

Editor's Note

“When I was younger,” Mark Twain once wrote, “I could remember anything, whether it happened or not, but I am getting old, and soon I shall remember only the latter.” Is to get old to forget? As our faces wizen with age, do our memories likewise contract? Or, is to get old an opportunity to reflect? If we cannot remember the details with meticulous accuracy, can we at least mull them over, discuss them, debate them, and argue them?

When I was younger, I couldn't remember anything. In my youthful haste I would gloss over facts. I was almost disdainful of details. They were insignificant, I was petulant, we had an understanding. It became quite clear as I grew older that this understanding was not a fortuitous one. I struggled to recall highlights of the previous night's Blue Jays game. I had trouble remembering names of characters in films and novels. Perhaps that's one of the great benefits of old age: as we slow down physically, our attention spans expand and we pay greater attention to the smaller things.

I write this while in transit to New York to visit what could be my home in the immediate future. There is no better time to reflect than sitting in a quiet airport terminal on flight delay. Time is slow and patience must be adopted by creed. It seems fitting that as I get ready to embark on the next part of my life, indeed as I get older, I am forced to stop, and thus compelled to reflect. But I am choosing not to grow wistful as ten undergraduate essays sit before me, reminding me of the last four years of my life. Not only are these essays tools for reflection of my own undergraduate experience, they *are* reflections, reflections of what university is all about. They exude intellectual vibrancy, investment and sustained belief in an idea, and staunch dedication to a craft. They reflect a love for history. They are reminders of the beauties of the experience, the good and the bad (if there ever were any): the stale-coffee breath at 2 a.m.; the parched, de-hydrated lips; the hopeless, depressed pacing; the camaraderie with fellow students; the sudden burst of creativity; the self-fulfilling triumph of completing something to be proud of. Regardless of how old I am, these things I'll always remember.

I hope the following essays will help you remember them too.

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