

GARBAGE RESEARCH 1

HOARDERS

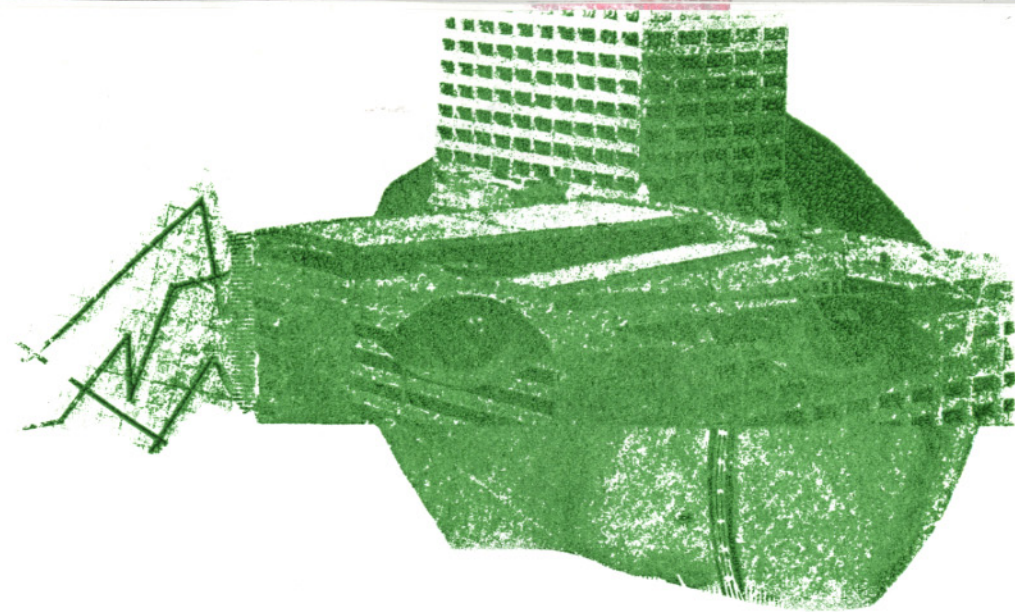
and those resembling hoarders

words Lara Durback

images Greg Turner

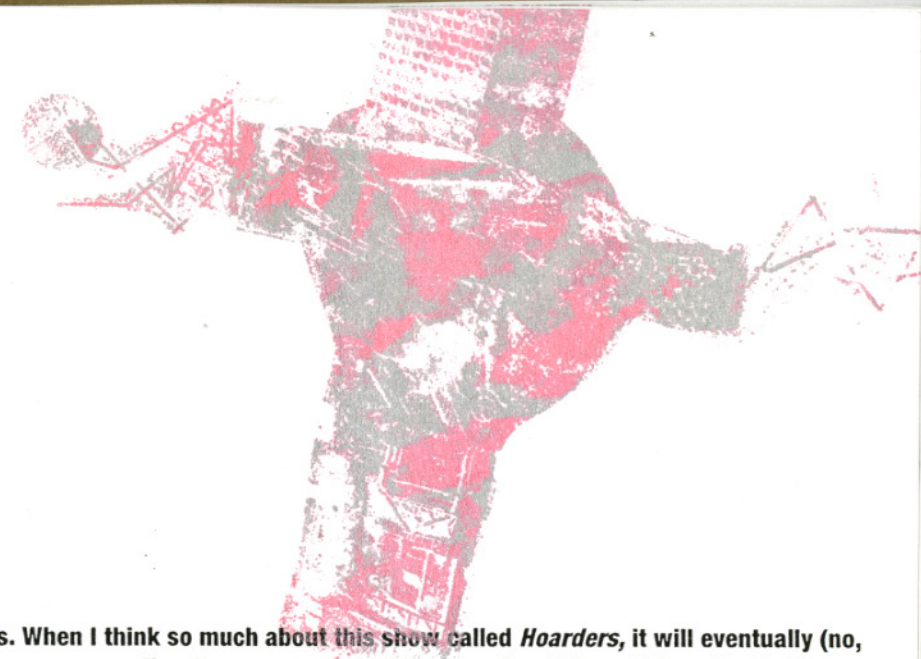
making Greg & Lara



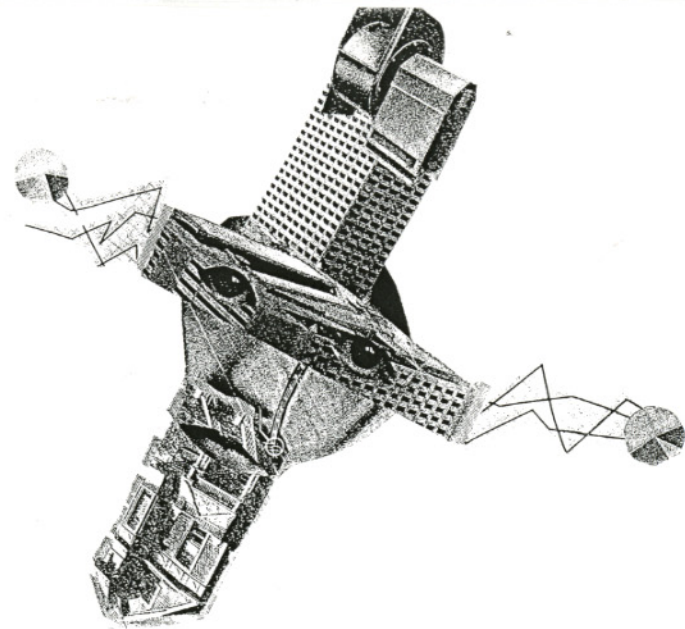
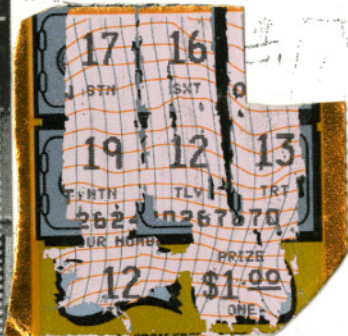
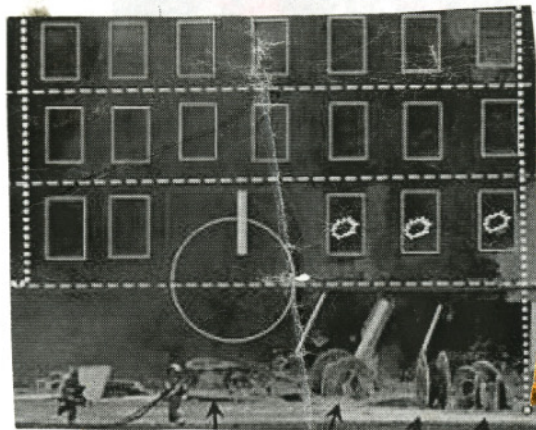


-Maybe the hoarder is the oldest child. I knew 2 hoarders that were the oldest child. They would come into their siblings' houses and demand an item. No this is not true. I don't have enough information to generalize in this way.

-We noticed that her sister would come to the house and demand things more often. The further she fell into emotional crisis, and the more abusive her relationship became, she would spurt out, "I love that shirt. Give it to me."



-We are diviners. When I think so much about this show called *Hoarders*, it will eventually (no, rather quickly) cause my mother to come around with a bin of my things. It is a plastic bin so big that two of me could fit in there. It is a double coffin and a time capsule. I dig through rave flyers one by one on my aunt's couch and think about how my life was saved. I puzzle over the gloves and sweaters I thought I would never need in Northern California. I touch individually each one of Grandma's crocheted Barbie dresses. Her hands must have moved so often.



-So we (the viewers) drooled in awesome horror at the things we might have been, being American or other global consumers. Or even someone who just somehow acquired a plot of land. And filled it. There is still time. And we might have it in us anyway, somewhere there.

-I saw the woman on the show *Hoarders* sit down in the chair, unable to deal with her accumulation of dolls. The host person, a psychologist or professional organizer, or whoever was there that day, dives into the room of dolls like it is a pit of foam. I want to do that thing.

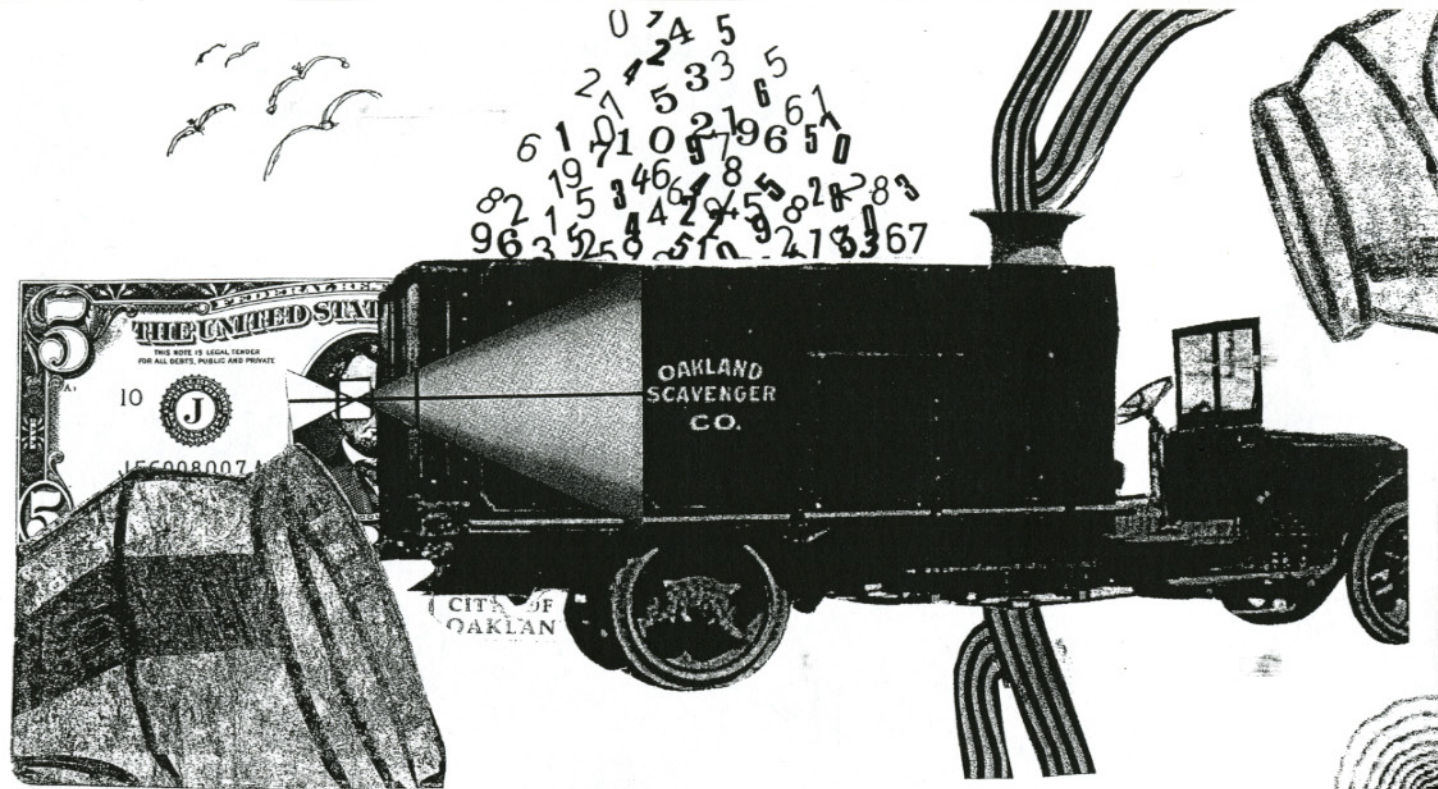
-With space and structure a Hoarder might be called an archivist.

-There was a woman doing engraving who worked at a university who collected all the water-damaged packages of the engraving factory in Louisiana and put them in an exhibit.

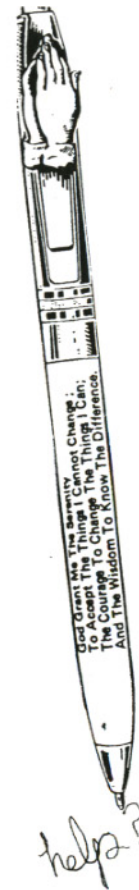
-In Cairo, Egypt, the Hoarders are called Zebbaliin as she spelled it, or Zabaleen, as the internet spelled it, but according to her, they were the kings. They had it all. There were 10 million of them. By collecting 6,000 tons of trash per day, they sustain themselves apart from a government that does not support their way of life. Children do it. They have to. The government has been as yet unable to replace their trash collection methods with a contractor.

-In Guiyu, China, Hoarders are called surviving. Surviving by collecting e-waste. Children do it. They have to. She sits in a pile of spiraling phone cords. (Remember those?) He sits in a pile of the first iPods. (Remember those?) He melts the box-shaped TV to get the metals that are worth something. (Remember those?) Now breathe the air with them.

-Is the filling guilt? Is it the tube that empties to feel/fill with the objects on the outside of the skin?



-In Oakland, the recycling center requires a minimum of 100 lbs. to sell some metal or plastic of any sort, and a photo ID.



-Also, a woman on *Hoarders* refuses to obey the expiration dates. You can practically observe the dialectic of her cells. She also knows that she has a stomach of steel. She knows that rotting is good for her, and she has taken this idea and run with it. There are about 75 La Yogurts.

-There were always giant boxes of kitty litter everywhere. Whether they were full or empty.

-The kids--the show worked that angle--how hoarding affects the kids. There is a man hitting a playhouse with a sledgehammer. Just a man doing a job. The kid crying over the demolition of his play structure. He said "I wanted my kids to be able to play with it," and he was about 7 years old.

reasons:

- fear of inability to support oneself
- fear of loss of relationships
- recent death of a loved one
- having space (too much space)
- never home because working too much
- protection from the objects
- righteousness/isolated logic (i.e., my way is the right way)
- isolation in general, from other spaces
- poverty or past poverty (fear of poverty returning)
- unemployment
- lack of agency
- suburban, is it suburban? Is it true that poverty is moving to suburbs?
- is it related to whiteness? in every case on the show, and of all the cases of people who have been encountered, all but 2 have been white people, or is it something having to do with who has the surplus, or who is considered for the show?

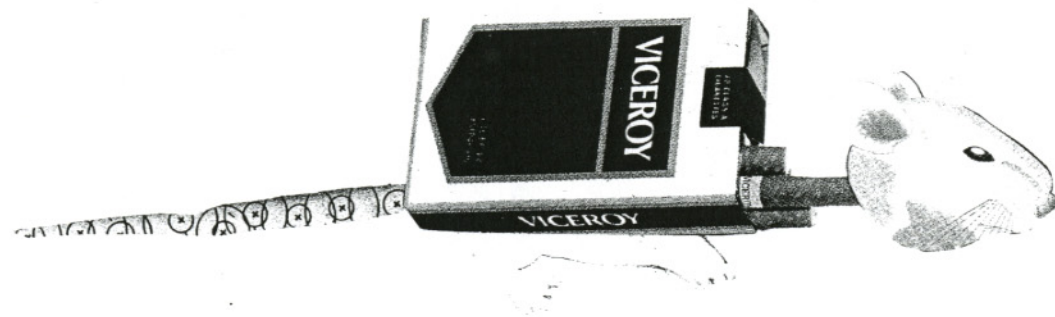
- is it a mind that disregards or overregards itself?

-It's like somebody's hips where you can see the collection has lodged itself there. It's been a long life, even if it is only 10 years or so. It is now difficult to walk.

-It's the game Katamari where this Hoarder is illustrated by a rolling ball where every object sticks to that rolling ball, the ball that is you. And the ball who accumulates is obvious in its absurdity, the animals kicking legs as the ball rolls and the buildings even stick eventually. You start small and then eventually can accumulate larger objects.

-We visit his press, a partially open-air warehouse. It has at least 50 machines that weigh over a ton. He has filthy cases of type everywhere. He wants people to use the machines, but it is way out in Hayward and there are things like liability preventing him from sharing. He doesn't know what he will do with these things. He loves these things. He actually uses all these things.

-How will a person who buys multiple pieces of one item and a person who reuses everything and never buys anything both get called a Hoarder?

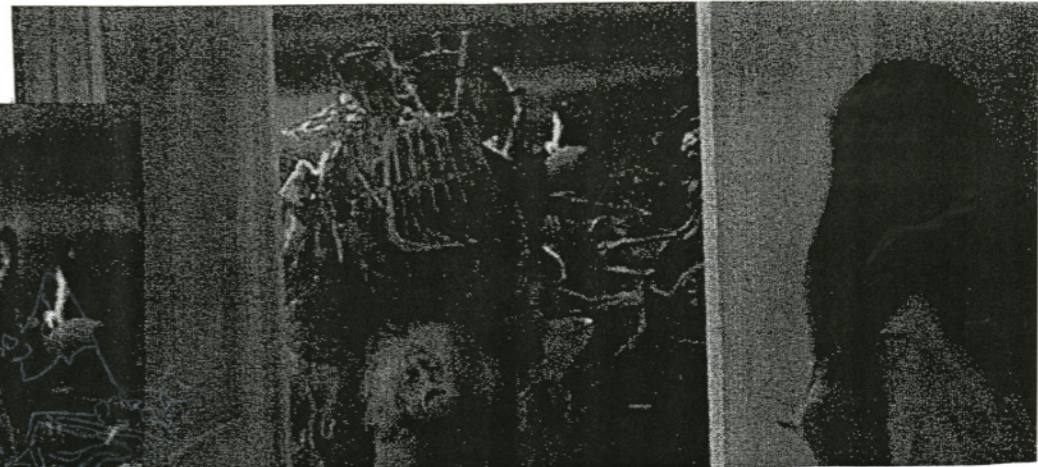


-The neighbor shows up at the door and begins to talk to me not only about the men who collect the bottles, and how she likes them, and how they work together to split up the work, make income for themselves, and clean up the city, but she admits to me that she is a Hoarder. She has been in her apartment off of Piedmont Ave. since the 80s. Digging in others' garbage is illegal. She says that some neighbors come out and scream at the men. We can't figure out why. We talk for a half hour, exchanging pasts.

BUY AND SAVE -----DON'T EVER BUY
BUY-----LIVE OFF WASTE
DON'T BUY-----REPAIR OTHERS WASTE: KEEP
REPAIR OTHERS WASTE-----OR-----PREPARE TO SURVIVE



-I don't know if a house will definitely represent a mind, or a body, but I do know how it feels to look at each thing and wonder if you will throw it away. And to wait, and stare at each thing, and it has this pull for you. And what is the pull about.





-Formal trash collection in Oakland began 100 years ago when Italian immigrants, the Oakland Scavengers, began informally collecting garbage from backyards.

-He hands me a weekly newspaper in which it is described how Recology is winning a garbage contract in San Francisco, though this is decided by only 3 people and there are a lot of questionable motives and questions about why the company would be chosen over another.

-I knew the oldest child in emotional crisis would come along and take all the photo albums, and hide them like a squirrel.

WORKS + ACTS SIGHTED + FELT:

GONE TOMORROW: THE HIDDEN LIFE OF GARBAGE,
HEATHER ROGERS, '05 • THE GLEANERS + I, AGNES
VARDA, '05. • "IS ART MAKING SUSTAINABLE?"
HOSKINS, STEPHEN + RISSEEUW, JOHN, '09. WWW.
UWE.AC.UK • PLASTIC BAG BY RAMIN BAHRANI, '10.
• HOARDERS A+E SHOW @ RACHEL'S MOM'S HOUSE,
SNIPS COLLAGE ZINE; "AFTER DUMP, WHAT HAPPENS
TO ELECTRONIC WASTE?" NPR.ORG, Dec. '10.; GREG
HELPS CLOSE DOWN RODENT RECORDS + FACES 10
YEARS OF THINGS. "THE ELECTRONICS JUNKYARD
DISMANTLERS OF GUIYU" VLAD JECAN, WWW.
ENVIRONMENTAL GRAFFITI.COM • ASHBY FLEA MKT.
LANEY FLEA MKT. THE PEOPLE COLLECTING
BOTTLES + CANS IN OAKLAND. OAKLAND HISTORY
ROOM. ETC, ETC.

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