



# ARTICLES AND ESSAYS

Sean Michael Wilson

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## ***Introduction***

This is a collection of articles and essays that I have written over the last 10 years for various newspapers, magazines, and websites. Including my own website, Radical Roots. They cover a wide range of subjects but focus around Japan, garden destruction, sociological and cultural subjects, comic books, music and fashion. These are normally quite long or medium length articles that I thought would be a bit too long for the companion book *The A to Z of Anything*, and so are collected together here is the wildly imaginative title of *Articles and Essays*. Or if you prefer we might call the collection: *Sean Takes on the Universe... and Loses*.

But I have a go. I do, I have a go.

Sean Michael Wilson, 2022

## Articles related to Japan

### *A Really Safe Japan*

Prime Minister Abe says that he is concerned about the safety of Japan in the uncertain and constantly changing flow of international politics. If so then there are three, rather simple, things that he could do that would hugely increase the safety of people in Japan, guaranteed - and with no prospect of war resulting. But he won't do them, and probably no other government of Japan will do either, for reasons that go right to the heart of modern Japanese society and economy.

The three simple things that could be done are these:

1. Make it illegal and totally unacceptable for cars, taxis and vans to block the pedestrian pavement/sidewalk.
2. Change the road system so that it's illegal and totally unacceptable for cars to drive through road crossings at the same time as people are crossing.
3. Make an extensive system of bicycles lanes that are actually wide enough to use (meaning for human beings wider than a cat walk model!).

Let's look at these three. Number 1 is something that happens millions of times everyday, with delivery vehicles, taxi's and other cars in every town and city across Japan completely blocking the very narrow walking path. This forces people, including infirm old ladies and careless children, to walk on the main car road, often right in the middle of it, putting them in far greater danger of getting hit by the unseen cars rushing towards them from behind. In any well run society, that should be both illegal and totally unacceptable. But in Japan it is accepted. I've never once seen anyone complain about it (apart from myself!). And I've never once seen the police remonstrate with a driver for it. In fact, I've seen it happen right outside a Koban police station, and they did not even notice until I brought it to their attention that people were being forced to walk onto a busy road. It appears to be a 'traffic blind spot' in Japan, so long the norm that people don't think of it as a problem. But, it is.

What's the Solution? First the major one: redesign the roads in Japan to make the sidewalk/hodo much wider than they are at present, so that even if a car does park on to it there will still be room to walk past. I'm wondering if the pile of money needed to do that would reach up to Venus or only to the moon. It would be the height of several Mt Fuji's at least. In any case, we might safely say that this would take about 50 years to complete. And what government appears to be able to think past the next 5 years nowadays?

Ok, so got any other bright ideas? Why, yes, I do: make it compulsory for any new shops and houses built to have an 'offloading/waiting area' where such delivery cars and taxis have to go. Again, that would take 'loads of money', to coin an 1980s phrase. Although, a lot less than the first solution. Houses are replaced in Japan very often - by comparison to the UK anyway. Where I grew up, in Edinburgh, 90% of the houses are around 100 years old. But in Japan this solution would probably only take about 20 years to become normal and it would be a very large improvement.

Yet, there is an even easier solution: buy small cars. The first thing is that no one, other than those with large families, needs those big ugly four wheel drive cars that are so popular now. Since they are so inconvenient to drive in the narrow roads of Japan, cause obstruction to others where ever they go and definitely where ever they park, are expensive to buy and waste gas/petrol, then how about this: be smart, don't buy them.

The very small, single seater, electric cars that are just starting to be seen in the last few years will probably become more and more common. When they are the normal type of car we drive the benefits will really be, no exaggeration, life changing. Not only will it solve the sidewalk blocking problem, since they are too small to completely block even the narrow walkways of Japan, they are cheaper (to run I mean - not yet to buy, but they will be), much less noisy, take up less parking space, and pose less of a threat to pedestrians and, therefore, in the end, will be safer for car passengers too. Sounds great, let's do it! Oh, but macho cars lovers won't be able to drive around dangerously fast, making lots of noise revving their engines, and showing off to the ladies about the size of their appendage. Yes, they wont... Good!

Ok, next up: Number 2 is something that happens even more often than number 1. Although cars and motorbikes are supposed to let people go through first, it is very common that they push ahead while someone is still on the crossing. Often if the person is only inches away. Thankfully, the majority of drivers are considerate, and do wait until the people crossing are safely out the way. But if only 10% of cars and motorbikes go through in a reckless fashion that still adds us to literally millions of dangerous situations being allowed to happen everyday. Again, in any well run society, anywhere in the world, that should be a totally unacceptable thing.

What's the Solution? Change the road rules and traffic light functioning so that cars are not allowed to go through when people are crossing AT ALL (as is the road system in other countries already). Again, that would be costly. It would involve reprogramming millions of traffic lights all over Japan. But far less costly than the changes needed for number 1. And remember the aim is: to increase the safety of people in Japan. Isn't that worth doing? Chances are that it would cost less than a new battleship, and be a lot more useful. Plus it would probably only take about 5 years to do it.

Or, a cheaper version: continue to allow cars and motorbikes to go through but launch a major campaign to make it clear that they absolutely HAVE to wait until all people have walked through, and that severe fines will be given to those that do not wait. And then actually GIVE out those fines! Put it into practice. In a country like Japan were most do follow the set rules, if it became clear that this was the new standard road rule, then within a few years we would see 99% of folk follow it. Result: a massive increase in the safety of the people of Japan. And no constitution needs reframing, no neighbouring countries offended, no increased risk of war. Just a nice safe walk along the road.

(This article first appeared in Japan Daily magazine, 2017)



## ***Kumamoto Kool – the South West Center of Japan***

Kumamoto is the southern most location for the 2019 Rugby World Cup and a city steeped in Japanese history, with many famous historical figures having lived here - such as the unbeaten swordsman of the 17thC, Miyamoto Musashi, who wrote his famous guide to samurai behaviour and swordsmanship, *The Book of Five Rings*, in an isolated cave in the hills of the prefecture. It also has a famous 17thC castle, which, sadly, was extensively damaged in the earthquake of 2016 and is now being rebuilt.

But Kumamoto is not all about the past – it's a city around the size of Manchester with many bars, restaurants, shops and museums. The center areas, called Kamitori and Shimotori have a very active nightlife with a wide variety of places to drink and eat, from traditional Japanese bars serving shochu or saki, to modern western style pubs with music to match. There are also many famous onsen spas in the smaller towns surrounding the main city. In recent years the fame of the city's mascot, Kumamon, has spread throughout the world. The Rugby World Cup games of France v Tonga will be played here on Oct 6, and Wales v Uruguay on Oct 13 in the Kumamoto Prefectural Athletic Stadium (also called Umakana Yokana Stadium) in the east of the city.

### **Mount Aso**

I started my experience of Kumamoto by going out of the city, right out into uplands countryside area called ASO. There are several good hotels in the area, each with their own spa or onsen provided free for guests. These are very relaxing but please read the rules about using them first. First thing in the morning I was taken to the famous Aso volcano – still active after 270,000 years and occasionally bursting forth! There is an excellent museum on the plateau where I was given a guided tour about the physical and animal life of the area, including a fun diorama that moves and lights up and was built by the same company that produced the Godzilla movies. There are some VR (virtual reality) goggles in the downstairs area which really put you IN the area! It's a very interesting way to see the landscape. Among the models of animals found in the area and of personal interest to me was the giant salamander, and elusive creature that inhabits clear rivers and can grow to be as large as 1.44 meters!

I was then taken on a climb of the hill, which is quite steep, so bring suitable clothing and shoes. But it's a wonderful area, full of colourful plants which the guide is very knowledgeable about. On the day we had a mix of sunshine and fog, which made the view of the area from the top look both beautiful and mysterious. English speaking guides are available but you need to book one week in advance.

### **The Gardens of Suizenji**

Then I was taken back into the city to visit to the old garden of Suizenji, which was originally constructed in the early 17thC by Lord Hosokawa (though I don't think he did the actual digging himself!). It's really is one of the most beautiful attractions of Kumamoto – tranquil, immaculately designed and maintained, an oasis of calm greenery in the otherwise busy city. There is a 'mini Mount Fuji' mound in it, which looks great, a wonderful big pond with huge Koi carp, and lots of smaller fish darting around and under the old-style Japanese bridges.

You can also visit the Shinto style Izumi shrine, cleanse your hands in the magical water near the entrance and say a prayer in the Japanese style, with clapping and bowing. The best thing for me though was the tea ceremony building, which is very relaxing. You can learn a simple part of the tea ceremony and look out at the lovely gardens and pond.

### **In the city there is 1000 things I want to show you**

Then, to finish on a modern note I went into the main shopping center mall of Shimotori, right in the middle of the city, which has a very large amount of shops, everything from karaoke places, to food shops, from drugs stores to shoes shops. There are also seemingly endless bars strewn around all the small streets that come off it, on several levels of each building. I don't think it would be possible to visit them all even if you went out every night for a year!

The city is also famous for its ramen noodles, and so my experience was rounded off by a bowl of at the well-known shop near the main rail station. This ramen really was very good. It's served with slices of dry black seaweed, called Nori, which you should place on top. The sauce is especially tasty!

I can definitely recommend visitors to the Rugby World Cup to come to Kumamoto where you can see something of Japan outside the big metropolis of Tokyo and beyond the main tourist places like Kyoto. As they say in the local dialect: 'yoka ne!' – its good!

(first appeared on Rugby World Cup official website, 2019)

## *Foreign workers in Japan*

Recently there has been a considerable increase in the amount of foreign workers in Japan. This is especially observable in convenience stores and bars, the construction industry, hospitals and farming. Currently the government estimate is that 340,000 foreign workers could enter Japan over the five years. But how are those workers treated? Under what conditions do they work? According to an increasing amount of reports, not too well.

But first of all, a look at the figures: although much has been made of this increase by some right wingers it's actually a relatively small increase by the standards of other developed countries. By comparison, according to the ONS (Office of National Statistics) in the UK: "Latest net migration statistics show that in the year ending June 2018, net migration to the UK was 273,000." That is in just *one* year, not over 5 years as in the Japanese situation. So, the UK has an immigration figure 4 times more than the Japanese amount. Proportionally it's even more than that, because the UK is a country with only half the population of Japan – therefore the immigration level is actually 8 times more than that of Japan. Which puts the increase in foreign workers in Japan into global perspective. It comes down to only 68,000 new foreign workers a year - in a country of 127 million that is not a lot, and far short of the labour increase that Japan needs to fill vacancies in all those areas.

However, the psychological and cultural impact on Japan is probably more than on countries in Europe that are well used to many immigrant workers. One way that this is perhaps showing itself is in the draconian rules that foreign guest workers have to agree to. Recent reports in the Japanese media have focused on an emotive issue that make an immediate physical impact: of young female workers who become pregnant are being forced to choose between getting an abortion or returning to their home country.

According to a recent investigation reported on in the Asahi Shinbun there are perhaps already over 100 cases of forced return or abortion of 'technical intern trainees', with some host institutions talking of severe penalties or fines if a trainee becomes pregnant. The article tells of one such trainee, a 22 year-old Vietnamese woman, now being assisted by a human rights group in the Tokyo: "I'm two months pregnant... I came to Western Japan to work at a paper factory and after one-month preliminary training ended I realised that I was two months pregnant. When the supervisor knew of my pregnancy, I was forced to choose between having an abortion or returning to Vietnam." The rumour is that the supervisor was urged by the person in charge of the training facility to give medicine for an abortion to the young woman.

A related rule which seems very common is that trainees and other workers who live in company owned buildings are not allowed to have members of the opposite sex in their rooms. To investigate this further I asked various foreign workers and trainees about their experience of these rules. Linh, a 21 year-old trainee from Vietnam in my town of Kumamoto, told me: "We're allowed to date people but we're not allowed to bring our boyfriend or male to our rooms." Diana, a 23 year-old Filipino lady who works in a hostess bar in Kitakyushu told me that not only are they barred from having anyone of the opposite

sex in their rooms that the employers do not let them do almost anything on their own, in case they try to 'escape'. Meeting people for dates in private is completely out of the question. Employed by the bar on account of her good looks which attracts in male customers she nevertheless appeared to be lonely, telling me in rather desperate tones: "You don't know what it's like here. We have almost no freedom."

It was largely woman that I spoke to about this, as the rules seemed to most targeted at them. But, a Vietnamese man in Tokyo, who asked that his name not be mentioned for fear of being traced, told me regarding the pressure to get an abortion or leave Japan: "I find them very strict, doing so could affect the health of women."

However, some of the people voiced a surprising degree of support for these restrictive policies. Maria, a young Filipino trainee in Fukuoka said regarding the policy of not allowing people of the opposite sex into rooms: "Well, it's a little bit unfair but overall it's not so bad." When I asked if she thought it was fair that the Japanese company asked pregnant girls to leave, she told me: "Of course. Because I still have unfinished contract. If I get pregnant, I can't finish my training." Maria went on to comment about the policy of not allowing male visitors in our rooms: "It's okay because it's for our own good. They just want us to be safe all the time."

Allowing for the idea that various companies may indeed have the welfare of their foreign employees partly in mind, this indicates a degree of faith in the good intentions of the employers which some may see as naïve. We may perhaps reflect that this has something to do with the traditional image in East and South East Asian countries of the employer as a paternalistic force, almost a surrogate parent to young workers. Some indication that the companies are thinking along more selfish lines was provided by a former staff member of a training facility in Western Japan, who the Asahi Shinbun notes as saying: "The company wants to make the interns work efficiently, production capacity drops during pregnancy. I have never heard of a company that gives maternity leave to trainees."

Perhaps not yet in Japan, but other countries have such habits and rules already. For example, the National Health Service in Britain has extensive rules which help trainees continue their work when pregnant: "If a full-time trainee is unable to continue to work full-time because of ill health during pregnancy or breast-feeding, then reduced hours or sick leave can be arranged." And it goes further than that to extend to a generous continuation of rights during pregnancy: "During maternity leave the trainee is regarded as if she is in work for the purposes of annual leave entitlement, incremental credit etc." If the UK can provide such work benefits to pregnant trainees then what stops Japan, with a larger economy, from doing the same? A related issue is that various efforts are being considered to try to reverse the declining birthrate in Japan. Why, then – even setting aside the possible human rights abuses of these draconian rules - make it so difficult for foreign workers to contribute to that birthrate? What is at the root of that thinking?

(first appeared in Japan Daily, 2019)

*Comics and Capitalism 1*

I'm a professional comic book writer (graphic novels if you prefer the posh term), with various books published, three of them with New Internationalist (*Fight the Power*, *Goodbye God* and *Portraits of Violence*). Recently I've noticed that there has been a lot talk in the graphic novel world about creators simply not being able to make ends meet.

Amongst the debate has been very detailed consideration of how we increase our readership, market our books better, make books that people want to buy, increase our social media presence, etc. All in order to make the numbers add up to a decent living for creators. All of these are relevant. But, oddly enough, the main cause of the basic problem is rarely mentioned. Our old adversary, that so far refuses to lie down, capitalism. Among 99% of the people talking about this the question of how the basic economic system affects comic book creators hardly raises its head.

Most of the views and discussions I have seen about the economy of comics are based on the idea that what we need is more READERS. I want to say something quite radical: actually we have enough readers already. What we lack is PROFIT. And by that I do not mean therefore we need to get more profit. What I mean is that the problem is the very idea of profit itself. The need, the compulsion, to make profit within a capitalist style economy. That's our real problem. At the very least there should be an awareness that this is the underlaying cause.

So, if this profit obsession is such a barrier to our creativity, in many fields, why don't we get rid of it? Why not set up another, better system? Some think because we can't. But, for now, let's presume that we CAN come up with a better, alternative system. Probably one that draws on elements of socialism, anarchism and environmentalism. Since those words are loaded with negative images, let's just call it a 'Better Economic and Social System' (BESS). In a BESS private profit will not be the main focus. Instead we will focus all of our energies towards creating good societies, towards creating a sense of well-being, healthy lifestyles, environmentally friendly policies, a good education etc – all the things that we human beings need for a decent life. And comics are part of that. Music is part of that. Dance is part of that. So, in a BESS what will matter is not 'Will this comic make enough profit?', but the far better questions of: 'Is this a good comic? Is it interesting? Is it funny? Is it moving?'. When those are the criteria comics will flourish far more than now, when the poison of profit no longer taints our efforts.

As to the nuts and bolts of how that would work. In capitalism a tiny elite of the power get to decide most of what happens in our economy. In a BESS decisions about what gets made and how we make it, and how we use our resources, will be made by people in general – by us all, as equals, working together in local democratic council type groups. We comic book folk could bring our ideas to the council of our area and try to persuade them that the book is interesting. It won't be some elite group of councillors who decides. It's a council, or collective or community that WE are also equal members of, and that decides things in a truly democratic way with real processes for bringing up complaints and appeals. How much better that would be than now, were creators get ideas rejected mostly on the grounds of low profit potential, and with absolutely no process in place to challenge that decision.

I said we have enough readers. A study of facebook found that 24 million Americans have noted 'comics' as an area of interest on their accounts. What this means is that we already

have enough people interested to read comics. Certainly enough to influence those local arts groups in a BESS that comics are something worth focusing some of our limited resources into. If there are, say, just 1000 people interested to read your comics that's plenty – that's one thousand real flesh and blood people, all of who matter, all of whom are part of society and get a say in how it's run. We already have enough people interested in comics to allow for many, many comics to be given the backing of those arts councils up and down the country. And by backing I mean money, yes. In a BESS meaning some kind of credits for 'useful work done for the community'. The same kind of credits received by the teacher, the street sweeper, the brain surgeon. Credits that can be spent on the things we all need for a decent, healthy, happy life. And this is not a utopian dream. We can achieve it by organising things well, according to what we want, need, value, and are prepared to work for.

Lastly, in a BESS, it is highly likely that that amount of readers of comics will go up. Because there will also be less of a barrier of having to buy comics. Many of those council backed comics that we creators would make would be available for free, just like the local play park is free. So, many more readers will check them out. Or readers would 'pay' some allotted credit for them, which would probably be small amount, simply deducted from their total credit balance. In the same way they pay for milk or a new pair of shoes. And, as its not a capitalist profit based system, creators would not get that credit, direct from reader to creator, or some % of it via a publisher. Creators, like everyone, receive their collectively agreed on level of credits via the local council (that they are a full and equal member of, remember) for their work. So, they would not receive 100 times more credits if their book is read by 100,000 people instead of 1,000. So, that would free us from the slavery of obsessing with numbers, to the shallow 'sell, sell, sell,' mentality of capitalism. And there would be far less of a problem of the silly desire to become 'rich and famous' too. We would not need either in order to feel we are doing something worthwhile. The focus would be on something very simple, but rather healthy: on making good comics that people value. And since the horrible profit issue would be out of the way we would all be more free to focus on experimenting, flexing our artistic muscles, trying new ideas. Or simply making good films, good music, good comics.

(first appeared in New Internationalist, 2017)

## Free comics for everyone!

Aug 16, 2017

Cartoon Art

Capitalism is bad for graphic novels and an alternative economic system is necessary, **Sean Michael Wilson** argues.



**Sean Michael Wilson**

Sean Michael Wilson is an award-winning comic book writer from Scotland, who now lives in Japan. His book with...



***Fashion has gone out of fashion***

In the UK the tight style of t-shirt and trousers, influenced by 60s mod and 60s/70s pop style in general, came back into fashion in the mid 90s. The most interesting thing about that is that it never went away again... not so far anyway. That's now more than 20 years ago, and that 60's/70s tight style is still normal for young guys (some of whom weren't even born in the mid 90s).

We are in a very odd time for fashion for two aspects:

1. That styles last for so long now. Until the mid 90s they normally changed every 3 or 4 years, sometimes quite drastically (compare the big difference in hairstyles from 1964 to 1968). Nowadays we see no or next to no change...even over 20 years. Although I'm kind of happy about the style now, as i like 60s style, it seems a bad thing that no other style from the street up has come along, and certainly this is very unusual in post war pop culture.

2. The other interesting point is how most young people now have almost no awareness of the style categories or origins of the clothes they are wearing. The average young Japanese male worker, just to take one example, now is dressed head to foot in a 60s/70s influenced style...but with no awareness of that at all.

The shoes are 60s long thin winkle picker style, the jackets and coats are short, tight, 'bum freezer' styles that originally were French and Italian style and become cool in London in the early 60s... the trousers are mod style tight and lay just above the shoes in a 'boot cut' style....and the little briefcase/bags are 60s/70s style... 'skinny fits' shirts of mid 60s style, with mod type buttons and collars, etc.





**This fashion photo from 2017 has a young Japanese man dressed from head to foot (and bag) in 60s mod style, without him knowing it.**

But if you ask them about it (as i have!) 95% of them have absolutely no idea of any of that. They just wear it cause its fashionable now. That is a marked difference on the past. If you had asked a London mod in 1963, a skinhead in 1971, a punk in 77, etc 'what's with this X style you wear?' you would have still be there 15 minutes later while they went into all the details...

This decline in clothes awareness also seems to be a bad thing. Most people now follow fashion sheepishly, rather than changing it themselves as was more than case in the past.

in my case when i was 17 and getting deeply into 1960s music and fashion it spurred me on to read about it and research it and check old photos and movies etc, and learn about the styles... in a way that after 5 or 10 years of it means that you become a mini-expert. So, why do most young people now - despite the time and money they spend on consumerism - know next to nothing about the fashions they wear?



**Does this kid have any idea at all who THE JAM were? Does even the designer know?**

One element that people say now is that modern technology has created a generation with a short attention span. That is a common idea, but i wonder how true it is. I dont see a fundamental difference in some kids seeing a pair of shoes on instagram, to some kid seeing shoes in a pop magazine in 1967. Yes the young kid now can see many other images simply with a flick of their finger on their iphone. But couldn't that young kid in 1967 also just flip over the page of the magazine? The lack of attention' aspect MAY be true, or it may just be a popular myth. I wonder how we can measure if it has actually decreased or not?

Another common idea is that the ease of hi-tech gadgets makes us appreciate stuff less. Now we can download a whole rare RnB album, in seconds. In the mid 60s the kids had to know some merchant sailor who had brought over some rare RnB albums from the USA. Or hunt around the shops for that much sought after pair of shoes. Or get the suit tailor made, etc. Now it's all easily available and so we value it less. That sounds reasonable.

But, we could look at it from another point of view: since a wide range of music and fashion is now more easily available shouldn't that INCREASE the amount of people who get into it? There are now less barriers of time and expense therefore more people should be doing it, no? More young people should be exploring a wide range of fashions, that they can easily check online. The average 20 year old should have a wide range of musical knowledge. Because they can, while relaxing in the comfort of their own room, listen on youtube to a rare psychedelic song from 1967, then Bob Marley's and the Wailers first single, then a WW11 big band tune, then an acid house song from the late 80s, then the new song by Lady Gaga and then a Frank Sinatra single from 1953. They could do all that, easily, in under one hour, for next to no cost. Yet, somehow 90% of them don't.

As to the lack of young people creating their own styles now: it's possible that people feel they have 'done something' by just online commenting or posting (like me now!), so they don't need to create other stuff as much. But, on the other hand, the easy availability of technology can also be a vehicle for creative expression which should result in more, not less, youth style activity and range and even attention span.... so it seems to me that other issues going on are here, beyond mere technology.

Another comment often made in relation to fashion is that there are plenty of young designers doing interesting things. I agree with that. I was 'in' the fashion designer scene in London before in the late 90s and early 2000s, filming it and sometimes modelling too (just because friends asked me to model their clothes, I'm not keen on modelling either!) and there was a

LOT of energy at the grassroots level, with various folk having distinctive styles (like the clothes style or or not, they had energy to do stuff, and that is the key point here). BUT, their energy had very little spread out into mass youth culture.

Some say, 'Oh fashion has changed, its just that older folk dont see it'. That seems like an obvious explanation, but i dont think it's the case. As a test have a look at these photos below – one of them is from 2008 and one is from 2018. Can you tell which one is from 2018? I bet most people can not.



Ok, lets extend the time even more. One of these photos below are of people out drinking in 2001, and the other is a similar scene from 2019, before the pandemic. Even with 18 years of difference can you tell which is which?



Again, its pretty tough to call it. The clothes, the hair styles etc are very similar, even with a whole 18 years in between. In fact I have forgotten which is which myself! But I have the dates of each photo noted in a file if anyone want to know.

So, a key thing in fashion nowadays is that styles change very slowly, almost to the point of complete stagnation. Certainly far less rapidly and radically than they used too. If we look at what young folk wore in the streets and bars in London 20 years ago its pretty close to what



folk wear now. There are some small changes, but as these photos show the changes are very small indeed. But if it was 1960 compared to 1980 or 1970 compared to 1990 then we would see the differences in an instant. A fundamental cultural shift has taken place in how quickly fashion changes. It used to change very quickly, now it changes very slowly, hardly at all.

By comparison, here below are four photos from 1960, 1965, 1970 and 1977. Surely everyone can see, right away, that the styles are very different. Not only can we clearly see the difference that 10 years made, we can even see the difference that only 5 years makes.







Nowadays a 5 year time gap makes almost no difference in hair or clothes styles at all. In my view there has been very little change for 20 years, certainly in comparison to the norm in the 50s, 60s, 70s and 80s. This is a very odd thing, which we have never seen before in the post war world in the UK, France, Japan, US, etc. Is it good or bad? Probably mostly bad, but there are some positive aspects to it.

The lack of knowledge about fashion and music, however, is definitely bad. Learn-ify yourself young folks! Explore music and fashion more. You'll be bigger and better and cooler for it.