

The Chariot

Childhood Nostalgia

March 2021

Fashion and Nostalgia: The Unlikely Pair By: Lexi Polyak

A lot of us wore bright, colored clothing with busy patterns in the early 2000s. Looking back, you might cringe a bit, embarrassed by the wild clothing you wore as a child. This year, though, you might actually want to take some fashion advice from your younger self. Vivid, colorful clothing with unique patterns are predicted to be in style this spring. Fashion is finally taking a break from the cool, neutral tones we have seen so much of in the past decade. Wacky patterns, such as warped checker print, marble, and Hawaiian print are quickly growing in popularity. Crochet is also becoming an increasing popular material for clothing. Colorful knit pieces, as well as matching sets, will definitely be featured in spring of 2021. Halter tops are also on their way in for the summer, as they have been archived from the late 90s and early 2000s. Surprisingly, longer, baggier



denim shorts are becoming the favored option in terms of bottoms. Again, this is heavily inspired by fashion from fifteen and twenty years ago.

In terms of shoes, platforms are on their way in, as well! Chunky, colorful sandals have increased in popularity recently, serving as the footwear of choice. Thick jewelry, including statement rings and bigger chain necklaces, have also replaced more minimalistic pieces formerly worn by women. Colorful clay rings are trending on many social media platforms, too. This spring, fashion is straying farther away from its minimalistic past, and it is taking on a bolder, more vivid palette of colors.



Fancy Nancy: The Voice of a Generation **By: Riley Dauber**

Her first book hit the shelves in 2005. Written by Jane O'Connor and illustrated by Robin Preiss Glasser, the Fancy Nancy books inspired an entire generation to learn large words, travel to Paris, and express their inner femininity through fashion and attitude.

My first experience with Fancy Nancy, whose real name is Nancy Clancy (yes, her first and last name rhyme), was when I borrowed the book from the Wyomissing Public Library. I was entranced by Nancy's big words and larger-than-life fashion sense. In the first book, she tries to transform her family into the fancy people she wants them to be; her plans fail, but she learns to accept her family for who they are. After the first book, I knew I needed more Nancy in my life.

My favorite of the Fancy Nancy books was *Bonjour Butterfly*. Nancy's friend, Bree, is throwing a butterfly-themed birthday party, but Nancy is unable to attend because she is going out of town. As a child, I could relate to Nancy's struggles, and when she sulked around the house because she couldn't go to her friend's party, I felt that. I saw myself in Nancy, even though I wasn't nearly as fancy as her. I donned her pink tutu and leg warmers for Halloween in first grade, and searched bookstores for the next book.

Even though I have overcome my obsession with Fancy Nancy, the books and the titular character have left a lasting impression on me. I have many of the books, two Nancy dolls, board games, play sets, and any other memorabilia they were selling at the height of Nancy's popularity.

Another aspect of my obsession came with sending letters to the author, Jane O'Connor. With an interest in writing, I sought advice from Ms. O'Connor, and she replied to my letters with fun Nancy stickers

and sneak peeks. In one of my letters, I asked if Nancy had a middle name (I suggested "Fancy" as her middle name, because that's how much creativity I had as a kid). Sure enough, in the next book, Ms. O'Connor addressed the mystery of Nancy's middle name (she preferred the initial "M"). The same can be said for Nancy's sister, who was unnamed in most of the books. When asked in a letter, Ms. O'Connor told me her name was Jojo, short for Josephine. Nancy's sister is now referred to as Jojo, instead of going unnamed.

The Fancy Nancy books were an important part of my childhood. Not only were they some of the first books I read, but Nancy was the first character I could relate to. She had problems that most kids could relate to, and she always encouraged everyone to be themselves and express their femininity. Because of Nancy, I am never afraid to dress up, no matter how outlandish the getup is.

Nancy's popularity was not short-lived, however. A series of chapter books were released, followed by an animated show on Disney Junior. Have I watched an episode or two? Of course. When my family went to Disney World a month before the pandemic, did I wait in line to meet Fancy Nancy?

Of course. She even signed my copy of *Bonjour Butterfly*.



Being A PBS Kid

By: Ellie Folga

To anyone who watched PBS Kids television shows as a child, I'd like to take some time to journey back and appreciate the favorites that helped shaped each of us in one way or another. For those of us who did not have Disney Channel or whose parents did not allow it, I'm sure there were a few of us who were jealous or upset, wishing that we could watch what our friends were into. However, as a young child myself who was surrounded by other PBS lovers, I was okay with that.

One of my first memories regarding television shows was *Curious George*. If that does not ring nostalgia to you, I do not know what does. Whether George was living in the city or in the country, you knew that he would run into adventure with The Man with the Yellow Hat, Chef Pisghetti (do you remember him?), and Steve and Betsy. Not to forget the theme song, which plays in my head clear as day, as George pulls the white page from the corner as the song ends and the episode is about to start.

How about *Martha Speaks* and *Arthur*? I think if you watched PBS at all as kid, you have at least seen an episode of these once or twice. These shows were the PBS staples. As a kid, how cool was it to watch a talking dog on television, "who went ruff and ruff, and then she ate some alphabet soup", which practically sums up the show, curtesy of the theme song. From my memories of Arthur, this show always had something different to star each episode. DW and Buster remain two essential characters, next to Arthur of course, and as I write this the Africa song they sing from the show just emerged from the depths of my memory.

Now for some underrated favorites: *Word Girl*, *Fetch! with Ruff Ruffman*, and the one that never receives enough credit: *Cyberchase*. *Word Girl* was honestly a bit



scary as I remember it, but nonetheless a worthwhile show. *Fetch* was a phenomenal after dinner choice. I have a specific memory with this one, where in one episode, Fetch left the Golden Fetch on a dock, and the bad guys got hold of it. Pretty intense.

And now *Cyberchase* was absolutely fantastic for me as a kid. The theme song was extremely catchy and each character on that show had their own distinct personality. It was hard not to love Digit, and it was always fun to see Inez, Matt, and Jackie outsmart Hacker. *Cyberchase* remains supreme in my humble opinion.

With this next one, just go look it up if it sounds unfamiliar because I completely forgot that this PBS show even existed: *Maya and Miguel*.

Though PBS produced shows that were both entertaining and valuable, I think we can agree that *Calliou* takes lowest rank on the PBS scale. My youngest cousin once disagreed, but thankfully she's learned at this point. Oh, the reputation PBS acquired with that one. Thank you for taking this journey with me along the memory lane of PBS TV! I think us PBS kids could agree that life was pretty great on our side of the channels as well.

Hearts, Stars And Horseshoes, Clovers And Blue Moons. Hourglasses, Rainbows, And Tasty Red Balloons!

By: Sutton Daraneau

Above we see the slogan for Lucky Charms, which is, not so coincidentally, this month's topic. Not the cereal of course, but actual lucky symbols. Everybody has one, of course. It might be a lucky sock, ring, shirt, or whatever, but everybody has a lucky charm of some kind that makes them feel better when they wear it or have it on them. Those are more personalized, however. So, what about regional, even worldwide lucky charms, and why are they considered so lucky?

We'll begin with the easily most recognizable good luck icon: the four-leaf clover. Why is this symbol considered so lucky? To put it simply, the Christian Church wanted to indoctrinate more people. To put it considerably less simply, the patron saint of Ireland (St. Patrick) was lacking a symbol of his own, something that the Irish people would look at and be constantly reminded of their church. If you weren't aware, the hills of Ireland are absolutely coated in clovers. The four-leafed



part was to make it a bit more rare, I mean, supply and demand, right?

Next off is the foot of a rabbit, or more traditionally, a hare. This is where things begin to get a bit interesting. There are more than a few different reasons behind this belief. To begin with, some believe that, for the luck to hold, the rabbit must be killed a certain way. Some say that it must be killed by a silver bullet, or it has to be the back left paw, or must be killed over a grave. The idea is that the ritual brings about the luck in one way or another, and it's the process that's lucky, not the foot itself. Another reason the rabbit's foot is considered lucky is due to witches. More specifically, they would believe that a witch transformed into that rabbit. As anyone knows, a witch is innately magical, and thus having a piece of her on you is, in fact, good luck, and not practically begging her ghost to haunt you until the end of your natural life.

Moving on to the horseshoe, two main factors are playing into its luck. First and foremost is its composition. Surprise surprise, a horseshoe is made out of iron. For those who don't know, it is widely accepted that Fae and other magical entities hate iron with a burning passion, if you'll pardon the pun. Placing a horseshoe above the door is supposed to stop them from entering. The church is the other factor, an even bigger surprise that no one saw coming ever. Officially, one day the devil entered a smithy's shop and asked for a horseshoe for his horse. The smithy pretended not to recognize the devil and made him the horseshoe. Instead of hammering it into the horse, however, he hammered it into the devil, only stopping when the devil promised to never enter a house with a horseshoe over the door. Unofficially, this was already a tradition, and the Church went and said "oh look, me too, I also believe in

horseshoes. We're so similar. You should all worship Christ."

Last but not least, the number 7. Almost every casino has it up to their neck, and it's the focal point of so many games, so why is 7 so lucky? The answer is mostly unknown. One could look anywhere and everywhere in ancient cultures to see evidence of it. For instance, while there are 13 seats in Olympus, 14 deities reside within, 7 male and 7 female. In Egypt, it was a god's number. The pharaohs ordered things in 7s, and one was not even allowed to write this number down, it was considered so holy. There are 7 classical planets: The Sun, Mercury, Venus, Moon, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. Of course, Christianity needs to get involved with the 7 deadly sins and 7 virtues. Your cells are completely changed roughly every 7 years. Hinduism proclaims 7 chakras. There were considered to be 7 seas and 7 continents. Islam suggests 7 heavens and 7 hells. In Buddhism, Buddha walked 7 steps at his birth. European folklore states that the 7th son of the 7th son is increasingly powerful magic-wise. There are 7 days a week. 7 wonders of the ancient world. 7 notes in the diatonic scale. 7 colors of the rainbow. Why is it so common? They all come from different areas, right? Why is 7 so increasingly prevalent? It's begun to scare me. I have so many questions. 7 is also a prime number!

There we have it, the four most famous symbols of luck, as well as why they are lucky. As a quick summary: people make weird traditions, the Church stole everyone else's ideas, and 7 is an unknowable number both descended from the gods and risen from the depths of hell itself, allowing for us mortals to simply question why it is the way that it is. One looks out into the void and 7 stares back.

March Madness Is Back!

By: Harry Weiss

DISCLAIMER: You may be reading this after the first weekends games.

March Madness is back! After a yearlong hiatus due to COVID-19, the beloved NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament has returned. This year, teams will play in a bubble in Indianapolis, Indiana in a variety of courts. Few fans are allowed, but the madness of March will reign supreme up to the championship.

Of course, every year people spend hours perfecting what they think is the perfect bracket, myself included. March is always a hectic but exciting time of the year. Many people enter pools for money prizes or just bragging rights with family and friends. This tournament is one of my favorites throughout all sports.

The fan-favorites to win it all this year vary from Gonzaga, Illinois, and Baylor all of which are No. 1 seeds. Michigan, the fourth No. seed, has been the least picked of the top seeds to win the championship due to the Wolverine's late skid and loss to star Isaiah Livers. As a Michigan fan, it hurts to see a team this talented fall so late in the season. I do still think they will make a run to at least the Sweet Sixteen but they will have a tough matchup if they face LSU in the Round of 32. For Illinois, their hardest challenge may be Cade Cunningham and the Oklahoma State Cowboys. Cunningham has been sketched in as the first pick in the 2021 NBA Draft. However, I am a big fan of Ayo



Dosunmu and Kofi Cockburn. The Fighting Illini dominated in the regular season and are hitting their stride at the right time. Look for the Big Ten to dominate in March. It seems every year there is a top-ranked Gonzaga team that everyone raves over despite their weaker regular season. This year is different. Coach Mark Few has done a phenomenal job steering the Bulldogs to a perfect 26-0 record heading into the tournament. Gonzaga dominated the Men's All-American teams with Corey Kispert making First Team and the duo of Drew Timme and Jalen Suggs on the Second Team. I have a lot of faith in this Gonzaga team compared to those in the past and they are my favorite to win the championship. Baylor is another favorite as a No. 1 seed. With Jared Butler an All-American First Team selection and Davion Mitchell selected to the Third Team, the Bears have a high chance to make the Final Four with an easier side of the bracket. They are still rebounding from a COVID-19 spell, but the Golden Bears are built for March.

Some teams with a high chance to bust some brackets are the No. 13 seed Ohio Bobcats, No. 12 seed Winthrop Eagles, and No. 12 seed Georgetown to name a few. The classic No. 12 over No. 5 seed is once again in full effect this year. Winthrop faces a No. 5 seed Villanova Wildcats who are 0-2 without starting guard Collin Gillespie. I like the 23-1 Eagles over the Wildcats in this



one. The No. 4 seed Virginia Cavaliers are one of several teams that had to withdraw from conference tournament play due to COVID-19. They face the Ohio Bobcats in the first round who have an outstanding guard in Jason Preston. In multiple articles, I've seen Preston compared to NBA rookie LaMelo Ball. Preston does the same as Ball, averaging 16.6 points with 6.8 rebounds and 7.2 assists while shooting 40.8% from three. While I feel Tony Bennett can coach the Cavaliers to a win, I'm going with Preston and the Bobcats in an upset. Georgetown was probably the most unlikely team to make the tournament until they went on a run in the Big East and narrowly beat Villanova and crushed Creighton to win the tournament. The Hoyas will face the No. 5 seed Colorado Buffaloes who lost to Oregon St. in the Pac-12 title game. Many people will praise the Hoyas momentum heading into this matchup, but I feel strongly that Colorado will take this one with their veteran presence and efficient offense. This year, my personal favorites are Gonzaga, Illinois, and Baylor. Yes, I know they are all No. 1 seeds but I am confident that they are the best three teams in the tournament. Some of my preferred upset picks are No. 7 seed Oregon over No. 2 seed Iowa and No. 6 seed USC to the Sweet Sixteen and Elite Eight. I believe potential top three NBA pick Evan. Mobley can lead the Trojans deep into the tournament, even over I'm a fan of Eric Musselman's Arkansas team with Justin Smith and Moses Moody. In most of my brackets I have Arkansas heading to the Elite Eight and defeating Baylor to advance to the Final Four. I also like Texas Tech's chances to make a deep run to the Sweet Sixteen with Mac McClung dominating under Chris Beard's Red Raiders. One of my highly anticipated matchups from the first weekend is No. 6 seed San Diego State against No. 11 seed Syracuse. Jim Boheim's team is

always a threat in the tournament, especially when his son Buddy Boeheim is on fire from three. But, San Diego State has a phenomenal defense limiting teams to just 60.6 points per game this year, which is the eighth lowest figure in Division 1. It is safe to say I'm very excited for March Madness to be back.

Finally, the best time of the year is back. I'm already scratching my head over my picks and spending hours looking over data trying to make the perfect bracket. But of course, that is very unlikely. The odds of a perfect bracket is 1 in 9.2 quintillion... so yeah. Good luck. Per usual, there will be huge upsets over high seeds and some amazing finishes, which is what makes March mad. Rejoice everyone, March Madness is back!

POETRY

Childhood Nostalgia

By: Emma Seley

I left my consciousness that day
I left it all behind and moved away
They told me it would follow me
But I think I'm doing pretty well without it
I'm on fire

Watch me walk on water
And twist time between my warm ridged
fingertips

You wouldn't understand
I hate the color grey because of you
I think I'm mad at me
But it sure is easy to blame the one who
loves me

Stop the anxiety
Sweaty moldy stinky feet
The ones I used to run that day
The day my consciousness moved way

Childhood Nostalgia
What once was will never come again
Lemonade stands and sticky fingers
Arts and crafts and fraction flash cards

Growing up is hard
But the rocks I ran on the day I was nine
Remind me of stinky moldy feet
Yet it'll all be just fine



These Beautiful Things

By: Katie Schadler

I remember the sun.

That 93 degree heat overwhelming at first
but penetrating through our skin,
filling our bodies with just enough energy to
remind us that we were alive.

I remember the bike rides and the cookouts
and the games that started it all,
freeze pops melting in our hands, staining
our tongues the colors of blue and red.

I remember the made up dance and ice
cream truck runs and the life-altering
lemonade stands

relentlessly trying
but never succeeding in changing the fact
that

it has been you and me since the beginning
of time.

I remember your lawn.

How many fights we had there,
how many times I went flying back to my
house on my scooter crying 'cause you had
me so mad about

something ridiculous that I just can't seem
to remember anymore, forgetting that
you have truly been my best friend since that
night on the beach,
eating the soup and throwing sand in each
other's hair.

In fact, all of the fights seem like a blur,
all of them seem like insignificant specks in
time

diluted by the air of the night when we
 played music a little too loud,
 always a little too loud for the quiet streets
 of Wellington
 but we were so young
 and everything was so new
 and we would snack until all of the chips
 disappeared
 and we would jump until the deck
 would break
 and we would fight until all of us seemed to
 stop talking to one another yet again
 as if all of this didn't happen,
 as if we weren't writing history,
 weren't creating these moments in time
 captured by second-long videos
 reminding us all of our youth, before we
 became the people we are now.
 Before the world had the chance to strip us
 of our innocence.

Five years ago and so much has changed.
 We are messy and broken and finding
 ourselves
 but we are evolving into these beautiful
 things bound by a history that simply cannot
 be ignored.
 I remember the park.
 It was raining and we were playing that roof
 game we always did.
 We had just ordered Chinese food and it was
 great
 cause we had all become friends again
 and we were probably obsessed about who
 was dating who



and all of it was one big worry that had
 little to do with classrooms or common apps.

I remember the butterflies.
 So exciting yet real all at once,
 accompanied by late trips to Dunkin just to
 get free donuts at 9:30 PM,
 sitting in the booths and talking for hours as
 if the night belonged to us.
 As if all things moved in our orbit.

But mostly, I remember you.
 And that you have become this integral part
 of my existence,
 how you lay the very foundation of my
 childhood,
 the inner workings of our beautiful history,
 and in my dreams,
 I see you smile.

The kind of smile that bring the stars to their
 knees,
 I am so excited to watch you grow.
 Because we are growing up
 and growing out
 of who we used to be
 and out of old relationships and into new
 ones, but we will always have this.
 A moment in time.
 A split second in the grand scheme of life
 where we were young and impressionable
 and didn't have a year
 and a quarter left.
 A year and one quarter until we throw our
 caps in the air and
 put away a life that we have always known.
 The end of an era.

And to you it may seem like I am over-
 idealizing
 summers that were ordinary,
 memories that were nothing but good times
 and I probably am.
 But I cannot sit back
 and watch you overlook
 the magic we made,

the kind that was so powerful,
it could never last.

Because to me,
those days were nothing short of
spectacular,
and the nights were ours to keep.
But seeing you now,
the sun on your face
standing before me,
You have never looked more Glorious.