

CALL FOR PAPERS

Edited anthology on Trans Identities, Childhood, and Nostalgia*

Nostalgia, as an affective reaction/experience, is often characterized by both pleasurable and anguished feelings of recollection, most commonly centred on an 'idyllic' moment one does not expect to replicate. Previous critiques and expansions of this definition made by (but not limited to) feminist, critical race, post-colonial, disability, queer, and post-modernist scholars have sought to disrupt the supposed universalism of nostalgia's affective characteristics in favor of establishing a more nuanced framework of interpretation. Though some literature has been published by trans* identified authors and scholars on the topic – Jay Prosser's *Second Skins* questions the transsexual's relationship to a bodily and emotional 'home'; while most recently in 2014 Jennifer Finney Boyle's piece, "I had a Boyhood, Once" featured in *The New York Times* – a concise investigative collection has yet to be compiled.

This anthology seeks to perform a necessary intervention into current conceptualizations of the nostalgic experience by calling attention towards the emotional responses trans* individuals have regarding the tenuous temporal space of childhood. For trans* individuals, childhood itself can often be a distinctly ambivalent time (bliss over the [a]gendered malleability of the pre-pubescent body, despair over not experiencing a socially and culturally normative 'girlhood' or 'boyhood') and may thus shore up a plethora of mixed emotions not commonly associated with the nostalgic experience. More over, for trans* individuals, the nostalgic response also implicitly evokes a unique teleology that disturbs properly gendered understandings of time (for instance, in the movement from 'girl' to 'man') and subsequently reorganizes measures of temporality in unfamiliar ways. To this extent, this collection works to unhinge our assumptions regarding the affective makeup of nostalgia while simultaneously reconsidering previous logics of time as they are tied to the sexed/gendered body.

Specific lines of inquiry include but are not limited to...

- What is 'trans* nostalgia'? What are its affective characteristics?
- In what ways do trans* individuals experience a 'boyhood' or a 'girlhood'?
- In what ways are desire and/or pleasure inherently at stake in the nostalgic experience?
- How does the trans* body via its defiance of strict, temporal linearity (growing for instance from 'boy to woman' or 'girl to gender non-conforming adult') disrupt the nostalgic experience, if at all?
- In what ways is the nostalgic response tethered to conceptions of trauma, particularly the trauma of ever-forward moving time (for example, from the harsh transition from child to adult)?

This collection, though primarily focused on scholarly submissions, is also interested in working with the ever-growing malleability of academic writing through the inclusion of autobiographical texts or creative material.

Interested participants should send a 500 word abstract, accompanied by a brief biographical note to Dan Vena (d.vena@queensu.ca) by March 16th. Accepted proposals will be contacted by April 20th. Completed manuscripts will be due by September 1st. Questions prior to the deadline are always encouraged.

Dan Vena is an avid storytelling and emerging scholar currently completing his PhD in Cultural Studies at Queen's University. He locates his academic interests primarily within the spheres of visual and popular cultures, merging together trans*, queer, and feminist approaches to a diverse array of topics including monstrosity, medical pathology, the sexually 'perverse', and comic superheroes. He has most recently been featured as a contributing author in *Manning Up: Transsexual Men on Finding Brotherhood, Family & Themselves*.