

# Bibs

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We swapped overalls  
for ammunition  
when the denim shop wedged between  
a Polish church  
and a German tavern, closed its tiny doors,  
shut its blue paneled windows  
and made way  
for a defense plant—  
booming with revolving doors  
and blue collared welders:  
men trained to avert their eyes from sparks  
and direct their stares  
instead towards long legs  
hanging limply from barstools,  
in the a.m or P.M.  
but always in dingy yellow light.  
Always between  
work and worry.  
Now the pension minds wear  
Dickies Dockers  
or Cintas collars,  
because Oshkosh  
is detached from B'Gosh.  
No more labels stitched

in navy and yellow.

No more makeshift patch jobs  
for young dirty knees.

Now Oshkosh

is synonymous

with weapon's contracts

and canasta,

polka and Blatz,

buses empty,

due to lack of bustle,

and a broken down

state university.

The old architecture

downtown houses

one record store,

and one coffee shop,

west of the drainage basin:

Lake Winnebago.

It collects empty brown bottles,

four year diplomas,

and weathered, discarded bibs.