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Mosaic: A Lifetime of Poems

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Mosaic:

A Lifetime of Poems

Emma F. Bowen

Honors Project

Submitted to the Honors College at Bowling Green State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with
University Honors, April 2022

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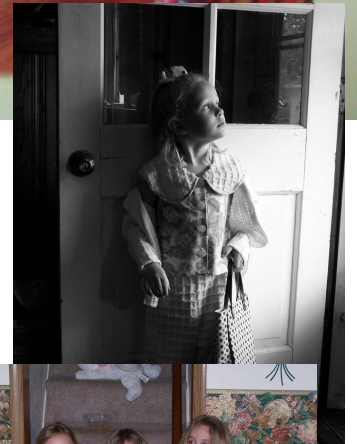
Introductions

Illustrations

Implications

Inspirations

INTRODUCTIONS



Overview

Upon nearing my graduation day, I found myself shuffling through old photos of myself and my family. Facebook is an endless archive of tagged adventures I had since forgotten. In the home of my small town near BGSU, there are a handful of dusty albums; the Bowen family library of time. I grew up with great parents, close friends, and fun experiences.

Reminiscing on fond memories and comparing them to my life now, I started to pick out similarities and key differences. Beginning my childhood with dreams of one day becoming a princess or working as a “dog fashion designer” has somehow morphed into earning my bachelors degree with the hopes of teaching psychology to college students. My grade school BFFs are now acquaintances on social media. My bleach blonde hair and tall middle school body has grown to resemble my dark haired mother. As I sat and thought about how glad I am to have met my partner and how I now fully fill out my denim jeans, I wondered if my parents had felt as I feel now.

Research Questions

My love for poetry and the written word began in the third grade and was reinforced when I earned the title of my school's "Royal Writer." My junior year of high school ignited the flame for my career in psychology. But during my four years here in university I've been applying my two interests to nearly every aspect of my life in tandem.

Thus, the idea for my creative research was decided. These roots planted in my past, along with the physical references to my time slipping by, were of great significance to my design. I wanted to explore varying voices across a developmental timeline through life. Using poetry as a lens to explore points of view, I created three questions to guide my creation:

- Why do we see the world so differently at certain points in time?
- As we grow older, what is so important that makes us shift how we view ourselves and our environment?
- It is often seen that each generation shares like-mindedness throughout their lives... Why?

ILLUSTRATIONS



Methods

Using developmental psychology as a framework for my research, I applied key themes, ideas, and wording through the use of various poetic forms.

12 previously written poems fell under each of my categories in which I wanted to explore. In these cases, I altered imagery and tone to better reflect that of the target speakers of each individual poem using elements of developmental psychology. In addition, I also created 3 new poems to include viewpoints from ages I was lacking in.

Using my psychological textbooks and journal articles, I edited my poems to better fit key lifestyle changes that the majority of the population encounters. I wanted my research and outcomes to be more applicable to a greater number of people.

I relied heavily on my past feelings to aid in writing childhood and young adulthood poems. Using some of my old diaries, I tried to keep certain words and woes as central themes to better encapsulate childlike nostalgia.

My parents, family, and friends proved to be excellent additions to my understanding of how different people perceive the same environment. This helped me shape a variety of voices and include thought processes that varied.

Poems

Daycare - page 8

I Wanna Be a Princess - page 9

Rite of Passage - page 10

An Ode to the Locker Room - page 11

Last Generation - page 12

Underdogs - page 13

Falling in Love with a Friend - page 14

Scent of Pine - page 15

Unspoken Tension - page 16

The Art of Gift Giving - page 17

Defense Mechanism - page 18

Home - page 20

Cream & Sugar - page 21

8:00 am - page 23

My Brother's Eulogy - page 24

Daycare

I'm in a sandbox
surrounded by buckets and shovels,
my toes wiggling and burying
themselves under damp grains
that slice sunburnt skin.
Overhead wood planks cast
rainbows, kisses of sunlight,
that shine on falling sand
from my skinny fingers.
The muffled tapping of Velcro shoes
hurrying up faded stairs
breaks my concentration.
Tapping that's replaced
by bouncing rubber balls
on a boiling blacktop.
My head swings to the loud
screech of the teeter totter
while children run around it
playing tag. In the distance
I hear sticky skin, pulled down
a steaming silver slide; Above me
are more taps as sand
particles flitter down
from the cracks in between
the rotting planks. I reach out,
catching some in my hands,
and sift it through my grasp
before it joins the rest,
like my future memories of this place.

I wanna be a princess

Glitter! Pink! Jelly shoes!
My favorite things
are b-e-a-u-t-i-f-u-l!

Today was show and tell
so I wore my new Cinderella dress;
I made so many friends!

Daddy tells me I'm the prettiest
girl in the world and Mommy let
me wear her makeup to prove it.

Tomorrow, I'm bringing my
furry sparkly diary to school.
My BFF will love it,

maybe she'll share her lip gloss...

Rite of Passage

Here's a special one for the books:
Make it a teenage angst.

Luminescent streetlamps
cast hazy hues on an unmade bed
through the open window.
Witching hour wind
carries spring pollen, dusting
satin curtains with earthy perfume.

She straddles a rotting wooden pane,
"Help me down." Clammy hands
meet cold ones, Converse meet dirt.
Mosquitos search for bare skin
and trail behind zig-zagged running
around barren roads.

Fleece blankets spread on a damp field,
developing bodies and temptations mix
with the first taste of vodka
on a school night. They stargaze on the walk
back, suppressed giggles amplify adrenaline.
Creaking floorboards fade to white noise.

An Ode to the Locker Room

You hold secrets in dark shadows,
whispers hidden by locked doors.
A hive mind's hideout
disguised in moldy showers and
memory matted tile.

The heart of the body,
gathering place of buff blood vessels
and oxygen-rich cheerleaders.
Separated cliches,
a right and wrong side. Student athlete
jocks delivering nutrients, income –
outcasted waste, nothing
but carbon dioxide to breath out.

Bouncing echoes off ceramic
walls, support system for rumors. Calcium
stained mirrors, bruised and bent
metal bones encircling protein
filled duffle bags.

You too hold first kisses, getaways
from third period. Vending machines
of school spirit and teenage angst,
packaged perfectly as carbohydrates
for a momentous youth.

Last Generation

Summer sunshine burns my skin;
reddened cheeks dotted with faint freckles.
Mom warns of melanoma,
the spots are no longer signs of youth.
Overheating at my core
just like Lake Erie – it reeks
of rotten fish and algae. Gone
are the summer camp swims
with baggy one-piece suits.
Winter snowmen around Wayne’s town
center barely standing tall before they melt.
No more “White Christmas;” a new tormentor
has come to town with nonstop hail pelting.
Snow days turn to snow weeks.
Blizzard baggies become teachers.
Autumn colors – once vivid in my yard –
are now muted and bland, greys coat the town.
Science class warns, “Take action now!”
But will I have a job, a family, a car?
Spring tulips bloom early, on guard
from critters awake too soon to back down.
Crop season is off, the soil is dry,
my neighbor’s field is cracked and desolate.

Planet Earth comes without strength to renew,
dying around me – what am I to do?

Underdogs

I'm not great at ultimate frisbee
but as captain of the team, I choose you,
the slowest person, first. I pick fruit

in produce by giving it a squeeze,
filling extra plastic bags
with the chronically bruised. The runt

of the litter comes home with me.
His mother doesn't pay him attention
but I've already named him Champ.

Bent bottle necks are the perfect
solutions to labeling your drink
at this weekend's BYOB party.

Sure, the curb appeal isn't great
but the foundation is strong, interior
beautiful. I don't mind a fixer upper.

I see myself in them.

Falling in Love with a Friend

A campus in the middle of October when my love for you grew steady as the maple tree leaves changed to amber.
The deep aroma of our shared coffee cup leaves whispers of desire on chapped lips, wet with stolen kisses.
I watched your eyes, the color of the nutty grounds, over the steaming brim leaving heated sweat on your wind-burnt nose. My infectious fascination in me is fueled by our brushing hands on brisk evening walks.
Will your feelings for me ignite, taking solace under a blanket for two, or will they fade, burnt out, forgotten under the looming December snow?

Scent of Pine

A lecture hall; laptop keyboard clicks send me reeling.
I hear a woodpecker, peck, peck, pecking at dry bark.
There are no forests for miles. I dreamed always

of a cottage and saw miles of trees running
along a river. A reading nook, a cable-knit sweater. Birds
through my window carrying bits of twigs

and a familiar song. The professor babbles like a cobblestone
brook. Oh how I long to be alone, noise soaked
up by dense trees, a frontier for wild thoughts. I'd love a place

with wildlife. My skin is poked with green
needles, feet brushing through bladed grass. I open
my eyes, fingers busy on keys. Even now forests
are alive and any one of them could be mine.

Unspoken Tension

I had been admiring you for a while,
Looking up
 and over
my lit-up laptop screen for the past hour.
In a dark room with
 space
 between us,
desks and a girlfriend between us,
we sat in silence - together.
You have condensation building
on your glasses, making it hard
to see what you're typing.
Fidgeting feet on carpeted floors,
a percussion of stress
I echo
 echo
 echo
with my own.
Hands entwined in your messy
hair, eyes focused down
on cheez-itz crumbs
and shredded paper bits.
I focus back to my computer,
back to my thoughts
and wonder,
have you been stealing glances
at me? Hiding your eyes
behind fogged lenses
also wishing
this conference room was smaller.

The Art of Gift Giving

My mother married a man with a low
credit score and rubber work boots.
Her wedding ring is polished and proper
but spotless shoes walk over a molding subfloor.

Growing up I had more clothes than closets
could carry. Christmas lists of name brands
and celebrity-endorsed products. I wanted more
than could fit in a childhood bedroom, upstairs
a packed storage unit leaking must-have stuffed

animals. I knew I was spoiled, and my mother.
Father couldn't say no to a pretty face
and snuggle time. He'd pick up extra hours
in the night. Savings cashed in for trips
to Disney World – we were making memories,

weren't we? Credit card debt and a low GPA;
Mom had an addiction. My father consoled her
but cut the plastic to shreds. She used paychecks
for purses instead. Our friends thought we fit in,
but we lived like hoarders late on rent. A middle-class

thing: validation from strangers. We are worthy
of something. We skip meals and thrift
with coupon books propped up in shopping carts.
A labyrinth of mother and father opposites
like two negative ends of magnets.

I give away my love in pieces
of my bank account.

Defense Mechanism

Psychoanalyzing friends
is my party trick.
I don't do it for practice
and it's not for their benefit.
Though I could showcase
my glowing feedback
in a gold-trimmed trophy case,
I'd see nothing but a coward
in the glass's reflection.

Is it too much to ask?
Wanting to uncover my traumas?
As if Freudian theories
were correct and I could blame
my fragile id and ego on a burning desire
to fuck my father.
No, I don't want to fuck
my father. I want to be seen.
Celebrate me, please. I'm good
at this. I must be,
what else do I have?

Therapy works for everyone
but me. I blame it on myself,
really, since it's all a game.
This 50-something year old woman
sitting tall, looking down
at me over her bifocals, jotting down
every piece of bullshit I spew
unaware that I know already
what my issue is. She never will.
That's it...
That's part of it.

As if I were some ethereal being,
more special from the others,
those poor souls I rip apart
for internalized entertainment.

I am a detective, uncovering
traumas so apparent it's embarrassing
to see these people so surprised.
They've yelled, cried, one even shook
my hand outside the bar bathroom
when I told him he was afraid
of being rejected.

I keep my thoughts neatly filed
in between my cortexes;
I've never been a diary girl.
If I wanted people to see me
I wouldn't hide behind a profession
that gives me superpowers.
I wouldn't need the rush of greed
that comes with being right – a
modern-day throne garnished
with worshiping clients at my feet.
It's not all selfish, is it?

Home

You have to read between his bruised knuckles.
Trust me when I say
his kisses soothe
all of my worries.
Lips on tender skin, hushing the stories
of my scars.
My bleeding-heart finding solace in
leaking eyes, soaking shared sheets
with unmatched devotion.
I feel safe in his strong arms
that so easily sweep me off my feet
and take my breath away.
The love I have for him is suffocating.
Admiration splattered on our white tile floor
tinted red with my fresh desire.
Keeping me company in my private paradise -
there will never be another for me,
he swears.
Until the day my last "I love you"
is choked out from my lungs.

Cream & Sugar

Hazelnut sweetener dries in a splotch on the spoon
and you pull your cup of cream and coffee
closer. Bright blue ocean eyes now glazed over,
dull and grey as the overcast sky
beyond the rain-covered window. Stapled papers
strewn about, ink smudged from dripping tears.

Remember back to your favorite shirt, a tear
in the sleeve. She turned over every fork, knife, spoon,
until a needle appeared. Mom mended the hole while paper
mache flowers littered the kitchen table. She sipped coffee
with creased brows, reflecting an Easter egg sky
from the lens of her glasses, one stitch leftover.

Then it was summer. You couldn't have been a day over
seven. Her soft arms embraced you as the first tear
fell at the sight of a bloody knee. Hot pavement under a sun-filled sky,
wheels still spinning. She carried you in, grabbing a spoon
from the drawer and a pint from the freezer. Coffee
flavored; her favorite. Waste basket of crimson tissues and paper.

The two of you sipped autumn squash soup from spoons
and stomped acorns and twigs falling from the sky.
She wore her hand-me-down flannels, head tilted under paper
lanterns, whispering wishes. You shared roasted coffee
on morning drives. At night you burned crispy s'mores over
bonfires, flames nipping at fuzzy eyes; nostalgic tears.

Mid-January when the stack of college papers
came; you decided to wait and celebrate over
dinner. Breakfast for every meal, paired with hot coffee.
Waiters brought syrup and butter while you tore
open the acceptance letter, bumping excess plates and spoons.
She still smiled while watching the sunset sky.

In the spring, she ignored her sky
high temperatures and the junk mail, papers
piled up from winter; even as you spooned

her cereal into her quivering mouth, spilling over
chapped pale lips into the bowl. And with a single tear
she said, “My love, bring me a cup of coffee.”

It smells different here, not the same coffee
from home; wet like the storm cloud sky.
They poke her arms with needles, tearing
soft skin. Medical bills and hospital papers
shoved to your chest. She is shaking, swallowing
green jello from a plastic spoon.

Local newspapers stained with coffee
rings. Your hand still swirling the spoon
as the sky opens overhead and you, alone,
return home.

8:00 am

Lawn clippings caught
in the folds of my shirt
flit down on the kitchen island,
peppering Mom's china
in mossy scraps.

I lift my baseball cap
and hang it in the coat closet,
minding the tear
in the seam behind its
sun-faded Buckeyes logo.

My knees don't work
like they used to. After
my accident in 67'
these oak stair railings
are my saving grace. Lord,

if Mom goes before me...
There's no point
in putting a fancy chair lift
on the wall. Golly...

There'd be no point.

My Brother's Eulogy

Uncle Art used to draw under our maple tree
behind the pond; colored pencil shavings
mixing with the acorns and twigs.
Once he brought a baby squirrel
into the dining room during dinner,
cause it was choking on the wooden litter.

Our mama whooped him so hard;
told him, "Art! Now, you bring me
a switch. And don't you never
bring no rodent in here again, you hear?"
Boy that shut him up real quick.
That squirrel, though? We kept him.

Frisky Koosky Loosky - that was his name.
Don't ask me how I named him,
that was Art's doin. We put Frisky
in a broke down cereal box - fed him
mighty good nuts, too. Art trained
that squirrel like a dog, taught

it to beg and sit on his shoulder
during family time. That was Art;
always including erybody.
He made sure all the kids had presents
at Christmas. My girls giggled
when he'd say, "Come here lassies,

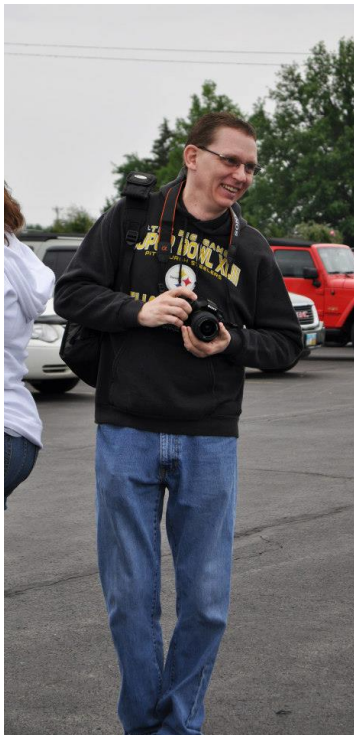
come get your hair bows." The
grandkids loved him too. Yeah,
he might not have been all there
these last couple years but gee,
He still remembered the time we
raced our sleds down a mud hill

after school and he caught his fingers
in the metal bits. I couldn't stop
laughing; he told me I was next!

Art was a goofball if I ever knew one.
A pain in the butt and my best friend,
may God bless his soul.

Amen.

IMPLICATIONS



Results

Once completed, my collection consisted of 15 poems; 2 centered in childhood, 7 on young adulthood, 4 on middle adulthood, and 2 on later adulthood.

Responses to Research Questions

- Why do we see the world so differently at certain points in time?

Developmentally, humans are slowly more capable of taking in more of their environment and applying critical thinking skills to the world around them as they age and progress. Although this may seem like common sense, it's important to note that certain ages are incapable of understanding basic functions or physics. Think of babies when playing peek-a-boo or "I've got your nose!" Now consider toddlers when they first ask where mommy or daddy goes when not with them. The same logistics can be applied as we mature, older and older, with different aspects of life and emotional capabilities.

- As we grow older, what is so important that makes us shift how we view ourselves and our environment?

This question was harder to pin down, as a variety of cultural, economical, emotional, and societal impacts plays a role in defining it. An overall way of answering this question comes from the typical life progression. As a child, we are not old enough or mature enough to handle responsibilities.

Therefore, children are able to be imaginative, have fun, and focus on social skills. Maturing a little more, we are taught to speak for ourselves, learn from those around us, and apply our skills to a club or sports. The idea of teamwork is heavily enforced and sought after. Stemming from this is friendship and intimacy. We start to understand ourselves more and seek out positive qualities in others, to round our personalities out and feel better when surrounded by others. Once we hit adulthood, we gain a drive that was absent when younger. We see adults around us working hard, earning recognition, and sustaining their lives. We, again, want to apply learned skills and make a difference or contribute to the environment around us. Depending on cultural and societal views, we start to wonder what life would look like with larger career, family, and social lives. Pushing the boundaries of the familiar, we set out in search of something exciting and intriguing. Later adulthood is a continued reflection of gains from the past, as well as educating those around us. There is no greater feeling that looking back and seeing how far you have come, and allowing those you care about to do the same as they learn and build in their own way.

- It is often seen that each generation shares like-mindedness throughout their lives...

Why?

Considering my grandparents and the older generations, it was clear to me that society plays a clear role in shaping generations and familiar trends and norms. Although, my generation also has noticeable trends. From my research on psychosocial

predictors and societal influences, I found that generations tend to remain similar in viewpoints and morals because people aren't too comfortable with change. During our middle adulthood, we further strengthen who we are and who we surround ourselves with. Younger adulthood opens us up to new experiences and how the world really is, but we have the power to shape more of our future when a little older. However, we become so accustomed to what we know and who we enjoy being that into later adulthood, we become more stagnant on average. We hold onto older ideals that younger generations don't utilize anymore. In addition, I found that technology and society moves at a more rapid pace as time goes on, which aids in older generations becoming lost more easily. Each generation is grounded in their own pace and way of doing things because that's the way it was always done. We tend to mature at the same pace as others of our own age. And as the world and climate changes as time goes on, overarching ideals, values, and thoughts are bound to as well.

Strengths

Being a psychology major proved to be of great value when working on this project. Coming into my research with a solid understanding of psychological phenomenon and terminology aided in my research and application of theories.

My minor in creative writing was the inspiration for this project - I wanted to do more with poetry than my classes were giving me. I had the drive and passion to create something and push myself. In addition, my copies of poetry books and collections were useful in drawing ideas from, or challenging myself to learn new techniques in my writing.

The Honors College, as well as this Honors Project, allowed me to gain experience with setting my own goals with faculty, seeking out research I was interested in, and creating a template for completing a creative piece of work. Unlike other classes and assignments, this project helped me discover my strengths and weaknesses in finishing material and taught me the importance of discipline, communication, and research.

Limitations

Perhaps the most obvious limitation to the validity of these poems is my age and lack of experience past early adulthood. Being a twenty-two year old college student holds great privileges, but obviously limits my capability to write from the perspective of an older individual.

Coming from a middle class white family able to afford schooling and extracurriculars also limited certain struggles that many other people have to deal with. Again, this made it difficult to accurately represent certain themes.

Time and energy proved to be of great difficulty to combat. As a senior with many responsibilities and deadlines, I did not write or edit as many poems as I had originally planned and hoped for. At the start of my honors journey, I had wanted to physically publish a book of poetry - it turns out that earning a degree, working a job, and juggling a social life takes its toll and forces you to prioritize.

Self-doubt is a burden in itself but it adds greatly to writers' block. With creative writing as my minor, and with no plan to pursue it further in graduate school, my poetry skills are lacking from my perspective. I can often criticize my writings too harshly. Although I believe in constantly editing and improving a piece of work, too much of a good thing can be detrimental.

The Future

Although I do not plan on continuing my education in the creative writing realm, I do want to keep my passion for it alive. Therefore, I hope to continue my cleaning of the poems in this collection. I believe that this project and its themes within are important, interesting, and worthy of further exploration.

As I grow older and add new adventures, ideas, values, and morals to my arsenal of memories, I want to also grow my poetry. I will no doubt meet new people that inspire my writings further, especially in lifespan development.

If I were to recreate this project or add onto it, I would allow myself more time and incorporate interviews of a variety of different people. I have found over the course of my research and writing that it is important to give voice to different individuals. I want to do justice for others' stories.

INSPIRATIONS



Literature Review

Detailed below are elements of each poetic and psychological source I was inspired by or used in my work.

Depression & other Magic Tricks - page 35

Poets on prozac: Mental illness, treatment, and the creative process - page 35

Happy, okay?: Poems about anxiety, depression, Hope, & Survival - page 35

Turning points and transitions: Perceptions of the life course - page 35

Self-perceptions of aging and control of life in late adulthood:

Between-person and within-person associations - page 36

Catechesis: A postpastoral - page 36

Blud - page 36

Ariel - page 36

Don't let me be lonely: An American lyric - page 36

The end of the alphabet - page 37

Women on the River of Life: A Fifty-Year Study of Adult Development - page

37

Anne Sexton: The complete poems - page 37

Life reflection: A Social-Cognitive Analysis of Life Review - page 37

Turning points and lessons learned: Stressful life events and personality trait development across middle adulthood - page 38

Turning points and developmental change: Subjective and "objective" assessments - page 38

Executive function and subjective well-being in middle and late adulthood - page 38

Depression & other Magic Tricks

This collection of poems follows a speaker struggling with depression, family issues, and self-worth. I applied themes present in this book to specific poems of my own, mainly based around teenage and young adult years. This author also writes about love and daily life, touching on the good parts of life as well. I used this duality and kept it in mind when writing characters. Similar to my own life, I wrote about points in time where I struggled with conflict and felt intense ups and downs.

Poets on prozac: Mental illness, treatment, and the creative process

This author compiles a grouping of distinct voices that each share their own story, while having overlapping and underlying themes throughout. Focusing on the influence of mental illness on artistic endeavors, this book offers up the idea that madness is a gateway to creativity.

Happy, okay?: Poems about anxiety, depression, Hope, & Survival

This book of poetry was useful when writing about darker themes and struggling speakers. Such heavy topics are important to talk about and explore the effects on a person, which this book does. I used these craft elements in my own writing, and applied them to personal memories and experiences with the hope of connecting more to different speakers.

Turning points and transitions: Perceptions of the life course

This research takes two different cultures - American and Japanese - and explores the differences it can make on perceived turning points in life, as well as what life means in general. The authors seek out both similarities and differences between the cohorts that carry across the cultures and are seen as norms. Overall, the common experience of growing up and growing up transcends the familial and cultural differences.

Self-perceptions of aging and control of life in late adulthood: Between-person and within-person associations

This study wanted to see the correlations between self-perceptions of aging and control of life as people aged. I used this research to aid in my inner-feelings of middle and later adulthood voices that may perceive their experiences differently than I do.

Catechesis: A postpastoral

This book explores what it means to grow up as a young woman. Themes of gore and nature emerge to form the overarching theme of feeling like you're in an apocalypse. The author includes mentions of sexual harassment, puberty, and self image.

Blud

This book is a unique collection centered around things that are inherited. I applied it to my writing and understanding of certain personality traits or ways of thinking. The author is interested in blood/family, mental illnesses, and trauma, all of which can be turning points in a developing life.

Ariel

This collection of poems showcases a dramatic shift in character of the author based on previous works. Detailing powerful mental emotions, female empowerment, and nature's overwhelming power, the author details confessions and thoughts felt at the time.

Don't let me be lonely: An American lyric

This book takes a unique look at civil unrest and toxins from within politics. I referenced this to aid in my writing of multiple age ranges and themes within them. The author uses multimedia, poetry and photography, to detail grievances felt across a country.

The end of the alphabet

I used this book to draw on themes of grief. This poetry collection focuses on loss and despair, which is something I am not as familiar with. Especially when writing from the perspective of older adults, this book came in handy.

Women on the River of Life: A Fifty-Year Study of Adult Development

Perhaps the most influential of my sources, this book includes interviews and data from over 100 women in their twenties, forties, fifties, sixties, and seventies. I utilized sections of this book to aid in understanding women as they grow and mature, as well as how their goals change over time. Not only did this source help me to describe changing thoughts and feelings, but also emotional challenges and physical issues that I relayed in my writing.

Anne Sexton: The complete poems

Sexton creates a variety of poems, all with a raw intensity that feels real. I applied her craft skills to my poetry, specifically with darker topics. Many of her poems center around addiction, suicide, and other real topics many don't have the courage to talk about openly. Her poems helped me see into the darker points in a life that would certainly sway how someone lives.

Life reflection: A Social-Cognitive Analysis of Life Review

In this research article, the author is exploring what life review looks like at each age during development. Individuals of all ages self-reflect and seek out insight about themselves that help to shape what they want to become. It can be both amazing and taxing, so this author studies the effects of sharing life reflecting with another person to ease stress.

Turning points and lessons learned: Stressful life events and personality trait development across middle adulthood

This article compares traits of neuroticism and conscientiousness in adults who had faced a hardship in their life recently. The authors ask how each participant viewed their hardship and whether or not it was a "turning point" or a "lesson." Based on how each participant answered, it was more clear which personality trait they had gained more of and were taking into the next stage of their life with them.

Turning points and developmental change: Subjective and "objective" assessments

This author explores self reports of turning points in a life as well as changes in self concept and well-being. Using self-defined turning points, the research was able to examine different dimensions of psychological well-being and how stable it would be over a lifetime.

Executive function and subjective well-being in middle and late adulthood

This research was kept in mind when writing poems I didn't necessarily understand or experience. The authors wanted to study well-being later in life as determined by life situations and experiences, such as psychosocial predictors.

Memories

A significant amount of credit is due to my personal memories, on my own and with others. Without acknowledging my experiences, I would not have been able to connect as deeply to this topic or area of study.

A majority of the poems in this collection were written using my personal feelings, emotions, and circumstances. I attempted to remember what certain events elicited in my mind, and build more thoroughly onto these thoughts.

People

A significant number of individuals close to me made an impact in this project and in each poem. Especially in poems that were not written from my experiences or point of view, others in my life inspired the context and content.

Perhaps the most significant individual who played a role in my writing and researching was my mother, whom I become more similar to each day. I see qualities from her life bleed into mine, and imagine poems inspired by her life to one day reflect mine as well.

My father, who gives every ounce of his energy into being a dad and husband, challenged me inadvertently to write intricate details of a parent who never got to be a kid.

My grandparents provided me with a late adulthood lens (unaware to them) that became vital to my understanding of writing from an elderly standpoint. Seeing them interact, hearing what they said to their adult children, and watching them during interactions with their toddler grandchildren put into perspective their thoughts and feelings I was previously not concentrated on.

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