

Nostalgia: A Commodity in Business and Politics

By Charles Prefore

School of Liberal Studies and Continuing Education

Suny Purchase

Senior Capstone

November 5, 2018

Abstract

In 2018, the concept of nostalgia has become a commodity that has been widely used by both marketing teams and politicians to help sell their respective brands. This can best be seen in Hollywood today as most blockbuster films are either based on or are reboots of older properties and franchises that many would consider nostalgic in the pop cultural landscape. However, nostalgia is also capitalized in the political arena, which is best illustrated with Donald Trump's infamous campaign slogan, "Make America Great Again". In this essay, I intend to show how and why nostalgia is used in this way by examining both the tactics being performed by politicians and marketing teams, but also psychological factors in which nostalgia effects consumers.

Charles Prefore

Senior Capstone Intro Draft

Professor Keteku

November 5, 2018

Webster's Dictionary defines nostalgia as "a wistful or excessively sentimental yearning for return to or of some past period or irrecoverable condition". This sensation can be triggered by a large assortment of outlets, whether it be through an audio/visual medium such as television and movies, or through merchandising products such as toys. When used correctly by marketing executives, it can be quite profitable.

As of 2018, the sensation of nostalgia has become a commodity that is widely used by large corporations, media producers and politicians to help sell their brand. This can be best seen in Hollywood, with how studios are more content to reboot or continue older nostalgic franchises rather than creating new intellectual properties. It doesn't stop there; in order to hook younger generations on their brands, companies such as Disney or Hasbro not only reboot their products, but go out of their way to assault consumers in as many mediums as possible. These examples include toys, clothing, video games, and more. This is done so that their brand is virtually inescapable for consumers, as introducing children at young age makes it easier for them to possibly develop a nostalgic bond with said brand. This use of nostalgia also extends to the world of politics, which is best illustrated by the tactics used by the Trump campaign to sell the candidate as a legitimate politician.

In this essay, I intend to show the way the brands such as Disney, Hasbro and even politicians such as Donald Trump, go about using to nostalgia to help sell their products and strengthen their brand recognition. I believe this topic is important because it not only could reveal the predatory nature of the businesses, but to also see if the media reliance on nostalgia has any ramifications within the political sector. Through this, I will demonstrate how the companies are able to hook younger viewers through merchandising and older generations by reminding them of an era that they may find more ideal. This hypothesis seems more and more likely when considering the means in which the Trump campaign weaponized nostalgia through slogans such as “Make America Great Again”.

The reason why nostalgia is used so commonly by marketing teams is because of its ability to draw interest from consumers by reminding of something they liked from the past, which in turn makes them more likely to buy their products by appealing for a time or emotion they long for. Typically, brand nostalgia is created early on in a the consumer's life because they're more likely to create a sort of bond with the product that can then be exploited for years to come. The way in which these bonds are embedded within the children's subconscious are likely due to the brand's personality, appealing to their own, and allowing them not only to relate to the said brand, but also absorb the values and ideal their product's are pushing (QING). Again, after this bond is formed, it becomes far easier to sell the same or a similar product to that consumer by reminding them of the fond memories associated with it. This also can be replicated in political setting such as when a politician's marketing shows them that longing for an era with a different political climate and capitalizes on returning a state or nation to the way it used rather than progressing forward.

As previously stated, the most blatant use of nostalgia based marketing in the film industry can be seen in blockbuster franchises such as the Marvel movies, Transformers, and reboots of older series such as Jurassic World or Mission Impossible. Considering that seven out of the top 10 highest grossing films of all time are either installments in franchises that are based on a nostalgic property or an adaptation of a property that already has a well established fanbase (All). With this in mind, one might ask, why Hollywood is so reliant on older intellectual properties. One answer is that older properties are likely to already have a fanbase in which a movie could appeal to. This in turn makes films that are based on older properties to be less of a risk than an attempt to create a new one from scratch.

The best example of a franchise that is based on an older non-film based property is the Marvel cinematic universe. Almost all of the films produced by Marvel Studios are based on comic book characters created in the 60s, and they have been extremely successful in marketing these films based on the nostalgia they've accumulated. They've been so successful in doing this that they've dominated the box office in the last decade, by having four of their films make up the top 10 highest grossing films of all time (All). Marvel's film success can also be attributed to their filmmaking approach of adapting the classic stories their characters are most known, while respecting the source material it's based on. This, in turn, pleases older fans of the property, while attracting younger fans without having to create a new story from scratch, and relying on older ones that already proved their worth. However, the greatest draw of the Marvel films is that all the movies take place in one connected cinematic universe, which can cross over into other films, much like the comics they are based on, which allows the studio to pull in audiences

based solely on presenting them the opportunity to see one character they love co-star in a film with other characters they also care about.

Though this may seem like a relatively new phenomenon, film has been using nostalgia to sell their films since the creation of the medium. In the essay *Stars and Stories: How Films Became Branded Products*, author Gerben Bakker explains that, much like the way characters in the Marvel films are marketed to sell a film, the stars and celebrities appearing in the movies were pushed in a similar fashion. During the 1910s, film was considered an extremely risky investment due to it being a relatively new medium. Producers had no way of knowing what movies people would want to watch, so the movies produced were more focused on showing locations rather than telling a story. This was known as the Cinema of Attractions, which initially drew in audiences but quickly became irrelevant. This pushed producers to focus on creating narrative driven films based on fiction, so that they remain relevant for longer. With this change in production standards, this allowed the stars of the films to become celebrities and also selling point for future movies (Bakker).

As actors became more important to the medium, audiences began to recognize them and began seeing movies based on who appeared in a film. Studios quickly took notice and started to sign to their big actors to multi-film contracts that required the actor to work with this studio exclusively. This allowed studios to push their stars as somewhat of a brand in which an audience can feel comfortable with and enjoy, based on their previous experience with movies they starred in. This also gave studios the ability to better predict which films would be successful based on the audiences reception to the actors starring in the film, which in some

ways is nostalgic marketing due to the fact that studios were attempting to sell the films based off the audiences previously positive viewing experience with their celebrities, (Bakker).

Now, comparing the way old Hollywood studios promoted their stars to the way Disney and Marvel studios promote their characters, the similarities become far more visible. Much like how older studio's sold their films based on the their stars, Marvel has focused on promoting their older, well-known characters doing new and exciting things while paying homage to the stories that they are based off of. The best and most recent example of Marvel doing this was with the 2018 release of *Avengers: Infinity war*, which was a huge crossover film that brought together almost all of the characters that have been the starred in their own feature film. This not only was another adaptation of a classic story, but also allowed Marvel to draw audiences from almost every corner of their large collection of films, based mainly on the fact that fans would be able to see all of their favorite characters interact and go on adventures with other beloved characters from different films for the first time. This strategy proved to be extremely successful, as *Avengers: Infinity War*, became the fourth highest grossing film of all time, placed right below *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, another franchise that is also owned by *Disney (All)*.

This brings the discussion to the film franchise that revolutionized the way blockbuster films would be marketed forever: the 1977 release of *Star Wars*. During the original *Star Wars*, film studio 20th Century Fox had little faith that the movie would perform well; this gave the director, George Lucas, the ability to strike a deal with the studio to let them pay him less for the work he did as director, but allowed him to keep all of merchandise revenue, a resource in which studios rarely capitalized on at the time. After the film debuted and became an unexpected smash hit, Lucas saw the merchandising potential in his film franchise, and commissioned toys, comics,

and other novelties that were based on the movie, on a scale that had never really been done before. This proved to be an extremely successful move on the part of Lucas, and made the Star Wars brand nearly inescapable for boys growing up in the late 70's and early 80's. (Moore)

Today, *Star Wars* remains a huge film brand, so much so that back in 2012 Disney bought the franchise from Lucas for about 4 billion dollars, and lead them to make four more Star Wars films (Moore). To market these new films Disney relied heavily on the nostalgia the fan base had for the original trilogy, which can be seen in the way they brought back the characters from the first series, and promised to continue their stories by placing them in new and exciting situations. As previously stated, this idea was yet another success for the brand and the first instalment in Disney's new trilogy; it was so successful that it ended up being the 3rd highest grossing film of all time, though the following instalments have yet to reach this height (All).

Something that both the Marvel and Star Wars brands have in common other than being bought by Disney is that they both had made a big impact in the pop-cultural landscape and have proven to be popular with both children and adults in the decades following their inception. What it may be is that both franchises have somewhat of a high nostalgic value, which can be seen by the fact they continue to draw fans to their merchandise and movies and remain relevant to this day. Another notable franchise that has also received a similar amount of financial success based on its nostalgic value is Hasbro's *Transformers* toy and film line, whose history has given us possibly the greatest blueprint on how to create nostalgic bond with a young audience that could be exploited for years to come.

Unlike the Star Wars or Marvel franchises whose critical reception varies from film to film, the critical reception of almost all Transformers films have been overwhelmingly negative. Despite the negative feedback, these films continue to bring in large numbers at the box office, so much so, that as of November of 2018, fans of the franchise are currently awaiting the 6th instalment in the franchise, titled *Bumble Bee*, a spin-off prequel that focuses on one the most popular characters from the brand. Considering all the negative feedback these films have accumulated over time, it makes one wonder, how are they able to keep bringing in such a large audience?

The most likely answer to this question is the way the original Transformer's incarnation connected with its audience back in the 1980s. Taking a page out of George Lucas's playbook, Hasbro saw great potential in its newly acquired Transformer's toys licence, so much so that they decided to promote their toy line through multiple facets of media, such as Saturday morning cartoons and comic books. One thing of note is the popular cartoon was created for the promotion of the toys, and basically functioned as thirty minute commercials that were specifically structured to convince children to buy the toys. This was done by introducing new characters based on the toys every episode, each of which had their own design and personality, so that consumers would feel the need to buy all of them. This in turn made them far more likely for their product to attract young viewers and consumers due to the fact that their product was everywhere, and much like Star Wars, Transformers become almost inescapable for a boy growing up in the late 80s.

Also like Star Wars, Transformers has been able to stay relevant throughout the years by rebooting and reinventing itself frequently. The best example of this was back in the early 90s,

when the original toy line was dying and consumers were not as interested in the brand as they used to be, this pushed Hasbro to redesign their toys to transform into animals and rebrand it as *Transformers: Beast Wars*. To support the new toy line, Hasbro created another television show to promote it, and though it faced some initial backlash, *Beast Wars* would go on to be a huge success both as a toy line and as television series. In doing so, drew in fans of older products and also introduced a newer and younger audience as well. The success of *Beast Wars* not only reinvigorated the brand, it set the precedent on how Hasbro would treat its franchise until this very day (Frost).

So again, This brings us back to the question, why is it that in 2018 that the Transformers movie franchise is still so successful? One can theorize that it's due to the nostalgic bond created throughout multiple iterations, not only due to the fact that they drew interest from the original product, but also all of its subsequent reboots, making its fan base even bigger, while proving to be a safe financial investment for studios. The success of the Transformers illustrates a clear picture of how useful nostalgia can be when trying to promote a brand, considering that, nostalgia can also be used in politics to great effect as well.

When looking at the way the Trump administration promoted itself during the 2016 election, one could also see a politician attempting to capitalizing on the nostalgic memories of those who longed for a return to what the country once was, or rather what they believed it was like. This can best be seen with his infamous campaign slogan, "Make America Great Again", which itself means to elicit nostalgic feelings of a bygone era. What is most alarming about this statement is that the demographic that it was meant to appeal to was mainly white, straight, cisgender males, while the way in which he intended to "Make America Great Again" was to

make it far more conservative. While it may be impossible to judge just how much of an impact this method of political branding had on the election, there is no doubt that it gathered great attention and helped the Trump administration win over many voters.

With all this in mind, this brings up another question, how and why are marketing teams able to create these sensations of nostalgia? To attempt to answer this question, one must look at the psychology of how nostalgic bonds are created and the effects that brand personality has on consumers as they age. Another psychological aspect that should be of interest is the way in which nostalgia can be passed down through each generation, which is a phenomenon known as intergenerational nostalgia.

In the next section I will examine nostalgia with a psychological lens, and will discuss the phenomena known as bonded nostalgia, intergenerational nostalgia and brand personality attachment have on consumers. In the following section, I will talk about how nostalgia is being used in politics and why it is an effective way to promote a brand. The final section of this essay will be a discussion of the information presented and consider the ways that nostalgia affects society.

The Psychology of Nostalgia

As stated in the previous paragraphs, nostalgic bonds are typically created at a young age. In the article entitled “Childhood Brand Nostalgia: A New Conceptualization and Scale Development”, Alison B. Shields and Jennifer Wiggins Johnson explain that bonded nostalgia is most likely to be created when someone has a meaningful interaction with an object or subject at

a young age, so that they will have a liking for it as time goes on. With this in mind, bonded nostalgia can be a great tool to be exploited by marketing teams.

To get a better idea of the correlation of brand recognition and nostalgia, Shields and Wiggins interviewed 29 undergraduate students about brands they remember from when they were children. After recording the interviews, they were then compared and contrasted to find similarities and consistencies (Shields, 2016). In the interview, those who participated found themselves feeling nostalgic for a diverse selection of brands such as toys, snacks and athletic teams. They also found that participants were often nostalgic for multiple brands, and were more attracted to brands that were able to diversify themselves into different categories such as products that are able to sell different iterations of itself. After studying the interview, they were able to identify three main consistencies amongst their participants, as Shields describes, “experiences with the brand in the individual’s past, the recollection of memories associated with the brand, and positive affect associated with the brand in the present” (Shields, 2016). They also go on to explain that all the brands the participant chose for discussions were ones that they had been introduced to at a young age, and that the conversations in these interviews never brought up brands that had been created recently (Shields, 2016).

This study is notable because it helps underline the effect that bonded nostalgia and early exposure to brand marketing can have on consumers and marketing teams as time moves forward. Showing us that the participants were so willing to discuss products that they were fans of at an early age, but disregarding any recent brand, gives some insight to how nostalgia can be effectively created by appealing to consumers at a young age. If a brand attempts to market

itself to children, it becomes far more likely for them to become lifelong consumers of said brand due to the nostalgic feelings they have surrounding it.

Considering the way bonded nostalgia is created, one might ask, how exactly do certain brands make themselves appealing to a young audience? One answer is the personality in which a brand is marketed to have, or more specifically what attitudes or ideal that are on display when the brand presenting itself. In her article, “Consistency between Consumer Personality and Brand Personality Influence Brand Attachment,” Qing Yao, explains how certain personality traits that are embedded within the both products and the marketing of a brand. This can be used create an emotional attachment to a consumer by relating to their own personality (Qing, 2015).

Yao hypothesized that the more similarities between a brand and consumers personalities, the more likely they are to form an emotional bond with said brand. To test this hypothesis, Yao gathered 189 surveys from students attending Tsinghua University in China, asking about the way they perceived the personalities of multiple mobile phone brands. The participants were then asked questions about the way they felt about these phone brands and their personalities. The questions administered were rated on a 1 to 5 scale, 1 standing for “Strongly Disagree” and 5 for “Strongly Agree”, and focused on 25 different mobile phone brands.

The results of this survey found that participants were far more attached to brand personalities that they found to be “cool,” “sincere,” and “young,” rather than personality traits such as “simple”, “sensitive”, “reliable” and “competent”. In other word, most consumers are focused on products whose personalities are closely representative of who they want to be, rather than one that’s quality could be more productive (Qing, 2015). This also demonstrates that consumers are more to buy a product based on how it is marketed, this can be seen in the

Transformers and *Marvel* franchises, which are made up of a large and diverse group of characters, all of which have different personalities that can appeal to various different demographics.

When looking at the way certain brands market themselves as cool or young, one can see how they are able to create nostalgic bonds with those they are attempting to appeal to. As stated before, this can be seen with the *Transformers* franchise by the way it was marketed in the late 80s; with such a huge push on multiple mediums such as toys and cartoons shows, the company makes it far more likely to make those who already fans into lifelong consumers. The *Star Wars* brand is another franchise that was able to create nostalgic bonds through multiple generations due to how well known they are, and how enjoyable both the world created but also the characters that live in it. It is also through the personality of the characters and the aesthetics of the *Star Wars* universe that helps make it that much more appealing to consumers, because they are likable and inhabit a world they want to live in . This helps underline the correlation between brand personality and childhood brand nostalgia to be made more clear. Brand personality also give us a better idea what consumers are thinking about when shopping.

With this in mind, nostalgia isn't only created by marketing tactics; rather it can also be passed down through each generation, in a phenomenon known as intergenerational nostalgia. In his experiment conducted and logged in an article titled “Sociality and Intergenerational Transfer of Older Adults’ Nostalgia” Psychologist Tim Wildschut shows how nostalgic emotions can be passed down to younger generations through narratives and media created by older generations (Wildchut, 2018).

In Wildchust's experiment, the observers gathered 352 undergraduate participants ranging from ages 18 to 28, to read 10 stories written by older adults and were then asked questions to help gauge if any emotions of nostalgia were transferred (Wildschut, 2018). In the stories, observers decided to split them in two different groups, one group was made of five stories that the observers deemed nostalgic, while the other 5 were considered non-nostalgic in comparison, all of which were based on real events. The stories were then given out to the participant with the practitioners explaining "this is a genuine description of a past event which was recalled and written by an older adult." Then, after reading, they were asked a few questions based on their experience with the stories, all of which were rated on a 1 to 7 scale, 1 standing for "Strongly disagree" and 7 meaning "Strongly agree", though each answer prompt was tailored to the corresponding question. Some of the questions they were asked were, "Right now, I am feeling quite nostalgic;" "Thinking about the older adult's memory makes me feel connected to loved ones," "...Makes me feel connected with my past," "makes me feel that life is meaningful," and "After reading their narrative, how much do you like this individual?" this was done to gauge how the stories made them feel (Wildschut, 2018).

In the end, the observers found that the participants that read the nostalgic stories, as opposed to the normal ones, were reported to experience nostalgic emotions on a greater scale than those who did not. After gathering the results, the observers found that the nostalgic stories that were read had, as Wildschut puts it, "conferred greater social connectedness, self-continuity, and meaning on participants" (Wildschut, 2018). This is notable because it displays the way in which nostalgic thoughts, whether they be simple memories of happy time, or the ideals and

social norms of yesteryear in which some wish to relive, are very possible for older generations to pass on while communicating their sense of longing for these things to their children.

Another point of interest in Wildschut's article, is that he later goes to argue the beneficial nature that intergenerational nostalgia could have on those suffering from depression. When discussing the possibilities presented by their find's Wildschut explains,

“Our findings raise the possibility of presenting depressed individuals with others' nostalgic memories from which they can benefit. For example, reading about another individual's nostalgic recollection of a childhood birthday party surrounded by close family members could induce nostalgia, and consequently foster social connectedness and meaning in life in the depressed individual.”(Wildschut, 2018)

The reason this is relevant is that it displays the potential effect that nostalgia can have on an individual's emotional status. Not only can a generation's sense of longing be passed on, a vast array of emotions can also be transferred and even manipulate those influenced to feel the same way. This could also be used to great effect in the political sector, if a politician is seeking to sell voter's on the same forgotten values that they long for.

Overall, the psychology of nostalgia is a topic that must continue to be researched and discussed to better understand its full potential in modern society. However, concepts such as bonded nostalgia, brand personality and intergenerational nostalgia give us insight of how it's created and effects society. All of these concepts remain relevant when looking at the ways certain brands, politician and franchises go about promoting themselves to an audience. What is

most important to note is the sponge-like nature of the minds of children, through their absorbing of media, advertisements and the lesson and stories told to them by someone older, they can be deeply affected, which also can be exploited by marketing teams and politicians.

Nostalgia in Politics

As previously stated, Nostalgia or the longing for the ideals of day passed, can provide a political candidate a great opportunity to capitalize on those emotions by promoting their brand in the way they believe represent those values. This can be harmful to the flow societal progress if the ideal's that their attempting to promote are representative of racism, sexism, and xenophobia, all of which still exist today, but were far more prevalent in the decade proceeding. This again, brings us to the 2016 election, in which Donald Trump won the U.S. presidency on that the platform that he was going to "Make America Great Again", a promise to all those who were nostalgic for time in which the conservatives were the dominant political force in america, that their time has indeed come again.

What's important to note is demographic in which Trump is using nostalgia to appeal to, which mostly consist of older, white, straight, cisgender males, and has little interest in the needs of any other group. This can be seen in Trump's insistence to build a wall along the mexican border and the dehumanization of immigrants in which his policies are backing. Another alarming factor that should be considered is demographic white nationalist that support the support the actions of Trump, and fact that he often refuses to condemn, give us some sort of idea of the america that Trump considers great.

Though Trump has purposely left it unclear exactly what he meant by his campaign slogan, we can however paint a picture of it based on his actions. In an article titled “Looking Backward and Inward: The Politics of Nostalgia and Identity”, authors Gregory Rodriguez and Dawn Nakagawa explain

“Trump isn’t selling the image of a better future as much as he is offering an illusion of what may or may not have once been. He harkens back to a past in which white Americans largely enjoyed unchallenged economic and cultural dominance. While it isn’t exactly clear what era he’s nostalgic for, Trump’s campaign overtly relies on rhetoric and imagery designed to appeal to white, Christian America. From blanket accusations against Mexicans, to banning Muslims and singling out Christian Americans as deserving of respect and protection, he is constantly delineating who belongs and who doesn’t in his great America.” (Rodriguez)

The importance of this quote is that it underlines what kind of scope Trump is looking through when using nostalgia to promote his candidacy, and also reveals what does not apply to and possible threats to immigrants and other minority groups. What also can’t be denied is the effectiveness of such an approach and though he’s a great poster child for a politician using nostalgia, he’s not the only example of it having an effect in the realm of politics.

The authors also go on to explain, that the 2016 US election wasn’t the only political event to be affected by political nostalgia, England had felt this. During a referendum being held to decide whether or not England would stay apart of the European Union, this resulted in the majority of citizens to vote in favor of leaving. What’s notable is the rhetoric that was being used to push voters to exit the E.U., was an attempt to remind of England of its imperial history, and

clearly longs for the lifestyle and policies present during the height of British imperialism. This is troubling because it not only longs for the cultural destructive politics of British colonialism, but also reinforces feeling of racism and xenophobia, while actively affecting a major political decision for a whole nation. (Rodriguez)

With this in mind, it's clear that exploiting nostalgia to gain political power is becoming a popular tactic for politicians whose platforms are built on ideals of conservatism. Much like Donald Trump, the majority of voters that were in favor of England leaving the E.U. consisted mostly of people who were over 65, while most young voters who were also in favor of this were high school dropouts. (Rodriguez) This consistency makes it even more clear that the main target of these nostalgia based campaigns are mostly older and have not received any form of higher education. Considering this one might ask, why are more people becoming nostalgic for conservative eras of politics?

This could be due to the way in which contemporary media outlets portray life during a time when conservatives were the dominant political power. In an article written for *Business Insider*, titled "How the magic of Netflix's 'Stranger Things' can help explain the rise of Donald Trump", author Oliver Darcy argues that television programs that take place in the past and market themselves based on the nostalgia for that time, such as the show *Stranger Things*, could be one of the reasons Trump's campaign got so far. As Darcy points out, *Stranger Things* takes place in the 80's, during the Reagan years, which was a highly conservative era in U.S. politics, but rarely shows that, and rather romanticizes the era as a simpler time. Darcy then theorizes that because of this, viewers of the show feel nostalgic for that era and its politics, without actually seeing the repercussions. (Darcy)

Darcy isn't the only to see the effect of shows like *Stranger Things*, in an article titled "Rose-Coloured Rear-View *Stranger Things* and the Lure of a False Past.", author Myke Bartlett also talks about the shows misleading framework of the 80's. In the article Bartlett discusses how *Stranger Things*, feels like it being created by someone who hasn't actually lived during it, due the fact that sexism, racism and homophobia aren't as social prevalent as they realistically were, and that they only characters to show these traits are considered antagonist. This in turn, can be harmful because it seeks to convince its audience of its idealized view of the past, by neglecting to show negative thing affecting society at that moment. (Bartlett)

With the deliberate neglect of presenting audiences with the true adversity that was present in the times studio are attempt to adapt, and the effects intergenerational nostalgia, it's clear that media plays a big role in what consumers will nostalgic for. This makes it easier for politicians such as Donald Trump to gauge what certain demographics of voters long for, and in doing is able to exploit them by vaguely promising to "Make America Great Again". Having said that the potential for politicians to use nostalgia in this way, seems to on the rise, and with the success of the Trump campaign and the Brexit movement, it obvious that tactics such as these aren't going away anytime soon.

Discussion

As discussed throughout this essay, the concept of capitalizing on nostalgic emotions further ones brand isn't new; rather it's becoming far more common than ever before in both politics and the film industry. Through sensations such as bounded nostalgia, brand personality attachment and intergenerational nostalgia have been looked into and talked about. Much more research should be invested into relation of brand awareness and nostalgia, and how it's being

exploited by certain marketing groups. This research would undoubtedly prove useful in both predicting marketing trends in terms of product brand and political awareness, and could be important based on the intentions of those manipulating nostalgic emotions.

Nostalgia being used in way this can also be harmful to society in the long term if certain political candidates or brand's values are repressive or are untruthful to the way things were. This could impede progress and revert life to a more oppressive and antiquated way of life that caters to a small portion of the population. It also blinds us of the oppressive ways of the past, and makes it easier for modern society to fall for the same problems and mishaps.

With all this in mind, the importance of educating those in the ways nostalgia is being used is more relevant than ever. The effectiveness of the Trump campaign and Hollywood's reliance on older properties has proven that this tactic of exploiting nostalgia will not be going away anytime soon. Considering that, there is still very little we know about nostalgia's long term effect in a capitalist and political climate, and, as such, we must continue to apply research to this topic to better understand the values of those exploiting it.

Reference sheet

All Time Worldwide Box Office Grosses. (2018). Retrieved October 24, 2018, from <http://www.boxofficem>

Bakker, G. (2001, September). *Stars and Stories: How Films Became Branded Products.* "Enterprise & Society". Retrieved October 26, 2018, from

ezproxy.purchase.edu:2048/login?url=<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ahl&AN=44438902&site=ehost-liveojo.com/alltime/world/>

Moore, T. (2017, September 02). How Star Wars used the Force of Fandom to create a merchandising empire. Retrieved October 15, 2018, from <http://www.syfy.com/syfywire/how-star-wars-created-a-merchandising-empire>

QING YAO, RONG CHEN, & XIAOBING XU. (2015). Consistency between Consumer Personality and Brand Personality Influences Brand Attachment. *Social Behavior & Personality: An International Journal*, 43(9), 1419–1427. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2015.43.9.1419>

Frost, B. J. (Producer). (2018). The Toy's That Made Us / Transformers [Television series episode]. In *The Toys That Made Us*. Netflix.

Shields, A. B., & Johnson, J. W. (2016). Childhood brand nostalgia: A new conceptualization and scale development. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 15(4), 359–369. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.1578>

Wildschut, T., Sedikides, C., & Robertson, S. (2018). Sociality and intergenerational transfer of older adults' nostalgia. *Memory*, 26(8), 1030–1041. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09658211.2018.1470645>

Rodriguez, G., & Nakagawa, D. (2016, July 28). Looking Backward and Inward: The Politics of Nostalgia and Identity [Web log post]. Retrieved November 1, 2018, from www.huffingtonpost.com/gregory-rodriquez/political-nostalgia_b_11199804.html.

Darcy, O. (2016, August 13). How the magic of Netflix's 'Stranger Things' can help explain the rise of Donald Trump. Retrieved from <http://www.businessinsider.com/netflix-stranger-things-popularity-donald-trump-2016-8>

Bartlett, M. (2017). Rose-Coloured Rear-View Stranger Things and the Lure of a False past. *Screen Education*, (85), 16–25. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.purchase.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=f3h&AN=122296399&site=ehost-live>