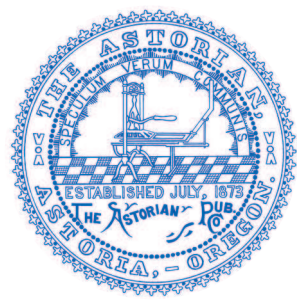


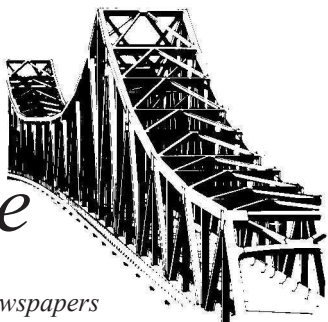
THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873



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Water under the bridge



Compiled by Bob Duke

From the pages of Astoria's daily newspapers

10 years ago this week — 2007

A severely limited salmon season on Oregon's North Coast and off the coast of Washington has fishermen worried about declining Columbia River runs and the future of fishing in the region.

At its meeting last week, the Pacific Fisheries Management Council set the lowest levels for salmon harvest in more than a decade for the coastal area north of Cape Falcon to Canada. The decision to protect endangered runs of Chinook salmon returning to the Columbia River and its tributaries means fewer of the river's fish will be caught.

The mystery of the dying seabirds is being played out on the North Coast.

Horned puffins, mottled petrels and thick-billed murrelets are seabirds that generally stay far offshore and away from Oregon.

But the birds have been washing up dead in high numbers this year.

The birds are starving, with empty stomachs and breast muscles shrinking as their ailing bodies burn muscle tissue to survive, say people who have found and examined the birds.

The die-off is a mystery, but theories range from global warming to a scarcity of the herring the birds usually feed on this time of year.

Young herring thrive in colder water, and their smaller numbers could be tied to warm ocean conditions over recent years, said Bob Emmett, a research fisheries biologist with the National Marine Fisheries Service in Newport.

The good news is that Astoria is just the kind of place the state Department of Geology and Mineral Industries likes to help.

The bad news is the reason why: The city has all the ingredients needed for a high-hazard classification for landslides. In fact, the city is one of the most slide-prone communities on the coast.

It is so well known for its unstable geology that the "Astoria formation" is a term found in geology texts.

50 years ago — 1967

We believe all the communities in the lower Columbia area from Portland to the sea and along the coast from Long Beach to Cannon Beach should send a combined and outraged protest to Lewis and Clark College or whoever is responsible for the much publicized stunt that four students of that institution are conducting.

These students have had much ballyhoo in the Portland press. They are, it says, planning a trek over the "last stretch" or "final one third" of the Lewis and Clark expedition's route. They are hiking from the Idaho-Montana border to Portland. That's right, Portland.

How many of you knew that the Lewis and Clark expedition's route ended in Portland?

Well, it does, according to the Lewis and Clark College version of U.S. History, apparently.

We suggest that, when and if these students reach the so-called Lewis and Clark trail's end in Portland, they be dragged bodily to Clatsop County, dunked in the Lewis and Clark River in front of Fort Clatsop, and then be compelled to stand in the chilly ocean at Ecola Park while they read the pertinent chapters of the Lewis and Clark journals.

Also, we suggest Lewis and Clark College fire its history faculty, forthwith.

75 years ago — 1942

Here's the latest rumor from inland about conditions along the Clatsop coast.

Mrs. Charles Henrys of Seaside was in Salem recently and was in a store making a purchase. She mentioned she was from Seaside.

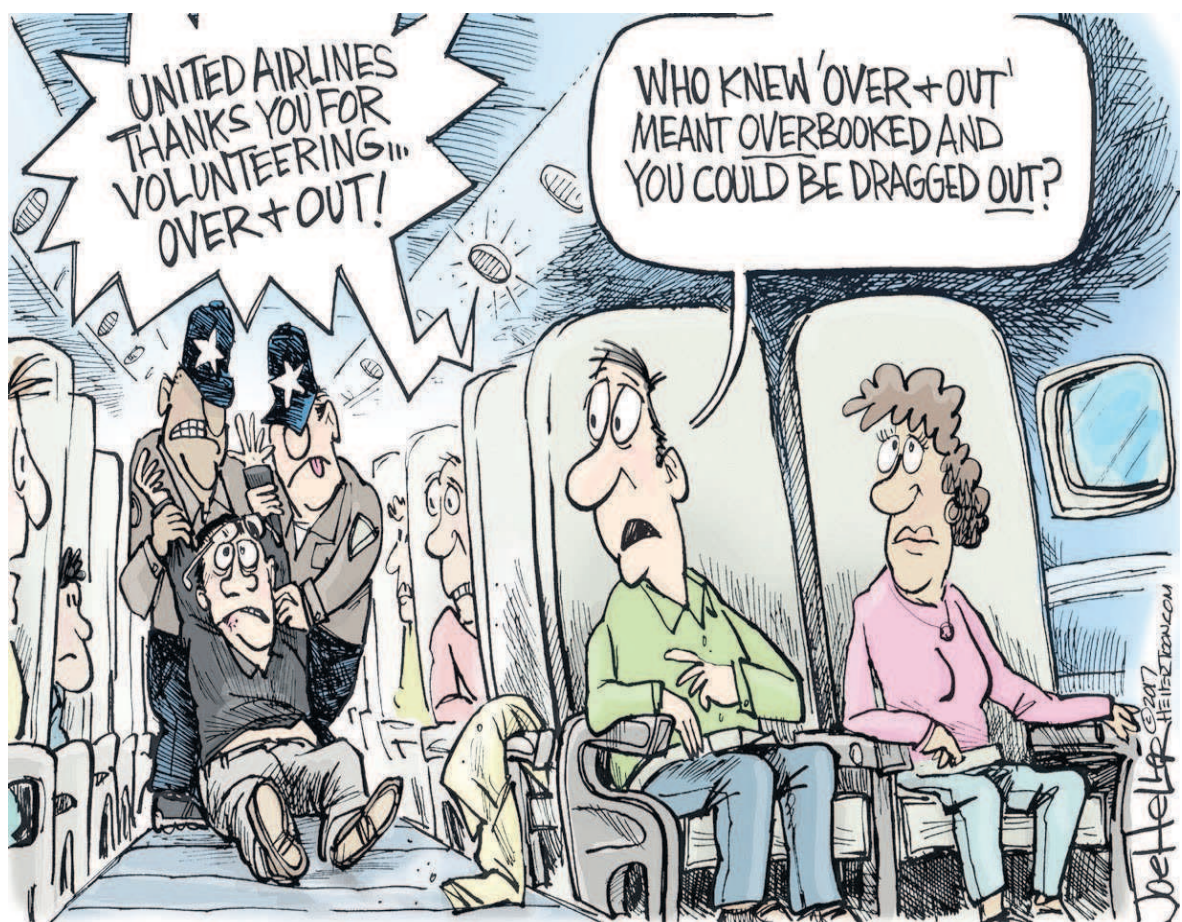
"Don't you find it lonely down there now?" asked the clerk.

"Lonely? What do you mean?" asked Mrs. Henrys.

"Well, it must be lonely down there now that all the people have evacuated," the clerk said.

Even as Astoria was the first Oregon city to have a black-out after World War II broke, it was the first Oregon city to perfect its home guard organization after outbreak of World War I. On the afternoon of April 6 R.J. Pilkington, chairman of the Citizens Patriotic League of Astoria, called a mass meeting in the Astoria theater. There 300 Astorians signed the constitution of the league, whose objects were proclaimed to be to assist the war, encourage enlistments in the Army and Navy and guarantee that the dependents of enlisted men would be taken care of.

More public participation in the education of young people was urged by Rex Putnam, state superintendent of public instruction, in a talk given Monday night to Astoria apprenticeship and vocational students at a banquet held in Trinity Lutheran church.



This age of wonkery

By DAVID BROOKS
New York Times News Service

If you were a certain sort of ideas-oriented young person coming of age in the 20th century, it was very likely you would give yourself a label and join some movement. You would call yourself a Marxist, a neoconservative, a Freudian, an existentialist or a New Deal liberal.

There would probably be a small magazine where the doctrines of your sect would be hammered out. People today seem less likely to give themselves intellectual labels or join self-conscious philosophical movements. Young people today seem more likely to have their worldviews shaped by trips they have taken, or causes they have been involved in, or the racial or ethnic or gender identity group they identify with.

That has changed the nature of the American intellectual scene, the way people approach the world and the lives they live. In his book, "The Ideas Industry," Daniel W. Drezner says we have shifted from a landscape dominated by public intellectuals to a world dominated by thought leaders. A public intellectual is someone like Isaiah Berlin, who is trained to comment on a wide array of public concerns from a specific moral stance. A thought leader champions one big idea to improve the world — think Al Gore's work on global warming.

As Drezner puts it, intellectuals are critical, skeptical and tend to be pessimistic. Thought leaders are evangelists for their idea and tend to be optimistic. The world of Davos-like conferences, TED talks and PopTech rewards thought leaders, not intellectuals, Drezner argues.

Intellectual life has fallen out of favor for several reasons, he continues. In a low-trust era, people no longer have as much faith in grand intellectuals to serve as cultural arbiters. In a polarized era, ideologically minded funders like George Soros or the Koch brothers will only pay for certain styles of thought work. In an unequal era, rich people like to go to Big Idea conferences, and when they do they want to hear ideas that are going to have some immediate impact — Jeffrey Sachs' latest plan to end world poverty or Amy Cuddy's findings on how to adopt the right power stance.

In the first place, public thinkers now conceive of themselves as legislative advisers. Drezner writes a book called "The Ideas Industry," but he is really writing about public policy. When George Orwell, Simone de Beauvoir or even Ralph Waldo Emerson were writing, they were hoping to radically change society, but nobody would confuse them with policy wonks.

Second, there was a greater sense then than now, I think, that the very nature of society was up for grabs. Call it a vestige from Marxism or maybe Christianity, but there was a sense that the current fallen order was fragile and that a more just mode of living was out there to be imagined.

Finally, intellectual life was just seen as more central to progress. Intellectuals establish the criteria by which things are measured and goals are set. Intellectuals create



KRT
 Officials stand and applaud as North Korean leader Kim Jong Un presides over parliament in Pyongyang, North Korea.

Drezner does not call this a decline, just a shift (let us not underestimate how silly and wrong some of the grand, sweeping intellectuals could be). But I am struck by how people's relationship to ideas has changed.

It is good to have people who think about North Korean disarmament. But politics is most real at a more essential level.

In the first place, public thinkers now conceive of themselves as legislative advisers. Drezner writes a book called "The Ideas Industry," but he is really writing about public policy. When George Orwell, Simone de Beauvoir or even Ralph Waldo Emerson were writing, they were hoping to radically change society, but nobody would confuse them with policy wonks.

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the frameworks within which politicians operate. How can you have a plan unless you are given a theory? Intellectuals create the age.

Doing that sort of work meant leading the sort of exceptional life that allowed you to emerge from the cave — to see truth squarely and to be fully committed to the cause. Creating a just society was the same thing as transforming yourself into a moral person.

For Orwell, this meant being with the poor and the oppressed — living as a homeless tramp in England, a dishwasher in Paris, getting shot through the neck as a soldier in the Spanish Civil War. It meant teaching himself how to turn political writing into an art form.

For Italian Communist Antonio Gramsci, it meant committing fully to ideas, even if it meant years in prison, and doing the rigorous mental work required for a life of hard thinking. He was as left as can be, but he believed in traditional school curricula, the tough grinding of learning Latin and Greek grammar.

"It will be necessary to resist the tendency to render easy that which cannot become easy without being distorted," he wrote.

It also meant joining a tradition and a team. There were a whole set of moral tests involved with obedience to the movement, breaking ranks when necessary, facing unpleasant truths, pioneering a collective way of living, whether feminist, Marxist or libertarian.

The 20th century held up intellectuals like that, and then discredited them — too many were too wrong about communism and fascism. But we have probably over-adjusted and deprived a generation of a vision of the heroic intellectual. It is good to have people who think about North Korean disarmament. But politics is most real at a more essential level.

WHERE TO WRITE

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