

From the Guest Editor Kenneth Showers

When I was tasked with finding a topic for this month's issue, I admit I went through a thousand different ideas. While I was doing so I kept looking out the window, day dreaming and drifting off. Recently an old friend of mine had come to town and I found myself thinking wistfully about our past, back to less complicated days. It was then I knew exactly what my topic was, and in the process of developing that idea, I discovered that everyone's idea of nostalgia was not as different as it first appeared.

You see, I think at the center of most nostalgia, is family.

The people we are given as family and the people we make our family.

Nostalgia is also a great American tradition. The process is trans-formative, and it defines us: That old book we love to read, a

fondly on those things that make you smile. So go ahead and put on that album that's collecting dust in your closet. What do you remember? The time, the place, the smell. Even the colors.

Let it take you back.



song or favorite movie, your grandmother's famous dessert, all of these take us back.

We hold them tight in our hearts, and we share them with the people who were there.

I dedicate this issue with those people in mind, and I hope as you're reading these articles, that you will think

Interns' Bios



Ken Showers is a senior at Arizona State University, majoring in English Literature. Last semester as part of his course work he wrote and edited articles for Kalliope. This semester he joins us as an intern. In his spare time he researches and writes speculative fiction.

His interests range from science, to fantasy, horror, and more. He currently lives at the Arizona State Polytechnic Campus in Mesa, AZ. Very rarely he can be seen doing work.

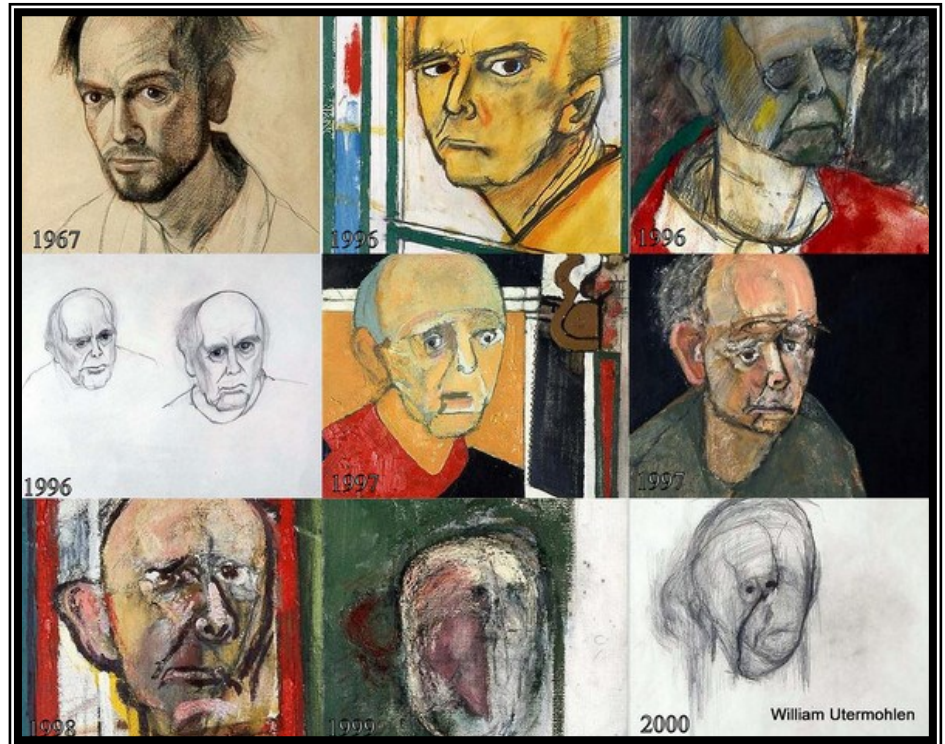
Fernando Zapata Garcia is a Communication major at Arizona State University, working on a writing certificate. He is a huge sports fan and strives to reach his personal and professional goals. One day he hopes to become a sports writer. Since he has sports in his blood he says he will keep working on his skills until he reaches the pinnacle of the profession in which he wants to work. He feels interning is a great way to do that.



What's Left When Our Memories Are Gone?

Shavawn M. Berry

I recently ran across the series of paintings by American artist, William Utermohlen (1933–2007), chronicling his descent into Alzheimer's disease, between 1995 and 2007. They provide the most illuminating illustration of the ways in which one man lost himself as his brain deteriorated. When he found out he was ill in 1995, he embarked on this series of self-portraits as a means to track his experience with the illness. What the series reveals is perhaps the best evidence of what Alzheimer's disease steals from its victims: their memories. Their identity. Their sense of themselves. What strikes me about the portraits is their shocking and visceral reality. As his mind disappears, his sense of space and color does, too.



For me, [these paintings] are a reminder to live with a fierceness and consciousness that my time here is precious and finite.

His face is obliterated. He becomes a blob, a pencil sketch, a pre-verbal shadow of himself. I find myself admiring his brave grace, for allowing this vulnerable, naked exhibition of the ravages of this illness to be documented and seen by others.

Utermohlen was interested in art all his life. He studied Fine Art in college, first in Philadelphia, and then later at the Ruskin School of Art at Oxford University. He lived all of his adult life in London.

In 2008, "Portraits from the Mind: The Works of William Utermohlen, 1955-2000" ran at the Chicago Cultural Center. Not long after that success, Utermohlen's

later works were shown in Utah at the inaugural Art and Brain Symposium.

A year before his death the **New York Times** wrote of his portrait series. His wife, Patricia Utermohlen, an art history professor, noted that, "From the [moment he was diagnosed] on, he began to try to understand [the disease] by painting himself."

I wonder — having a grandmother who died of Alzheimer's and an aunt who is currently in the throes of the illness — what it is that makes us, us? Is it our bodies? Is it our sense of ourselves? Our voices? Our actions?

If our memories are gone, what does that leave us?

For me, it is a reminder to live with a fierceness and consciousness that my time here is precious and finite.

Who will remember us when we are gone? Have we done enough to anchor ourselves into the fabric of our lives, so that even as they begin to unravel, we might consciously seek to make meaning of our demise?

That's what William Utermohlen did. He confronted his illness with a brush in his hand. He didn't give up without a fight.

From Roots to Branches

Allie Desrochers

I close my eyes. I am riding my bike, looping through my whole neighborhood from one block to the other. Then, I am speeding through mud-puddles on a four wheeler, screaming and laughing. Next, I am driving the same roads, to the same places, with the same friends, doing the same things. I can't forget. I am home, and I open my eyes.

Cave Creek is hot, dusty, and small. Cave Creek is home, but it has changed. I visit and I see fewer dirt roads and more pavement; I see fewer small businesses and more big names taking over. I see less and less of what I once knew. Now, I am at a university. This is a big school in a big city in a big world. I often find

myself looking back on the place where I grew up, wondering if I ever want to live there again, or any small town for that matter. My past defines my future. As I approach graduation from college, I wonder where I will spend the next ten years. It could be here in Tempe, it could be back in Cave Creek, or it could be in the city or town where I or my significant other find jobs. The possibilities are endless, but my small town soul is afraid. I am not a big city girl. I suppose I could become one, but I am just not sure I want to.

My nostalgic look upon my past may be holding me back, but I like to believe that instead it is pointing me toward something better.

Admittedly, the future freaks me out! As a notorious over-planner, thinking about the uncertainty of what is ahead makes me anxious and mostly uncomfortable. But, when I think about my home town and all of the memories there, I am comforted by the familiar. Every time I go back to visit I feel at peace. I often wonder if another dwelling place will ever feel so calm and so exciting at the same time. I daydream of a place very different from the desert where I grew up. I think about rolling green hills in a farm town, of pure white snowy banks near an elementary school, of tall trees and the smell of pines. Still, even though I believe I can make a life *anywhere* in this world,

I daydream of a place very different from the desert where I grew up. I think about rolling green hills in a farm town, of pure white snowy banks near an elementary school, of tall trees and the smell of pines. Still, even though I believe I can make a life *anywhere* in this world, I do not believe I'll want to.

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My mother is constantly telling me to be “young, live in the moment, stop worrying about ten years from now.” But I have been this way for as long as I can remember, always thinking about what's next or what's behind me. My past defines my future. I am okay with that because the roots in my past make me feel calm while the branches of the future are both exhilarating and scary. I feel like that's a healthy place to be.



The Man Behind the Lens Kenneth Showers



used digital. It's odd, because I haven't seen the digital footage since. My father died not long after that. So, there were no more videos.

When I graduate this year, there will be families making movies with their children at the graduation ceremonies, but I won't be there. I will probably be sitting in this same chair, writing. In part because I don't like pomp and circumstance (the song or the pageantry), but also, because it would be strange to be there, and not see my

father's goofy mustached face, smiling, from behind that large 80's style camera.

When I chose to go back to school, it was my father who

I'll be the first one to admit, my childhood probably isn't littered with as many charming memories of time spent fishing on the lake with grandpa or of baking cookies in the kitchen with mom. It wasn't that they didn't happen, it's just that, for the most part, they were less memorable to me. I spent my childhood deeply buried in my books and my video games. To be sure, I could write a lengthy article on my nostalgia for either of those topics without breaking a sweat. However, When I think of nostalgia, what I think of most are the times I spent with my family. They are fewer in frequency, but they hold a larger place in my heart.

When I was about 4 or so (at the end of the 80's) my father owned a large, unwieldy, video camcorder. He used it to record everything, because that's who he was, a guy that like to tinker with gadgets. He also oil painted, played guitar, programmed computers, and one hundred other things that I completely lack the talent to do, but I digress. Recently, I watched an old VHS we salvaged from years before, and there was a memory I'd

nearly forgotten. In it, my sister has a sheet over her head, painted with markers. She is pretending to be a dragon. Her younger twin brothers are pretending to be knights. It brought a smile to my face as I relived what I remember of that day. However, it brought more shame than warm reminiscences, since apparently, I beat the hell out

of her with a little plastic sword, something I'd blocked out. It's true, we do remember things as somewhat better than they actually were.

There were other videos too, and they are like miniature windows into my life as I got older: Birthdays, the Cinco de Mayo parade, Christmas and Thanksgiving. By the time my senior prom rolled around, the VHS Video recorder had breathed it's last, and for my graduation we

“How often have I lain beneath rain on a strange roof, thinking of home.”

~ William Faulkner

inspired me. That image — of the man behind the lens — is the one I remember the most whenever I look back.

Nostalgia for the Criminal Past: Kathleen Winter Looks Back

Shavawn M. Berry

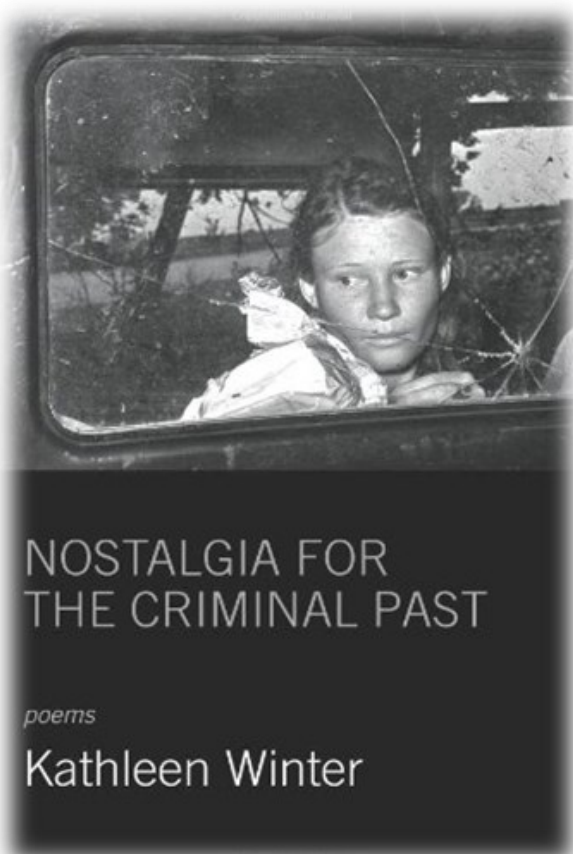
Nostalgia for the Criminal Past is poet Kathleen Winter's first book. I contacted her and asked if she'd be willing to discuss the ways in which she shaped and developed the themes and ideas of her book into an award-winning volume, especially in terms of memory, connection, separation, and time.

Kat lives in Northern California with her husband. She is currently what those of us in the teaching profession call, 'a road's scholar' meaning she teaches at two or more institutions and spends a good deal of time in her car. (Two hours in traffic to get to her gig in San Francisco.) Right now, she teaches literature and composition at the University of San Francisco and Napa Valley College.

When I open our conversation, she reveals that she worked on the individual poems in *Nostalgia* for a number of years prior to starting her MFA at Arizona State in 2008. She actually had about two-thirds of the manuscript drafted by the time she arrived.

"Putting it together, the whole time, I re-read and re-wrote the poems. Constantly. I sent it out steadily prior to its acceptance for publication. I can't even remember how many contests I paid for, or how many rejections I got. I kept track at the time, and when I'd get it back, I'd cross that place off the list, swap out a few of the weaker poems for newer stuff, and then send it out again." This went on for two years.

When she received word the book had been chosen as the winner of the 2011 Elixir Press Antivenom Poetry Prize, she was understandably, "surprised and excited."



"Getting the call was really joyful. I remember imagining what it would be like to get the book accepted. When it finally happened, it was wonderful. The editor, Dana Curtis called, and told me I'd won. It was morning. I'd been back home for a couple of weeks after finishing my master's degree. The editor told me Deborah Bogen selected it as the winning manuscript. I remember I called my husband to tell him."

Although many writers think that getting a book published

assists one in terms of landing a coveted teaching gig, Winter found that wasn't the case. For six months after she finished her MFA, she worked part-time in a bookstore as well as in a café as a coffee barista while she tried to find teaching work. Her current job "fell into [her] lap" through a friend, just prior to the fall semester in 2011. *Nostalgia* came out a few months later, in March 2012.

In the book, Winter focuses on "silos of time," and our sense of memory. Still, she felt wary of her choice of theme. "When I wrote the book, I was just writing poem by poem. The challenge for me was to turn the poems into a more cohesive manuscript. So I tried to find a way in, tinkering and looking for patterns." She read her work and noticed to what sorts of things tended to draw her in. "I am a poem by poem poet. I tend to write based on an image, phrase, or a snatch of something that occurs to me. As I read my work, I saw interests I didn't know I had. My concern for my environment, not necessarily in an eco-political way, but

instead in a most basic, what's around me kind of way. I noticed my surroundings affected me. Interiors (physical or natural surroundings) were important. As far as nostalgia as a theme, I was a bit skeptical of it because I was afraid it might be dismissed as clichéd. Other poets might not like it." She paused and laughed, thinking back on it. "[Poets are] smart, impatient critters." However, she found herself circling back to the idea. She saw another collection, built around a sense of 'anti-nostalgia,' focusing on the

negative side of the notion. “I think I stood up for nostalgia in the title poem as a reaction to that. When I ended up wanting to start the book with that poem, I realized that its title worked as a title to the manuscript as a whole. To me, nostalgia and déjà vu are connected, I don’t know why. I find both compelling and appealing.”

Knowing that she lived in Arizona to complete her graduate degree while her husband and dog returned home (to Northern California) in 2009, I asked if that separation influenced the book.

“That’s a really good question. I’ve never thought about it, but I’d have to say looking back, that being away from both my beloveds (my husband, and Finnegan, her 14-year-old-dog) definitely influenced me.” She noted that in the 20+ years she’s known her husband, she’d never lived apart from him, other than for one year when she was working in LA and he wasn’t. “Certainly being estranged from him [in terms of distance] infused the ideas and themes and issues, particularly in the final section of the book.”

Winter’s favorite poet is Sylvia Plath. Her favorite collection? “*Ariel*. She’s just so powerful to me. The forcefulness of her voice. Her incredible technical skill. The sounds and rhythms she uses. Her elegant, memorable phrases and surprising images. Her wit, her humor. She blows me away.”

Other collections on her ‘must read’ list? *Selected Poems* by Thomas Lux. She admires his technical skill and use of form,

I ask her what advice or encouragement she has for young poets.

“I would say, for me, the best thing to do is read. That’s what I tell my students. Read more. That’s what inspires me. And *always carry paper so you can write that word or phrase down.*”

calling him, “a bitingly sarcastic virtuoso.” She also mentions *The End of Beauty* by Jorie Graham. “I love her confident tone and seriousness.” She notes that her own work is “more playful” and she learns from seasoned poets whose approach is different from hers. She mentions Louise Glück’s collection, *Meadowlands*. “The book looks back at a marriage; at its failings, and also wondrous times of closeness.” She laughs and says, “I suppose I should mention someone contemporary. Alexandra Teague. Her book, *Mortal Geography*, came out in 2009. Winter says she admires its “emotional power and seamless use of form. The first poem is the best poem about teaching, ever.”

I ask her what advice or encouragement she has for young poets. “I would say, for me, the best

thing to do is read. That’s what I tell my students. Read more. That’s what inspires me. And always carry paper so you can write that word or phrase down.” We discuss the frustration of forgetting that elusive, yet perfect line or phrase.

She continues, “And don’t give up. If you’ve been [writing] for a while and feel frustrated, remind yourself to keep at it. You’ll get better. Slow, imperceptible improvement is happening.”

Winter’s second manuscript is written and already circulating in much the same way that she handled *Nostalgia*. Besides teaching, that is what she most wants to see happen in the next year or so. “I’d like to get another book out.”

Kathleen Winter’s poems have appeared in *AGNI*, *The New Republic*, *Field*, *The Cincinnati Review* and other journals. Her awards include the 2011 Elixir Press Antivenom Poetry Prize, as well as fellowships from Vermont Studio Center, Virginia G. Piper Center, and the Prague Summer Program. She is a graduate of the University of Texas, Austin; Boston College; the University of California, Davis, School of Law; and the Creative Writing Program at Arizona State University.

Nostalgia for the Criminal Past is for sale on Amazon, Small Press Distribution, and the Elixir Press website.

Memories in a Mason Jar

Emily Anderson

“Go on, honey, reach on up there and grab yourself a glass. Mamaw’s* got some tea she made this morning, or you can have a soda.” I remember the first time I found a mason jar in someone’s cabinet while looking for a drinking glass. What was so familiar about it? I turned its weight in my hand, only to discover the word “Kerr.” I recall seeing those letters as a kid, but not knowing what they meant or why there were there. Even though I don’t remember exactly where I was, a sense of happiness suddenly, and unexpectedly, poured over me.

In the south, mason jars are used for everything. When I think hard about it, I can remember walking by my Mamaw’s outside



For the first time in my life, I was suddenly ready to re-discover myself. The feeling of opening up my dad’s cabinet to see all mason jars, some with handles and some without, nearly made me cry.

pantry that held many shelves of homemade, canned goods. By canned goods, I’m referring to food that has been canned at home, and then kept in jars for long periods of time. She had green beans and peaches, pickles and pears. They caught the sunlight from the back porch.

When you opened up one of those jars, you felt all the love she’d put into canning them.

When my family picked up and drove across the country from

the small town in an Appalachian region of Virginia to Mesa, Arizona, mason jars were just about the last thing on my young mind. I was eight when we moved. I was obviously much more concerned with my new school, friends, and experiences. In fact, only one mason jar made the trip, and I think we broke it not long after we got here.

As I grew up in Arizona, I lost touch with my southern roots. However, at the age of 20, I decided to take a trip back “home.” For the first time in my life, I was suddenly ready to re-discover myself. The feeling of opening up my dad’s cabinet to see all mason jars, some with handles and some

without, nearly made me cry.

Since it had been so long since I had seen most of my dad’s side of the family, I went to visit my Mamaw for the first time since 1997. It was a though no time had passed. She held her arms out and said “My baby!! She’s home!” While there, I went inside for a drink. My dad pointed me in the right direction. Opening up the cabinet I found another collection of mason jars of various shapes and sizes.

Dropping ice into one of the larger ones and filling it with sweet tea, I realized I was finally home.

(*Mamaw— is a word typically used for Grandma in the Southern U.S.)

Flaming Hot Cheetos Chriselle Asuma-Irion



Nostalgia is the feeling that you get when the autumn wind creeps through your skin and slowly tries to sneak winter into your bones.

It is the smell of cactus blossoms on late summer nights, when it's finally cooled down just enough for the flowers to bloom.

It is the taste of cheap, boxed wine and the sound of fireworks exploding on New Year's Eve.

Sometimes it is saltwater on your cheek, the scent of musty old books, and the taste of my Lola's homemade cookies.

It's the sound of children laughing and the feeling of down blankets on a cold day.

It's nights staying up in bed, wondering where time went and how you got to where you are.

It's a thought that can scare you or inspire you. It is a memory that shapes who you are.

It's the move I should have made and the date I should have asked him out on.

Most importantly, it is the Flaming Hot Cheetos I should have shared with Jamal in the third grade.

A Post Card From Scary Spice Hailee Axelson

I miss simple summer days. There wasn't homework from Ms. Kostner and the hot summer sun kissed our young skin and made it a glowing bronze. Everyday Kelly, Kristen, Kelsey, and Nicole played outside my three-car garage. I pushed the garage door button and put on my red, heart-shaped sunglasses to shield my eyes from the sunlight that filled the garage. We owned Orchid Lane; bikes, scooters, roller-blades and lemonade stands filled our grassy front yards and lined the chalk-covered sidewalk. With a box of over 100 crayons, we covered the

oceans and surfers. Kelly and Kristen's pool was the place to be. Equipped with a diving board, a Shamu, and an extremely loud stereo, music took over our lives in the summer of '96. We discovered our absolutely kick-ass dance moves and choreographed wicked dances to songs like *Wannabe* and *The Macarena*.

The Spice Girls were the band of my childhood. Their girl power charisma helped us go from tomboy to totally rad. We each resembled our favorite Spice Girl. Me? I was Scary Spice. I had thick, curly, dark brown hair that formed

we *needed* a Ginger Spice.

We memorized our vocal harmonies and killer dance moves in "*Wannabe*." I had the best part, as a proud curly-haired Scary Spice. I got to open the song with a roaring maniacal laugh and a high kick guaranteed to make the crowd scream and cheer.

As a Spice Girl, it was important to express your individuality and have the movie *Spice World* memorized. I played it on repeat to drive my brothers insane. It also helped to have a fresh pair of platform blue Sketchers.

Everyone remembers the "*Macarena*," a hip-hop song that inspired a dance craze. The Latin-fusion pop hit starts with your hands out in front, and then they move to your head, then to your hips, finally followed by a sweet little booty shake. Occasionally when we performed it by the pool, the synced dance moves were followed by a definitive dive and a splash that was sure to be a crowd pleaser. We performed it everywhere we heard it: in the grocery store, Water & Ice, on the playground...

The best summer growing up was that summer. Thanks to our successful lemonade stand, we had money to buy super-sour raspberry snow cones, and Big League Chew bubblegum at Water & Ice. We mastered holding our breath under water for over 100 seconds. We choreographed radical dance moves. I loved summer of '96. Summers like that were easy and uncomplicated. My biggest concern then was which Scary Spice cheetah print ensemble to wear for the day.

If only things were that simple now.



lemonade stand posters in artistic lemons, leaves, and money. Boulders placed strategically in my childhood home's front yard provided us with perfect perches to slack off and climb on while others squeezed fresh picked lemons and added way too much sugar. We circled the lemonade stand with pink, blue, yellow and purple sidewalk chalk that twisted from vines with lemons to vines with flowers. Our artistic graffiti expressed our freedom. Regulars came to get a glass for fifty cents and returned back home; our moms, in particular, loved our lemonade.

After making our ten-dollar quota, we shed our tank tops and shorts and swam until late in the afternoon. My favorite bikini was sky blue with printed palm trees,

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a round shape that resembled an Afro. Kelly was Baby Spice; she had natural stick straight platinum blonde hair that looked perfect in pigtails. Nicole was Sporty Spice; she was older, and very athletic with long brunette hair. Kristen was Posh Spice because she had an attitude that matched and Kelsey was Ginger Spice, because frankly,

Midnight in Paris Larissa Venard

The hottest new fashion trend to hit the market: the past. It appears the fascination with what will never be ours will ironically perpetuate throughout time. The exotic, which in this case is time, is a source of everyday yearning. This fascination is constant; maybe I would like to be living in 1967, but then the college graduates of 1967 covet those from the year 1942. And the youth of the 1940s pine for the roaring 20s. To quote Kurt Vonnegut, “*and so it goes.*”

Woody Allen recently released *Midnight in Paris* (2011) dealing with this very issue. In the film, protagonist Gil is on his honeymoon in Paris and transcends time at the stroke of midnight to meet up with some of his favorite artists and writers who lived during his idealized sense of time and place- the 1920s in Paris. When he “arrives” there, he finds that he is not alone in his longing for the past; a 1920s character wishes to be a part of Belle Époque just before the turn of the century Paris associated with another influential set of artists. Gil realizes that living for the past is misguided; yet almost every person can relate to it.

How accurate is this sentimentality for the past? Somehow, we inevitably assume the past holds all of the answers to our contemporary problems, but, as Gil discovers, this thinking is ultimately flawed. I can’t exactly knock Mr. Allen’s way of thinking; I mean, who wouldn’t love hanging out with the likes of Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein, Salvador Dali, and Luis Buñuel during the magnificent 1920s in Paris? All of these artists

and/or writers featured in the film are some of the most influential figures of the 20th century. Just like Gil, I am uncontrollably fascinated with this era, but by the end of the film, I understand that this allure is nothing new in human history. For whatever reason, people are attracted to the unfamiliar- whether it be geographic, cultural or temporal. We aspire to live and exist in a time period that is not and will never be ours.

The current poster child for this is the presence of “hipsters” and their penchant for all things retro. After all, isn’t it our duty as the younger generation to rebel against older generations? And then there are the bleached-blonde, makeup-heavy girls who throw up a peace sign and listen to Bob Marley thinking they are the next Janis Joplin. Meanwhile, they sip on a Grande Caramel Macchiato and obsessively toy with their iPhones- a slightly anachronistic touch, I suppose.

All sarcasm aside, I understand that living solely in the present is equally flawed. I’m not a history expert or fortuneteller, but I can attest to the importance of the past and future. It’s important to understand the past so that it’s not repeated; this is true on a personal, national, and global level. While the past is an important guide for how to make better decisions for the future, it’s not a state of mind to which we yield. A declaration for those in my generation: we will

never live in the 1950s, 60s or 70s. It’s not something to be in denial about, but rather to draw attention to the importance of the present and future. And, unless you are a nihilist, the future is similarly critical in the sense that we have something to work towards and improve upon. As for the present, maybe our situation is not “ideal” to everyone, but I still find it important to taste the food, listen to the music, watch the films, and participate in our time- no matter how awful they may or may not be. That way, in another 20 years when things have *really* gone downhill, we’ll let the youth wish for our time, further enforcing this puzzling cycle.

And so it goes.



"So it goes." ~ Kurt Vonnegut
Slaughterhouse-Five

Rearview Kenneth Showers

The door to my gas tank broke this morning.

This in itself is not a surprise, I am cursed with bad luck. What's going through my mind as I glance up at my car in dismay, is how much I hate the damn thing. I was not one of the kids who were chomping at the bit to get their permit at 16. I knew it would mean extra responsibility and hauling people around when I could be doing something else. I probably would have put it off indefinitely if my friends hadn't forced me into it. When I finally received my permit, I was given my own car with which to carry out my new punishments. It was a 1980 Toyota Celica GT Liftback.

I know nothing about cars, but it was ugly as all hell, with a yellow paint job that you knew instantly



companion. I didn't name her (Cars are girls, you know.), but I mourned her all the same when she finally died. The first night at my first job delivering pizza I waited outside with the other drivers before I left for the evening, shooting the breeze.

came right out of the 70's. It had tacky fins on the back window, and all the other really ugly accoutrements you might expect.

And I loved it.

You see, that car withstood a lot of punishment and kept on going. It was well loved long before I started driving it, and never gave me trouble. The only time my best friend ever apologized to me was in that car. I went on some of my first dates in it. It was a faithful

A waitress in a bad mood got in her car, put it in reverse, and floored it. There was a moment of silence while we watched my beloved car take the wound that would slowly make her unfit to drive. Finally, I said simply, "That's my car."

My new car is neither reliable, nor pretty. So, while I stare down at the broken plastic clip on the ground, I fervently wonder why a waitress doesn't hit *this car*. This car, I wouldn't care. I'd probably thank her.

The 50 Million Dollar Man Fernando Zapata

After signing for 50 million dollars to play for Stamford Bridge's soccer club, Chelsea, Fernando Torres became the fourth-most expensive player in soccer history (ESPN.com). He is the most feared striker in the game. The thinking was, the sky was the limit. El Nino (Torres) can only get better from here. However, since signing that lucrative deal, Torres has failed to meet expectations. Torres signed to Chelsea on January 31, 2011. Fast forward to March 2013. Torres has been plagued with injury, missed

open net goals, and even claimed to have fallen out of love for the game

of soccer. It's safe to say that is something a world class striker is *not* supposed to do.

Though he has had glimpses of brilliance of his former self, reports say he is washed up. The truth is, Torres wants what any striker in soccer wants: to score goals. That's what Chelsea thought when they signed him and that's exactly what Torres fanatics (like me) thought when we saw him transfer to Chelsea; GOALS.

Nostalgia can be a moment to look back and get lost. It can be a form of escape from

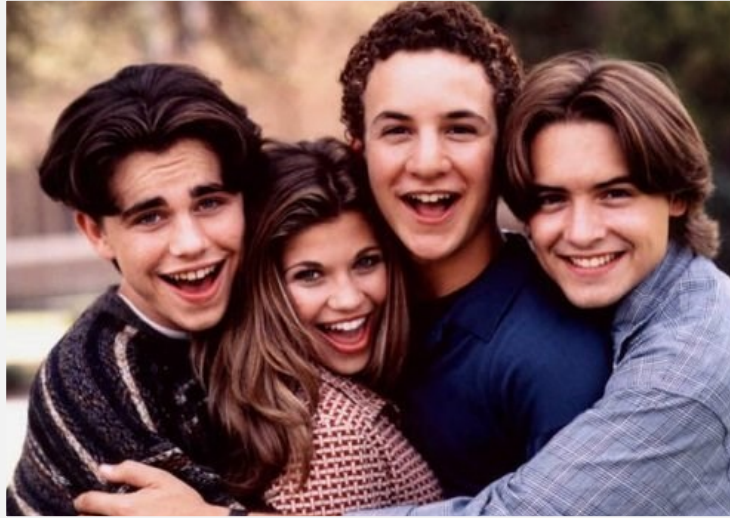
reality. In this case, it is a constant reminder of what was and what should be. Torres is now 28 and should be at the peak of his athletic career. The critics preach lack of confidence is the issue. He reminds his fans that he will find his previous form and become the man we all loved to watch, but is that a fair thing to say?

As a fan I say I don't want previous form; I want new form. New team, new style of play, new Torres. I need my boy to adapt and become a threatening striker again.

Has the nostalgia bug gotten to me too?

Heath Meets World Heath Harris

School is out, I run to meet the bus and then jump off at my stop. I get home, heat up my Hot Pocket and grab my Coke before I sit and turn the T.V. on. After patiently waiting through *The Famous Jett Jackson*, *Lizzie Maguire*, and unfortunately, *Sister, Sister*, my show appears on screen. *Boy Meets World*: the perfect way to end my day. Cory, Shawn, Topanga, Turner, and of course, Mr. Feeny, who was always able to



secure a job at the next level of education to keep an eye on “Mr. Matthews,” show up to bring me into the weekend.

It’s been almost 10 years since I sat down and watched the show religiously; however, I can still recall how much I enjoyed it. I’ve considered the reasons why this show has remained popular among young audiences and has inspired a kind of sequel or continuation in the same vein of the show, *Girl Meets World*.

Originally *BMW* ran from 1993 to 2000, and in reruns until 2007. Most shows barely last a season, let alone 7 seasons. In a way, *Boy Meets World* was on air for about 14 years. That amount of time in front of impressionable kids is significant. For me, watching people my age on T.V. was a lot better than cartoons. It’s cliché to say that I came of age as Cory, Shawn, and Topanga also did, but that’s what happened. It’s rare to see characters, especially kids, grow up on screen. On a long enough timeline, people are bound to catch an episode or two of *Boy Meets World*.

The story begins with Cory Matthews and Shawn Hunter — both sixth graders— pulling the usual shenanigans. Mr. Feeny was the mentor of group. And then there was the second woman of my dreams, coming in just behind Tawny from *Even Stevens*, Topanga Lawrence. Together these characters weave their way through grade school, high school, and eventually college and young adulthood. I almost forgot about Eric Matthews: Cory’s lazy, but hilarious, older brother. There are times when I found myself watching the show with the intentions of only seeing what Eric might do.

Perhaps looking back, it’s a bit melodramatic, but isn’t everything when you’re a teenager? It was relatable and also gave me a glimpse of what the future held for me. That was a little over-the-top I’ll admit, but it was good to know that I would eventually feel the same way about someone that Cory and Topanga felt about each other. Cory and Shawn were always there for one another, much like my best friend Steve is there for me. While

I never had a teacher who was my neighbor and also my high school principal before teaching at my college of choice, there were professors that, as I moved into my first real job, mentored me and gave me advice.

I still remember Mrs. Peters, my fourth grade teacher. I’ve never had a teacher that was so kind and caring, that would also show a

fourth grader respect. Of course, there have been some college professors — my own personal “Feenies” — who I’ve grown closer to and asked for advice on more than just papers. Cory, Shawn, and Topanga had Mr. Feeny. He was this steadying presence for them.

Anyone who watched the show when it was originally on, probably has children by now, which makes the announcement of *Girl Meets World*, all that more exciting. The show will focus on Cory and Topanga’s 13-year-old daughter, Riley. Riley has a friend, Maya, who is meant to be a Shawn-esque character. Cory Matthews fully embraces the whole “Mr. Matthews” aspect of his character and is now a seventh grade teacher that would make even Feeny proud. Ben Savage and Danielle Fishel are also in the lineup, which should help bring in some audiences for the first few episodes. Who knows? There may come a time where I’m taking a study break and I may tune in again. It actually might be nice to see how Cory and Topanga have been since I was last in contact with them.

Tales of the Old West: A Daughter's Debt of Gratitude

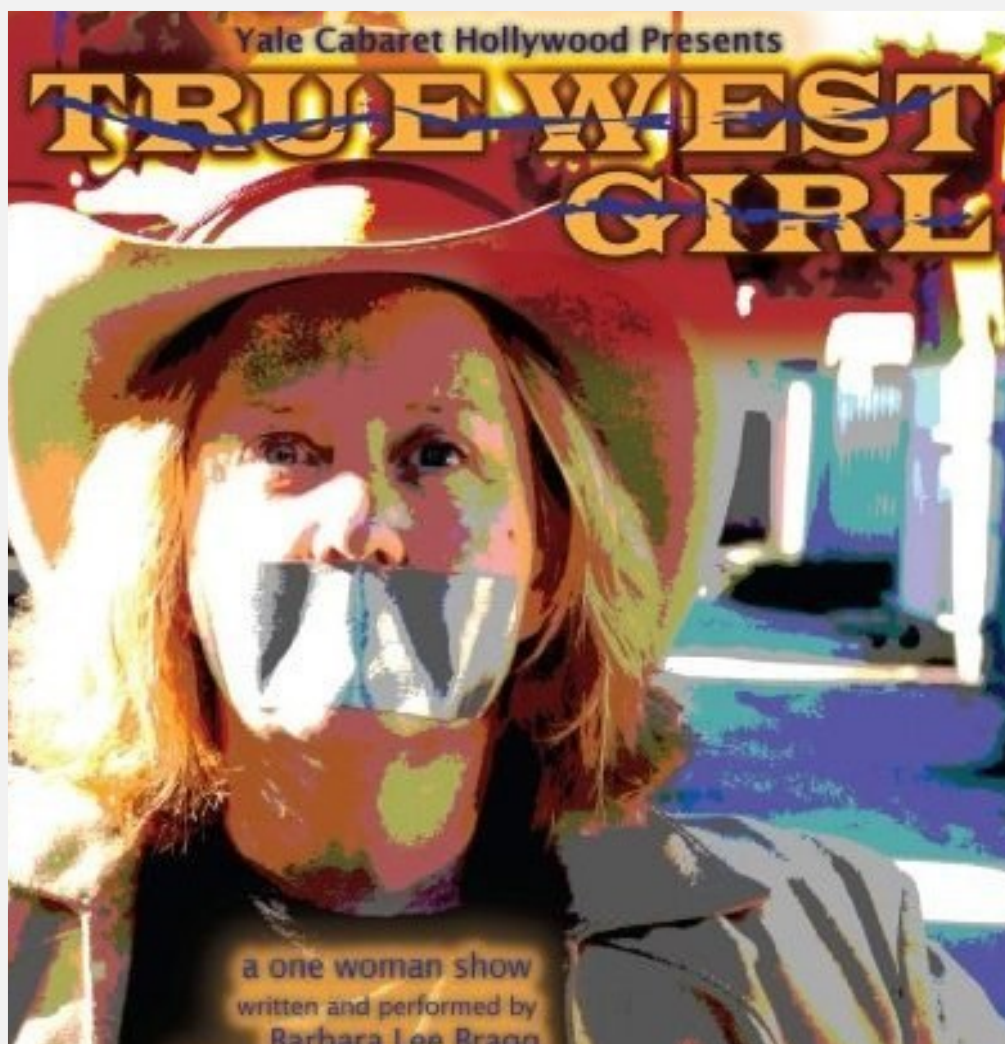
Shavawn M. Berry

I met actress/writer/producer/comedienne Barbara Bragg just a few months after she graduated from Yale School of Drama. She was dating my brother at the time. Although their relationship didn't last more than a few months, the friendship we struck up has endured for the past twenty-five years. Most of her time has been spent in Los Angeles for the past two decades where she's worked as an actress and comedienne, written a one woman show, done live theater, and — in the past five years — started to teach voice at various colleges around Los Angeles, after more than a decade of teaching privately.

Barbara Lee Bragg comes from a fifth generation Wyoming pioneer family. Her grandfather was a Western writer, and her father followed suit. Although she's been writing for most of her adult life, I don't think she saw herself as a writer until just recently. All of her writing investigates her own life, in one way or another. She's worked on her one-woman show, *True West Girl*, for the past decade performing it in the Yale Cabaret, the Los Angeles Fringe Festival and several other venues. I saw one of the earliest incantations of the show that features scathing and hilarious memoir-style monologues about her childhood and young adulthood. She has a sharp



tongue and a piercing sense of irony that is both bitterly funny and painful. She has taken those experiences and woven them into a thing of fierce beauty in *True West Girl*. However, for the past three years, Bragg has been developing some of her father's short stories for adaptation to the stage. Her father, William F. Bragg, Jr., loved Wyoming and loved "cowboy stories" most. As a child, she heard

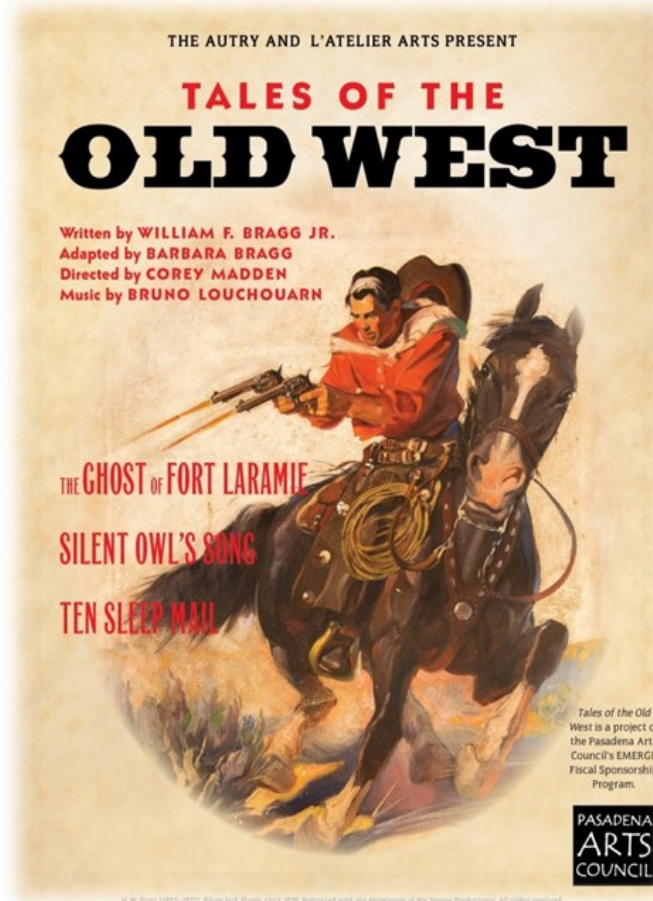


“His characters were so vivid that I swear I could hear them talking to him down there.”

them all. In her late teens she began to realize that his stories had meaning for others. She watched, awestruck, as carloads of people drove sixty miles out into the wilderness to sit around a campfire under the stars and hear her father tell stories.

This April, she will honor her father’s memory at The Autry National Center in Los Angeles with a theatrical showcase of her adaptations of three of his short stories: *The Ghost of Fort Laramie*, *Silent Owl’s Song*, and *Ten Sleep Mail*. In a [blog posting she wrote for the Autry](#), she reminisces about what was it like growing up with a father who was a western writer. “Writing was his life. His characters were colorful. Whether he was talking about Big Nose George Parrott, the Cannibal—with

TOTOW poster includes a painting of “Silver Jack Steele,” courtesy of the Bragg Family.



whom my mother was not so pleased—or Cantaloupe Jones, a cowboy who could unhinge his jaw, I was always in awe of his imagination. I have no idea whether he was telling the truth, but isn’t that why they call them tall tales? I’d listen to the tap-tapping of the old hulking typewriter filtering up through the heating grates. His characters were so vivid that I swear I could hear them talking to him down there. Lying in bed at night, I’d see a stagecoach rushing by me or Silver Jack Steele come to life. (theautry.org)

For years, Barbara has dreamed of sharing her father’s work with the world. She considers this show at the Autry a means to, “repay a debt of gratitude,” she feels she owes him. The show is, in fact, a love letter to her father. William F. Bragg, Jr. died of cancer in 1988.

Tales of the Old West opens at the Autry for a short four performance run on April 3, 2013. The show features a large ensemble cast including Barbara, and her nephew, Peter Gaddis. It is directed by Corey Madden and includes live original music by Bruno Louchouarn. The show is being produced by the Autry and L’Atelier Arts, with underwriting by the Pasadena Arts Council. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at <http://theautry.org/programs/performing-arts/barbara-braggs-tales-of-the-old-west>.

Left to right: William F. Bragg, Jr., with his family, Laura, Robert, Betty, Barbara, and his wife, Rita Bragg, on the set of John Wayne’s movie, *Hell Fighters*, in Casper, Wyoming in 1969.



Nostalgia: Fantasy or Therapy?

Mara Ray Michael



For you, it might be an old comedy you watched a thousand times with your best friend on past sleepovers, laughing until your stomach hurts and memorizing every single line. Maybe it is the familiar scent of your mom’s deliciously homemade chocolate chip cookies. Or maybe, it is the reunion of you and an old childhood game or toy, reminding you of days playing freely and carelessly, imagination unbounded. Whatever it may be, we all know what it feels like to be touched by a memory of the past – to cherish it, savor it, and at times even long for it.

Memory brings us back to places of joy, sadness, adventure and triumph. It can reignite emotions long forgotten, awaken our senses to a time lost. The phenomenon of memory has haunted and inspired us for ages. We have considered its content a compilation of experiences that make us who we are. It is our

abstract record of the world. But how accurate is it?

Recent scientists have only just begun to understand memory’s true nature. A memory, especially one with special meaning to us, might seem like some precious and permanent, something seared and stored reliably in our brains. But it is not. Scientists are finding that memory actually changes every time we think about it. The emotions that come attached to them are so real, at times it *feels like* we’re reliving the experience.

“Every time you recall a memory, it becomes sensitive to disruption. Often that is used to incorporate new information into it,” says Dr. Eric Kandel, one of the world’s leading experts on memory. Basically, we remember things the way we want, or choose, to remember them. This characteristic of memory allows nostalgia to have a profound effect on us.

The term nostalgia has a

surprisingly long and complex history. It was introduced in the 17th century by Swiss physician Johannes Hofer to refer to unpleasant psychological and physiological symptoms displayed by homesick Swiss mercenaries. Back then, it was considered as a medical or neurological disease. Symptoms included weeping, irregular heartbeat, and even anorexia in extreme cases. In the 20th century, nostalgia was regarded as a psychiatric disorder, with symptoms such as insomnia, anxiety and depression, and was confined to groups such as first-year boarding school students and immigrants. Nostalgia, in the past, hasn’t received a very good rap. Only recently have scientists and psychologists begun focusing on positive and potentially therapeutic qualities of nostalgia.

The flexible nature of memory and the powerful charge of nostalgia have the potential to positively change our perspective

of the past, as well as the present and future. Dr. Tim Wildschut, member of the Centre for Research on Self and Identity and the Social and Personality Psychology Research Group at The University of Southampton, has conducted research that seeks to identify the content, functions and triggers of nostalgia. His findings support the idea that nostalgic experiences can increase social bonding levels and positive self-regard.

Wildschut's colleague and research partner Jamie Arndt reveals his studies of nostalgia in a paper published in the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* a few years ago. These studies were designed to look at the relationship between mortality salience and nostalgia. Mortality salience is the experience of being confronted with the thoughts of one's own death. When we experience these thoughts, we often seek order and meaning. Results found that nostalgia can help to reduce the anxiety that comes with mortality salience by reminding us of cherished life moments.

Considering these groundbreaking revelations of nostalgia, as well as memory's elasticity, leads us to the empowering realization that we can change our perception of the past and use it as a comforting foundation, instead of something that weighs us down. It is up to us whether we use our memory's ability to encourage us or hold us back. Though it has been observed that we are more prone to nostalgia when we are lonely, it also has the paradoxical power to help us combat the feeling of loneliness or reassure us in times of trial and change.

Another fascinating quality

of nostalgia is the many ways in which it manifests, culturally and personally. A thought-provoking look at the seductive nature of nostalgia is explored in the movie *Midnight in Paris* (2011), directed by Woody Allen and starring Owen Wilson as Gil (see page 11 for another take on this topic). This film became an instant favorite of mine; it takes a look at what a trend it has become for generations to romanticize past eras and cultures, referring to them as "the good old

"How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard." – A.A. Milne, *Winnie the Pooh*

days" or "the golden era." This kind of nostalgia is called historical nostalgia, and Gil has an extreme case of it. Through a certain willful magic, he transports himself back to Paris in the 1920's.

In spite of this focus on nostalgia, Allen's film is, in fact, a story about "coping with the present," explains Krystine Batcho, a professor of psychology at Le Moyne College in New York. "It was Gil's journey through the past that helped him identify what was missing in his present and that gave him the courage to take steps to correct it."

This movie has a great message. We all have experienced the yearning for bygone days, when life was simpler, more creative, more exciting, more whatever. Whatever we need at that moment. But could much of it be a substitution for our much needed desire to find purpose and

satisfaction in the present? At the end of the movie, Gil concludes, "Maybe the present is a little unsatisfying because life is a little unsatisfying."

"If someone were to maintain the fantasy, using that as a psychological device would not be very healthy. The character Gil does not," Batcho said. This movie is inspiring because not only does it reveal the double-sided nature of nostalgia, it encourages viewers to embrace their inspirations of the past while still being grounded in the present.

Nostalgia can be a fantasy, or it can be a natural and existential anti-depressant used to cope with the burdens of life's continual changes. It all depends on how we process it.

Suggestions for inducing positive nostalgia:

- Make a list of cherished moments.
- Jog your memory by finding some photos or other mementos from good times past.
- Close your eyes to block distractions and think about what's outside the picture frame to bring back subtle details. Mental imagery is said to produce greater happiness than just looking at old photographs.
- If possible, reminisce with people from your past. It strengthens close relationships.

As you go about your life, cherish good moments for future reminiscing. Take a mental snapshot and hold on to that feeling. Love what is ahead by loving what has come before.

The Glory Days Fernando Zapata

I am a huge sports fan. A sports fanatic, if you will. As a sports fan, the feeling of nostalgia is not too far away. Anyone who is into sports would agree. Everyone has the feeling of the game they should have won, the shot they should have made, the call that never was, or the glorious moment where they were at the top looking down. My nostalgia is a sea of up and down waves. Throughout my life I've had great moments in sports, and of course, better days.

Looking back, I long to remember how it felt to be at the top of my soccer career. I watch Barcelona soccer star, Lionel Messi, score a hat trick to will his team back from a two goal deficit to win a game, and think, *I used to be that kind of player*. This feeling is both good and bad. Sort of like eating at McDonalds after slaving for several hours at the gym.

I am 12-years-old. I lace up my cleats, getting ready for my big game that takes place every Sunday. Most people would describe a sort of nervous feeling before any sporting event; maybe even feeling anxious to get into action, but not me. I thrive on the feeling of scoring a goal. I love soccer and know I am going to score. That cockiness makes me feel I am better than the other players. The game begins. It is hard fought and close in competition; one goal between the two teams. Unfortunately our team doesn't have a goal and I have yet to come close to putting one in the back of the net. Stubbornly, I let my frustrations get the best of me and draw a yellow card with the risk of a red. A yellow card results in committing a foul to the opposing team and red card results in two

yellow cards. Luckily for me, I manage to get under the skin of an opposing defender and I draw a hard foul in the box of the opposing team. The referee signals to my coach that this will be the last play in regulation. For those of you who do not know the significance of this, it means whoever is taking the penalty kick has the chance to tie the game before the end of regulation. Its equivalent to a



That day was a roller coaster ride, full of ups and downs.

buzzer beater in basketball or a Hail Mary in football. It is a chance to be a hero. Since I was fouled in the penalty box, I am awarded the shot. My coach comes up to me as the goalie sets up, ready to do his best to defend his goal, and says "All right. You're our best player. You can do this."

I remember savoring the words "best player." I thought I was the best player, but hearing it from him finally hit me. I can hear my competitor (on my own team may I

add) screaming to let him, and not me, take the shot.

Why am I so scared?

I know what you're thinking, I was only twelve, but I had scored so many times before and from further, but this was different. This was for the game! I take a few steps back and as soon as the referee gives me the green light, I run up on the ball and kick as hard as I can at the goal. The ball soars towards the net — and keeps on soaring — way over the crossbar and out of bounds. I secure the opposing team's victory and my own defeat and humiliation.

I feel the craziest feelings all at once. I go from being the number one player, as recognized by my coach, to a total zero, as recognized by my teammate. He screams, "I told you! Why didn't coach give it to me!?"

I never felt so alone in my life. I walk off the field with my head low, feeling absolutely sorry for myself. My family was right there: "It's ok; you will do better next time."

My brother advises me, "Don't worry about it, you are the only one who deserved that shot." That spoke volumes. He's pretty reserved and keeps his emotions and feelings inside, so I knew then it would be ok.

That day was a rollercoaster ride, full of ups and downs. That day left a bittersweet taste in my mouth. I think back on it now, and feel as though it has shaped how I compete, not only in sports, but in life.

I want the ball at the end of the game.

I want control.

A “Yellow Submarine” of Memories

Miranda Myers

When I was in the 4th grade and living in Provo, Utah, the epitome of cool (Uncle Mike) came to live with us. He played video games and even let us watch PG-13 movies. From a nine-year-old’s perspective, watching a PG-13 movie was an indication I was truly living on the edge. Uncle Mike had this awesome green truck with dark green swirls painted on the sides of it. Looking back, I realize how dreadfully ugly that truck was, but at the time it seemed like the best thing ever. He took us for rides to get milkshakes and he blasted his favorite Beatles’ cassette over the speakers in that car, much to the chagrin of all the cars around us.

On one particularly sunny day, we were playing basketball in the driveway and Mike surprised us with tickets to see *Disney On Ice: Beauty and the Beast*. More than the show itself, I remember the drive home after. The show was in Salt Lake City, and the drive back took about an hour, which was just enough time to get to my favorite song on my Uncle’s Beatles’ cassette. When “Yellow Submarine” began to play, let’s just say, my life was, in my opinion, completely perfect.

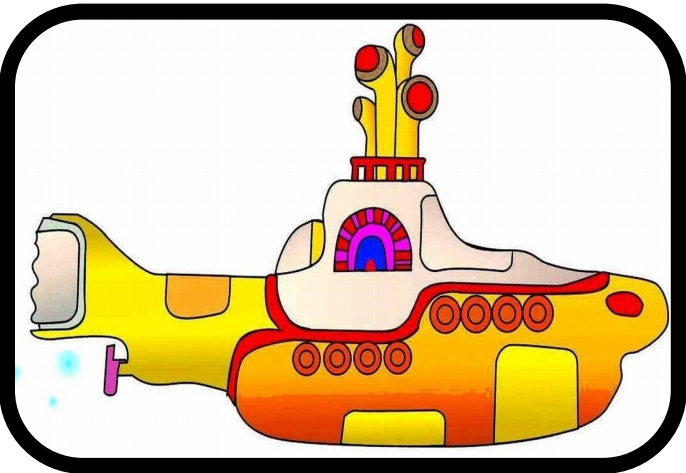
My sister and I were sitting in the passenger seat with the seatbelt stretched over both of us, and my uncle was drumming along on the steering wheel. We were singing our hearts out. I had on my Disney On Ice hat, and we were — without doubt — the coolest people on that highway. We came home and I got ready for bed, still smiling and humming that

little song about some friends who live on a yellow submarine, without a care in the world.

Music is universal. It comes in many different genres and languages, and has the ability to evoke powerful memories. It can affect us in so many ways. We listen to it on our way to work and while we run on the treadmill. We sing to it in the shower and in the car on the way to soccer practice. We dance to it in the kitchen when we think no one is watching. Music also has the power to trigger memories.

Everyone remembers the song playing on the radio when we

My sister and I were sitting in the passenger seat with the seatbelt stretched over both of us, and my uncle was drumming along on the steering wheel. We were singing our hearts out.



were first asked out to a dance. Not only that, but we can often remember every little detail that the song evokes in us. Smells, tastes, and sounds all trigger memories. Music does this because

the front section of our brain — called the restromedial prefrontal cortex — is the part that not only processes music, and also helps in memory retrieval. When we hear the tune of a song from our past, it seems as though our minds play the song back to us through memories that we associate with that song. Music allows us to seamlessly time travel. Whatever memory or feeling it may be, a song can preserve it in our minds.

So, why do some songs make a bigger impact than others? More than the song itself, the emotion and experience we have at the time we hear it, causes us to connect it with the memory and emotion we felt. It may be a feeling of happiness that caused us to connect a certain time in our life to a song. It may be sadness that connects us.

A few years ago, I was in my first car accident. It was one of the scariest moments of my life. I associate the song, “Battlefield,” by Jordin Sparks with that terrible moment. Whenever that song plays, my palms sweat and my pulse begins to race. It’s almost like I can hear the tires squealing and feel the fear begin to settle in the pit of my stomach. The song’s lyric mirrors how it felt to be completely powerless in the passenger seat of a car as it spun out of control.

Music opens a door to the past. It helps us remember who we are. It elicits those memories effortlessly. Wherever we’ve been and wherever we want to go, in just a few chords, or a few lines of melody, we’re right there. Again. No ticket required.

Technical Skeptical Larissa Venard

It was fun while it lasted, but let's face it, we're moving in different directions. We've grown apart. My priorities have changed. It's not you; it's me (but *really*, it is you). I miss the simple times when you were not in my life. You're just too oppressive, too controlling and you've ruined my life.

Delete profile.

This break-up is going to be a messy one.

It all started when I was young and naïve enough to fall for your social connections and prowess. I loved the idea of meeting new people and re-connecting with those whom I had lost touch. Eventually, the whole thing turned sour when I was 'friending' people in high school that I never spoke to, and to top it all off, I heard their status updates every five minutes. These consisted of trivial updates like: *going to the store*; followed by the even more frivolous: *went to the store*. I was alternating between iPhone, iPad, and MacBook because you enslaved me, and the thought of losing touch, even if for a moment, was devastating.

Since I cut you out of my

life, things have been a lot better. I feel free and independent. It's clear that you will never really leave my life since your siblings HDR, CG, LED, DSLR, and all the other acronyms are compulsively omnipresent. I can't go anywhere without seeing them and their



obsessive effects on others.

Welcome to the digital age.

While the allure of technology is something I think everyone can relate to, I also think that many people can also relate to the feeling that it takes over your whole life (if you let it). I am skeptical of its oppressive effects; I think that what we have made up for in convenience we have sacrificed in resourcefulness and imagination. And I always find myself asking, "*is it necessary? Do we need it?*" Now, I'm not necessarily saying let's all go

Thoreau, but in my book simplicity is a virtue that should be experienced by everyone at least once. I find it enriching to sit alone and think, even if it's about something insignificant.

Now when we think, thoughts aren't complete without sharing them via Twitter or Facebook. Call me crazy, but I think divulging every aspect of our lives leaves something to be desired. Furthermore, it appears as if many social media users have reduced their identity to their 'About Me' section. I miss the days when I would actually get to know someone by having a face-to-face conversation. I used to think that a dystopian society run by a single red light was a comical idea, but as my age's technology has progressed, I'm actually worried that it's not even a far-fetched idea anymore. Still, I think many people are happy with this dependence because it keeps progressing.

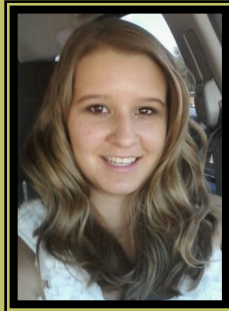
Let's agree to disagree; I'll take my paperback and you can have the e-book; I'll take 35mm film camera and you can have the DSLR; and finally, I'll take a genuine connection over one that requires a router.

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Contributors' Bios



Allie Desrochers is a native of Arizona from Cave Creek. She is a senior at Arizona State University majoring in English Literature, and plans on using her degree in a publishing and editing career. Outside of her love for reading and writing, Allie especially enjoys cooking, traveling, and spending time with her large family.

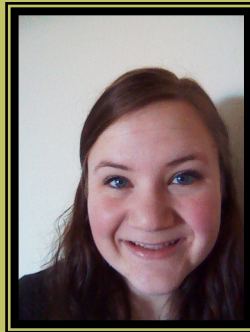


Hailee Axelsen will be graduating this May with a degree in English Literature. She enjoys travel, art, bubble gum, coffee, and hanging out with her dachshund. Her dream job would be writing for a fashion magazine or working as an actress.

higher education at Scottsdale Community College where he studied anything and everything from Psychology to Geology to Statistics. After receiving his Associate's Degree, he then took his talents south to Arizona State University.



Emily Anderson loves staying active with school, being outdoors, and spending time with her dog. As a senior at ASU, she has nearly completed her studies in English Literature while also working in the insurance business for several years. Even though she seems quiet, she actually enjoys some good rock music or an ATV ride through the desert with her boyfriend.

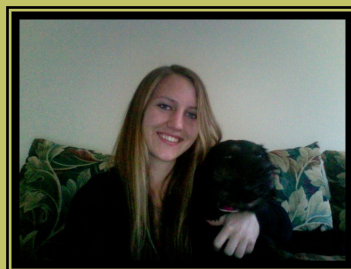


Miranda Myers grew up in Gilbert, Arizona, and is currently a junior at ASU. She is majoring in English Literature and hopes to pursue a career working as an editor or at a publishing company. Miranda enjoys reading, writing, and watching movies. She also loves to travel and spend time with her family and friends.

Mara Ray Michael is an English Literature major. Her writing has undergone many transformations over the past few years. She entered college with a decent amount of news writing experience under her belt, but her passion for fiction turned out to be too loud for her to ignore. She has since fully explored her imaginative power, enjoying every minute of the ride. When her head's not buried in a book, you can find her enjoying nature or looking for somewhere to travel. She's here to create, experience, and explore!



Chriselle Asuma-Irion is a junior studying communication at ASU. She has been published in Sheknows.com, an online magazine dedicated women's lifestyle and entertainment. Aside from spending time with her family and friends, her favorite hobby is participating in CrossFit. Her dream career would be to own a community based CrossFit magazine.



Larissa Venard is in her final year in the English Literature program at ASU. Upon graduation, she hopes to move to the East Bay area. She has two very fluffy fur children named Smokey and Sasha. In her free time, you can find her watching films or blowing glass.

Heath Harris will be graduating in the Spring of 2013 with a Bachelor's degree in English Literature and a Writing Certificate. He began his

Shavawn M. Berry, Managing Editor is also a writer and a poet. Her work has been published in *Poet Lore*, *The Cancer Poetry Project*, *Ebsco Poetry database*, *Westview*, *California Quarterly*, *Synapse*, *Poetry Seattle*, *Blue Mountain Arts*, *North Atlantic Review*, and *Concho River Review*. She teaches writing and editing fulltime at Arizona State University. Her blog, [Falling Into Wonderland](#), has thousands of readers throughout the world. *Kalliope* has been, and continues to be, a labor of love for her.



Kalliope: Beautiful Voiced

Mirror, Mirror Kenneth Showers

I was reading a book and one thing in particular jumped out at me: the fact that I wished I could read it again. Not like I was doing at that moment — a repeat read — but instead I wanted a chance to read it again without knowing what was about to happen. I wanted to read it like it was new to me.

I suspect that desire is rather common for most of us. Nostalgia can be a wonderful thing. That said, we can't live every day in our past. We need to live for now, to have fulfilled and productive lives, so that we can keep creating new memories, and giving those memories to others.

The alternative is a dark destination for the soul. If a person nothing good to look back on, that fact will color their future. Or worse, if they have no memories, how does that affect them? I recall a passage from *Harry Potter and the Philosophers Stone* (a book that conjures plenty of its own nostalgia for people) where Professor Dumbledore catches the young Mr. Potter in front of a mirror that reflects your hearts desire: the mirror of Erised.



That, I fear, is what nostalgia is, our desires in reverse.

Nostalgia is a culmination of what we've had, not what we could become.

Dumbledore notes that men have wasted away in front of the mirror. The same is true for people living in the past. The present is what it is. There's no sense in wasting tears on it. And by the same token, your future is what you make it.

So is nostalgia a kind of poison then?

No.

It's like a glass of fine wine. Drink one for your health, two for your memories.

However, if you subsist only on those memories then you become

drunk on nostalgia, and like any addiction, it will destroy you.

My advice? **Reminisce at your own risk.** Looking into the mirror of your past doesn't reveal what you actually face now; it simply reflects what you most desire your past to be.



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