

Some Pulp #18 - You Must Remember This: The Future of Nostalgia

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Welcome to Episode 18. I'm your host Bruce Edwards. In this special solo effort for *Some Pump*, we're going to be nostalgic, that is, we want to examine the phenomenon of nostalgia--and its connection to films, photos, music, tastes, and smells -- what it is, how it is, why it exists, and whether it is something good for us.

Topics:

- What is Nostalgia? What's its connections to Sentiment and sentimentalism, to memory itself? C. S. Lewis's "longing"/Sehnsucht
 - a. When I Grow to be a man/God only knows
 - b. Casablanca/A Christmas Story
 - c. Diesel/Beemanns' Gum/
 - d. That unnameable something, desire for which pierces us like a rapier at the smell of bonfire, the sound of wild ducks flying overhead, the title of *The Well at the World's End*, the opening lines of "Kubla Khan", the morning cobwebs in late summer, or the noise of falling waves.^[10]

- When did it arise in human discourse?
 - a. It begins with lost eden
 - b. Jesus crying for Jersusalem
 - c. Postwar, post-exile, post-era (postmodernism) - **off-modern**

- What are examples of it and its effects?
 - a. About returning home
 - b. Reminiscing not necessarily of a better time, but of a link to something in that time, maybe even painful
 - c. The existence of museums
Postcards retro -- gas stations, Howard Johnson's

- Is it inevitable? Is there a cure? Does there need to be?
 - a. Not inevitable if there is a resistance to memory--of affirming presence in the now, or constant novelty, certain kinds of music, tv, --

- b. 1950s fifties already affirming an alternative lifestyle; Bachelor Father, Occasional Wife, Yankee Doodle Dandy, The Fugitive,
 - c. No cure needed, but a wariness, a warning.
- The Future of nostalgia
 - a. Svetlana Bohm -- distinguishes between two kinds: restorative, reflective
 - **Restorative nostalgia** reflects a conspirational re-placement, a literal return to values, experiences, patriotism from another time and place--that all will be well with the return. It can be aggressive, coercive, totalitarian
 - **Reflective nostalgia** attempts to understand the positive feelings of security, a platform from which one can stand to see what was and what is to come without a necessarily a false innocence--it's more of a search for meaning in the present that is both radically attached and disattached. What Bohm calls not post-modern, but off-modern.
 - b. Rock and roll was a radical disjuncture, a break in sound, rhythm, instrumentation, loudness. The Beach Boys represented new ground as well but not as radical break, preserving but putting to new use the harmonies and choral arrangements of Four Freshmen, etc.
- Steampunk and retrofuturism

Show Notes

- Samples of Nostalgia: "We'll always have Paris," as time goes by
<https://youtu.be/zaAqze81y4Y>
- Academic studies
- Nostalgia and religion
- Nostalgia in movies, songs, places
- Kinds of nostalgia