

Nostalgia: Sanctuary of Meaning

Janelle L. Wilson



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This book examines the relationship between nostalgia and identity. It suggests that nostalgia can help to facilitate the continuity of identity. In these postmodern times, when so many threats and obstacles to constructing and maintaining a coherent, consistent self abound, remembering, recalling, reminiscing, and the corollary emotional experience of nostalgia may facilitate the kind of coherence, consistency, and sense of identity that each person so desperately needs. Individually and collectively, the past is remembered and, in this act of recall, it is often re-created. The author's position is that whether nostalgia's claims about previous times are true or accurate is not as important as why and how those nostalgic claims emerge. What meaning is being constructed in the retelling? What purpose is being served - individually, collectively, politically, economically? Janelle L. Wilson is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Minnesota-Duluth.

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