

EAST OREGONIAN

Founded October 16, 1875

KATHRYN B. BROWN
Publisher

DANIEL WATTENBURGER
Managing Editor

TIM TRAINOR
Opinion Page Editor

MARISSA WILLIAMS
Regional Advertising Director

MARCY ROSENBERG
Circulation Manager

JANNA HEIMGARTNER
Business Office Manager

MIKE JENSEN
Production Manager

OUR VIEW

Now's the time to limit the Antiquities Act

It's probably not high on the list of priorities, but we'd like to see Congress revise the Antiquities Act to give legislative oversight to the creation of national monuments.

The Antiquities Act of 1906 has been used by presidents starting with Teddy Roosevelt to create national monuments.

The authority comes with few restrictions. The president, "in his discretion," can designate almost any piece of federally owned land a national monument for "the protection of objects of historic and scientific interest."

Although the act makes mention of protecting historic and prehistoric structures, there is no statutory definition or limit on what may be found to be of historic or scientific interest. Presidents have used the act to preserve wild areas.

It's easier than establishing a wilderness area, or a national park — both of which require congressional approval — but can impose similar restrictions on how the land can be used.

Local residents and their elected representatives have no say in the

process. At least, they don't in 48 states.

The creation of the Jackson Hole National Monument by FDR in the 1940s so rankled Wyoming pols that when legislation was proposed to merge most of it with Grand Teton National Park the Congress amended the Antiquities Act to prohibit the president from establishing monuments in that state without its approval.

After President Jimmy Carter created 56 million acres of monuments in Alaska, Congress amended the act to require it also approve Alaskan monuments of 5,000 acres or more.

We would not argue that the Antiquities Act has not preserved legitimate cultural treasures. We might not have the Grand Canyon in its current state had TR not protected it by making it first a national monument.

But that was a different time. The restrictions that can be placed on ranchers and timbermen throughout the West by these declarations require oversight.

They should have at least the same consideration afforded the people of Wyoming and Alaska.

The restrictions that can be placed on ranchers and timbermen throughout the West by these declarations require oversight.

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the East Oregonian editorial board of publisher Kathryn Brown, managing editor Daniel Wattenburger, and opinion page editor Tim Trainor. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the East Oregonian.

Culture Corner

In his career, journalist Ted Conover has ridden the rails with hobos ("Rolling Nowhere"), crossed the U.S.-Mexico border with illegal migrants ("Coyotes") and worked as a correctional officer at Sing Sing prison in New York ("Newjack").

For each assignment, Conover fully immersed himself in the world of his subjects. Writers looking to engage in this kind of storytelling can take a page — literally — from Conover in his latest book, "Immersion: A Writer's Guide to Going Deep," which offers tips and instruction from brainstorming to publishing.

"Immersion has a huge potential for sowing empathy in the world," Conover writes. "It's a way to introduce readers to strangers and to make them care, a way to shine a light into places that need it."

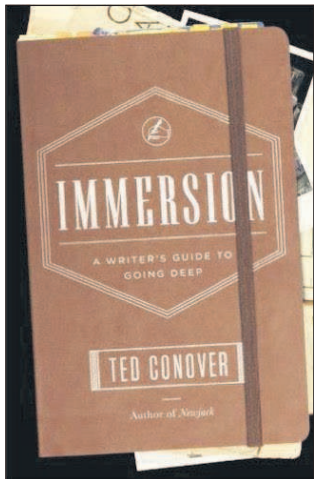
The book is divided into six sections,

covering different ways a writer can gain access and what to look for once inside. It discusses the ethics and potential pitfalls of undercover reporting, and narrative techniques to consider when writing.

Conover's advice is practical, and perhaps more importantly, accessible. While an associate professor of journalism at New York University, Conover resists coming across as a teacher lecturing his students. He also draws plenty on the work of other well-known writers, including Sebastian Junger, Susan Orlean and George Plimpton.

Conover does not claim to know everything. "Immersion" is not a field manual, nor is it a map, he writes. Rather, it is a headlamp to help writers light their own way.

— George Plaven, reporter for the East Oregonian



OTHER VIEWS

Why don't all jobs matter?

President Donald Trump is still promising to bring back coal jobs. But the underlying reasons for coal employment's decline — automation, falling electricity demand, cheap natural gas, technological progress in wind and solar — won't go away.

Meanwhile, last week the Treasury Department officially (and correctly) declined to name China as a currency manipulator, making nonsense of everything Trump has said about reviving manufacturing.

So will the Trump administration ever do anything substantive to bring back mining and manufacturing jobs? Probably not.

But let me ask a different question: Why does public discussion of job loss focus so intensely on mining and manufacturing, while virtually ignoring the big declines in some service sectors?

Over the weekend The Times Magazine published a photographic essay on the decline of traditional retailers in the face of internet competition. The pictures, contrasting "zombie malls" largely emptied of tenants with giant warehouses holding inventory for online sellers, were striking. The economic reality is pretty striking too.

Consider what has happened to department stores. Even as Trump was boasting about saving a few hundred jobs in manufacturing here and there, Macy's announced plans to close 68 stores and lay off 10,000 workers. Sears, another iconic institution, has expressed "substantial doubt" about its ability to stay in business.

Overall, department stores employ a third fewer people now than they did in 2001. That's half a million traditional jobs gone — about eighteen times as many jobs as were lost in coal mining over the same period.

And retailing isn't the only service industry that has been hit hard by changing technology. Another prime example is newspaper publishing, where employment has declined by 270,000, almost two-thirds of the workforce, since 2000.

So why aren't promises to save service jobs as much a staple of political posturing as promises to save mining and manufacturing jobs?

One answer might be that mines and factories sometimes act as anchors of local economies, so their closing can devastate a community in a way shutting a retail outlet won't. And there's something to that argument.

But it's not the whole truth. Closing a factory is just one way to undermine a local community. Competition from superstores and shopping malls also devastated many small-city downtowns; now many small-town malls are failing too. And we shouldn't minimize the



PAUL KRUGMAN
Comment

extent to which the long decline of small newspapers has eroded the sense of local identity.

A different, less creditable reason mining and manufacturing have become political footballs, while services haven't, involves the need for villains. Demagogues can tell coal miners that liberals took away their jobs with environmental regulations. They can tell industrial workers that their jobs were taken away by nasty foreigners.

And they can promise to bring the jobs back by making America polluted again, by getting tough on trade, and so on. These are false promises, but they play well with some audiences.

By contrast, it's really hard to blame either liberals or foreigners for, say, the decline of Sears. (The chain's asset-stripping, Ayn Rand-loving owner is another story, but one that probably doesn't resonate in the heartland.)

Finally, it's hard to escape the sense that manufacturing and especially mining get special consideration because, as Slate's Janelle Bouie points out, their workers are a lot more likely to be male and significantly whiter than the workforce as a whole.

Anyway, whatever the reasons political narratives tend to privilege some jobs and some industries over others, it's a tendency we should fight. Laid-off retail workers and local reporters are just as much victims of economic change as laid-off coal miners.

But, you ask, what can we do to stop service-sector job cuts? Not much — but that's also true for mining and manufacturing, as working-class Trump voters will soon learn. In an ever-changing economy, jobs are always being lost: 75,000 Americans are fired or laid off every working day. And sometimes whole sectors go away as tastes or technology changes.

While we can't stop job losses from happening, however, we can limit the human damage when they do happen. We can guarantee health care and adequate retirement income for all. We can provide aid to the newly unemployed. And we can act to keep the overall economy strong — which means doing things like investing in infrastructure and education, not cutting taxes on rich people and hoping the benefits trickle down.

I don't want to sound unsympathetic to miners and industrial workers. Yes, their jobs matter. But all jobs matter. And while we can't ensure that any particular job endures, we can and should ensure that a decent life endures even when a job doesn't.

Paul Krugman joined The New York Times in 1999 as a columnist on the Op-Ed Page and continues as professor of Economics and International Affairs at Princeton University.

OTHER VIEWS

A GOP promise to rural families

When Donald Trump ran the tables on Hillary Clinton in middle America, many coastal pundits were caught flatfooted. They never saw it coming. But those of us in the vast areas of Oregon dominated by rural communities, ranches, farms, and forestry operations understand exactly how the GOP carved out a new majority.

President Trump spoke unapologetically to rural voters about his support for agriculture, promising to roll back needless regulatory limits on productivity, while strengthening America's commitment to programs like the Renewable Fuel Standard, which allows U.S. farmers to compete against foreign oil producers. It's a bipartisan program that has worked for over 11 years to create a stable market for biofuels, and it will only grow in importance to Oregon as new innovations allow us to create more and more homegrown energy from existing biomass, including wood scraps from lumber operations.

The fuel standards ensures that oil companies can't lock rural biofuel producers out of the market, giving consumers more affordable options at the pump. It's a perfect example of a policy that works for American energy security, for our environment, and for rural communities struggling with



ANDY BENTZ
Comment

economic stagnation. Ninety-seven percent of U.S. fuel is now blended with some amount of homegrown ethanol, holding down prices and protecting against manipulation by hostile oil exporters, like Venezuela and Russia.

Biofuels also replace some of the most toxic additives in gasoline, like methyl tertiary-butyl ether (MTBE).

MTBE was a gasoline additive notorious for contaminating groundwater supplies until ethanol offered a cleaner, more affordable way to increase octane for better performance. Moreover, the U.S. Department of Agriculture reports that carbon emissions are slashed by 43 percent when biofuels displace petroleum-based fuel — a number that continues to rise as farmers learn to grow more crops on less land year after year.

Thanks to these innovations under the renewable fuel standards, biofuel production now supports nearly 16,000 Oregon jobs, including those at one of the West Coast's premier biorefineries in Morrow County. These facilities not only deliver homegrown energy, they generate a steady stream of high-protein, low-cost feedstock for ranchers because only the starch portion of grain is fermented for fuel production.

No matter how you look at it, the fuel standard is a clear winner, and it remains

one of the few untarnished pillars of economic growth in rural communities at a time when U.S. farm incomes are expected to fall for a fourth straight year due to a global crop surplus.

These rural families are struggling, and policymakers — Republican or Democrat — who fail to recognize the importance of supporting America's agricultural economy can expect the same response from voters that shocked pundits in 2016. It's not about partisan politics; it's about delivering on a promise to protect homegrown fuels and revitalize rural growth, as President Trump vowed to do.

Senior leaders in Congress, like our own Congressman Greg Walden, who chairs the House committee responsible for domestic energy, should keep these families in mind as lawmakers look to craft the next farm bill and oil companies ramp up efforts to dismantle the fuel standards. Democrats learned their lesson in 2016, and they are reaching out to rural voters. The success of those efforts will depend largely on how well GOP leaders stay on track to restore growth outside of city limits.

Andy Bentz is part of the third generation of a southeastern Oregon ranching family. He spent time in the timber industry of western Oregon and now is the managing member of Bentz Solutions, LLC.

YOUR VIEWS

Support your firefighters, vote yes on fire station bond

Citizens of Pendleton, I am asking for your support in passing the new fire station bond. The site was chosen and confirmed through a third party study, through public input, and through input from the firefighters themselves.

The Old St. Anthony's site was chosen after that lengthy process. In response to a recent letter the PGG site would not be cheaper. The building would have to be torn down and a new station built in its place. This is because the building does not meet the standards that are set for a fire station. Other sites had many issues as well. The Old St. Anthony's site also provides room for onsite training.

Another concern I have heard is the cost. Please remember this building has to be built to withstand the needs of the future, not just our current needs as a city, and the current station has been in service for over 57 years. I know of a very small district on the Oregon coast that passed a \$7 million bond for a new station, and Albany is building a new headquarters station for \$10 million as well. This is not an uncommon price tag. As for cost to you if you own a \$200k house it will cost you about the same as two cups of coffee a month (\$10.33/mo).

Please support your firefighters; they are asking for help in their time of need. The current station has a leaky roof, inadequate exhaust removal, not enough space for on-duty personnel, and very limited training space. These affect not only our firefighters but their ability to help you when you need it. Ineffective training, high health risks to firefighters, and limited staffing can affect you directly. One of the steps needed to address this is proper facilities. Please vote yes on the fire station bond!

Adam Wilkinson
Pilot Rock