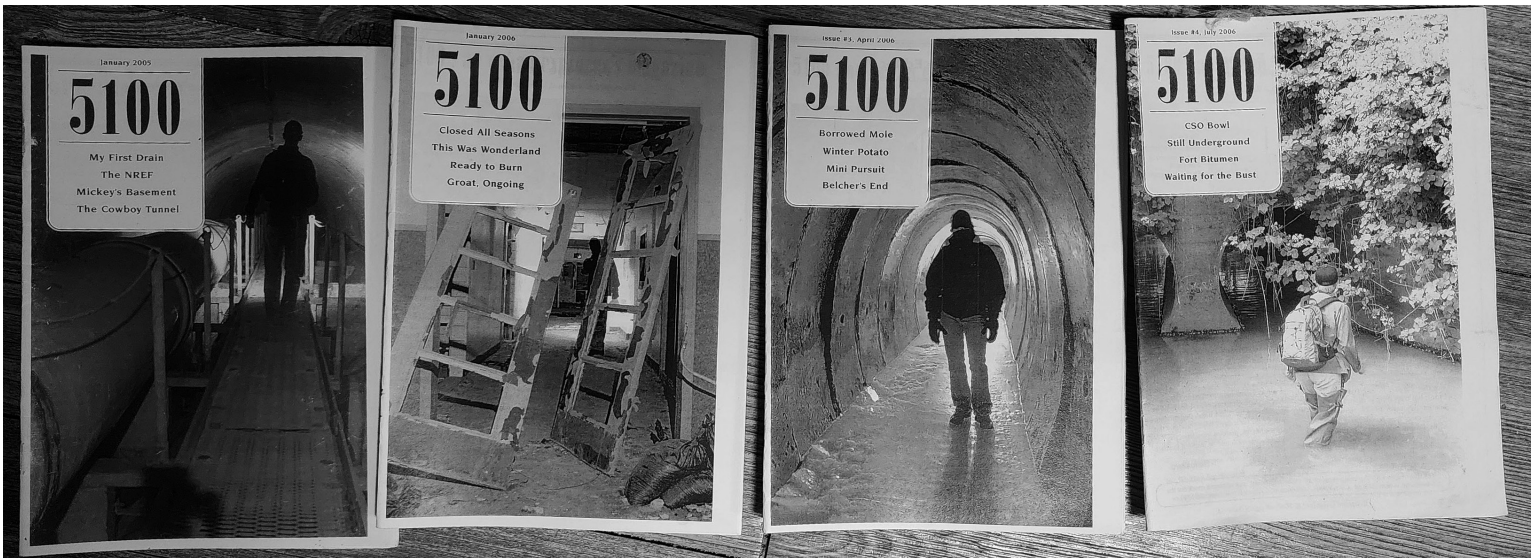
There have been some pretty amazing Edmonton sites: CFB Griesbach, the Charles Camshell Hospital, the whole freaking airport in the city center. But all those are gone now.

I couldn't imagine coping with the crazy shit they've had to put up with. Once, plans were made for a meetup to explore a storm

drain in Edmonton, and when people arrived, they found cop cars waiting at the site. It was concluded the police were reading UER, and waiting to arrest anyone who showed up. The story about my fake time being a 133t Edmonton explorer also points to an excessive policing of this community, which while troublesome is generally still well-meaning.

I wouldn't try too hard to talk anyone in Edmonton into trying urban exploring, but visit me in Korea and I'll offer all sorts of fun things: rooftops, abandoned neighbourhoods, underground rivers, maybe subway tunnels.

If I had stayed in Edmonton, I doubt I would have ever gotten into urban exploration. I would probably have gotten more into nature if I stayed, stuff like hiking or even mountaineering if I was ever so inclined (incidentally, Korea also has an abundance of mountains, with 107 named mountains in Seoul alone, 14 of which are over 300 meters tall; hell, I live on the side of one).



The four issues I have of 5100, an Edmonton-based UE zine from about 20 years ago, I received from Australia.

Thinking quickly, you start singing the first song that pops into your head. "We all live in a yellow submarine," you sing.

Everyone joins in, but they only know the chorus.

"It's not working!" someone by the basement window shouts. The zombies are coming closer.

It seems like the zombies are only repelled by punk. Thinking quickly, you start singing "Dirty

Old Town."

"That won't work," someone remarks. "That song was written by Ewan MacColl in 1949, and isn't originally a punk song."

But it does appear that this

qualifies enough as folk punk to drive back the zombie hordes. Everyone sings along, and gets the lyrics mostly right. It's working!

After a few minutes, the electricity comes back on, and you

go back to playing regular music.

You're a hero! You've saved the party, and as far as you know, all that remains of the human race.

THE END

A band by any other name

Broke: I'm surveying bands about "rejected band names. Could you share any band names you considered but rejected?"

Eric: "Government Weed" © "Ragazz" © "Open Exes" © Hands off I call dibs on those for the future ;)

Darren: Two Punch Fetus

Jenny Woo: The Demonyms

Rob/AK-747s: Grevenwicht Crime

Rich: Pretty much came up with Mad Bomber Society before the band existed and used it when the band was created. Does that make us conceptual?

Dog people or cat people? Answers

1. Dog. But we had a cat for a long time and he was pretty rad too.
2. Cat
3. Cats all the way! Dogs are gross and smell bad. But I'm sure if I had the right dog and enough money and stability to take care of one properly I'd love it. Good metaphor for my life I guess.
4. A rain person.
5. I'm a dog person. Absolutely. I have a dog. His name is Fruit.
6. Cat lady for life. Frida and Kush say hi.
7. Cats. I kiinnick your dog! (Shout out to the Pug Life)
8. Can't I be both? Always felt like a baseless binary to me!
9. Both!
10. Dogs! (cats are cool too but lose by a small margin)
11. Neither really. I only have a cat because my kids very much wanted one. If it's an either-or question. I'll say cat person.
12. Cats. I've had both, but I live in Korea which is a terrible place to raise dogs (not that much for the reason you're thinking), but is also great for cats: we all live in small boxes with intensely hot floor heating; cat heaven).
13. Cats. Had both animals as pets as a kid. I grew up thinking I was a dog person but I'm a cat person, for sure.
14. Cats. I love all animals including dogs, but I am most definitely a cat person. I love dogs and kind of want one but my kitties are #1. They are whatever the politically correct equivalent of a spirit animal is.

What holds back Edmonton's scene?

I WOULD SAY THE LACK OF FUNDING AND SUPPORT FOR VENUES AND ARTISTS. THE EXISTING GRANTS DON'T GO FAR ENOUGH AND THEREFORE PEOPLE AREN'T AS INCENTIVIZED TO STAY. THERE IS A REASON A LOT OF FOLKS MOVE TO BIGGER CITIES TO FURTHER THEIR ARTISTIC CAREERS, AND THAT'S OFTEN WIDER ACCESS TO RECORDING STUDIOS, VENUES, LABELS, ETC. ETC.

Edmonton geographically has always been a challenge. We're in the middle of fucking nowhere! And in the frozen tundra to boot.

we don't lean into how awesome we are enough as a community. It's going to happen, at some point, like in Seattle in the early 1990s, when Edmontonians realize what's really world-class about this city is its musicians, artists, studios, venues, and all the other communal aspects that makes this city great. It'll take the right timing, marketing, and innovation, but I can't wait!

Living in Edmonton! There aren't the opportunities here that there are elsewhere in North America. Edmonton is geographically isolated, which makes it hard for touring bands to get in (and for local bands to get on the bill as support), and hard to get out. The distance and cost associated with traveling into or out of Edmonton is prohibitive.

I think the scene is doing pretty great but local politics and age will always be an issue. Also with the rise of social media there's never really going to be a scene again the way that you and I are thinking of. The scene is dead, long live the scene. I also think that a lot of people with deep issues such as myself are some of the biggest contributors to the scene but never truly understood at least in my case how to get over my shit and work together on something larger than myself but it was also much, much more difficult being a woman.

There are certain cliques that still exist. How much cooler would it be if we could all support and appreciate each other's different styles of punk?

The fact that flying to/from Edmonton is expensive and it's hard to get to and from on tours

It's cold as hell, so while that can incubate a lot of creativity in the dead of winter, it can also be a very isolating, alienating place. We've got hometown musicians and pals getting worldwide success and exposure, so that also helps the rest of us with roots in Edmonton.

Aging hipster gatekeeping royalty who brokered media attention through their nepotism gig at the paper who are so lonely and terrified of death that they hang out with kids in their 20s with a cut off that makes Leonardo DiCaprio look like he browses mature pornography, untreated narcissistic personality disorder, weaponizing scene politics, infighting, rich kids pretending to be poor, wooks, bar stars, people my age, people with sweaty palms who rip off touring bands while rumor mongering for social currency. Really all of the malaise of a 'world-class city'. If I want to make something Edmonton I'll just start drinking again.

Broke Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Skinheads' favourite tennis player (2 words)
- 6 KPISSFM founder
- 9 Parrot
- 10 Site where you could encounter SirOn, Wraith, Carmania
- 11 Leith's instrumental band
- 14 One of LGBTQ+
- 16 Riot Games' online battle arena
- 17 And symbols
- 20 Ruffled
- 21 Rancid's Armstrong
- 23 ___ Fighters
- 25 FB page "Celebrating all that is Edmonton."
- 29 Edmonton record store
- 31 "To ___ and Protect"
- 33 "There's a Story to This Moral" band
- 34 The Clones 2.0

- 3 Kamal Alaeddine's former superhero identity
- 4 "Unified ___" as promised by Trump
- 5 Since Jan. 1
- 6 Punk's not dead... it just now
- 7 Member of Open Eyes
- 8 Spain and Portugal
- 12 Shoelace alternative
- 13 A line in a song
- 14 10 Chicken McNuggets group
- 15 Proofreader
- 18 Micronesia island republic
- 19 1995-established search engine
- 20 Bastard who should avoid Pride Parades
- 22 2tone Prince Buster tribute band
- 23 Unauthorised story
- 26 Toastmaster
- 27 Inner circle
- 28 Protagonist
- 30 DS9's shape-shifter
- 32 ___ Speedwagon

DOWN

- 1 ___ Fluids
- 2 Upper-left key

ANSWERS ARE UNDER THE ANIMAL LOVERS

You scramble around, looking for a generator, or anything. The zombies start smashing windows and coming down to the basement.

One guy starts playing a punk recording on his phone, and it repels the zombies, but it's not enough and they were already too close, and they grab him and

smash his phone.

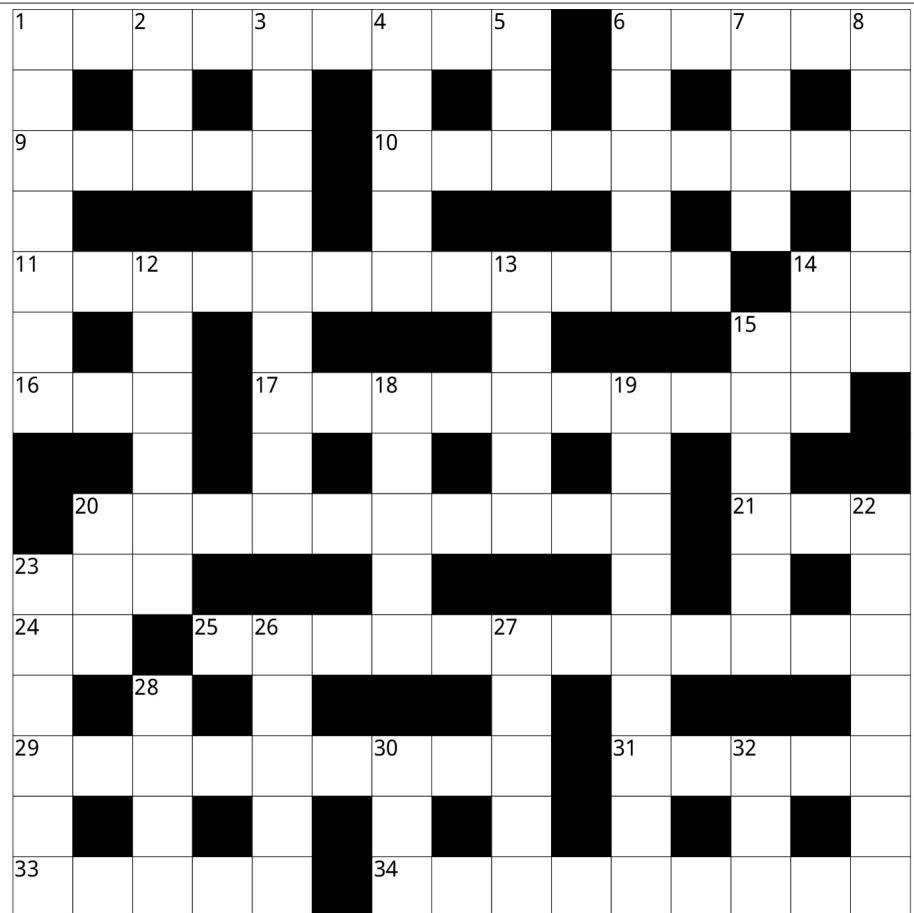
As the zombies close in on the people of the basement, no one else has a phone with them that can work. But your phone has

been off for days while you were camping, so you pull it out and turn it on.

"Quick, do you have any punk mp3s on your phone?" one of

them asks you. "Preferably something local!" Well, do you?

THE END..?



Contact-foreigners

Jon Twitch

I may be out of date, but the Canada I know is ridiculously multicultural. One incident that always stuck in my head that summed up Canadians' baseline ideas of multiculturalism can be traced to a fairly minor interaction that occurred sometime after the 2002 World Cup in Korea and before my departure for Korea in December 2003.

After the World Cup renewed my interest in moving to Korea, I offered to tutor a Korean exchange student. We only actually met once, and maybe she was shopping for a boyfriend; she did turn out to be Christian, so we would not have been compatible.

After having one lesson on campus, we caught a bus to Whyte Ave. There, we walked into an ice cream shop that I don't think still exists. When we entered, there was a chalkboard or something behind the counter displaying the names of all the ice cream flavours. It was a lot for anyone to take in, but it was especially overwhelming for this Korean who wasn't used to being in a foreign country yet.

The guy behind the counter gave us a friendly greeting, and then he saw the confused look on my temporary student's face. He then looked at me, and said "Oh, where are you guys from?"

I replied quickly and fluently that I was a Canadian, and she was my student.

The idea that this guy would size up this obvious foreign girl from Asia who didn't understand the language well, who was here with this obviously white guy, and assume that we could possibly both be from the same place, was funny at first, but got me thinking.

Seriously my dude, what country has both East Asian women and white dudes who aren't good at English? Admittedly, it's possible — maybe she was a Korean adoptee sent to Denmark, and we were both Danish and happened to come to this Canadian city in the middle of nowhere, and also we

were the rare Danes who didn't know English somehow. But this seems highly improbable, let alone that this guy went through the mental gymnastics to come up with that, which would probably require a detailed understanding of Korean diaspora demographics.

I don't hate this reaction, and I have to respect this worker for having such a patient, open-minded, inclusive approach that he could conceive of this. There's something very Canadian about that, to assume that other countries could be as multicultural as us.

Later Korea where the tables are turned, I have observed similar reactions by Koreans seeing me out in public with a local woman. The reaction is also sometimes "Oh, they're both foreigners," but for different reasons. A few Koreans have been bold enough to tell my companion exactly why: "No true Korean woman would be with a foreigner."

While this Canadian ice cream shop worker clearly was coming from a place of open-mindedness, this Korean reaction instead shamed and took away national belonging.

I call this phenomenon "contact-foreigner." If a Korean is in a group with five foreigners, they become a "contact-foreigner." I've observed it in other circumstances as well — a group of five skinheads and one non-skinhead is observed as a group of six skinheads — "contact-skinhead." A white person in a group of mostly Black people similarly may become "contact-Black."

I'm not sure about the exact numbers — could you achieve the same effect with only three skinheads? What if you have two white people and five Black people? What effect would gender have on these perceptions?

Regardless of the calculus, it's a weird estimation that is usually not intended as generous. It's also a chance for the contact-person to get a quick glimpse into how other groups of people are treated in a society.

Up on the Cross

My Korean History X moment

Jon Twitch

The familiar sound of my scooter revving up woke me from my sleep. It was a little after 5am, still dark out. Yep, that was my own scooter engine; I could tell because it wasn't in very good shape. This noise was accompanied by what sounded like teenagers cheering.

I jumped into some jeans and put on my steel-tipped boots. Unlike the original movie scene, I covered up with a shirt, because this is Korea and you don't go shirtless, not even if you're a man at the beach.

There were three teenagers, and they had hotwired my scooter, which was a Daelim Supercab with a 50cc engine, not a very expensive vehicle even if it were in more pristine shape.

I had not put a lock on the thing, which might be why they targeted it. However, I had engaged the steering column lock. This means that while the engine can technically be activated, the steering column is locked in a position with the front wheel turned sharply left.

At the time, I lived in Geumho-dong, an eastern Seoul neighbourhood that was pretty undeveloped, by Korean standards. Buildings were no more than three storeys tall, made of bricks with no more than one apartment per floor. The alley was only one lane wide, barely enough room for a truck to fit. What was worse, in the direction these kids were going, the alley narrowed and curved to the right.

When I emerged, they had made it to the end of the alley, and were trying to drag the left-turn-only scooter into the rightward passage.

They looked back and saw a white skinhead walking straight



This is the alley where I had lived in 2008, on the top floor of the brick building on the left. Revisited for this photo 20241026.

toward them. They left the bike where it was, thankfully not dropping it, and started walking away. I walked faster, and they ran for it.

I recovered the bike, to find they had smashed the front panel in order to reach some wires inside. I've had scooters stolen before, but never so destructively. Ironically, the scooter engine actually ran more smoothly after that.

A week later, we woke up in the morning to find two previously unknown scooters parked in the alley. They belonged to a small pizza chain, and the phone number was on the back. My now-ex-wife phoned the pizza hut, and a youngish-sounding girl answered. I was told she started getting nervous when she heard about the misplaced scooters. My ex suspected the scooter thieves were her friends.

Within about an hour, the scooters had been stealthily removed from our alley, presumably returned to the pizzeria in fear of curbstomping.

This story always amused me. I never once felt like I was



The front of my scooter is smashed in, 20080301.

in mortal danger, whereas in Canada those teenagers probably would have been able to kick my ass. Street crime is not unheard of in Korea, but it is incredibly rare. I don't think I've had a single scooter stolen since this moment; maybe those kids spread the word.

Bimonthly Bootfuck

Venue washrooms.

What the hell is with Edmonton's venue washrooms? I showed up in 2022 with a pouch full of stickers and a stamp for leaving behind a few traces that I had been there. You can find the same such things in venue washrooms around Seoul. But every Edmonton venue I visited, the washrooms were surprisingly clean, and the walls had no graffiti or stickers on them. Nor did they seem conducive to anyone starting that.

The venue washrooms I saw could have been a little filthier. I won't be offended if a venue washroom isn't pristine; we probably need more venue washrooms in our lives to build up a healthy immune system.

Also, at some point we need to talk about that awkwardly tall gap under stall doors in Canadian washrooms.



This was the worst washroom I encountered on my 2023 visit, in the Black Dog's basement. No toilet seat. And yet, absolutely pristine without any graffiti or stickers.



Now here's a proper venue washroom, caked with graffiti, posters, stickers, etc. on all surfaces (also fully functioning and hygienic). Designed by Kylee at Skunk Sindang.

You lead some of the punks out to your car, and start driving off down the zombie-infested streets. Your car is pretty old and still has a tape player. One of the punks opens up the glove compartment and finds an old Offspring tape.

"Really?" he says.

"It was the '90s," you say with a shrug.

He slips the tape in and cranks it up to "Come Out and Play."

As you drive down the

suburban streets, none of the zombies come close.

You find a liquor store that has been left abandoned, and raid the beer cooler. Once the trunk is filled, and with everyone holding more booze on their laps, you drive off back to the punk house.

This will be enough to keep the party going for a while longer.

As you're driving back, you start to think about what you've learned. If punk music can repel

zombies, maybe more can be done than just playing live music in a dingy basement.

When you return to the party with all the alcohol, everyone gives you a hero's welcome. Someone hands you a beer.

Soon you find a stereo shop that has a lot of equipment. And you find a music store that has amps.

You drive out to the main road where the zombies are walking around, and while they're repelled

by the music playing on your car, now on "Bad Habit," you set up the equipment and put on a Ramones album very loud. The zombies groan in displeasure and wander away.

Then you drive off to another major road and set up a similar system, playing some band you've never heard of called The Wolfnote.

Soon, you've purged the whole suburb of zombies. With enough

punks to keep the systems running, you're able to establish a safe enough community here to withstand the zombie apocalypse.

On the few occasions that living visitors come by, you let them know the key to repelling the zombies, and soon punk music spreads across the whole region, ending the zombie threat. And getting people to listen to punk again.

THE END

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