

Vol. 8 Issue IV

# Analogue Dialogue

A Newsletter of the

## Digital Natives with a Cause? Project

We have this notion that progress exacts its payment with sacrifice. Each generation that embraces newer gadgets and devices, laments the loss of the 'good old days', when things were simpler, easier and cheaper. We participate in this mass act of sacrifice through nostalgia, intermittently and with others of our generation. Elders look at kids today with a reminiscent gleam, shaking their heads in bemusement that today's children would never know what they have lost, including the ingenious way in which we used a pencil to loop an unruly audio cassette! (Page 2: **Adolfo Fitoria**, Being Human in a Digital Age)

Not necessarily looking down their noses but not buying into this nostalgic spiel of their parents and grandparents, the younger lot eagerly adapt to the gleaming pods and pads, the Zwyper way of texting, the funky mobile-phone lock patterns, the multi-tabbed existence of listening to music whilst chatting with three friends on messenger and catching up on a Monday morning presentation on Ms Excel – it's a uniquely digital native trait? (Cole Flor, Visual Monologue, Page 1) Certainly not! Back in the 70s, my mother did her school work while watching television, sharing gossip with her classmates and handling household chores in between. We might be using the @ symbol to chat with just about any person online, but the way to someone's heart is through a postcode on

paper and envelope (Mumtaz Nazim, Page 6). Of course, the stuck-to-my-swivel-chair generation have it a tad easier as alt-tab comes to their rescue for multi-tasking.

But I sense wonderment from the previous generations for all these 'digital' practices. They don't seem to think of mobile phones and texting as extensions of modes of communication that existed in altered forms earlier. For them, it's a clear divide. When someone totally new to a web camera and video chat sees the 'real-time' face of the person on the other side of the screen, the sense of astonishment is palpable. Digital Natives might act all cool and go, 'Oh come on grandma, it isn't rocket science', but it can't be denied that along with our grandparents, we too feel a sense of wonder that it's even possible to do such things. After all, *'Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic'*, right? That's science-fiction and fantasy writer Arthur C. Clarke for you. This and other quietly confident quotes pepper the What Say section overleaf.

In experiencing this analogue – digital wonder, it's clear that there isn't a divide so much as continuity in the timeline of technology. The scale of inventions has not really leaped, so much as mutated. We had Twitter and Facebook back in the B&W era (remember notice boards, community centers and pamphlets?); they just weren't so instant, hyperlinked and global in scale. We

still use the medium of a mouthpiece and speaker to talk to each other long distance, the difference is in the changed aesthetics of the 21st century – it's all squarish curves and scratch-proof glass that are more appealing today. Blackboards, writing material, listening devices and memory aids have undergone unprecedented transformations of function and usage, but it's still about having a blank canvas to write upon with a chalk, pen, paper or iClick (Page 5, Reverse Engineering).

Moving beyond the analogue-digital paradigm, we are confronted with things of value and junk. We live in an age of versions, upgrades and sixth-generation gadget releases and when a device reaches the end of its life-cycle, it's considered junk; a generation later, it's obsolete! But there is a scale of value even here as one man's junk becomes another man's 'limited edition collector's piece'. As a history major, it's fascinating to understand the process through which museums – particularly a museum of technology – would classify and contextualize the devices and gadgets of a generation and not qualify them as junk. How do they place value on objects that are obsolete for the next generation? Samuel Tettner makes an engagingly emotional point when he delves into his father's penchant for hoarding (Page 7) and Noopur Lily, a thorough digital native "brought up on floppy disks and CDs" finds herself in a love affair with the analogue

camera and the unique photography technique called Lomography (Page 8).

As it stands, housing obsolete objects in a museum and feeling nostalgic for obsolescence is a uniquely analogue-digital habit. It's those of us who were born post 1940s, who first got a glimpse of analogue technologies. They are now in their 60s and happily taking to digital devices like a caterpillar shedding its skin to try the new trajectory of a butterfly; they can trace the progress we have made, the leaps in imagination mastered by scientists and technologists, and at the same time, they temper their excitement with caution. There's is not the shocking pleasure of a cold, deep sea dive, it's more of a leisurely ferry boat ride that pauses at the right scenes and speeds up when there's a sight to be devoured!

Hope this issue of the Digital Natives with a Cause newsletter evokes a sense of newness in the way you look at everyday objects. Once upon a time, that piece of paper that you consider old school, was the most advanced technology for one of the world's earliest civilization.

Happy Flipping!

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November 2011

Cover Page Photo Courtesy: Jeroen van Loon @  
<http://www.jeroenvanloon.com>



Say what?



Before the iPod I used to lug a huge 500-CD case with me wherever I went. Man those were the days - @marksluckie via Twitter

@ikepicone via Twitter: "For my 1y old daughter, a magazine is an ipad that does not work"

Samuel Tettner: another one is how you point to your wrist to signify time, it made sense when people carried wristwatches, but more and more people just use their cellphones and time-telling devices

Carolina Flores Hine: I was thinking yesterday about the expression "picking up the phone". In spanish we say "answering" but in english "Do you still use "to pick up"? In Costa Rica, there's an expression that goes like "I must change mi cassette" in order to change some kind of pre-programmed way of acting... It's weird to hear teenagers saying that, because some of them have never seen a cassette!

"Fooling around with alternating current is just a waste of time. Nobody will use it, ever." Thomas Edison, 1889

"What can be more absurd than the prospect of locomotives traveling twice as fast as stagecoaches?" The Quarterly Review, March, 1825

"A rocket will never be able to leave the Earth's atmosphere." New York Times, 1936

"The Americans have need of the telephone, but we do not. We have plenty of messenger boys." William Preece, British Post Office, 1876

"Airplanes are interesting toys but of no military value." Marechal Foch, Professor of Strategy, Ecole Supérieure de Guerre, 1904

"Telephone" has too many shortcomings as a means of communication. It is inherently of no value to us." Memo at Western Union

[TV] won't last because people will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night." Darryl Zanuck, 20th Century Fox, 1946

Do you realize if it weren't for Edison we'd be watching TV by candlelight? - Al Boliska

If it keeps up, man will atrophy all his limbs but the push-button finger - Frank Lloyd Wright

Television is a medium because anything well done is rare - Fred Allen

The Internet is a telephone system that's gotten uppity - Clifford Stoll

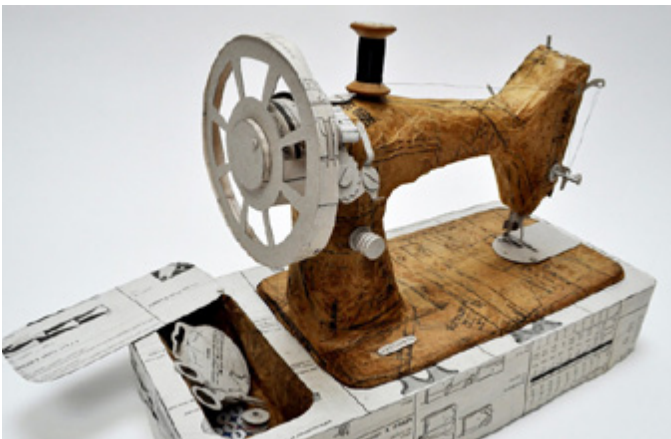
The typewriting machine, when played with expression, is no more annoying than the piano when played by a sister or near relation - Oscar Wilde

James Mlambo: Just sent my details for the Digital AlterNatives books. It will never be a paperless world. Anyway, looking forward to my first postal letter in two years!

VISUAL MONOLOGUE



There was a time when dinner time conversation was dominated by the chatter of voices and the battle of spoons and plates. It was called quality time. Today, quality is judged by the number of activities you accomplish while catching a bite - eating is incidental, the tasks aren't. Two decades ago, we got hooked on to TV dinners and kids were lulled to sleep with the fading sounds of Mickey Mouse. Today, the last thing our eyes see before we hit snooze is the comforting white screen of the Smartphone. The more things change, the more they remain the same? Photos by Cole Flor.



UK-based Jennifer Collier crafts these impeccably detailed devices using cardboard, thread, and road maps."I tend to find items then investigate ways in which they can be reused and transformed; giving new life to things that would otherwise go unloved or be thrown away."

Being Human in a Digital Age



Adolfo Fitoria

We are living in a world of changes. As somebody said, "change is the only constant", and this quote wasn't by Steve Jobs, Bill Gates or somebody from our generation or even this millennium. This quote is from Heraclitus of Ephesus, a Greek philosopher who was born in 535 B.C. (approximately). The difference is that change in our time is happening very quickly. Nowadays we're almost always online. If you look back a few years, this wasn't the way our life played out. Today, we do almost everything through our web browsers - eat while chatting, listen to music and read at the same time, talk to our friends, shop. When was the last time you sent a hand-written letter to someone important, even official letters for that matter? Do you make it a habit even now of visiting your library to look through the huge encyclopaedias?

This change is not at the personal or individual level; businesses, corporations, government and society have all been transformed by this shift from the analogue to the digital way of doing things. The most visible example is the media. Print media concerns like the newspaper, magazines and related supplements are having a hard time competing against the timely content churned out by the online media.

I really love printed newspaper and magazines and in my opinion they still offer a better reading experience, however, once paper is printed

it cannot be updated. Another media outlet, television has already gone digital. Radio is the only mass media communication tool that has managed to stay afloat in both the analogue and digital spaces.

Let's think for a moment: a baby born in 2011 won't really be expected to grow up reading news and information via a newspaper, right? Her love for reading would probably be encouraged on the iPad or other digital reading devices. TV would also seem outdated for a child born in 2011, as they would be more into Live TV online, gaming or digital immersive environments like Second Life.

The medium through which we understand and take in all this media information is our language. I'm a native Spanish speaker. These days most of our words related to technology are foreign to my language; they are English words that are constantly integrated into our culture. The new forms of communication - chatting, texting, Liking - tend to modify the way we write in our native tongue. We make use of shortcuts, abbreviations and slang that are almost unclear for people that do not live online that much and are not comfortable in English as a first language.

In summary, I don't have a crystal ball with me to predict how life will change in the coming decade. We can anticipate extensive changes in the way we do work and connect with people, and Google and other giant search engines are here to stay, playing a big role in human connection. A lot of things might change and some will still stay old school because even with all the technology, you cannot totally give up human interaction for a machine. In many ways right now, the world needs to become more human and this will be the relic that we should not change.

"I would personally feel that the biggest analog relic in the digital age is the human body. Where are all the promises of becoming cyborgs? where is my wearable remembrance divide? Why is my information and my devices more mobile than I am? The digital turn was supposed to rescue us from the mortality of our biological weariness, and yet here we are, trying to forget that biological weight by accessorising through technologies. Where is the digital body? And what shall we do with this fiercely analog self?"

Nishant Shah

NEWS & FEATURES

FAX is out



The facsimile machine, used to transmit documents over telephone lines, has seen little improvement since it debuted in the mid-1970s, when optical scanning, modulator and acoustic coupler technologies all came together.

The process is fairly basic, and shouldn't have lasted into the Internet Age almost unchanged. Somehow, though, the fax machine has managed to survive. Via: <http://bit.ly/nUuAQA>

Hanging on the Telephone:



Technological Relic

To my mind, the telephone amplifies and enables too much emotion. Calls are fundamentally rude and invasive. The premise from the start of telephony has been to drop everything you are doing and respond to that obnoxious ring.

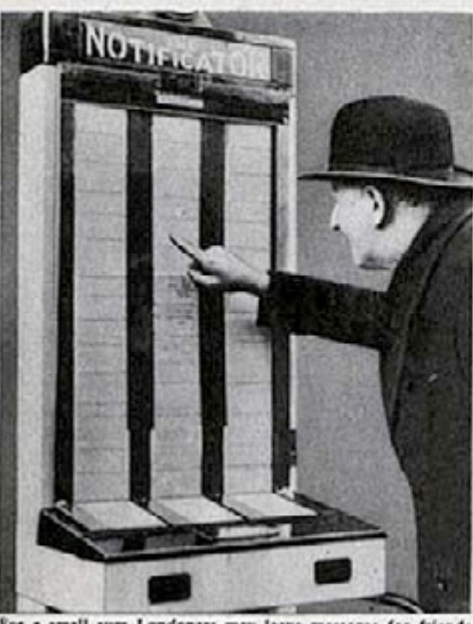
The telephone call is now officially on its way to joining the telegram on the scrapheap of communications technology (according to this New York Times article ) Via: <http://agood.com/794>

ANALOG RELICS



Who says folks from the Flower Power 60s couldn't dream up a technologically hyper-connected world? Have we surpassed their imagination, click on play to find out!

Robot Messenger Displays Person-to-Person Notes In Public



TO AID persons who wish to make or cancel appointments or inform friends of their whereabouts, a robot message carrier has been introduced in London, England. Known as the "notificator," the new machine is installed in streets, stores, railroad stations or other public places where individuals may leave messages for friends. The user walks up on a small platform in front of the machine, writes a brief message on a continuous strip of paper and drops a coin in the slot. The inscription moves up behind a glass panel where it remains in public view for at least two hours so that the person for whom it is intended may have sufficient time to observe the note at the appointed place. The machine is similar in appearance to a candy-vending device.

Source: Modern Mechanix (Aug, 1955)

Giving up my iPod for a Walkman

When the Sony Walkman was launched, 30 years ago this week, it started a revolution in portable music. But how does it compare with its digital successors? The Magazine invited 13-year-old Scott Campbell to swap his iPod for a Walkman for a week.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/magazine/8117619.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/8117619.stm)

TV: Not Dead Yet

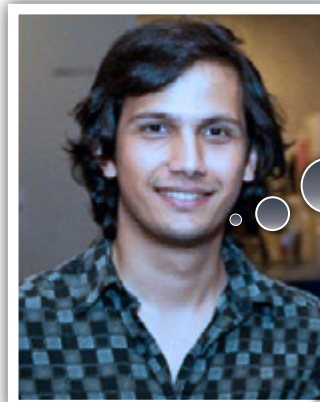
A few years ago, many people were predicting the end of television as we know it. The rise of video-on-demand, social games and other Web-based diversions all were supposed to kill TV. Who could possibly want to watch an antiquated, live network or cable show, the theory went, when one could Tweet, surf Facebook or watch something cached on Hulu or streamed on Netflix instead?

Via: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/ciocentral/2011/11/10/tv-not-dead-yet/>

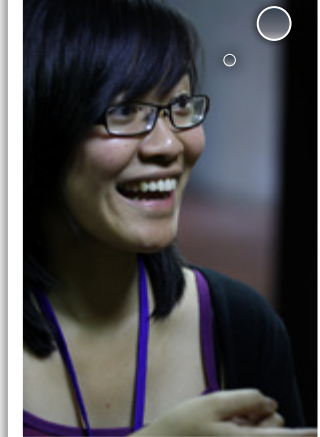




# Museum of Obsolete Objects



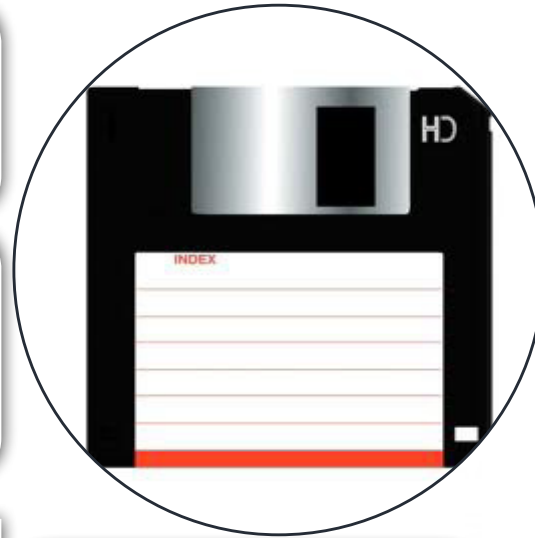
Prabhas Pokharel Some of those obsolete objects are themselves digital of course. My favorite one is the zip drive (mainly because how fast it became obsolete)



Maesy Angelina the thing is, i am not sure that these objects are obsolete all around the world. the abacus for instance, is still often used as a technique in learning math in indonesia by some alternative courses.



Samuel Tettner wow! I remember the zip drive, it went away in like 5 years...



## NOSTALGIA FOR OBSOLESCENCE

Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · November 4 at 12:24am

Eljah Bee and Pascal Bekono like this.

**Lolo Ansher** Two things here: hobbies that you discontinued because the computer took over as 'entertainment'....and hobbies that you couldn't find time to keep up with anymore after you got home digital gadgets... Please to respond ^\_~  
November 4 at 12:26am · Like · 1

**Adolfo Fitoria** this will sound weird: playing video games :-P  
November 4 at 1:11am · Like

**Simeon Orikio** djing music using cassette tapes and recording "radio shows". Weird huh? If I wasn't a DN I'd probably be a DJ/musician or something along those lines.  
November 4 at 1:59am · Like · 2

**Sibley Verbeck Simon** i was very lucky to have a mother into computers, so by around 1980 we had a computer at home, and I don't remember all that much before that...

**Rotimi Olawale** When i was younger probably age 5-12, i played a game called table soccer. It using bottle covers and a tiny ball to play a miniature soccer league on a flat table/surface. the game was popular in Nigeria in those days and it has completely disappeared now  
November 4 at 3:54pm · Like

**Paidamoyo Muzulu** the tv came late our home in the late 1980's, a computer much late in 1996. so solace was found in reading books resulting in my family having one of the well stocked personal libraries on many subjects from military, farming, economics, business, journalism and creative literature over the years.  
November 4 at 4:05pm · Like · 1

**Elijah Bee** before the PC... let's see, I used to watch TV  
November 4 at 6:47pm · Like

**Tsinane Pe** Dance, sing and sometimes draw and write over a non digital piece of paper :D  
November 4 at 6:52pm · Like

**Tsinane Pe** Also I love to watch TV.  
November 4 at 6:53pm · Like

**Prabhas Pokharel** Watch cartoons that were embarrassingly? meant for kids several years younger.  
November 4 at 7:57pm via mobile · Like · 1

**Maesy Angelina** Making comic books out of magazine cut-outs and rallying up the neighbourhood kids for 2 block hide and seek fest in the evenings.  
November 5 at 1:38am · Unlike · 2

**Frank Odongkara** I found a TV already at home... and a computer only on TV. WE used to play football, race, make toy cars from binding wires and sorghum stems... I used to spend a lot of time in my bedroom and library reading, fixing electronic gadgets and watched TV only 3hrs a day...mostly Rambo, Jackie Chan, Chuck Norris, Some Chinese guys and dance to Congolese Music like crazy... I do almost all those things still except for football..tis now the occasional rugby  
November 5 at 7:46am · Unlike · 1



### The Letter

Paidamoyo Muzulu

I can't remember when I last received a letter  
The envelope was sky-blue and had a foreign stamp  
The address was scrawled in tight and flowing long hand  
My mind went racing.

Slowly and composed after a thorough scrutiny of the date stamp  
I gathered the will power to prise it open.  
Yes, inside was the sweet scented long feather-weight ivory writing pad.  
The handwriting was controlled, tight and flowing.

Each sentence was carefully constructed,  
The diction was near perfect as the syntax.  
It was written in an enthralling and captivating descriptive language,  
But still simple enough to convey her emotions.

I envisioned the writer serene on her desk,  
Her slender and lovely hands scrawling away.  
The letter carried the tenderness of her feelings.  
It was simple yet powerful.

Reading the emotional signing off  
My mind wandered to new forms of communication.  
No email, text or chat message had moved me like this before.  
The letter had a mystical aura.

I gazed at the ceiling and shook my head to clear it.  
I searched my drawers for the long forgotten pad and pen.  
Emotional, I scribbled in a daze, blotting the plain pad  
I crumbled the blotted pad and started again, more composed.

Wrote slowly, concisely and legibly,  
I let my hand translate my emotions into words and images.  
I infused tenderness and seriousness of thought on paper.  
I signed off at long last with satisfaction at my handiwork.

Carefully I addressed the envelope,  
Tenderly took it with a merry heart to the post box.  
I sighed as I dropped it,  
Praying silently it would be received with eagerness.  
Hoped it would be delivered in good time  
Still carrying my frozen emotions for her thawing.



CYBER FLIRTS



**Maesy Angelina**  
"To be without you, is like facebook without friends, myspace without bands, google with no results."

Is this the way digital natives flirt these days?

Like · Comment · Follow Post · May 6 at 3:06pm



Maureen Agena, Zona Tsou, Rotimi Olawale and 3 others like this.



**Samuel Tettner** I don't know about you guys, but FB poking can be pretty flirtatious...  
May 6 at 5:08pm · Like · 1



**Maesy Angelina** Or this other line, which some in this group are already familiar with. "Your name must be Google, because you've got everything I've ever searched for."  
May 6 at 9:08pm · Like · 1



**Adolfo Fitoria** Did you make a Google Bomb? Whatever I search for, it's you I find.  
May 6 at 10:36pm · Like · 1



**Maesy Angelina** In another thread, Sam and I were thinking about finding 10 of these pickup lines for the DN Kit, so flirt away! ;)  
May 7 at 9:21am · Like



**Ajay Kumar** "Your homepage or mine?"  
May 8 at 11:24am · Like · 1



**Samuel Tettner** Ajay Kumar "I prefer Myspace"  
May 8 at 1:47pm · Like



**Maureen Agena** ..... I hate it when you turn into a jealous boyfriend and like Facebk you ask what I'm thinking, like Twitter what am doing and Four square where I am. Damn!!  
May 10 at 3:30am · Like · 1

hey babe,  
wanna come over to  
myspace and twitter  
my yahoo 'til I google  
all over your facebook?

#talk\_nerdy\_to\_me



REVERSE ENGINEERING

Springwise: Touch-Screen Ad Lets Restaurant Patrons Reserve A Table



If Chicago bus stops can be used to serve up warm soup samples on cold winter days, then why shouldn't a busy tram stop in Helsinki let passers-by make a reservation at a nearby restaurant? That, indeed, is now the case thanks to an interactive installation by Finnish ad agency HeyDay for local restaurant Ravintola Lämpö.

Video Game Simulator Translates Experience Into The Real World



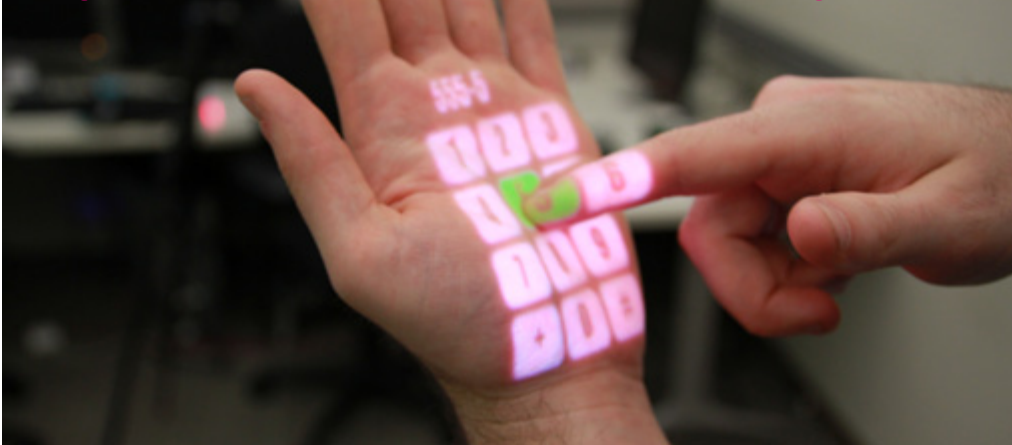
Would you play a first person shoot video game that would simulate the sensation of getting shot in the real world? British television series The Gadget Show has spent \$650,000 to develop an advanced simulator rigged with 12 paintball guns that will shoot its users whenever they are shot during a video game.

As 4 more social media magazines arrive in print format, we ask...why?



With magazines and newspapers steadily gravitating towards the app world, and eBooks growing in popularity every day, you could be forgiven for thinking that print is on the way out. But four new monthly magazines dedicated to Twitter, Facebook, Google and LinkedIn would suggest otherwise.

Wearable projection system turns any surface into a multitouch interface



OmniTouch, a wearable projection system developed by researchers at Microsoft Research and Carnegie Mellon University, lets you turn pads of paper, walls, or even your own hands, arms, and legs into graphical, interactive surfaces.

THOSE WERE THE DAYS!

Technology Is Amazing, Nobody Is Happy...



A good clip that comes from Alec Couros's 80+ Videos for Tech & Media Literacy. It features comedian Louis C.K. offering his funny thoughts on how our generation handles new technology.

The way to my heart is through a postcode

**Mumtaz Nazim**  
I was born half-a-century ago. That must make me seem ancient, considering that the young today, the digital natives, are people who were born in the 80s and 90s. Where does that leave an oldie like me, an analogue relic as my daughter says?  
I see my grandchild, all of four-years, coolly switching on my son's laptop and putting on her favourite Fairy Tales DVD. She's lost in this world and for hours together she won't bother her parents or ask for her friends if she has the Disney Mermaid Ariel as her companion. I haven't learnt to do that - put a CD inside the CPU - even after having a computer in the house for close to a decade. My daughter rolls her eyes and says, 'Mom, it's not 'put', you 'insert' a CD inside the DVD drive!' But it doesn't seem like a big tragedy. My favourite songs are not on DVDs anyways (and they are all so expensive!); I have the radio, the television and the stereo to listen to songs in my native tongue. And they don't all require booting, mousing, clicking, sorting, 'create a playlist mom', and all the other tasks my kids do before they finally listen to one song! A dial works just fine for me, thank you.  
Students who come to learn crafts from me, ask me for my email id and are eager to interact with me online. I got on Facebook recently and I couldn't understand the world. Everyone telling everyone else about what they are doing, with whom; the photos and jokes and messages all seem to be personal and public at the same time. Unless you meet someone and share common histories, interests, a circle of friends and have similar backgrounds, what possible topics would you really have in common apart from the weather? 'Oh, don't think like the Brits, mom!' my daughter rolls her eyes again.  
Youngsters say I am missing out on the digital boat and there's so much to learn, discover and share. But socializing online is foreign to me; spending hours together sitting on a chair, always chatting, checking for new messages, and going on to Google to discover the world, and endlessly stuck doing typing work is not my idea of socializing or fun. I tell my daughter and grand-daughter stories of my childhood fun activities - we swam in lakes, swung on the roots of banyan trees and almost touched the skies, we caught dragon flies and played with mud castles in our backyard, we waited every evening for the familiar sound of the ice-cream seller and parted with the half paisa we got as pocket money.  
Our village lane was our Google search engine bar and there were no places blocked, censored or restricted. We could explore for hours to-



gether with our entire body, holding hands with friends and skipping happily from one game to the next. There was never a dull moment, no power cut could distract us or get us frustrated. A few girls were my best friends and I shared my deepest secrets with them without worrying about privacy settings and control. My daughter tries to teach me the ways of the online world - privacy, safety, fraud, fishing (It's phishing mom!) - and I think, why do I need this added headache just so I could chat without opening my mouth with people who don't really know about me? The moment the computer shuts down, I don't exist for them (oh, mom, cyberspace never shuts, your avatar is still alive!). The only avatar I know is of the Hindu God Vishnu and I don't see any similarities between my Facebook profile and a God's incarnation.  
My daughter has her ways, I have mine. She feels sorry that I am not taking the full benefits of this global world and is not ready to accept that I am really happy being a housewife with a day full of activities. She tells me that I could do so much more with my talents! But I tell her that she should be doing a bit less; all this multitasking doesn't leave her with much leisure time. Recently, my granddaughter saw me writing a letter to my mother (she's in her 70s now, but still loves receiving letters). After telling her that I am writing to my mother (a concept which she found difficult to digest, "how can grandma have a mom!"), she asked in wonder, "Will you put the letter in inside the CD place?" Now, wouldn't that be a wonderful idea, to receive a real letter from your computer?! We might be using the @ symbol to chat with just about any person online, but the way to someone's heart is through a postcode on paper and envelope.

PSSSSSSsst

**Super DigitalNatives**

Here's a heads-up for you Digital Natives! We are cooking up a cool contest to cheer the Digital AlterNatives with a Cause? books. You will need an idea, a storyboard, a video camera and some nifty editing skills! Keep your eyes peeled for the video contest. Shhhh!

"Two observations about digital differences noticed so far:

1. When Digital Natives take a picture of you, they hang around and wait for you to confirm that you like the pic. Non-digital natives walk away right away, because the possibility of being able to see how the picture is instantaneously doesn't even enter their minds.

2. When Digital Natives speak wearing headphones, they realize that their voices are still the same volume even though they can't hear themselves. This was my mom yesterday in the metro: "THIS SONG IS REAAALLY GOOD SAM!!!"

**Samuel Tettner**

**"Get an Out-of-this-World Deal On My Favorite Color Computer!"**

Save \$100 With This Incredible Offer From Radio Shack!

"It's a fantastic deal on an exciting entertainer!" Take it from Isaac. Now you can save \$100 on any TRS-80 Color Computer. That means you can get our 16K Standard BASIC Color Computer regularly \$399.95, for only \$299.95! Add a pair of joysticks for \$24.95 and you can play Super Bustout - our exciting action game that's also sale priced at just \$19.95 - a \$10.00 savings! You'll find the TRS-80 Color Computer to be an outstanding entertainer and educator for the whole family.

"It's also a very serious, hard working computer!" Just plug in a handy Program Pak™, and your Color Computer can assist you in everything from word processing to selling up a family budget - even to creating your own electronic filing system.

"Just one of many fine computers from Radio Shack!" The Color Computer attaches easily to any TV set. See it today at your nearest Radio Shack store, Computer Center or participating dealer.

**"Hurry - this fantastic offer ends December 31, 1982!"** Get the \$399.95 Standard BASIC Color Computer for just \$299.95 - and pay only \$19.95 for the \$29.95 Super Bustout Program Pak™! And save \$100 on any other TRS-80 Color Computer.

— Isaac Asimov  
Renowned Science and Science Fiction Author

**Radio Shack**  
The biggest name in little computers™  
A DIVISION OF RANCO CORPORATION  
Circle 367 on inquiry card.



HAT TIP TO...



**Gidgax Kariuki**  
DNs ....Steve Jobs  
Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · October 7 at 12:12pm



**Lolo Ansher** I didn't cry, I didn't pay him tributes, neither did I say he "changed the world". Is Steve Jobs missed personally by you guys? :-/  
October 7 at 1:03pm · Like · 1



**Paidamoyo Muzulu** @Nilofar, personally I dont own an IPad, iPod or iPhone but once used an Apple I-Mac in 1998 when I started journalism. Those machines were ahead of their time. The man was able to push others in the industry resulting in batter gadgets being invented and produced. The ICT industry will never be same without him. He knew how to personalise and communalise use of technology at the same time.  
October 7 at 1:21pm · Unlike · 1



**Maureen Agena** I was saddened by his death though I own none of those i.....gadgets. I am sure the pinch was more in the developed world and not Africa where only a handful can afford those imacs, ipads, iphones blah blah. Well, death occurred and life is going on. May his soul R.I.P  
October 7 at 1:42pm · Unlike · 1



**Evelyn Namara** Hmm, I actually was affected a tiny bit by his death - Men with great minds and great vision like him are hard to part with! He had a vision for his life, knew what he wanted and he stuck to it no matter the stakes! And to be honest, am not a mac chic - I love my PC because I love to manipulate and do whatever I want with my computer, but then again I have to admit that Macs are the best designed gadgets every lived.  
October 7 at 1:50pm · Unlike · 1



**Evelyn Namara** That said, RIP Steve Jobs  
October 7 at 1:50pm · Like · 1



**Maesy Angelina** I think Apple designs are overrated, but I still think Jobs is one of the biggest innovators of our time. Personally, his 'Stay Foolish, Stay Hungry' speech in 2005 was one that really inspired me, so I did pay him tributes.  
October 7 at 2:08pm · Unlike · 1



**Evelyn Namara** My best speech of him was the one he gave at the Stanford Uni grad ... it was epic! I particularly liked the part of connecting dots :-)  
October 7 at 2:55pm · Like



**Maesy Angelina** Yes, Evelyn, the very same one!  
October 7 at 2:56pm · Like



**Frank Odongkara** I didn't give one second of silence to him. I wasn't saddened at all. I hated Steve Jobs and admired him at the same time. We share a trait - perfection. However, his products were never meant for my pockets and that always made me feel out of a certain circle...I still dream of running all my future simulations on Apple products...and in any case, the death of a hero is a stepping stone for other warriors. The ICT industry has always changed even before Steve Jobs and will continue to change...if you've been following developments in hardware options, you know what will happen in the next 5 years is tremendous. That speech. I owe to it most of my achievements and fall outs with my dad...Yes, Steve Jobs was awesome and may his soul rest in peace...okay, now I'ma give him that moment of silence.  
October 8 at 12:23am · Like · 4



David Caminer, creator of the first business computer:  
[http://www.reghardware.com/2011/09/27/heroes\\_of\\_tech\\_david\\_caminer/](http://www.reghardware.com/2011/09/27/heroes_of_tech_david_caminer/)

Death of C language creator Dennis Ritchie: American computer scientist, he created the C programming language and, with long-time colleague Ken Thompson, the UNIX operating system.  
<http://letsbytecode.com/programming/creator-of-programming-language-c-dead/>

The Inheritance of Loss



When Nilofar asked me to write my opinions about the definition of junk, how we chose to value digital objects as compared to analog ones, and if I believed there was a difference between analog junk and online junk, I immediately agreed. I did this because the topic is one which lies close to me emotionally speaking. My father had an interesting viewpoint towards junk: He didn't believe in its existence. My father was one of those people who kept everything and had troubles with the idea of discarding. Kind words would speak of him as a prime collector of the human condition: I remember growing up with Indian paintings, German swords, American commemorative coins – objects with cultural references I did not understand populate my earliest memories. It is now as an adult I make the connections; the Indian painting became Indian only after I saw others like it in a museum in Pune, until then they were strange men dressed even stranger-ier riding an elephant and fighting a tiger.

Less kind words would have classified him as eccentric. He didn't just collect objects with established cultural significance, he also ventured into the preservation of biological matter. The milk teeth (those teeth you have as a child but get replaced as you grow) – he had all of mine and my sister's, in two neatly decorated velvet jewel boxes. Another jewel in this bizarre organic collection: Both my sister's and my umbilical cord (not all of it, just the part the doctors leave or used to leave attached which dries up and falls independently).

More professional words would qualify him with having compulsive hoarding disorder. Often times my sister, mother and I would talk about my father's storage habits. We would do this the way a family deals with a member's less than "normal" conditions, through humor. Jokes, about how if you searched in dad's closet (which was permanently closed with 3 locks) you would find a museum, were common. I remember going with him to a play in Caracas as late as 2005. The protagonist of this play suffered from compulsive hoarding, and the tragi-comic character of the play came through her process of dealing with this condition. He laughed, a lot, during this play. On some level, he could recognize himself in the character, although never explicitly.

I'm not sure if such a thing as digital compulsive hoarding exists as a disorder. One of the pillars of information technology is the decreasing cost information per unit. This cost is approaching zero, very fast, which would make one think that theoretically one could store as much "junk" as one would want. Perhaps we ought to start thinking about the cognitive cost of "having things". My father's spirit was weighed down by all the things he possessed. I believe that the popular adage became true and instead of him owning his stuff – his stuff owned him. This cognitive overload I can see being transferable into the digital world, for example I have a friend who, in his quest for knowledge, has downloaded innumerable amounts of courses, video lectures, workshops, how-to-videos, lessons, audiobooks, and so on. If you peeked into his computer, you would think he is the most knowledgeable person in the world. In reality, he has not watched or listened to a fraction of those. They sit there, in his hard drive, but more importantly, they sit there in his mind, not opened. Cognitive intellectual junk, just lying around.

Our saved webpages can be considered cognitive junk as well. Do you actually read all the sites you have bookmarked for later? I don't. I can't. But I still bookmark, or leave the tab open, maybe with an idealistic mentality that someday I will have the time to catch up. That day has not come, and I suspect it won't come. My newest strategy is to make an effort to engage with the information as it comes to me. If for some reason I really can't read it at the moment, I will give myself a period of one week to have a more thorough look. After one week, all tabs walk the plank. I've found the presence of the urgency to read actually detracts from my performance. Unread websites occupy cognitive space in the drawers of my mind, just like those comics – the ones I don't really like but I might be able to sell one day for "a good price" – occupy my physical drawers.

Analog junk can connect with us intensely. Material non-essentialism believes that objects have a particular essence which is not static; rather it is dynamic and flows according to our relation with the object. For example, for a non-essentialist there is a difference between the hat which my grandfather wore in the 1920s and one which is exactly like it, yet not wore by my grandfather. The condition of it being worn by someone special to me endows the object with an essence it did not have before; it transforms it, lends it value. Thus, we can have sentimental and often non-ordinate relationships with our objects.

Can you rank which is more important to you, your toys from childhood or love letters from a past lover? It's a hard, if not downright impossible, task. In this respect, we can also extend the analysis to the online world. Do these objects also have the capacity to lend themselves to our emotional landscape? I think so. I know I keep photos in my computers simply for their sentimental value. There is a video of me with a group of friends from my university days that I revisit when I enter into a nostalgic or reminiscent mode. Does this sound bring memories to you?

Digital junk, albeit not taking physical space, can occupy space in our minds and in our proverbial hearts. It's been three years since my father's sudden passing, and we still keep digging out old stuff. It seems this man never threw away anything in his life; last year three trash trucks full of his junk were thrown away. A life, seen through its material footprint: Three. Trucks. Full of random old stuff that he never threw away. His digital footprint was much smaller, but it was in an exponential slope field. In his last years, I managed to introduce him to the world of the Internet. Of course, for a man like him, ebay quickly became a proto-religious symbol, the structured representation of his obsession. He would get home from work, shower, eat and go directly to the computer. There, he would sit for solid blocks of 4 hours, browsing through pages and pages of his favorite items, coins. The process of bidding, with its game-like design, was like ecstasy for him. Most of his inbox was full of emails related to his online buying and selling; this was a man who knew two websites: ebay and Yahoo as his email client. There, in his now defunct yahoo account, remained for some time the multiple emails confirming he had won bids, that he was out-bid by someone, that an item he was tracking had been sold – of course, the idea of "deleting emails" was as unfamiliar to him as its real life counterpart. Junk accumulated in his inbox in a beautiful yet haunting way, mirroring the physical junk it made reference to as it accumulated in his drawers.

Samuel Tettner


EDITOR RECOMMENDS



**Book:** You are not a gadget : a manifesto  
**Author:** Jaron Lanier  
**Publisher:** New York : Alfred A. Knopf, 2010. ISBN: 9780307269645  
Review: Many hail Web 2.0 as an empowering phenomenon that has brought about a democratization of information. But here, in his first book, Silicon Valley insider Lanier offers a radically different perspective. Widely regarded as the "father of virtual reality," Lanier argues that the structure of Web 2.0 violates the integrity of the individual by discouraging reasoned discourse in favor of intellectually flawed groupthink. Lanier skillfully constructs his argument by tracing the historical antecedents of social software to explain how design limitations constrain human behavior.



**Music:** OST of Atonement (2007)  
**Composer:** Dario Marianelli and performed by the English Chamber Orchestra, French classical pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet, and cellist Caroline Dale.  
Why is the music remarkable? The most notable elements of the score are the piano and the typewriter, which is often directly influenced by the characters' actions: when a character stops typing on the typewriter, for example, the ticking typewriter in the score ceases.  
You can listen to song samples here: <http://www.cduniverse.com/productinfo.asp?pid=7485578>



**Comics:** Ghost in the Shell series  
(Ed: One of my all-time favourite series)  
"Deep into the 21st century, the line between man and machine has been inexorably blurred as humans rely on the enhancement of mechanical implants and robots are upgraded with human tissue. In this rapidly converging landscape, cyborg super-agent Major Motoko Kusanagi is charged to track down the craftiest and most dangerous terrorists and cybercriminals, including "ghost hackers," capable of exploiting the human/machine interface by re-programming human minds to become puppets to carry out their criminal ends. When Major Kusanagi tracks the cybertrail of one such master hacker, the Puppeteer, her quest leads her into a world beyond information and technology where the very nature of consciousness and the human soul are turned upside-down and inside-out."



# Call for Contributions

## Next Issue: Digital Art Deadline: 4 Dec 2011

You consider yourself an art connoisseur? Your first doodle could have put Picasso to shame? You think pixel art is more priceless than Gogh's Starry Night? If you are one of the legions who appreciate digital art and spend time in the visual arts online, this is an issue especially dedicated to you!

Please send your contributions to:  
[nilofar.ansh@gmail.com](mailto:nilofar.ansh@gmail.com)

My favorite analog cause: Polaroid



If someone asked me if I felt nostalgic about typewriters or gramophone records, or cassettes or tapes, I'd probably say no. You'll understand better why, when I tell you that I was born in the 90s – a time when typewriters and records were long gone; cassettes were around only for another six to seven years and slowly made their way into sales oblivion as I was growing up. So, for me, inversely, the joy and moments of triumph at owning a CD or boasting of an attic full of floppy disks (which my father still preserves) or telling you that I played 'Gus Goes to Cyberstone Park' on a B&W PC while others were still learning how to switch on a computer are moments that are better registered in my memory.

Interestingly, I think me and my generation belong to the semi-analog group where as much as we are bound to be excited by new gadgets and more virtuality, somewhere, we are still shaped in hardcore mud and clay and nuts and bolts. To give you an analogy, a pager or a netbook were what used to be life altering gadgets and we anticipated some mind blowing moments (and thrill) with them. But look what happened – humans promptly upgraded to mobile phones and tablets :-|

However, there is something that I do feel nostalgic about: images, photographs. Partly because I have always been a keen movie watcher and loved clicking pictures as a child and partly because I actually participated in the semi-analog-to-digital move of the camera, so I can relate to this shift. I still remember how there were two cameras at home. A Yashica manual point and shoot that needed batteries and gave good results, another was a freebie that churned out okay images. You can guess what we kids got to use. Albums at home are still preserved, not so much in fondness but as a habit-relic that one lugs around everywhere, loaded with half burnt, half exposed, blurry yet proud memories of trips past.

Recently, in a cinema class, a professor was narrating how he used to work at a film archive center and one could see his eyes gleam as he narrated tales after tales of resurrecting negatives lying in tatters. I admit I feel his thrill. There is a different feeling when you touch a photograph that magically develops out of a single click. More important, the camera has a mind (mechanics+chemistry) of its own. So what you see is not what you always get on print!

This is when I, a digital immigrant, made a move towards the analog. After a few years of using digital cameras, I discovered Lomography. That in turn led me to how pretty these cameras are! More, they entirely manipulate colors to produce instant impressionist to surreal pictures! So, I bought a Diana F+ and after much hassle and a lot of expenditure, I developed my first roll. It wasn't that great like on the website, but I got the hang of it. This isn't just sheer nostalgia; this helps me rethink what I am doing in terms of capturing a subject, scene or visual that I did with my regular camera. Using manual lenses against automatic make me move in unrehearsed ways and put an effort in composition. At times I feel that reducing the number of steps and making things easier through technologies has a severe impact on the process of art and the experience.

**Warning: Analog inspires LONG rants :P**



This brings me to a couple of projects that I started looking at in the course of my analog obsession. The biggest of course, was the impossible project to save Polaroid cameras. When Polaroid announced they were ceasing all operation and production of films and instant cameras in 2008, a large community of instant camera lovers across the globe came together to keep the tradition alive. If nostalgia produces that kind of art, nostalgia is a great thing! Yet another project was "Before I die I want to..." project. It's not just the camera or the photograph, people mobilize their situations, clothing, old glasses, souvenirs, bring them all to create what fits in that imagination of time. Here was my little take with my mother's sunglasses when she was in her 20s. To surmise, as much as I hate analog nostalgia in general and sitting down to write a poem on the typewriter, I guess I participate in the analog love culture too, in my own ways. I guess nostalgia is a long vast landscape and mine is a semi-analog house in it.

**What is lomography?**

In the early 1990s a couple of students discovered a small, enigmatic Russian camera, the Lomo Kompakt Automat, and created a new style of artistic experimental photography with their first unorthodox snapshot cavortings. The approach: taking as many photographs (Lomographs) as possible in the most impossible of situations possible and from the most unusual positions possible, and then having them developed as cheaply as possible. The result is a flood of authentic, colourful, crazy, off-the-wall, unfamiliar and often brilliant snapshots. These are mounted on panels to form a sea of thousands of Lomographs which regularly astonish viewers with their sheer colourfulness, diversity and power of expression. Ensuing major exhibitions in Moscow, New York, Vienna, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Havana, Zurich, Cologne, Madrid, Cairo, Tokyo and many other cities, where up to 100,000 Lomographs were shown at a time, established an international reputation for Lomography.

Noopur Lily