



# Fall Fashion Guide & 2020 Election Edition of the CHS



# SASQUATCH

Your  
decreasingly  
local key to  
the  
Cambridge  
Underground



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high school reunion edition: [http://www.omnifoo.info/images/  
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## The 2020 Presidential Candidates: Head-to-Head for All the Marbles, While Losing Their Marbles

The highly reasonable electorate deserves a detailed outline of each party's policy platform to make an informed decision. Toward that end, and the end of the USA as we know it, The CHS Sasquatch hereby presents: The 2020 Presidential Candidates: Head-to-Head for All the Marbles, While Losing Their Marbles: Digital Edition (See your 20th-Century newsstand for print copies.)



### Green Party Nominees Howie Hawkins & Angela Walker

(ABOVE) - Some might see the failure to get on the ballot of one's own state of residence as a setback, but rest assured that when this ticket is elected to lead the Executive Branch, no tree will be left unhugged, nor stone left banned from fracking.

#### The Green Party promises:

- Exclusive scapegoatability in close races.
- Votes that 150% or more would totally have all gone to the Democrats otherwise, handing them the presidency on a silver platter.
- Green new deals on all 2019 electric car models- sign up today for Low Money Down and 0% financing!
- Faint glimmers of hope for humanity and nature, retro-active validation from 22nd-Century historians.

### Democratic Party Nominees Joe Biden & Kamala Harris

(BELOW) - This centrist, moderate ticket offers a slow walk to the apocalypse with down-to-earth charm, decency and a smile. In no way pandering, let alone begging the median voter to come back—just give me one more chance, please—for the kids, the Democratic Party promises:

- Lesser evils for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, 24/7.
- Totally long-term advantageous Supreme Court packing and Congressional filibuster abolition for an eternally durable liberal majority.
- Karen contentment.
- Increasing frequency and severity of senior moments and slurred speech, but in a kinder, gentler, and more reassuring tone.
- Total interracial reconciliation and harmony without all those costly reparations or cost-cutting police defunding.



### Libertarian Party Nominees Jo Jorgensen & Spike Cohen

(ABOVE) - Let freedom rain on our forest fires!

#### The Libertarian Party promises:

- A waaaay freer market and even fewer regulations than under the Republicans. Seriously. So free. Freer than birds. Freer than samples. More superlative than a Trump boast. The absolute freest.
- Private-sector construction and maintenance of infrastructure for efficient, free, fast crumbling and decay.
- Legalization of all drugs, unless that scares you, followed by regulation and taxation, unless that offends libertarians.
- Extensive appropriation of Covid-19 as a cover for deaths of famine, despair from the full outsourcing of employment and the abolition of welfare, both social and corporate.
- Balanced budgets.

### Republican Party Nominees (Incumbent) Donald Trump & Mike Pence

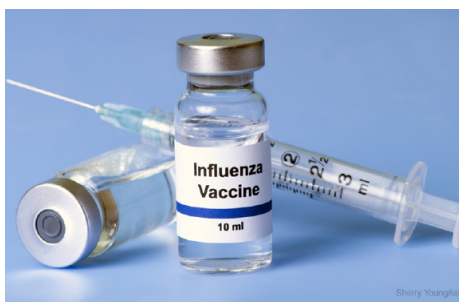
(BELOW) - If you've read this far, you must be grrrrrrreat!

#### The Republican Party promises:

- An exciting conclusion to this experiment and reality TV series we've called democracy.
- Enough liberal tears to put out the fires and end the droughts.
- Expansion of child-parent separation policy to U.S. citizens.
- On economic recovery, for fiscal year 2020, substitute all tax credits for Werther's Originals (soft, Cocoa Crème, Cappuccino, and popcorn exempted), followed by a gradual transition to fully replace the Federal Reserve and the gold at Fort Knox with the delicious, buttery hard candies. A new standard is born!
- Amendment of the Constitution to be white supremacist for totally the first time ever.
- Upon request, both candidates personally pledge to defecate on mail-in ballots.
- Platinum citizenship benefits for old, white men, including:

Lectures anytime, anywhere, guaranteed. Double mansplanation bonus. Suspension of coherence expectations. Reinstatement of ogling, groping, fondling privileges. Four more years of daily TV briefings about "turning the corner" on Covid-19.

## Willingness to Take Bleach Injections and Forthcoming Coronavirus Vaccine Remain Neck-and-Neck at 40%



Evansville, IN - In other polling news, local residents in this mid-sized, Midwestern red state city remain conflicted about methods to prevent infection, mainly due to mixed messages from the president. Like the president himself, neither highly touted option has managed to gain the trust of the majority. As usual, it's up to CHS Sasquatch investigative reporting to find out why.

In the words of one suburban resident, a self-described “shy” Trump voter who isn’t showing up in the polls, “I hesitate to follow everything Pres. Trump says or Tweets to the letter, mainly because his spelling isn’t always the same as what’s in the Bible. Now he says he was being sarcastic about the bleach thing, but I have known a few miracle cures in my day.”

When asked about the race to create a new vaccine, she was more skeptical, “I’m more of a faith healer, really—I don’t usually trust the government or science much. But if Trump can kick ‘Operation Warp Speed’ [as the public-private partnership to facilitate and accelerate the development of Covid-19 is named by the Administration] into high gear, I’d be more willing to try it.” Asked whether she would prefer the vaccine currently available in Russia or one fast-tracked to be deliverable before the election, she declared herself open to both. “But if Biden wins, nooooo way! Keep your government socialism off my CDC!”

## Fearful Democrats Express Dismay at Lack of Countries Willing to Accept American Defectors Should Trump Be Re-elected.

### Republican Preppers, by Contrast, Feel Their Moment Outside the Sun Approaching

Blaine, WA - In another sign of the polarization in our nation, opposing sides of the political divide are expressing divergent plans and concerns about the aftermath of the upcoming 2020 election.

All across the Canadian frontier, Democratic voters can be seen begging at border posts to be given special permission to be allowed to enter in the event the incumbent president is re-elected. Several expressed remorse at not following through on previous empty threats stated in anticipation of or the immediate conclusion of previous Republican electoral wins in 2004 and 2016.

Sipping a latte nervously in the remote border town of Blaine, WA, a visibly regretful Seattle emigre lamented, “I had so many chances to get away. I’m glad I didn’t go after Bush won in 2004, even if it was only the irregularities in Ohio that made me hesitate. I might’ve missed out on all the Obama years.” Taking a bite of her avocado toast, she continued, “Then when Trump won in 2016, I thought I’d have plenty of time to pack my things and head for Canada. Just three and a half years later, I’m afraid it’s too late. There’s nowhere to run. No one will give us asylum because we’re all infected.”

(Story continues on next page.)

(Cont. from previous page)

Upon being reminded that Mexico has remained open to all travelers over the course of the pandemic, a coughing scoff escaped her mouth, as she rejected the neighboring country's water as "dirty and undrinkable." She takes some solace in the polls showing Democratic challenger Joe Biden with up to a double-digit lead and, by some estimates, an over 80% chance of winning.

"If only that orange monster could be evicted from the White House, every last one of our problems would be solved. America is totally perfect other than him. What an abomination! He is so completely different from everyone else in America," she exclaimed, before exiting the cafe without leaving a tip.

Behind the counter, an increasingly rare, high school-educated, working class Democrat also expressed concern. "The polls in 2016 said Hillary couldn't possibly lose. I have a very firm grasp of concepts like representative sampling, margins of error, and Electoral College strategy. Why, someday, I might even save up enough money to go to the Electoral College myself and leave this dead-end, no-benefits job. As long as it offers in-state tuition." Grasping the check and finding no gratuity, the employee cursed, "[EXPLETIVE] city folks! That's it. I'm voting for Trump."

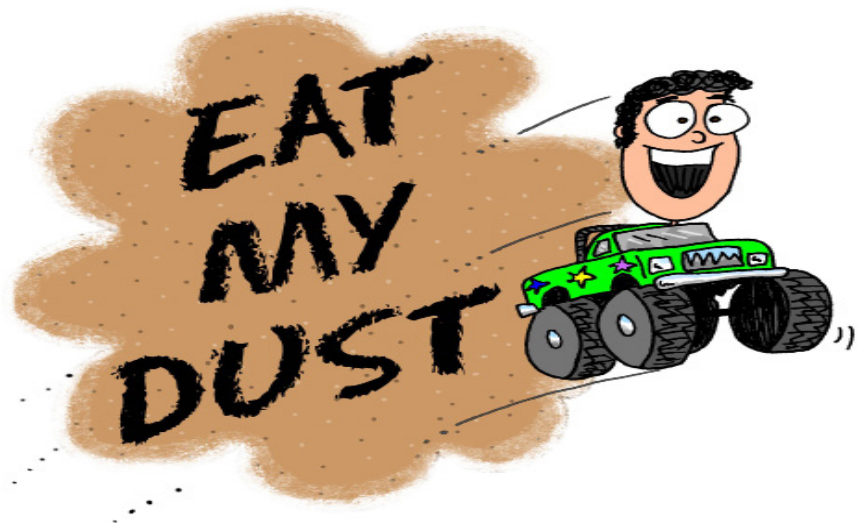
Embarrassed, your reporter offered to pay an extra tip, but by that time the employee had turned up Fox News on the TV to a volume that drowned out all other voices. Your reporter left the establishment to get back on the beat, seeking out the other end of the spectrum.

In the eastern half of West Coast states like WA, the picture looks only somewhat different, with a possible Biden win as the source of anxiety. An anonymous townspeople some twenty miles outside of Spokane spoke in detail to Sasquatch reporters as follows. "If that socialist Biden wins, I'll be heading for the hills, the Free State of Jefferson, or whatever comes first. I'm pretty sure the electricity will go out, so I'll have to shut down my Bitcoin mining warehouse entirely and go underground. Much as I'd like to take part in the Boogaloo, I just don't look good in a Hawaiian shirt, and those big-city Green New Deal Antifa enforcers will enslave all of us first if we're out in the open about it."

When asked if he would apply for a passport and go on the record with plans to leave the country as many liberal citizens have in the past, the man laughed. "Leave the country? Never. But I'll be damned if a ray of liberal sunshine ever touches my lily-white skin again. I've got enough Hunt's ketchup packets and canned soups to last me a single four year-term in my bunker." Asked if he trusted Biden would not seek re-election, he mumbled something about needing to double his supplies and left abruptly in his pickup truck, trailing dust in the face of the Sasquatch news team.

Estimated 50 Million  
Registered Voters Vow to Sit  
Out 2020 Election, as  
Neither Major Party  
Candidate Would Like to  
Have a Beer with Them

(SEE "VOTING UNDER  
THE INFLUENCE, pg. 37)



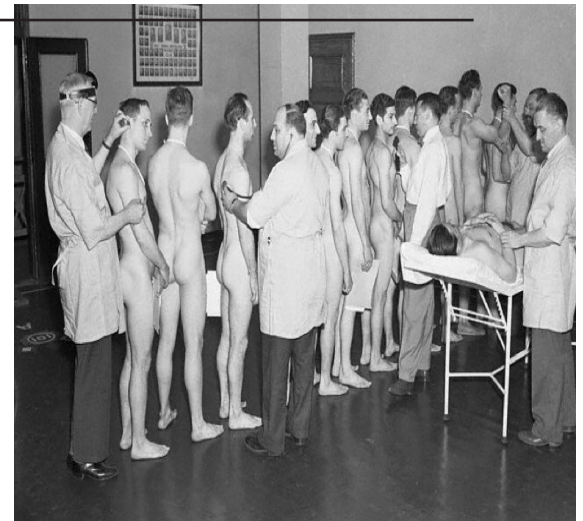


## Republican Legislature Calls for Statewide “Turn Your Head and Cough on Me” Mandate

Madison, WI - Citing flagging case numbers that struggle to lead the nation, Wisconsin's Republican-controlled legislature is enacting firm measures of manhood and to ensure that real men afraid to wear masks do not have their rights to freely spread Covid-19 infringed.

“Do we really want to see the Packers finish this promising NFL season?” one Brown County resident asked, removing his mask for an unimpeded mouthful of the crisp, autumn air. “I think not.”

Gov. Evers' continuing concern for public health and governance generally may in coming weeks be found to be in violation of the state constitution.



Republican members of WI's state legislature (CLOTHED, ABOVE) attend to the health of their constituencies (NUDE, ABOVE).



2020's hottest Halloween costume is flying off the shelves in suburban IL: The Kyle Rittenhouse Junior Enforcer Series, seen here in three styles... Lone Wolf Domestic Terrorist, Armed Trespasser/Wannabe Vigilante, and Bacon Envy.

heavily, illegally armed minors cannot cross state borders to join other heavily armed citizens looking for trouble, I fear for the future of our great nation.”

Rittenhouse himself awaits extradition back to WI to be tried before a jury of doughy white boys who worship police and weaponry of all kinds. Said Pres. Trump, in conclusion and with regard to the policies he would propose a second term to address these issues, “The protesters all deserve to be locked in cells with tiny, tiny windows. The smallest windows you’ve ever seen. And I have tremendous hands!”

## SC Justice Kavanaugh Betting on His Liking of Beer to Smooth over Use of Explicitly Non-Precedent Bush v. Gore Decision as Precedent to Cut Off Mail-In Ballot Counting in WI

(SEE “HEADLINE ENTIRELY TOO LONG,” pg. 37)

## Trump on Rittenhouse Shootings: “Nothing Says ‘Law & Order’ like Kids with Guns!”

Kenosha, WI - As the state of WI awaits the arrival of 17 year-old Kyle Rittenhouse from IL to be tried for the homicides of two protesters in the events of late Sept. 2020, Pres. Trump's re-election campaign has shifted strategy to a full embrace of armed minors and militias.

“Unfortunately, my own Federal Bureau of Investigation has curtailed the tremendous kidnapping plans of a militia in Michigan, dealing another blow to the rule of [vigilante, domestic terrorist] law in America,” Trump stated at a recent press conference. “If



## Los Angeles Sports Fan Unable to Decide on Dodgers or Lakers Shirt to Fight or Flee Approaching Wildfire

Orange County, CA - Amidst an otherwise dream come true, self-described "sports fanatic" Devin Beige was live-streaming from his home on the outskirts of Irvine about surviving on the edge of the latest wildfires when faced with a crucial decision: What championship t-shirt to wear?



As the fire approached his home, video shows the man taken with nostalgia for the unorthodox year of sports. "I know it's been kinda weird," Beige told his subscribers, "but overall I'd say 2020 has been a pretty good year for us."

Holding up fingers representing the jersey number of Kobe Bryant, Beige continued, "I know we lost Kobe too soon and all, but to be honest, I was already in kind of a 'what have you done for me lately' mindset about him already, like literally, no NBA championships in almost a decade? I was feeling deprived."

Noticing the smoke gathering outside his window, the superfan turned to the camera and asked his fans, "OK, voting time everyone. If you think I should wear my Lakers championship t-shirt to go out and fight the fire, leave your vote in the comments. I'm still waiting for my Dodgers championship t-shirt to come in the mail...damn slow lately. If you think I should wait for it, lemme know in the comments, too." A visit to his YouTube channel showed a tie in the all-important voting tally, resulting in the man's death in his home by asphyxiation after wildfires surrounded his property. His shirtless body was removed yesterday and will be on display at a local funeral home to be named later, pending free agency decisions.

A man declaring himself to be Beige's "best sports buddy," who wished to remain anonymous, had only one comment on his friend's death, "If only my friend had been a Clippers fan like me, he would still be alive today."



## Fresno Residents Continue to Outdo Remainder of State in Infrastructure Resistance

Fresno, CA - While much of the state has soured on the long-proposed and currently boondoggled plan to connect the San Francisco Bay Area to Southern California by high speed rail, Fresno residents counted themselves "ahead of the curve" in wanting nothing to do with building new transportation infrastructure in the state.

The National Transportation Research Group estimates that "[c]ongested roads choke commuting and commerce and cost California drivers a total of \$29.1 billion each year in the form of lost time and wasted fuel," perhaps a relative bargain at approximately 60 times the cost of Pres. Trump's golfing. However, Trump's golf and CA's high speed rail likely have a significantly smaller death toll, as "876 people were killed annually in traffic crashes in the Los Angeles area" from 2014-16.



The city of Fresno, pop. 531,576, remains the largest city in the U.S. not connected by interstate highway, and its residents have been at the forefront of the movement against high speed rail. "The way I figure," one Fresno car collector told the CHS Sasquatch, "just like more testing would mean a lot more Covid-19 cases and building a freeway to our city would just mean more traffic, that high speed rail fiasco cooked up by those elites in Sacramento is just going to overrun us with train traffic and taxes. Gov. Newsom, you can leave us the hell off your line! The Free State of Jefferson, though, I sure do hope it extends down to here."

We asked another resident who said unequivocally and with impeccable meter, "No, Fresno says no. No, says Fresno. No! San Jose, say nay or be sans this naysaying Fresnoian." San Jose has yet to respond to the Fresno resident's threat as of press time.

Former WI governor Scott Walker called Fresno residents and all those saying "no" to modernizations of the state transit system, "his kind of people." The ex-governor continued, "Just like I said that the excellent, first 2020 presidential debate between Pres. Trump and Joe Biden was really about ideas, I think any kind of railway connecting major U.S. cities is just a really bad idea. I'm still proud to have rejected the wasteful federal stimulus package that would have built an Amtrak line between Madison and Milwaukee. Who do we think we are? Communist China? Only Private Taiwanese companies deserve state funding and support because those kinds of deals never go wrong."



## Autonomous Home Colonoscopy Robots Draw High-Tech Praise in China

Shenzhen, China - What started as a dream is becoming a reality for Chinese citizens,

thanks to an innovative start-up company leading the world in colon cancer prevention. Founder and CEO of Rectotek, Wu Kongzhi, began with a vision to help screen Chinese seniors' digestive systems for signs of trouble with self-administered home colonoscopy kits, but he found interest, compliance, and technical ability wanting.

The solution, as in so many cases, was high tech. Enter the Pro-Bot.

"Our company has designed and begun to manufacture autonomous robots capable of scheduling and administering home colonoscopies to citizens in need," Wu beamed, proudly. "Just think: no more worries about finding the right doctor or inconvenient trips to the hospital. Our robots can now enter your home and find you!"

The first fleet of space-age, robo-proctologists was rolled out in Shenzhen this week and soon will be commonplace nationwide. With the expected success of trial implementation in China, Wu hopes the Pro-Bot will be coming to a neighborhood near you.

With over 50 PRC patents, Pro-Bots come equipped with tools to enter homes of all shapes and sizes at any hour of the day, as well as necessary restraining features to subdue and stabilize patients, ensuring a smooth examination.

China's large but aging population poses a particular challenge for cancer screening. Unlike neighboring Japan or nations in Europe, China's population is skewing elderly without first becoming a developed country. This has led to a shortage of oncologists and gerontologists, requiring innovative solutions.

World-leading technology and high levels of trust make the PRC a uniquely suited environment to experiment with solutions like the Pro-Bot, Wu says. "Using the Pro-Bot is just like having a professional perform a procedure without all the wasteful red tape and middle-men like reception desks, pre-screenings, and appointment scheduling in general. To fight cancer, we need tools that are just as wily and flexible as the disease itself. The Pro-Bot can show up on your doorstep at any time."

We asked about consumer experiences with the Pro-Bot around the city of Shenzhen, whose unusually young population made sure not to stretch the company's resources too thin. Recent retiree, Zhang Xin, 55, described his experience. Rubbing his posterior in memory, Zhang recounted this past week's visit, from a prototype of the Pro-Bot, "I was eating lunch at home at about 11am when I heard an unusual, mechanical knock at my door. When I didn't get up to answer, this machine entered my home entirely on its own, turned me around, immobilized me, and then gave me an unscheduled colonoscopy." Asked for an overall evaluation of the Pro-Bot, Zhang concluded, "I was left with a deep impression. Our Chinese artificial intelligence has truly advanced to a new level, and I'm sure we will lead the world in this technology."

But such advances do not come without a downside. Just days after Pro-Bots were deployed throughout the city, competing firms had reverse-engineered their own, counterfeit versions, without the extensive safety testing the original has undergone.

In a global context in which the importance of public health has never been greater, Chinese officials now worry that donations of Pro-Bot fleets to neighboring, developing countries are sure to be seen as the height of altruism. While such donations are undoubtedly appreciated by receiving countries, Chinese high-tech experts like Wu worry increasingly about knock-offs.

"Above all, Chinese patents and intellectual property must be respected. While all of these machines have been programmed to override any resistance among their human subjects," Wu Kongzhi warned, "for the safety of everyone, you should only accept the genuine article. Not that you really have a choice."



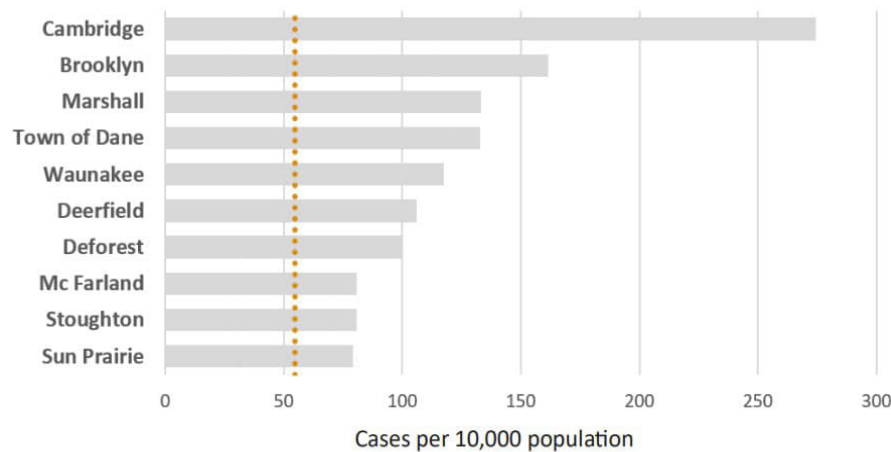
Though manufactured in China, these high-tech robots may soon be available at this very store in developing countries like Nepal.

Global IR scholars scramble to Google pronunciation and location of Nagorno-Karabakh, lest their field lose its last shreds of credibility...

(SEE AZERBAIJAN-ARMENIAN SKIRMISH ESCALATION DANGER, PG. 37)



## Municipalities in Dane County with a significantly higher rate of cases than the overall Dane County rate in the past two weeks



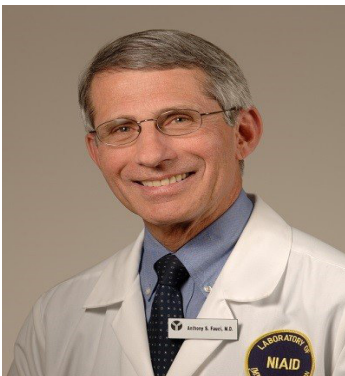
SOURCE: <https://madison365.com/new-dane-co-data-snapshot-points.../>

county, but it's "all in" to be the smallest town in WI to attract a visit from the top U.S. epidemiologist, Dr. Anthony Fauci.

While the original goal was to have the good doctor pay a "house call" to the village for its annual "Umbrella Daze" celebration on the lake during the summer months, village residents now have their hopes set on more than just their yearly physical exam. Umbrella Daze, known for its festive atmosphere and performances from the likes of "funky drummer" Clyde Stubblefield (1943-2017), the case drive has been such a success that the event could take place as early as this winter. One resident commented on the village's substantial head start, attributing it to the traditional sporting mentality of its residents. "Every town in WI has the advantage of being locked inside for six months even in a normal year. But whether it's varsity teams, the deer hunt, or pandemic 'superspreading,' I've got just one question for my fellow Cambridge villagers: Who's got spirit?" The CHS Sasquatch reporter, recalling high school pep rallies, declined to answer the question and allowed her to answer it herself, brimming with inexplicable enthusiasm. "We've got spirit! Yes we can! We'll spread this virus throughout the land!!!"

Tests for the Covid spirit remain negative among CHS Sasquatch staff, though it has been known to spread "like fever." We have no known immunity at this time and are unable to muster even the most perfunctory "Gooooooo TEAM!" Readers are encouraged to check back with us before and after the Homecoming game, by which time the situation may have changed.

CHS graduate and Associate Director of University of WI Global Health Institute in Madison, Janis Tupe-sis has been trying in vain to dissuade residents from their "deeply misconceived" goals. While seated and connecting Covid-19 patients to ventilators with all four limbs simultaneously, Dr. Tupesis took a moment to speak to the CHS Sasquatch.



CHS Sasquatch reporters, unfortunately, were unable to get within six feet of Dr. Anthony Fauci, above, to ask whether he had heard about our county-leading cases per capita rate, intended to pay a visit in the middle of winter, or indeed has heard of us at all. Early accounts are dubious, but we remain hopeful for a "fourth quarter miracle," possibly by means of a "Hail Mary" reception of the coronavirus in the end zone, with no time remaining.

He said, "Look, I'm as big a fan as anybody, but turning Cambridge into the biggest infection hot spot in WI is the wrong way to go about this. Epidemiology isn't like high school football; after you score a Covid 'touchdown,' you might not get back up. And your grandparents didn't volunteer to take the field." Early responses to the director's statement have been mixed, with some declaring they would avoid Madison and go to the hospital in Fort Atkinson when their name was called to be "next man up" to run up the village's Covid-19 score.

Citing the promising start of the Green Bay Packers 2020 season and UW quarterback Graham Mertz's show of support to "get with the program," local residents were nonetheless puzzled by CHS coach emeritus Bob Nodolf's lack of encouragement for Cambridge's dominance of its Eastern Suburban Conference rivals. One maskless resident declared, "Mr. Nodolf and Mr. Bockhop won't give me the time of day, but we're way ahead of Marshall and more than double Deerfield. I think this year we're really punching above our weight." While the growing village's population remains well below the baseline of 10,000, making its infection rate somewhat misleading, there's no denying that Cambridge is taking full advantage of its prominence in comparisons with others usually well out of its league in Dane County. "Per capita or not," the resident concluded, "this is our year to go all the way to the state finals. Playoffs, baby! Boo-yah!" Indeed, the village's Division III status appears to have been transcended.

Despite repeated attempts at contact and interview scheduling, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIH), Dr. Anthony Fauci, M.D., has not yet responded for this article. The moment a statement becomes available, rest assured that it will appear in this semi-bi-annual publication and across all Cambridge, WI, news media as the leading headline.

## With Winter Just around the Corner, Case Drive to Bring Dr. Fauci to Cambridge for Umbrella Daze 2021 Well Ahead of Schedule

Cambridge, WI - The Village of Cambridge, never one to demur in the face of competition or infringe upon the freedom of its scores of residents, is locked in a battle with county neighbors to put itself on the map and in the halls of near-Floridian greatness. That the rules are unwritten, the prize possibly fatal, and the rivalry itself undeclared are immaterial. This rural community surrounding Lake Ripley may only be halfway in Dane



Attempts to harness local pride to increase compliance with Gov. Evers' statewide mask mandate have so far been unsuccessful in Cambridge, with some calling it "just another socialist plot" or "a Democrat hoax."



# Your pandemic survival horoscope for the remainder of 2020

By: Nailuj Relyt, unlicensed astrologer & armchair epidemiologist.

**Aries** - (March 21 to April 20) Regardless of who wins the election, the stars advise investments in plywood for boarding up windows, glass for replacing broken windows, and the avoidance of areas with a population over 1,000. There's never been a better time to fortify your own cult complex out in the hills. Chance of survival = 98%

**Taurus** - (April 21 to May 20, 21\*) Anti-vaxxers, anti-maskers, and anti-pantsers might otherwise form an unholy trinity if you don't prove that only the third is truly dangerous to public health. Chance of survival = 44%

**Gemini** - (May 21, 22\* to June 21) Methane traps exposed from melting permafrost are letting vast amounts of the greenhouse gas that had been underground for millennia back into the atmosphere. Your Northern Lights trip will totally stink! Chance of survival = 58%

**Cancer** - (June 22 to July 22) Having stayed inside most of the spring and summer already, this winter's cabin fever promises to be no biggie, nothing new. Indefinite social distancing will be like the icing on the cake of wintery despair. At least you are expressly forbidden from going home for the holidays! Chance of survival = 88%

**Leo** - (July 23 to August 22, 23\*) What if they held a second civil war and nobody came, because they were afraid of catching Covid and it's chilly outside? If you show up on the streets armed to the teeth anyway, you'll be sure to receive a participation award and be recruited for Civil War reenactments when they resume in KY. Chance of survival = 63%

**Virgo** - (August 23, 24\* to September 22, 23\*) Though your personal quest for herd immunity may be extremely misguided, be advised that you can try just living among a herd of livestock before actually purchasing one. Chance of survival = 44%

**Libra** - (September 23, 24\* to October 22, 23\*) When the cold winds start to blow, a little mindfulness and meditation can help pretend you're comfortable keeping the thermostat at an environmentally sustainable temperature. Chance of survival = 50%

**Scorpio** - (October 23, 24\* to November 22) Birthday wishes sent remotely just don't feel the same, so get out there and be sure to try hijacking the street protests of whichever side loses the election to pay more attention to your special day. Chance of survival = 37%

**Sagittarius** - (November 23 to December 21, 23\*) Your fear that Trump might not hold any more rallies if he loses the election is no excuse for attending every single one. Give it a rest. Chance of survival = 2020%

**Capricorn** - (December 22, 24 to January 20) While on lockdown, you finally have time to ponder whether to pursue dreams to be a hip-hop producer, a visual artist, write "the Great American Novel," or become a raving lunatic. Choose wisely. You may only have until 2022 before Covid lets up and everything goes back to normal. Chance of survival = 100%

**Aquarius** - (January 21 to February 19) Worried about the new 6-3 majority in the Supreme Court or the possibility that Democrats might expand and pack it if they win? The ghost of the Notorious RBJ is getting tired of doing your dirty work. Go haunt the chamber yourself! Chance of survival = 93%

**Pisces** - (February 20 to March 20) While symptoms of Covid-19 do not officially include spiritual hallucinations, it would only be fair if you took back some of your freedom and experimented with mind-altering substances to "choose your own adventure" if you're ever diagnosed. Be sure to share this horoscope with your doctors before—not after—they put you on a ventilator. Chance of survival = 51%



Put down your bucket of Halloween candy for just a moment. As the holiday shopping season approaches, are you up for a different kind of consumption challenge?

I hereby challenge anyone reading this who can afford it or who otherwise lives in a country that has given citizens one or more Covid-19 stimulus checks to spend the equivalent 75 USD on music media, preferably on artists/bands you'd never heard of previously. Post your results in any way you choose, preferably here. Simply recommending obscure music hasn't gotten much traction, so how about making a meme out of thin air?

\$75 on music? That's unheard of! (I used to spend that much at Amoeba Music in CA a few times a year, in fact.)

\$75 on music you've never heard of?! Now that's a challenge!

I predict that it will be considerably more pleasurable than pouring a bucket of icewater over yourself, and not much less charitable.

I've personally done this four times this year, described below, putting my Covid-19 stimulus check to work. Compartmentalize some of your free money for musical exploration, and psychologically (behavioral economically), you won't feel a thing. This won't hurt a bit. Etc.

Are you up to the challenge?

Post your results here: [https://www.reddit.com/r/eMusicofficial/comments/jli28d/the\\_75\\_music\\_challenge/](https://www.reddit.com/r/eMusicofficial/comments/jli28d/the_75_music_challenge/)

I personally recommend [eMusic](#) and [Bandcamp](#). The first Friday of the month on [Bandcamp](#) is a particularly good day to take the plunge, as the site waives its fees and gives 100% of proceeds to the artists. As an [eMusic](#) member, you have the option of paying \$75 and getting \$200 worth of credit, which is quite a lot of music no matter what albums you buy.

If you're primarily concerned about that \$75 going into artists' pockets, try [eMusic's](#) blockchain tokens or [Bandcamp](#).

At least half a year's subscription to a streaming service could be bought for that price, but remember, bands can't play concerts lately, and bands you never heard of probably couldn't get booked at a concert venue anyway. Pair this with the collapse of the monetary value of an album thanks to streaming (aka renting rather than owning your music), and the case for music purchases as charitable couldn't be clearer.

Spending more money on music in this pandemic will help musicians make ends meet, and it will make you happier while on lockdown indoors (oh, and winter's coming!). Movie and TV series production is also stunted. What're you gonna do with all that lost media time? Read a book? I don't think so.

Put on some non-intrusive reading music, and THEN read a book, you consumer whore!

\$75 from COVID-19 Stimulus Check on [Bandcamp](#) & [eMusic](#) (& Chicago CD stores, for purposes of comparison) As a [Bandcamp](#) novice, I should acknowledge that this is a comparison on [eMusic's](#) home turf. \$75 is not coincidentally the maximum [eMusic](#) booster pack, so the odds of appreciation are stacked in favor of the much maligned mp3 emporium. When in CA, I would drop about that much on Amoeba music's clearance section (or a similarly excellent brick & mortar used CD store) a couple times a year, so that's my baseline for satisfaction.

I "ran the experiment" five times, twice for [Bandcamp](#), twice for [eMusic](#), and once in Chicago record stores in 2019.

[Bandcamp](#) 1 results...

Total titles= 21 (chosen over the course of 3 days from favorites list and Covid promotional list on site)  
Breakdown of purchases by type:  
By price: NYP = 14 More than minimum NYP = 9  
Full price (i.e. \$5 or more and not NYP) = 7  
Among NYP: \$1 EPs = 7 \$1.50 LPs = 7  
Other NYP = 1 (I thought I wouldn't like the 2017 album by Nurses and only paid them \$3 for it, still well above all others on NYP but obviously also a pittance. That I waited three years to buy the new album from the band that made my second favorite album of the 2010s is indicative of my general preference to buy a lot cheaply that I'd never heard of before.)  
Among full price: Single track titles = 1 EPs = 0 LPs = 6  
Titles purchased from artists owned previously (aka liked and buying more) = 11/21  
Titles purchased from artists whose work I hadn't owned previously (aka first-time purchase) = 2/21  
Titles purchased from artists I'd never heard of previously (aka total shots in the dark based on enticing sample/label/price/description/review) = 8/21  
Purchased titles from 2020 = 3/21  
from 2014-19 = 17/21  
from 2003-2013 = 1/21  
from before 2003 = 0  
Totally loved purchases contending for "favorites" status = 7  
Regretted purchases = 1  
Wishlist = 50

The larger mp3 files (I know I could reduce the size) from the [Bandcamp](#) default could fill my hard drive up in a hurry if I'd gone entirely NYP with obscurities. I still would have preferred to pay 75 cents for EPs and get more, but usually \$1 seems to be the minimum allowed. It was refreshing after almost a year of solely [eMusic](#) to pick up some albums by bands that have long been favorites. The final judgment concerns whether I enjoy these purchases more or less than a \$75 [eMusic](#) booster.

It's hardly worth listing which albums I purchased, b/c I'm sure no one has a problem finding stuff to buy there. Most of the albums on the NYP labels were mediocre. I should have sampled rather than basing purchases on album descriptions and previous purchases (who knew even obscure bands' sound could evolve?!), but the connection was slow from heavy traffic.

I've loved or at least been very pleased w/ the other albums.

Notably, I did not buy or wishlist any jazz. I liked almost all of what u/soulcoal and u/classicot recommended a lot late last year, but it didn't override what actually got prioritized. Obviously if money weren't a factor I'd buy all of what they recommended. Not a lemon among them.

[Bandcamp](#) 2 results...

Total titles= 62 (chosen over the course of 3 "Bandcamp Friday" promotions and two regular days in a 3-month span.)  
Breakdown of purchases by type:  
By price: NYP = 62 More than minimum NYP = 20  
Full price (i.e. \$5 or more and not NYP) = 0  
Among NYP: \$1 EPs = 17 \$1.25 LPs = 44  
Other NYP = 1  
Titles purchased from artists owned previously (aka liked and buying more) = 0/62  
Titles purchased from artists whose work I hadn't owned previously (aka first-time purchase) = 6/62 (several replac-

ing unavailable titles from [eMusic](#) wishlist)  
Titles purchased from artists I'd never heard of previously (aka total shots in the dark based on enticing sample/label/price/description/review) = 56/62  
Purchased titles from 2020 = 6/62  
from 2014-19 = 39/62  
from 2003-2013 = 15/62  
from before 2003 = 2/62  
Totally loved purchases contending for "favorites" status = 9  
Regretted purchases = 0  
Wishlist = 97

It took a lot of time and effort to spend a full \$75 on [Bandcamp](#) on music I'd never heard of before and without being a total crashout.

While most of the big ticket albums from [Bandcamp](#) 1 lived up to my expectations, were much easier to find, and were my favorite of all five \$75 shopping sprees, overall I think I prefer [Bandcamp](#) 2. It yielded two more albums I love and none I regret purchasing (due to better screening beforehand but I think also for the thrill of exploration).

Paying no more than \$3 for any single album, however, means that I didn't put a lot of food on anyone's table. There's a lot of reviews to write, and I hope others will be enticed to snap up some obscure goodies.

I'm sure there must be some good jazz on [Bandcamp](#) on a NYP basis, but for whatever reason, I just haven't stumbled upon it. I end up buying more experimental and new classical than on [eMusic](#), but only three jazz albums out of 62 (3/83 in total for [Bandcamp](#) 1 & 2 combined).

[eMusic](#) 1 Results...

Total titles = 47 (chosen over the course of 3 days, all from wishlist, w/ emphasis on choosing titles I'd previously hesitated to buy by previously unknown artists)  
Breakdown of purchases by type:  
By price (note \$75 booster yields \$200 in [eMusic](#), so the total \$ amount will differ): \$1 or less = (I try not to buy 99-cent and under titles on booster packs; Subscription credits lately have all been 99-cent titles. Even I have limits.) 1  
\$1.50-\$3 = 11  
\$3.49-\$5 = 25  
Over \$5 = 10  
Single or two-track track titles = 1 EPs = 7  
LPs = 39  
Titles purchased from artists owned previously (aka liked and buying more) = 3/47  
Titles purchased from artists whose work I hadn't owned previously (aka first-time purchase) = 2/47  
Titles purchased from artists I'd never heard of previously (aka total shots in the dark based on enticing label/price/description/review) = 42/47  
Purchased titles from 2020 = 0  
from 2014-19 = 40/47  
from 2003-2013 = 6/47  
from before 2003 = 1/47  
Totally loved purchases contending for "favorites" status = 6  
Regretted purchases = 2  
Wishlist = 350 (about 1/5 unavailable from label attrition of 2019 and previous years)

[eMusic](#) 2 Results...

Total titles = 49 (chosen over the course of 3 days, almost all from wishlist, by previously unknown artists)  
Breakdown of purchases by type:  
By price (note \$75 booster yields \$200 in [eMusic](#), so the total \$ amount will differ): \$1 or less = (I try not to buy 99-cent and under titles on booster packs; Subscription credits lately have all been 99-cent titles. Even I have limits.) 1  
\$1.50-\$3 = 11  
\$3.49-\$5 = 28  
Over \$5 = 9  
Single or two-track track titles = 1 EPs = 4  
LPs = 44  
Titles purchased from artists owned previously (aka liked and buying more) = 0/49  
Titles purchased from artists whose work I hadn't owned previously (aka first-time purchase) = 0/49



## The \$75 Music Challenge (Cont.)

Titles purchased from artists I'd never heard of previously (aka total shots in the dark based on enticing label/price/description/review) = 49/49  
Purchased titles from 2020 = 5/49  
from 2014-19 = 33/49  
from 2003-2013 = 10/49  
from before 2003 = 1/49  
Totally loved purchases contending for "favorites" status = 3  
Regretted purchases = 0  
Wishlist = 363 (about 1/5 unavailable from label attrition of 2019 and previous years)  
For this spree, I would encourage more reading into the zero regrets more than the lower number of "totally loved."  
I think I liked more of them more than the previous spree.

BASELINE: Last used CD-store binge (Chicago, Mar. 2019), \$76 @ Reckless Records, \$29 @ The Exchange (unable to differentiate between the two sources, so must combine them). Overall comparable to a big Amoeba Music spree in CA.  
Total titles (Est.) = 100 (mostly at \$1 each, some at 50 cents, a few up to \$3)  
Titles liked enough to rip to iTunes = 78/100 (approximately equivalent to a "successful," non-regretted eMusic purchase)  
Single or two-track track titles = 0 EPs = 1  
LPs = 99  
Titles purchased from artists owned previously (aka liked and buying more) = 29/78  
Titles purchased from artists whose work I hadn't owned previously (aka first-time purchase) = 5/78  
Titles purchased from artists I'd never heard of previously (aka total shots in the dark based on enticing sample/label/price/description/review) = 44/78 (Likely also the 22 regretted below)  
Purchased titles from 2020 = 0 (rather impossible at the time)  
from 2014-19 = 13/78  
from 2003-2013 = 49/78  
from before 2003 = 9/78 (Several don't list a date in iTunes, so the math won't add up here)  
Totally loved purchases contending for "favorites" status = 10  
Regretted purchases = 22? (Est. listened twice and deemed unworthy of ripping to iTunes)

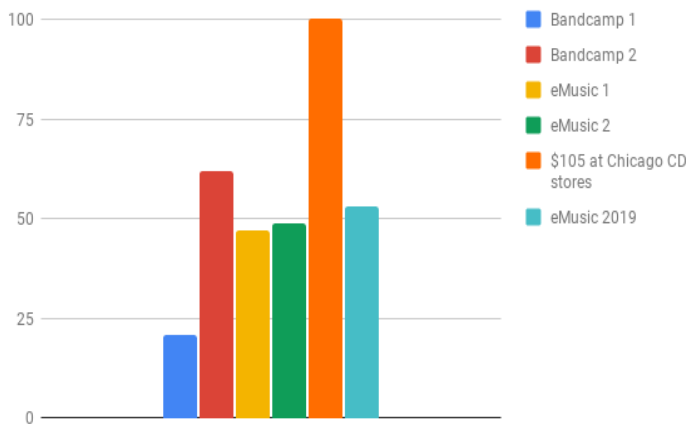
### CONCLUSIONS:

I assume the average consumer would think it ridiculous both to spend more than a year's streaming subscription price on music in one month. Doubly so for quasi-blogging about it.  
Were I to use Bandcamp exclusively, on a limited budget it'd either be like reverting to the old eMusic (maybe five albums a month in rock, electronica, and a little experimental thrown in) or more likely I'd restrict myself to purchases like in high school at a used CD store, just a couple albums a month.  
If just on a regular monthly subscription to eMu rather than tilting in favor of it w/ their best value deal, I'd probably be less satisfied with the site's contributions to my collection, certainly in the past two years. Only buying a few albums a month would amplify regrets and increase the pressure to avoid them to hesitate buying albums from artists I'd never heard of based on 30-second samples. Casting a wide net, by contrast, still yields lots and lots of happy surprises.  
Ranking of the Bandcamp (Bc), eMusic (eMu), Brick & Mortar (B&M) shopping sprees:  
Best for supporting artists = 1. Bc 2. (tie) eMu & B&M  
Quantity (maximum # of long LPs) = 1. B&M 2. eMu 3. Bc  
Best for cheap EPs & singles = 1. eMu 2. Bc 3. B&M  
Convenience (from current location), including time spent browsing = 1. Bc 2. eMu 3. B&M  
Best for 2020 (newest) selection = 1. Bc 2. eMu 3. B&M (though if buying new it'd be more competitive)  
Selection & Value = 3-way tie (each has advantages & disadvantages)  
Widest genre variety among titles actually purchased = 1. eMu 2. B&M 3. Bc  
3 genres I'm actively trying to expand my collection to broaden my horizons = jazz, world, experimental  
Highest % jazz = 1. eMu 2. B&M 3. Bc  
Highest % world = 1. eMu 2. B&M 3. Bc  
Highest % experimental = 1. eMu 2 (Tie). Bc & B&M  
Highest ratio of favorites/regretted purchases = 1. 7/1 Bc 2. 4.5/1 eMu 3. 5/11 B&M  
Best for taking total shots in the dark at a low price = 1. B&M 2. eMu 3. Bc  
Best for completing (or filling out) discographies of favorite artists (at a reasonable price) = 1. Bc 2. B&M 3. eMu  
Enjoyed the music the most (overall ranking, as measured by estimated # of plays) = 1. eMu 2. Bc 3. B&M  
Top 10 favorite albums purchased (& source) out of 279 total titles = 1. "Naughtland" - Nurses (2017, Bc1) 2. "Mirage" - Ben Lukas Boysen (2020, Bc1) 3. "Past Life" - Lost in the Trees (2014, Bc1) 4. "Yes I Jan" - Bas Jan (2018, eMu2) 5. "The Future Sound of Yesterday" - Implosion Quintet (2009, Bc2) 6. "Ballasts" - Human Teorema (Bc2) 7. "Fricciones" - Edurne Arizu (2018, eMu2) 8. "S/t" - Hijos Amigos (2018, eMu2) 9. "Auge" - Tono (2018 eMu1) 10. "Tempest" - The Young Scamels (2010)  
Other contenders for Top 10: "Frengers" - Mew (2003, B&M); "Bamnan and Silvercork" - Midlake (2004, B&M); "Sunroom" - Liz Unphair (2018, eMu1); "La Nueva Música Venezolana" - Quintillo Ensemble 2018, eMu1; "So Deep" - When Saints Go Machine (2019, Bc1); .. "Babes, Water, Waves" - Perth (Bc2).

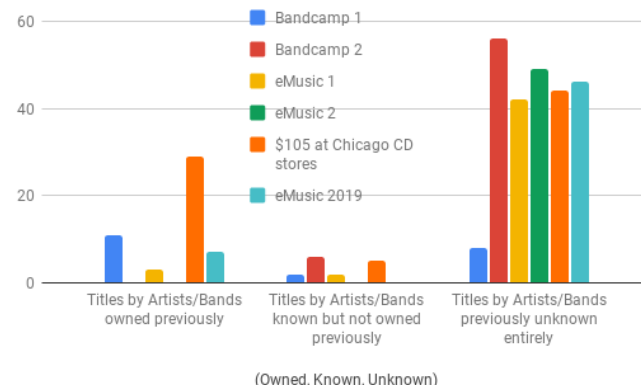
Weighing the certainty of supporting artists financially along with Bandcamp's dominance of the top albums overall, one might expect it to be the runaway favorite. Yet I think I prefer the much larger quantity of albums that I like and have taken me completely by surprise on eMu and the bargain bins of great record stores like Amoeba, Rasputin, Reckless, Electric Foetus, The Exchange, Princeton Record Exchange, and others strewn across the U.S. One can always go on a (more expensive) quest to own all the albums by one's favorite artists, but w/out actively seeking out stuff I've never heard of, the quest would become gradually more difficult and less exciting, if not less satisfying overall.

eMusic 2019 (From Kita Kouhei to Artur Mackowiak, Zhaoze to Hanan, Mark Kloud & Freestylers, then from Sybarite 5 to Maksymilian Gwincinski, then Peregrinos to Videatape)  
Total titles = 53 (Not done as part of the \$75 music challenge, and maybe overlapping a bit w/ the subscription)  
Breakdown of purchases by type:  
By price (note \$75 booster yields \$200 in eMusic, so the total \$ amount will differ): \$1 or less = 7  
\$1.50-\$3 = 17  
\$3.49-\$5 = 19  
Over \$5 = 4610  
Single or two-track track titles = 0 EPs = 14  
LPs = 39  
Titles purchased from artists owned previously (aka liked and buying more) = 7  
Titles purchased from artists whose work I hadn't owned previously (aka first-time purchase) = 0  
Titles purchased from artists I'd never heard of previously (aka total shots in the dark based on enticing label/price/description/review) = 46  
Purchased titles from 2020 = 0  
from 2014-19 = 39  
from 2003-2013 = 12  
from before 2003 = 2  
Totally loved purchases contending for "favorites" status = 17  
Regretted purchases = 3  
Wishlist = est. 350 (about 1/5 unavailable from label attrition of 2019 and previous years)

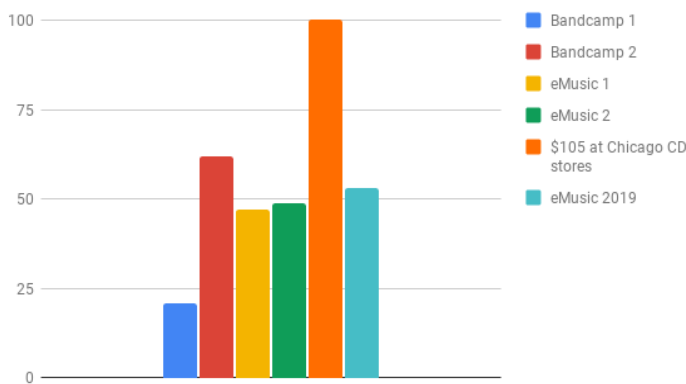
### Total # of Titles for Each "Run"



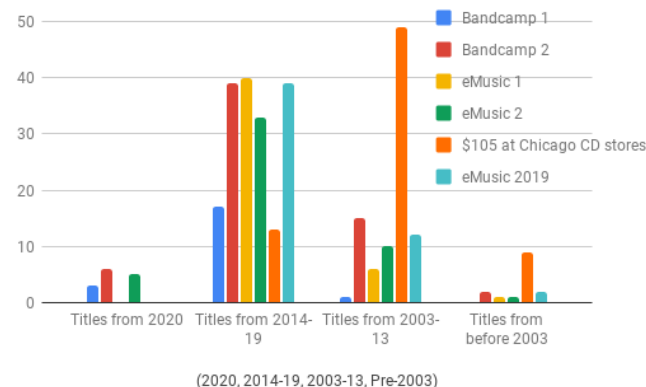
### Before Purchase, What Did I Know?



### Total # of Titles for Each "Run"



### How old or new are the albums?



## 20 favorite \$1 music purchases available on eMusic & Bandcamp

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Turn a \$20 bill into a cornucopia of musical bliss! Every year for the past decade or so, in what must seem incredibly foolish or at least old-fashioned to some, I spend hundreds of dollars to own music. Summer 2019 to the present day was the first in which that didn't mean going to CD stores and instead buying and downloading it all online. The wells are deep to draw from, and I must have hundreds more cheap albums than I did last year at this time.

I'm sure there's a lot more out there, as on NYP labels [https://www.reddit.com/r/BandCamp/comments/garf1o/life\\_by\\_a\\_thousand\\_cuts\\_name\\_your\\_price\\_labels\\_on/](https://www.reddit.com/r/BandCamp/comments/garf1o/life_by_a_thousand_cuts_name_your_price_labels_on/), but these are the ones I'm most open to listening to again (& again). See other lists if you've still got some spare change to throw at obscure music.

To repeat the line on my broken record, streaming royalties work fine when a song or album gets played online millions of times, but for anything less than the superstars, paying to own the music rather than streaming it helps musicians who may only have thousands, hundreds, or even dozens of fans. To earn just \$1 from a song on Spotify, for example, it needs to get played about 314 times. It might take a year or more for some of what's listed below to reach that many streams, and I hope paying a single dollar wouldn't hurt you too much.

20. "Ballasts" - Human Teorema (2020). I hear an update to Pink Floyd.
  19. "Unbalanced: Concerto for Ensemble" - Moisés P. Sánchez (2019). Almost an hour in three movements between jazz and new classical.
  18. "Wom" - Mow (2017). Endlessly replayable trip-hop EP w/ female vocals.
  17. "Roll with the Punches" - Yu Su. 2019. instrumental, almost ambient rock.
  16. "Derivacivilização" - Ian Ramill (2015). Alt. rock sometimes prog but usually rousing.
  15. "S/t" - Gallo Lobo (2018). Instrumental quasi-Latin guitar jazz.
  14. "Solapa" - Carlos Liebedinsky (2015). Psychedelic electronic accordion.
  13. "In My Room" - Rumpistol (2019). Acclaimed Danish melodic electronica w/ lots of layers.
  12. "The Future Sound of Yesterday" - Implosion Quintet (2009). The oldest entry on this list still sounds fresh. Mostly instrumental rock but surprisingly varied.
  11. "Yokai" - Breek (2018). Melodic combination of IDM and drum & bass.
  10. "Costuras Que Me Bordam Marcas na Pele" - Paola Kirst (2018). There are so very many wonderful Latin alternative albums for 99 cents on eMusic, it's impossible to choose just one as the best. Hers is one of the most unpredictable and diverse.
  9. "Figures EP" - Wookie, Blossom, M2R1 (2019). Smooth, mostly instrumental electronic fusion.
  8. "Antelizan" - Tethys (2013). Three-track electronic journey reminds me of classic mid-1990s Orbital w/ its sinister but always impeccably layered sound.
  7. "The Way I Began" - Desert Sound Colony (2014). Danceable post-rock w/ a companion equally fine a year later in "Cracks"
  6. "S/t" - Unalaska (2015). Sneaky rock EP w/ sampled sounds sneaks up on one w/ repeated listening. Kinda dark, but quite intriguing.
  5. "Lost & Found Sounds 2009-13" - Shimmering Stars (2014). Most would probably find these lovely b-sides, demos, and covers deserving of #1 position.
  4. "Infinite Summer" - NZCA LINES (2016). An expansive follow-up to a synth-pop gem.
  3. "Disruption" - Jetsam (2014). Delightfully bizarre melodies and dizzying compositions.
  2. "De Baile Solto" - Siba (2015). Almost as good as "Avante," which I did find on cd for \$1. Latin rock w/ tuba.
- "Naughtland" - Nurses (2017). I paid more, but you don't have to. It's really grown on me after I got over them changing their sound from their 2011 album, which was my second-favorite of the past decade.

(On eMusic: #3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. On Bandcamp: #1, 2, 4, 5, 12, 20.)



# Music Access Moral Continuum (Please rank yours!)

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(How) Should we judge people who access music from different sources than we do?

How long concerts, a major source of income for less famous artists, will be too dangerous remains to be seen, but if the financial incentive for musicians to make music is as strong as economists think, we could be in for a long and worsening dry spell. A hungry musical genius might not create the next masterpiece if the link to putting food on the table is severed. No better time to consider the payout-tied morality of different ways to access music. I hope you'll share your opinions using the following framework or your own.

"Music" refers to an "indie" artist w/ all songs under a million views on YouTube (arbitrary cut-off point). I'm not talking about the "winners" in the "winner-take-all market" that is the music industry (and so many others).

Some employ a moral dichotomy of "paying artists" (good) Vs. "not paying artists" (bad). Or possibly a trichotomy w/ eMusic even worse than average pirates b/c subscribers are paying the company to steal from artists and record labels. There's utility in this simplicity, but like most binary views it leaves out gray areas and the more complicated, inclusive reality of music access as a whole. I'll leave out the likelihood, in my view, that eMu is still paying some artists/labels or they'd all abandon ship and/or file a class action lawsuit b/c I've harped on it a lot elsewhere.

Here's a series of other, systematic ways of contextualizing the morality of remaining subscribed to eMusic in these difficult, uncertain times. I obviously prefer the more complex one. DICHOTOMOUS: Paying artists (Bandcamp, streaming services, etc.) Vs. Not paying artists (Pirate sites, file sharers, much of eMusic, etc.) "TRICHOTOMOUS": Paying artists Vs. Not paying artists Vs. Charging a subscription fee to steal from artists

EXCESSIVELY COMPLICATED IN PURSUIT OF NUANCED OPINIONS:

To avoid going wildly out of control, I'll limit myself to the 26 letters of the alphabet in my opinionated moral ranking, w/ A being "most moral/best" and Z being "least moral/worst." Rather than drawing a line between moral and immoral, I'll punt and call letters K-Q "morally ambiguous" even to my all-judging self. I hope others will rearrange the alphabet (selectively...I'm not asking for hours of anyone's time) with their own rankings. i.e. I guess/approximate u/classic's as C, B, M, W (b/c it hurts eMu), T, P, V, X, Z, J (all helping eMu at the bottom of the scale) but solicit his actual input. Anyone else who'd like to weigh in, especially anyone who's a musician or themselves in the industry, please do! Judge now lest ye not be judged thyself.

I've probably missed several obvious options and don't know how to add more letters to the alphabet. A1, Z1, etc.? Maybe use my letters as reference points and insert what I've missed between them?

Note that D, J, L, & W directly involve eMusic. I gather most who do so disparage any financial support or interaction w/ eMu at all uniformly for simplicity's sake, but given several ways to get music from the site, they're worth parsing individually.

MOST MORAL

A. Get access for "free" b/c your job (or volunteer position) is to promote the artist (Clearly it's the music industry's loss if anyone commenting here is not actively working in it.)

B. Attending an artist's concerts religiously, buying physical media from their merch table, direct GoFundme campaigns (As u/Soulcoal and others duly point out, this is THE major source of income for less popular artists who'll never be able to support themselves any other way)

C. Use of Bandcamp to maximally subscribe to one's favorite artist's output (including full-priced purchases of full discographies).

D. Use of eMu tokens to purchase MP3s from eMusic (Blockchain. I still haven't heard of any accounts of anyone actually doing this, but it should at least address accusations of non-payment of artists b/c it's transparent)

E. Buy a new vinyl record or new CD at one of the dwindling brick & mortar stores that still sell them.

F. Listen to an independent radio station (i.e. community/college-based)

G. Listen to an old-fashioned commercial radio station (I'd say it's morally ambiguous to listen to Top40 radio, though, but that my inner curmudgeon typing. I'm not even sure indie artists, new jazz, etc. even get played on any commercial radio stations.)

H. Borrow or otherwise listen to someone else's copy (i.e. friend or family member's) of an album they bought new, then buy more of it oneself. Burning a copy of it to CD-R rather than buying it would be worse, but does anyone still do that?

I. Buy a used CD or used Record online or at a used music store (Recent years show how dependent this means is upon people buying albums new in the first place. I welcome someone else to speculate how much buying a used CD helps the artist.)

J. Annual or monthly eMusic subscription (in hopes that it sustains eMu and will one day result in it being a viable business, doing its part to compensate artists, assuming it is still paying some artists/labels or they'd ALL leave the site)

MORALLY AMBIGUOUS

K. Innocently purchase a promotional copy of an album (i.e. as often happens in used CD stores that purchased stock from a radio station...only the disc itself or the interior of the liner notes, invisible at time of purchase, may be stamped with "for promotional use only")

L. Purchase of discounted eMusic booster packs (a concession to Soulcoal's distaste for them)

M. Paid subscription to the highest compensation-per-stream, non-gigantic service (currently Napster, or correct me if I'm wrong)

N. Paid subscription to a middling compensation-per-stream service (i.e. Tidal, Spotify, etc.). As I rant in a blog post, even if compensation improved, streaming services contribute to single-fication of music consumption and the death of the album, which I see as a moral injury. <http://www.omnifoo.info/pages/Streaming%20Mad.html>

O. Paid subscription to one of the huge corporations' streaming services (Giving more money to Amazon, Google, and Apple, even if they pay more per stream than some, is morally ambiguous at best given things like their carbon footprints, enabling of crass consumerism, using market share to squeeze artists/labels, crowd out small businesses, and the possibility that unless anti-trust enforcement increases a lot they'll someday own everything that people can purchase).

P. 7% of people (the same as the % who buy physical media or download from iTunes or elsewhere) surveyed in the link say they "don't really listen to music," which I think is evil and wrong, but I won't force them to change their evil ways. Am I saying people should buy music even if they don't listen to music? Kinda. To abstain or take the option of exit seems to be denied many Asian citizens (and probably elsewhere, too), where music is blasted in public over loudspeakers. I'm glad Skinny Puppy got paid for their songs being used at Guantánamo, but I'm sure detainees and other captive audiences aren't much concerned about artist compensation. <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/online-music-listening-preferences>

Q. Free streaming service accounts supported by ads (i.e. Spotify. Even if you're not bothered by your music being interrupted and financially supported by ads, I think it's morally questionable, especially in the long term.) Kids I've talked to (some of whom equate music w/ Spotify or YouTube...scary!) who can't afford a paid subscription need to talk to their parents about a family plan or listen to the radio, I say!

#### PROBABLY IMMORAL

R. Repeatedly doing free, 1-month trials of streaming sites and canceling before payment.

S. Streaming music on YouTube or other sites while using Adblock on your browser (on the assumption that artists aren't getting paid if ads aren't being played) as one's sole source of music.

T. Streaming music on YouTube from accounts not connected to artists themselves or their record labels (YouTube polices this but is pretty lax, especially for more obscure artists, songs, etc.)

U. Download all of a friend or family member's albums that you like w/out buying any of it oneself (assuming they were originally purchased properly).

V. Knowingly buy counterfeit physical media. (In developing countries, one can still buy counterfeit CDs of surprising quality and selection, and around the turn of the 21st century, this seemed to be the primary means of people there getting to own music. Maybe it still put food on street vendor families' tables? And as w/ pirated DVDs, there are upsides to spreading culture to poor people. This phenomenon mainly affected the most famous, I assume, who were losing the most revenue. I do know a ton of stores were shut down in China.)

W. Repeatedly signing up for eMusic's 1-month new subscriber bonus under different email addresses (I read someone's account of doing this and it struck me as entirely too clever, maybe a way to ensure that eMu's non-payment of artists worsens, possibly an active contribution to sinking the site once and for all?)

X. Use of (Russian or other) pirate downloading sites

Y. Stealing records or CDs from a college radio station (this one is personally irksome, having managed one and been a DJ)

Z. Stealing one's way into a concert, making a bootleg recording (to be sold for personal profit), robbing the merch table, hacking into a label's website to steal its music. Then maybe stealing a backstage pass and sucker-punching the lead singer or bandleader, slashing the band's van tires afterwards.

#### LEAST MORAL

Note that this is still a trichotomy. Placement in any of the three moral categories is just my opinion, and specific rankings are something you're very welcome to argue for and change my mind. I hope the letters can be used as shorthand when doing so (i.e. One could argue X is worse than Z b/c it's so easy and can be done on such a large scale.)

Perhaps some less moral options and certainly many morally ambiguous ones, IMO, can be offset by promoting the artist. You may tell me I'm deluding myself, but even if eMu is as horrible as some say for artists still on the site, I do believe that posting about them here, on FB, my website, etc. does a small but morally absolving bit of good to spread the word about what we all agree is mostly unknown music at this point.

My main contention remains that standard, dominant means of music access (via YouTube as on most of Reddit or other streaming services whether paid or free) categorized as "good" in a dichotomy b/c they do pay artists pay so little (literal pennies per month) as to be morally worse than an eMu subscription. Or at very least, getting on a high horse with a megaphone about how terrible eMu is compared to streaming is vastly overstated.

A streaming service subscriber who hopes artist compensation will get better somehow is, IMO, morally no better than an eMusic subscriber who is ignorant of its spotty record on compensation or who also hopes that it can become a viable business again and do right by artists.

In sum, yes, I'm still an apologist, maybe naive in optimism that eMu can still be a positive influence in a deeply unfair industry, whether or not it currently is.

Join the conversation, post your ranking and opinions at the source of this thread on Reddit:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/eMusicofficial/comments/ga30iw/music\\_access\\_moral\\_continuum\\_please\\_rank\\_yours/](https://www.reddit.com/r/eMusicofficial/comments/ga30iw/music_access_moral_continuum_please_rank_yours/)



COVID-19 appears to be extending everyone's Thai visa (or at least the permissible last day w/out being fined) until at least July 31st (then Oct. 31st, Nov. 30th, and perhaps indefinitely), and I intend to stay at least until then. However, on July 5th, my one-year mission officially concluded. Here's a long summary of what it cost, what I did and didn't accomplish, and whatever else pops into my mind.

In 366 days entirely within Chiang Rai Province (not a single night outside of it other than my missed connection in a fancy Bangkok airport hotel), I spent 132,327 Baht, or about \$4,411. That includes a little over \$1k for flight tickets to and (eventually) from here, depending on how Covid-19 would like to affect my return to the U.S. That's about \$368/month and \$12/day.

If someone had no expenses in their home country, I estimate the very lowest amount someone could spend here to be about \$4k for the year. But that would mean constantly trying to conserve money rather than just usually, basically no fun at all.

Of course, what I spent in Thailand doesn't account for outstanding expenses back home, namely monthly student loan payments, storage fees, and subscriptions. Feeding my music habit was especially expensive, as I passed a lot of time trying to help a floundering mp3 downloading site; writing short reviews of obscure albums was probably my most consistent activity for the year, and it definitely cost me.

Including those and incidental expenses (mostly buying music, but also applying unsuccessfully for a scholarship to study Chinese again at Middlebury summer language schools), at \$240 per month (\$2880 for the year) plus an additional estimate for incidentals, this year in Thailand actually cost \$7853 (\$654/month, \$21/day). To be clear, this is how one can live off savings from working in a developing country for three years and be unemployed for two more.

I'll also add that I was lucky not to get sick with anything like malaria, dengue fever, or of course Covid-19. Thailand might be #1 for Covid-19 safety, but the roads are notoriously dangerous here. I witnessed one actual crash in which a motor scooter slammed into the broad side of a pickup truck, sending its three bloodied passengers flying and requiring an ambulance. I passed by more accidents than I can remember. I don't know if any were fatal, but some looked extremely dangerous and painful.

I lived very cheaply, but I didn't cut every corner. I didn't want to jeopardize my health or safety any more than being uninsured would already. In fact, I ate out in restaurants almost every single day, perhaps a majority of days even twice for lunch and dinner. Dining in Thai vegetarian buffet restaurants was really a highlight of the year, and it'll be tough adjusting to a normal lifestyle again in that regard.

For most of the year, I paid \$80/month in rent to live downtown, next to the city's police headquarters. It was a single room with a shared kitchen that I rarely used, without A/C, which made some nights difficult to sleep with the temperature not getting below 90°F until after midnight. That didn't improve until Nov. or so, and for a couple weeks in Dec. and Jan. it was actually too cold at night.

I knew that I'd need a more comfortable place by the time hot (and polluted) season rolled around in late Feb., so I offered housesitting services to expats fleeing the heat and air pollution. This proved to be a stroke of excellent luck, as I ended up sitting two different places and paying no rent for the last third of the year. The gigs were only supposed to last a month or two, but one homeowner was stranded outside the country after Thailand closed its borders. April led to May, June, and now Nov. without him being able to return.

In conceiving this "year of projects," my intention was to write a book. I waited until the weather cooled down in Nov. before getting serious about that. I wasn't able to decide on just one topic to write about, so after three months on an incentivized writing regimen requiring me to work on a manuscript for at least an hour a day, I amassed tens of thousands of words on four quite different ones. By Feb. I concluded that I'd put quantity before quality and had a crisis of confidence not helped by indifference from family and friends about what I was writing.

I knew that there would be at least a couple months of terrible air pollution as farmers burned their fields before hot season, so I had long planned to find a new place to live with an air conditioner and maybe air filters, too, if lucky. Very early in the year, I offered to housesit for expats leaving Chiang Rai for that period, assuming that those who could afford to be away during this uncharacteristically ugly time would do so.

The housesitting offer wound up being my most consequential decision for the whole year and maybe right up there with getting financial aid and funding in college and grad school for my luckiest breaks in life so far. My rent had only been \$80/month in the old place, including wifi and all utilities, but not paying that rent at all makes a big difference when one is spending only a few hundred dollars a month in total.

The first gig involved quite a lot of work in taking care of two dogs, and despite getting to know every rural alley well, I'm not sure the daily walks were time well spent. They did make the dogs happy, though. A second expat in need who lived outside of town in the polar opposite direction also contacted me to housesit for him, and for a while I was biking 10-15 miles a day between the two houses.

Despite usually eating out twice a day, I tend to lose about ten pounds while in Asia, mainly due to a dramatic drop in my consumption of cheese, I think. Biking so much added, or rather, subtracted from that foundation. I had one of the best quarantine experiences of anyone on earth, I think, because the second house I've been sitting since March has a large swimming pool. In May, when it became clear that I'd be staying a while longer, I decided to prioritize eating more and swimming to regain weight and muscle tone.

Starting at just under 145lbs., at 6'1" I was probably looking almost as skinny as on my first drivers license, when I listed my weight at 135lbs. I started by swimming about ten very leisurely paced, diagonal laps in the pool for about half an hour, adding another lap each day until the sessions got too long (and my fingers too pruny). I split the sessions into a morning and afternoon, continually adding laps, until by June I had to add a third session in the evening, totally about 90 minutes a day in the pool. Sessions had to be timed carefully to be before the sun was too high for there to be any shade.

I've discovered the main perks of swimming are beating the heat, of course—I almost never use the A/C at the house—but also in terms of physical fitness it's way more enjoyable, even relaxing, than other solo exercise, IMO. My extremely slow laps have also meant that I haven't once been sore or dreading the next session. I thoroughly recommend that everyone reading this quit their jobs, install a large swimming pool in their yards for tens of thousands of dollars, and generally commit themselves to the finest, low-impact exercise regimen that life has to offer! Do it right this instant.

Adding push-ups and bicep curls with free weights in the last month, that combined with swimming has made me stronger and more toned, now just over 175lbs. Hooray for vanity and narcissism, I guess? Anyway, the old ladies working at the buffets have noticed, even calling me fat a few days ago.

My family had been worried about me from looking thin despite smiling in pictures, though even at my skinniest I don't think my BMI ever dipped into the "underweight" range. Then again, I've read that BMI doesn't work well for tall people b/c they think they're heavier than they are, meaning that I could have been endangering myself. In any case, my dad's proud of me again for not being as thin, though he suggests I should be "at least 190lbs." That's actually right on the high border of being overweight, but that's just how he thinks.

More at first than later in this year, I used a big box of oil pastels from a now defunct Japanese thrift store to take up drawing on the backs of cereal boxes, a rather futile attempt to make up for the apparent lack of a recycling program here in Chiang Rai. I've also taken bike rides around the province during the cool season, as documented in the 2019 and 2020 photo albums on Facebook. I think the farthest I rode last year was to the town half way to the Burmese border at Mae Sai a possibly typical place called Mae Chan, just under 50 miles roundtrip.

I made some local friends on the tennis and basketball courts at the park on the Kok River, but after cool season came along last year I abruptly abandoned them to explore everything within biking distance. I tried to ride more frequently to the Mae Fah Luang University library to keep my academic knowledge sharp, and it's a really nice place to spend a day. Riding in the morning before it gets hot, enjoying the air conditioning, checking out a few books for a week with the help of my landlady, then returning to town just before sunset makes for a more leisurely 22 mile roundtrip worth repeating regularly. With any extra time, there are several national parks and waterfalls even closer by, and they make for just about the most serene places to sit on a rock and read. When I move back to my room by the police station, after bidding the swimming life farewell, I hope to resume those rides and pick up tennis and basketball where I left off, if they'll have me.

Less physical activities have included other writing and creative projects that have done an excellent job of distracting me from already unfocused book-writing. For the new year I rebooted my high school satirical newsmagazine as penance for missing my 20-year reunion in the fall, as of Nov. in its second edition this year. I'm recording and about to launch a music podcast officially. I've revisited an elementary school hobby of writing rap music, set to instrumental beats that I hope are obscure enough not to sue me for all the mountains of revenue I'll receive from them. Maybe before returning home I'll have recorded enough songs in English, Chinese, Spanish, and Thai to compile an album, though my production skills are greatly lacking.

I can't count it as an accomplishment, but I was pleasantly surprised by how many live music concerts were held over the course of the year in Chiang Rai, all outdoors, and usually with quite cheap tickets. Of course, living next to outdoor festival and concert grounds has pros and cons, with the latter coming at night when you just want some peace and quiet to go to sleep before midnight. The cool season was actually cold for the "Peace & Love" reggae festival at the end of 2019, and it was definitely the entertainment highlight of the year. Its headliner accurately describes my year here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZxe5t2ENag>

A few other concerts, including by a couple of Thai bands I'd heard of before and actually own CDs of, held by the mall were also cheap and quite enjoyable. It's worth noting that CR has less than half as many people as the city nearest where I grew up, Madison, WI, and the city of Changchun, where I spent three years, is bigger than Chicago, but I went to more and better concerts here than either Madison or Changchun in just this year.

After three months off for Covid-19, my Thai language classes resumed for one more month from early June to the 13th of July, salvaging some of what has been meagre progress. Learning Thai was what allowed me to stay here for a full year, on an education visa renewed every three months, but I never figured out a personal purpose for doing so or put it to serious use. Having considered a "year of projects" for some time before this year, having at least some language ability and structure imposed from the outside was an important factor in choosing Thailand over other countries. It's sad to think my language learning days might be over, and I hope to practice a little more with some Thai friends before leaving the country.

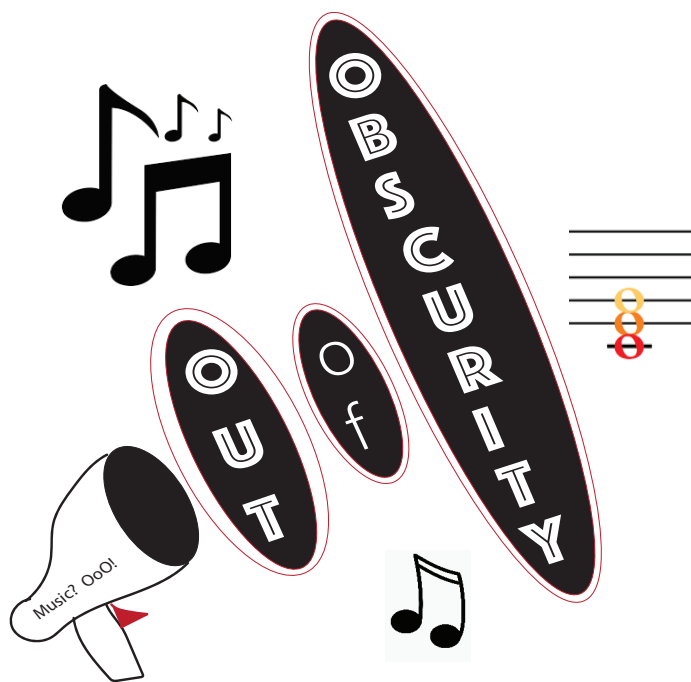
I believe my attendance in class was near-perfect, but it was difficult to stay in a cohort of students at my level. We began with a Chinese teacher and all Chinese students and a Japanese lady who also spoke Chinese, and I'm grateful to have the experience of learning another language taught in a non-native language. I don't think my Chinese got rusty over the course of this year; in fact I may have spoken about as much Mandarin with locals as I did Thai.

When it came time to learn the alphabet and reading, our Chinese teacher had a conflict with the boss teacher and resigned on grounds of having laid a solid foundation but wanting to turn us over to a native speaker. It was just as well, as she was very busy and canceled class too often. We were switched over to a group of students that had started learning at least a month ahead of us, but most of them had spotty attendance. We eventually caught up to their level, but then many of them dropped out entirely, leaving mainly my original group of Chinese classmates. The boss teacher encouraged everyone in our group, which was meeting for only two sessions a week by Nov., to join another group that was at least two reading textbooks ahead of us. Still struggling with the alphabet, I declined to attend, focusing instead on my personal projects. In the end, I'm pretty sure that despite attending every class appropriate to my level, the number of hours I actually spent in the classroom fell considerably short of what I paid for. I'll make a separate post all about learning Thai.

A couple of the more manageably sized writing projects I still hope to finish are a guide to the vegetarian and vegan restaurants in my city, leading me to declare hyperbolically that it's the best city for non-meat-eaters in the whole wide world, and a blog article encouraging Americans to take a year off and pursue their dreams like my ex and I have. The latter article is actually finished, but my ex objects to my mischaracterization of her trip and other inaccuracies. Back to the drawing board on that one. The conclusion, however, is that you have our permission to save up some money and take a year off when the pandemic subsides enough for other countries to let us travel again. Fingers crossed it'll be before all my painstakingly written words on the subject become obsolete.

For now, to prevent my emergency funds from drying up, I've returned to teaching politics at Northeast Normal University (NENU), in Changchun, Jilin, China, as I'd done from 2015-18, after basically failing out of my PhD program at UC Irvine. I've got a whole additional rant about that to update my blog posts about withdrawing from the program, this time in the context of deciding to retake the GRE and reapply for a second shot at a PhD somewhere. The short of it is that I chickened out, didn't want to go the 13 hours south to Bangkok to take the test. Maybe after another year at NENU I'll know whether or not I'm 100% sure about restarting the whole grad school process.

I'm sure I don't want to live the rest of my life in Manchuria, and I have Covid to thank for making this semester, possibly the beginning of the next one online. I think winters up there are colder than what I was used to growing up in WI, plus several additional inconveniences. I'm not sure whether Thailand beats "winters" in SoCal, but I'll sure take it over Changchun while also having an income for the first time in two years and a job I still love. So for all of you out there, even if you can't be with family for Thanksgiving this year, be grateful for the good things in life. Be healthy, and we all hope that the trend toward craziness reverses itself after this election.



## Shameless Self-Promotion

Welcome one and all to listen to my podcast,  
Out of Obscurity (OoO), about great  
but lesser known music: <https://musicooo.podbean.com/>

Visit (and join) my subreddit for links to the albums we  
review on OoO:  
<https://www.reddit.com/r/MusicNobodyElseLikes/>

If you really like any music, think it's criminally underrated  
or unknown, and would like to cohost an episode of OoO  
with me, send me an email: [omniscientfool@yahoo.com](mailto:omniscientfool@yahoo.com)

As ever, for back issues of the CHS Sasquatch dating to  
actual high school days, visit  
<http://www.omnifoo.info/pages/Sasquatch.html>

Stay tuned for almost-finished blog posts from my year (and counting) in Thailand at  
<http://www.omnifoo.info/pages/Blog.html>

If anyone would like to hear me rap in Chinese, Thai, Spanish, and English, ask me for an mp3. Eventually I'll subject  
the world to it, but I'm decidedly not yet ready for prime time.

And thanks for reading! Let's all keep fighting the creeping illiteracy that will plague us long after Covid-19 is eradicated.

## EDITOR'S NOTES:

This issue was very nearly the first in the CHS Sasquatch's long and storied history to be bereft of any local content. In the context of a global pandemic and pivotal national election, it was almost decided that we could get away with not checking in with the center of the universe, Cambridge High School. The editor admits to having let his finger off the pulse of community, but the fates would not allow such an omissive crime against humanity to be committed. Gratitude goes to one member of the Rucks clan for the inception and statistical thrust of the Fauci case drive.

Thanks also to friends and family who received a preview of the 2020 Election Guide, even for criticism as "not particularly funny."

The original CHS Sasquatch was a far more collaborative affair, and if the publication returns every occasionally or so, it would be wonderful if it could be so again. If you've written anything satirical or otherwise and would like to share it with our worldwide subscription base, please submit it via Facebook.

Unlike 2018, the editor won't be returning to WI to make calls to encourage folks to vote, and his vote in CA doesn't count for much. If you live in WI or any other swing state and haven't voted by the time you read this, please don't rely on the postal service to mail in your ballot. Drop it off or vote in person, please! Don't leave any room for shenanigans.