A Private Life in Rural Idaho

Description

The AutoEthnographer

A Private Life in Rural Idaho

Challenges Living in Rural Areas

Living a private life can be enticing. One way to do this is to escape urban and suburban sprawlâ??upward and outward respectivelyâ??and into rural areas. But this has its own challenges. The nearest clinic or hospital can be more than an hour away. Sometimes registered sex offenders move here because of cheap housing or to hide. And differences in ways of being in the world can keep neighbors at armâ??s length despite being of similar age.

Beyond Community Gardens

My outdoor-enthusiast daughter quickly adapted to her private life in rural Idaho. Itâ??s slower, quieter unlike life in suburban and urban settings where she had previously lived. Nature isnâ??t a community garden but down the road leading to wilder nature. The kind where it would be wise to take a satellite communication device when camping and hunting.

The 2008 Housing Bubble

During my visit, I took several pictures documenting her daily life. A life narrowed down to 19 photos that I hope captured her spirit, struggle and love of this specific place in rural Idaho. An area where a developer once had a dream of building a community of suburban-like homes until the 2008 housing bubble burst. This left behind vacant lots and a smattering of houses that sold for a song amidst dirt streets that never got paved and discarded fire hydrants. Houses that seem to have fallen here haphazardly, a little too dressed up. They wait for the party to start among the older, weathered dwellings that knew the party was over before it even began.

Cost of Housing

Since my visit, my daughter has moved. And those empty lots? Theyâ??re being snapped up by people moving into Idaho from other states they can no longer afford to live in. The other day, my daughter texted a photo of a bumper sticker. It was in the shape of the Idaho state with â??no vacancyâ?• written across it. So, my photos also convey something else. That period between the housing bubble and the flee movement thatâ??s driving up housing costs in Idaho and other states.

Townâ??s baseball field

The AutoEthnographer

Growth after fire

The AutoEthnographer

Hauling wood

The AutoEthnographer

Mushroom foraging

The AutoEthnographer

Drying morel mushrooms

The AutoEthnographer

Abandoned lots

The AutoEthnographer

Animal carcass

The AutoEthnographer

The AutoEthnographer

Scrobs watching birdhouse

Sassy and Lola eager to play

The AutoEthnographer

Mountain range

The AutoEthnographer

Jessica and Lola

The AutoEthnographer

Jessica and Lola cooling off

Silky Leaf Scurf Pea
3-5 palmate leaflets
Silt. Leaf
Hairs on top & bottom of leaf
- Press (meaning hairs lay down)
Similar Scurfpea
- leaflets usually in 3s but sometimes 5
- glandular dotted
- taller plant
Lead Plant
- Plants @ the end
- 1-3+ feet
(Amorpha canescens)

Plant notes by Jessica

Jessicaâ??s greenhouse

Jessicaâ??s plant from greenhouse

The Autoethnographer

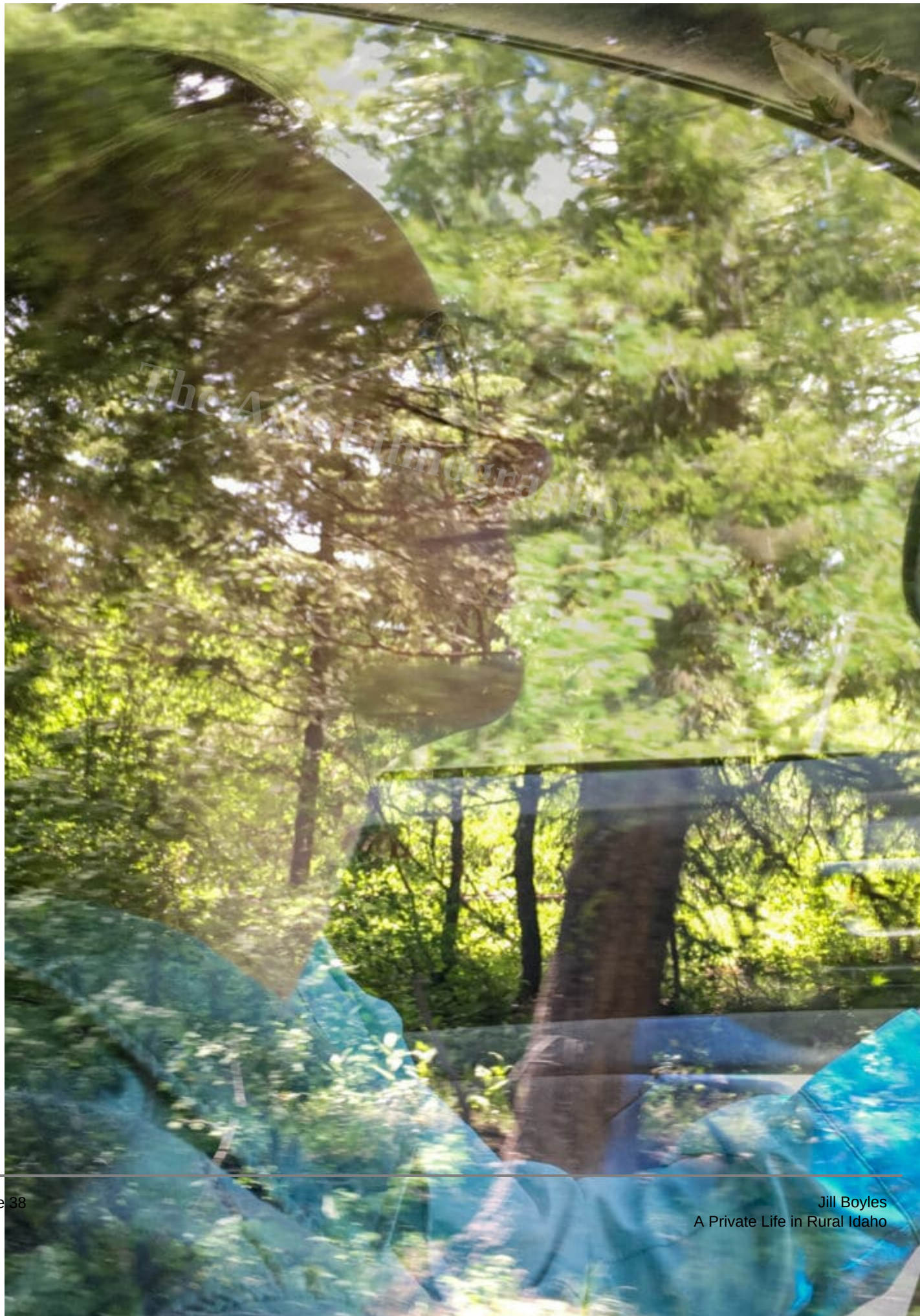
Fresh huckleberries

The AutoEthnographer

Tea party with Grandmaâ??s China and huckleberry cream cheese

The AutoEthnographer

Bird stealing some nectar



The Autoethnographer

Jessica driving on an old rural road

Credits

Image of Dworshak Reservoir, Idaho, USA by Micah Tindell for Unsplash

Featured image by Perry Kibler for Unsplash

Learn More

New to autoethnography? Visit What Is Autoethnography? How Can I Learn More? to learn about autoethnographic writing and expressive arts. Interested in contributing? Then, view our editorial boardâ??s What Do Editors Look for When Reviewing Evocative Autoethnographic Work?. Accordingly, check out our Submissions page. View Our Team in order to learn about our editorial board. Please see our Work with Us page to learn about volunteering at *The AutoEthnographer*. Visit Scholarships to learn about our annual student scholarship competition.

Category

1. All Content
2. Autoethnographic Art & Multimedia
3. Autoethnographic Literary Nonfiction
4. Volume 4, Issue 2 (2024)

Author
jjb