

We'd like to make a simple statement, one that we hope you will share: No, we don't want Amazon here. In fact, we don't want Amazon anywhere. We believe that Atlantans and all people of good conscience across the country should oppose the HQ2 proposal *now*.



# AGAINST AMAZON AND ITS WORLD & "A WARNING LETTER FROM SEATTLE"



TWITTER: @NoNewHQ

WEB: <https://atlantaagainstamazon.org>

best before their future took over. Now that it's here, don't let them do it to another city. Stop them before it's too late. Without exaggeration, this is your only chance. Don't waste it. Learn from our mistakes and try not to make any of your own. Together, we can do this.

With love,  
Your friends in Seattle

# AGAINST AMAZON AND ITS WORLD

&

“A WARNING LETTER  
FROM SEATTLE”

*ATLANTA*  
*AGAINST AMAZON*



of “Amazombies” moved to the city, and rent began its long climb beyond our reach. Everything we loved began to vanish. There was no opposition to this blitzkrieg of construction and displacement. No more building takeovers, no more beating the police, no more fires. This is how capital restructures a city. It crushes the opposition, forcibly if necessary.

In 2010, the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment was around 1,000 dollars in Seattle. In 2000, it was around nine hundred dollars. Little changed in those years, even during the first tech-bubble. However, between the years 2010 and 2018, the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment rose to over 2,000 dollars, if one is lucky to find something that cheap. Many luxury apartments are currently listed for 4,000 dollars a month, with some over 10,000. Renting a four-bedroom house is still possible for normal people in Seattle, with each resident paying around 700 dollars a month, although purchasing a house is impossible for all but the rich, with the average home price now at 720,000 dollars. Seattle is on track to join San Francisco and Vancouver in being the most unaffordable luxury shit-holes on the West Coast. Meanwhile, the homeless populations keeps increasing. Between 2012 and 2017, the number of unhoused individuals living on the streets of Seattle doubled from around 2,000 people to almost 5,000, with another 6,000 living in shelters. The problem will only get worse.

As you can see, Amazon wanted the rebellion crushed before it bought its own HQ1. Once the deed was done, the local capitalists enacted their pathetic orgy of short-sighted greed and pointless gluttony. Now the city is covered in their luxury boutique shit, everyone is a techie, traffic is horrible, money is everything, and everyone is a fucking hypocrite. Jenny Durkan (the federal prosecutor who presided over the Grand Jury) is now the Mayor of Seattle, Jeff Bezos is the richest man on earth, and this nightmare won't end until we destroy Amazon and end capitalism forever. We wish there was better news for Seattle, but at least you have a chance. If Amazon is moving into your city with its new HQ2, do everything you can to stop it. We did our

riots broke out in the streets, police cars got smashed, cops were assaulted, banks were trashed, newsstands were torched, and rebellion spread through the city. All this energy kept building throughout 2011 and into the Occupy Movement. The port was shut down with barricades, banks were vandalized and set aflame, houses were publicly squatted, the streets were taken from the police, and a massive demonstration was set for May Day, 2012. Everyone built towards this goal relentlessly, although no one knew what was going on behind the scenes.

Jeff Bezos and Paul Allen were in secret negotiations for Amazon to purchase the South Lake Union campus and solidify the HQ1. Since he signed the lease in 2007, Jeff Bezos had witnessed a massive rebellion overtake Seattle and come within blocks of his shiny new buildings. On May 1st, 2012, thousands of people filled the streets, corporate property was attacked indiscriminately, a federal courthouse was smashed, the police were physically assaulted, and the city was placed under a “state of emergency.” This was simply too much for Jeff Bezos. He threatened to relocate Amazon from Seattle if the local authorities didn’t suppress this growing rebellion. In less than two months, the federal government and local police conducted armed raids on houses in Seattle, Portland, and Olympia, after which they issued multiple subpoenas for a Grand Jury investigating the smashing of the federal courthouse. That was feeble their excuse, at least, although it was nothing short of a witch hunt.

Like in the burning times, the authorities forced people into their halls and compelled them to testify against the accused witches and sorcerers. If they refused to answer the questions of the Grand Jury, these people were thrown into the dungeon until they spoke. Just days after Jeff Bezos announced he’d purchase the South Lake Union property, the first anarchists were imprisoned at the federal detention center in Seatac. By the spring of 2013, the witch hunt had ended but the local rebellion was crushed. Then the real changes hit Seattle. What we experienced in 2010 was nothing by comparison. Cranes filled the air, thousands

## DISPUTE PLAN TO PREVENT FUTURE LUXURY CONSTRUCTION

By the time you fight through traffic and arrive at your apartment, your roommate is already a few hours into a Netflix binge. You wanted to tell her what a stressful day you had, but it seems like she’s already doing some ‘self-care.’ Still, you feel compelled to interact with something, anything.

“Alexa, play some relaxing music.”

You sink into your memory foam mattress and think of all the stuff you wish you had, all the little projects you want to start but never get around to because you have neither time nor energy. Maybe if your watercolors weren’t so shitty you’d feel compelled to paint more.

“Alexa, order a new watercolor set.”

“Okay. How about these...?”

Amazon: your every desire fulfilled.

Thankfully, Amazon makes your life simple: click, confirm, problem solved. Amazon will not only remind you of the items you forgot to buy, it will also introduce you to amazing products you didn’t know you wanted yet. They even have a new store in Seattle that’s eliminated the drudgery of waiting in line and the anxiety of making small-talk with cashiers.

But there’s something disconcerting about the simplicity of it all, something suspicious about a company whose business model is to swallow everything. You watched as your favorite local health food store was bought out by Whole Foods, only to watch

confusedly as Whole Foods was acquired by Amazon. Then there were the Amazon advertisements where they asked for the keys to our homes, so that packages could be delivered right inside our doors. And when that idea seemed a little too creepy, they tried ease our concerns by offering to install home surveillance cameras that would live-stream directly to their app on our smartphones.

Amazon prefers to hide its concrete operations – its existence in the real world as a sad string of mega-warehouses and server farms – in order to appear as a benevolent, invisible comfort blanket over our lives. But this year they need a location to open their second headquarters – HQ2 – and the release of the final twenty contending cities has become something like a televised Hunger Games death-match. Local governments and real estate firms are scrambling to volunteer whole districts up to the sacrificial altar, and cities around the country are fighting over who can lobby the most competitive tax cuts or draft the most alluring redevelopment plans to house and transport the 50,000 tech workers HQ2 would bring.

But as Atlanta residents, we see what's really on the table: wildly inflating rent prices, more congestion on the roads, and soon, delivery drones buzzing over our heads. The influx of thousands of socially insulated tech workers permanently damaging the cultural vibrancy of the city, as people of color and the working poor are forced outside the perimeter. A few more short-contract and benefit-free 'jobs' in stockrooms for those who manage to stay in the city, where workers will be treated like the robots that will soon replace them. The Mayor passing the crown to the CEO-Lord Jeff Bezos, and the Amazonian empire expanding to annex not just the entire Internet, but the neighborhoods and communities that raised us.

The visionaries in the Cloud dream of a world where unskilled labor is replaced by robots, Universal Basic Income keeps the poor at bay, and smart-cities become the live-work-playgrounds

## A WARNING LETTER FROM SEATTLE: STOP THE AMAZON HQ2

No one really saw it coming. There were more immediate issues to face. The federal government had forcibly gentrified the Central District through its Weed and Seed program, pushing out black residents and installing childless Microsoft employees with high salaries. These mostly white colonizers caused the schools to shut down for lack of students and altered the neighborhood beyond recognition. No one suspected that Amazon was an even greater threat lurking at the northern edge of Beacon Hill.

In 2007, Jeff Bezos announced that Amazon had signed a new lease with Paul Allen, the local tech-baron of the Microsoft empire, and would move from its perch above Elliot Bay. In 2010, the company moved into four shiny new buildings in the ex-industrial South Lake Union neighborhood that would eventually become HQ1. By this point, the first changes had become visible in Seattle. Entire blocks were torn down for high-end apartments that none of us could afford. The "alternative press" began to make very overt and public alliances with "new business owners" who arrived to set up their high-end shops. Our familiar dive-bars, storefronts, cultural institutions, and meeting places began to disappear, replaced with terrible and expensive boutique shit that no one could afford. A hybrid "yuppie/creative/techie" began to appear in the lobbies of luxury apartments or the tables of expensive restaurants. They were young, hip, plugged in, and ready to colonize.

Meanwhile, the local police went on a murder rampage. In 2010 alone, the cops executed six people in the Puget Sound region. It was only natural that luxury housing started to get vandalized,

and control. Just as industrial factory owners and mercantile trading companies formed the parliaments that replaced the old kingdoms, so too will the advanced algorithms created by today's technology conglomerates outmaneuver traditional representative governments. As their ever-increasing number of legal battles reveal, Amazon, Google, Facebook, and Apple are already in many ways more powerful than D.C. and Congress. And the courts, too slow to keep up with the advancement of technology, will soon be rendered subordinate as well. Amazon doesn't need a government, since it provides an array of services whose task is to govern. Compared to advanced AI and data analysis, democratic government doesn't stand a chance.

of the new rich. From our position on the ground, we see only a nightmare where all data is transparent, all movement is surveilled, and our access to the economy is directly proportional to the amount of personal freedom we're willing to yield.

Hence, we'd like to make a simple statement, one that we hope you will share: No, we don't want Amazon here. In fact, we don't want Amazon anywhere. We believe that Atlantans and all people of good conscience across the country should oppose the HQ2 proposal before the decision is made.

"Alexa? Are you listening...?"

By the time the verdict is announced, it will already be too late.

Today is day 1 of resistance against HQ2

## IF YOU LIKED WAL-MART YOU'LL LOVE AMAZON

Amazon is Wal-Mart on steroids. When companies with a global reach and supply chain move into town, their anti-competitive nature destroys the possibility of running successful local businesses. Companies like Amazon rely on corporate welfare and government pay-offs to undercut local retailers, and we've already seen how Amazon's original platform as an on-line bookseller forced thousands of independent bookstores to close down. The more successful Amazon is, the more we will see farmer's markets, neighborhood hardware stores, and clothing boutiques boarded up. It's hard to compete with a company whose predictive data analytics tools have not only determined which products you're most likely to buy next week, but have already shipped those products to the distribution center closest to you, all without you ever having to think about it.

## SURVEILLANCE IS THE COST OF CONVENIENCE

How is it that Amazon can overnight a package to you from across the world at a price lower than retailers in your own city? If Amazon is offering you an astonishingly good deal, it's because your consumer habits are an astonishingly good product. Amazon profits not directly from the purchases of its customers, but indirectly from gathering their information. Amazon is at the forefront of Big Data: tracking, predicting, and "nudging" people's interests into favorable marketing opportunities. What they offer is not merely a monopoly over the retail and shipping industries, but an ever-expanding grasp on data about people's behaviors, curiosities, and desires. The convenience and cheapness of Amazon products ensures that people buy into their platform today, paving the way for their total control over the markets of tomorrow.

Amazon's conquest of information will not stop until your entire psychological profile is documented, and their marketplace expands across your entire economic periphery. In Orwell's 1984, citizens are left without the words to describe freedom. In Bezos' 2018, citizens freely and voluntarily declare their preferences to Alexa, to be stored forever in Amazon's data-centers and eventually to be auctioned off to the highest bidder. A population whose citizen's habits are tracked and quantified at every turn is a population that is entirely vulnerable to both subconscious social manipulation and overt political control. In opposing Amazon, we are directly challenging the idea that our lives are reducible to sum of data attached to a user ID, and instead, stake our future on the possibility of freedom, cooperation, and independence.

who remain in the city will be forced to live on the streets. For an idea of what this process might look like, we can follow the road map of the California Bay Area's transition from a diverse, working class cultural Mecca to an increasingly sterile and expensive tech hub, where the city of Oakland has seen a 25% decline in its African-American population over the last ten years, and surveillance robots monitor homeless encampments on the outskirts of San Francisco.

## ( C . I . A . ) M A Z O N

Amazon hopes to lead the way in redesigning city infrastructure to suit their unique corporate vision. Those who control the architecture and layout of city geographies decide how our lives are organized, structuring our social and economic possibilities. In Seattle, Amazon lobbied for privatized transportation plans that benefited their employees, rather than for the public transportation we all deserve. Their attempts at lobbying for the legal clearance to use drones as delivery robots set a worrying precedent for the expanded use of drones for all sorts of anti-social purposes – those of us who paid attention to the array of technologies used to suppress Native Americans in Standing Rock have not forgotten that drones were first and foremost designed as military weapons.

As the legitimacy of electoral politics continues to dissolve, and as the hyper-connectivity of the Internet renders existing institutions increasingly irrelevant, mega-corporations like Amazon will step in to fill the void left by traditional governmental structures. As political and social divisions within the so-called 'United' States of America multiply, companies like Amazon are seizing the opportunity to network fragmented populations together into new demographics and political constituencies, enclosing us into neatly organized and manageable social bubbles. Amazon and the other technology giants are not just new business models for the digital age: they represent an entirely new paradigm of governance



Of course, Amazon is in the process of automating its warehouses, and in Bezos' perfect world, he would only employ robots. Just as Taylorism and Fordism were the defining principles that changed the nature of work in the 20th century, Amazon is a global leader of restructuring the future of work for the emerging information economy: an economy without us.

## AMONG THE PERKS OF BEING AN AMAZON BLUE-COLLAR WORKER: HOMELESSNESS

Amazon, like all major corporations, depends on a stratified division of labor. The typical salary of a white-collar Amazon worker is \$100,000 per year – a blue collar worker, \$24,000. The model office environment of the new digital economy demands the blurring of the lines between “work” and “home,” and downtown developers will charge a premium for apartments and condominiums a street-car's ride away from the new headquarters. Companies that rent or sell residential properties will charge more to these well-paid tech workers, who make nearly double Atlanta's median income and can afford to pay extra to live in-town. While gentrification in Atlanta is already an issue, HQ2 would permanently cement this disastrous transformation.

Those who will work the blue collar jobs at Amazon – the custodians, warehouse stockers, delivery drivers, and service workers catering to the new gentry – will be forced to commute long hours from outside the perimeter to work low wage jobs in the neighborhoods that they used to call home. Those who manage to eek out an existence in-town will inevitably jump from apartment to apartment, year by year, as they are priced out of each successive neighborhood. With every \$100 increase in median rent resulting in a 15% increase in homelessness, many

## FIFTY THOUSAND JOBS ... FOR ROBOTS

One of the biggest incentives HQ2 offers to its prospective cities is its promise to create 50,000 new jobs. This couldn't be more false. We already know that the high-paying tech positions will not be filled by local residents, but by highly-qualified professionals imported from across the country and around the world. As for the few less-skilled positions, many of those who are currently ‘employed’ by Amazon do not work directly for the company itself, but are hired by third party agencies for temporary contracted labor. This way, Amazon shirks responsibility for providing benefits and worker's compensation, and workers can be terminated without reason. Temporary work agencies also help Amazon quickly hire new workers to replace those who have been fired, injured, or who have quit, as most employees don't last more than a few months. This practice of “hire and fire” means that Amazon doesn't have to worry about giving their workers advancements or raises, and the rapid turnover rate makes it difficult for those who last with the company to organize for better working conditions.

Inside Amazon's warehouses, workers are treated like prisoners on parole. They are strapped with tracking devices that monitor their productivity in calculated units. These devices link performance measuring algorithms to an automated disciplinary system, where workers are docked “points” for not working hard enough, getting sick, or spending too much time in the bathroom. Amazon has more data regarding its workers than any employer in history, and they use this data to constantly optimize the process of production, quickly terminating and replacing those not operating at maximum efficiency. Maybe this is why Jeff Bezos was recently voted Worst Boss in the World.

AMAZON DEATH CULT? SAME DAY DELIVERY ON  
SADNESS AND CHEERIOS. FREE BEZO BUCKS IN EX-  
CHANGE FOR LIFETIME OF DEFERRED FULFILLMENT  
AND RISING RENTS. WITHOUT COOPERATION OF SAN-  
ITATION COMMIS NONE OF THIS POSSIBLE. HEADS  
QUARTERED IN MULTI-BILL CAMPUS DOWNTOWN ON  
SIGHT OF FORMER PIG FARM. RAINFOREST SHIRKS  
AS DEMAND FOR CARDBOARD SOARS. RETURN SHIP-  
PING TAKEN OUT OF YOUR NEXT PAYCHECK. TWELVE  
NEW DYSTOPLAN SCIENCE FICTIONS STREAM NOW.  
PRIMED REAL ESTATES AT COMFORTABLE DIST  
ABOVE SEA LEVEL. STILL NO ANNOUNCEMENT ON  
RUMORED MERGER OF PARENT COMPANY WITH AN  
UNNAMED MAJOR AMERICAN CITY. DRAINED WORK-  
ERS PEN ERSTWHILE MISSIVES ICE THEIR WOUNDS  
AND AWAIT A NEW AGE.