

BA Thesis English Language and Culture, Utrecht University.

**The Goon Catching Up: Nostalgia and Music in *A Visit*
*from the Goon Squad***

By Alannah van Wijk (4137965)

Supervisor: Simon Cook

Second reader: Cathelein Aafthink

24th of July 2016

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Introduction

Jennifer Egan's *A Visit from the Goon Squad* is a contemporary novel that discusses the themes nostalgia, identity and music. The term nostalgia is defined by the New Oxford Dictionary of English (1998) as "a sentimental longing for the past." Bennie, Sasha, Jocelyn and Scotty are four of the characters that deal with the feelings of loss, longing and memories through music in *A Visit from the Goon Squad*. Their lives are thoroughly interwoven: they lived together, grew up together, work together or are similar to each other. Because of this, their feelings and identities are influenced by each other and the music they played and listened to together. They mainly feel nostalgic about their teenage years, when they were part of the punk rock subculture. There are many academics, such as Andy Bennet, Iaian Chambers and Dick Hebdige, that researched the effect of punk rock in America on those who identified with this subculture. According to them, adults can be strongly influenced by the music taste they had in their teenage years. The subculture died out and with its disappearance, feelings of nostalgia arose. Images of loss, according to John J. Su, are key to many contemporary novels. This is certainly the case in Egan's novel. According to Thomas Turino, identities are both individual and social. Egan's characters struggle with both themselves and their social status. It is thus linked to someone's identity, as Adrian C. North and David J. Hargreaves argue. Identity can change over the years, but it takes a mental development and acceptance for this change to happen. Older punks often feel punk is dead. They either have to accept this, or change to a more positive view and see that punk is a living genre for their nostalgia to lessen. All characters in *A Visit from the Goon Squad* deal with their identity and feelings of nostalgia in different ways. This paper will show the interrelationships between music, identity and nostalgia as instantiated in *A Visit from the Goon Squad*. The concepts of nostalgia and identity in relation to music will be investigated and translated to four of Egan's characters: Jocelyn, Sasha, Bennie and Scotty.

Chapter 1: Nostalgia

The term nostalgia was first introduced by physician Johannes Hofer. He used the term to refer to the adverse psychological and physiological symptoms that mercenaries who traded on foreign shore showed. Hofer saw the concept of nostalgia as a medical or neurological disease. He regarded it as a “cerebral disease” (387) caused by “the quite continuous vibration of animal spirits through those fibers of the middle brain in which impressed traces of ideas of the Fatherland still cling” (384). However, J.J. Scheuchzer, a contemporary of Hofer’s, thought it had to do with the traveling but instead of it being a brain sickness, he argued that it was due to “a sharp differential in atmospheric pressure causing excessive body pressurization, which in turn drove blood from the heart to the brain, thereby producing the observed affliction of sentiment” (as cited in Davis, 1979). While these were the most common beliefs about nostalgia in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth century (Wildschut, Tim, et al, 4), in the Nineteenth century this changed. Instead of it being a neurological disorder, nostalgia was considered a form of depression. It was not until the later part of the Twentieth century that nostalgia and homesickness were discriminated. Nostalgia and homesickness are now two different concepts. The New Oxford Dictionary of English (1998) defines them as such: “homesick” as “experiencing a longing for one’s home during a period of absence from it” and “nostalgia” as “a sentimental longing for the past.” Thus, while being homesick refers to missing a certain place, nostalgia is longing for not per se a place, but a more abstract past. With the new definition of nostalgia in the Twentieth century, it became more important in fiction. Su argues that images of loss and yearning play a big role in many literary texts written in the later part of the Twentieth century. Even though there are many cultural differences, nostalgia is a theme found in literature all over the world. Su argues that nostalgia is often a negative theme. According to her, this is a necessity for the ethical visions in contemporary novels. Stephanie Coontz also views nostalgia as a negative concept. According

to her, nostalgia is nothing but a Hollywood myth: with nostalgia, it is often forgotten how much worse people had it in that particular decade. When people experience nostalgia they often tend to leave out negative memories about a certain period.

Subcultures have disappeared with the growth of globalization, according to Dylan Clark. He argues that “there has been a notable return to the imagination persisting as a repository of nostalgia” (35) because of this disappearance. He links it to - what he argues to be - the last subculture: punk rock. The classical subcultures disappeared and the people who were once part of them are left with nothing but nostalgic feelings. Clark argues that nostalgia heals the historical wounds; it covers up a past that is not as pleasant as people like to think it was. The politics and ideologies of a subculture are often forgotten when it comes to nostalgia and it is reduced to hairstyle, slang and music. However: “perhaps – perhaps – the meaningless language of punk was made meaningful” (226). Bennet argues that older fans of punk rock continue their attachment to the music and its visual style. Hebdige and Chambers agree with Bennet: they discuss the effects of punk rock on youth culture in America and argue that younger punks often recognize the importance of the older generation. Ruth Adams also views the attitude of the older punks as positive: nostalgia might not be the only future for punk rock, because they keep holding on to the music and style. Punk has an “active construction of new social and aesthetic modes of being” (10) which might lead to a less passive future.

Every main character in *A Visit from the Goon Squad* experiences a sense of development. Jennifer Egan explains in an interview with *Bomb Magazine* that she does not “experience time as linear. I experience it in layers that seem to coexist” (Julavits). Su describes nostalgia as “an image of loss and yearning”, which applies to strongly to character Jocelyn. In the chapter “You (plural)”, Jocelyn has an inner conflict with her past and future. She is a former drug addict and while she hopes to recover, she often longs back to the past.

When she meets Lou again after many years, she thinks back to a past that seems distorted: “Rhea and I stand by Lou’s bed, unsure what to do. We know him from a time when there was no such thing as normal people dying” (97). Her distorted thoughts reveal that she cannot discriminate the bad from the good memories. Through these memories, she idolizes youth. Jocelyn lived a fast-paced youth, which was filled with drugs, parties and the empty promises Lou made. She wants to live a normal life when she is an adult in her forties, but her past makes that almost impossible. Becoming older frightens her and Lou is the proof that they are all slowly dying:

My questions all seem wrong: How did you get so old? Was it all at once, in a day, or did you peter out bit by bit? When did you stop having parties? Did everyone else get old too, or was that just you? Are other people still here, hiding in the palm trees or holding their breath under water? When did you last swim your laps? Do your bones hurt? Did you know it was coming and hide that you know, or did it ambush you from behind? (97).

Age alarms her; the years that have gone by have been jumbled in her mind, distorting time. Jocelyn refuses to accept that time has gone by fast, holding on to her youth desperately, afraid to accept change. Lou once told her that Rhea was doomed. When they meet again, Rhea has three kids, Lou is dying and Jocelyn feels like she did not accomplish anything. This realisation makes the fact that many years have gone by hit her even stronger. She tries to reject this by remembering Rolph, Lou’s son. However, Rolph committed suicide, which comes as another shock to Jocelyn and it finally shatters her nostalgic feelings. Clark argues that nostalgia heals wounds from the past, making the past appear better than it was. While Jocelyn knows all Lou ever did was lie to her, she still feels that he was the best thing that ever happened to her. She knows her past with Lou was a bad experience, but, as Clark argues, it appears better than it actually was. Egan uses Jocelyn’s (past) relationships to show

that Jocelyn is extremely nostalgic about her youth, which is portrayed through her relationships with Lou, Rolph and her friendship with Rhea. Lou represents her getting older, Rolph her dying past. Rhea is everything Jocelyn hopes she will become. This hope might be answered: her recovery from a toxic past and her mom helping her with earning a degree, gives reason to believe that she might become a happy, functioning adult.

Memories are key to the past. Character Bennie Salazar collects them and writes them down on little receipts. Songs conjure up memories in his case. Therefore he often listens to bands such as Dead Kennedys. He is one of the older fans of punk rock Bennett talks about, who continued their attachment to the music through the years. Although Bennie produces music that is contemporary, he still listens to the punk rock from when he was a teenager. For him, it is still a living genre. The memories that come with listening to punk rock seem regretful: he is ashamed of them and of the problems he thinks these memories give him. He tries to resolve this by writing his memories down and by eating expensive gold flakes. Just as Clark argues, with the disappearance of the classical subculture, which is in Bennie's case punk rock, all that is left to Bennie is a feeling of nostalgia. Like Jocelyn, he recalls Lou from years ago. Lou is dying in a later chapter, but he also comes back as a living character. It creates a feeling of the time going backwards: Bennie's memories break the chronological continuity. According to Kirstyn Kedaitis, the colour yellow represents the theme of youth and naivety in the novel and thus the nostalgia to those times. In Bennie's chapter "The Gold Cure" the colour yellow occurs often. Sasha is wearing a yellow sweater, Bennie's Porsche is yellow and he eats gold flakes. His gold flakes represent a time where he was still able obtain an erection and when Sasha tries them out, he stares at her blond hair. She reminds him in that moment of a girl he once chased at a party. In each instant, yellow colours represent his nostalgia. In "A to B", Bennie tries to escape his dark-eyed grandmother. She represents the future with her dark colours, but since Bennie is still living in the past, he refuses to see what

is ahead. At the end of the novel, Bennie has a wife called Lupa, who is also dark-eyed. This means that Bennie has finally accepted reality and is finally living in the present, with less of his nostalgic desires for the past. He says it himself, regarding Lou Kline: “nostalgia is the end” (42).

Egan does not reveal Sasha’s story in a non-chronological order. Because of this, the changes seem bigger than they would appear if they were chronological. In this manner, time and nostalgia have a stronger presence in Sasha’s life. Sasha is a kleptomaniac and has trouble detangling herself from the past and the objects she has stolen over time. She keeps them as a small reminder of every past action. Sasha cannot imagine that there are people who do not feel the same way as her about past experiences and she projects this on others. She desires for Alex to feel nostalgic about her: “It jarred Sasha to think of herself as a glint in the hazy memories that Alex would struggle to organize a year or two from now: where was that place with the bathtub? Who was that girl?” (15). Just like Jocelyn, Sasha represents hope. She deals with mental issues over the years which result from her father’s disappearance. She admits to seeing her father on her travels: “I thought he might be following me, making sure I was okay. And then, when it seemed like he wasn’t, I got really scared” (225). She cannot forgive her parents easily; her therapist tries to talk about it but she refuses to answer. Sasha thinks this is not only for her and her therapist’s protection, but in the direction of second chances “lay only sorrow” (9). Because of her sorrows in these years of her life, she feels nostalgic to the time where her parents were still together. Although she never had a proper father, she fantasizes about meeting him anyway. This shows that she views the past as more positive than it truly was. Although she had an awful youth and is nostalgic about her younger years when she is an adult working for Bennie, she turns out to be a great mother of two children when she is older. Her nostalgic feelings for her parents turned her into the parent she dreamed of having. Sasha shows that Adams’ argument was correct: nostalgia is not be the

only future for punk rock and can have an active future. While Sasha did not change entirely, she still is the punk rocker she used to be and she still feels the need to retain memories, she developed into a great woman. When her daughter asks her about her youth, Sasha simply replies: “nothing you need to think about” (259). Nostalgia made Sasha a stronger person and aided her in overcoming her mental issues.

Scotty starts out as a popular teenager and is actually one of the only characters whose story is linear. The other characters stories are told non-chronological, which adds to the shocking changes in their lives. However, the changes in the stages Scotty goes through are large enough to appear shocking without the extra effect. In Scotty’s eyes, Bennie has made it in life, while his own popularity and motivation have disappeared over the years. When talking about what happened between “A and B”, he fantasises about killing Bennie and delivering his head to Sasha. This shows his jealousy and his desire for relationships to be the same as they were in the past. Scotty assumed that all of his past friends changed in the same way as him. When this is not the case, Scotty gets angry seemingly at Bennie but actually at himself. He is nostalgic for a past version of himself but does not have the strength to become that person again. Although conversation is strained, Bennie still gives Scotty his business card. Instead of keeping it and guaranteeing himself a better future, he gives it to two junkies. When they express their gratitude, Scotty realises how long it has been since anybody thanked him. He repeats it to himself so he will not forget, not unlike Sasha, who keeps trinkets as memories. While most of the chapter is written on a sad, nostalgic note where Scotty seems to have hit rock bottom, his mood turns better at the end of the chapter. The chapter ends with “and she would make it new again” which alludes to the last chapter, where Lulu makes sure his first concert as an adult proceeds smoothly. According to Bennie, Scotty is “absolutely pure” (348), the sound he has been looking for. Scotty is Bennie’s redemption. Because of Scotty, Bennie can finally stop feeling nostalgic about the music he loves. Scotty’s sound is

not clean, but raw and pure which ensures that Bennie suddenly feels positive about the future. However, Scotty is still scared he cannot perform; he thinks he is too old: “the goon won” (37). When Lulu appears, a change happens in Scotty: “a ghost version of Scotty Hausmann flickered at Alex from the dregs that are left, sexy and rakish” (372). For a small moment, Scotty is his old self again, a ghost from the past that still lives in the present. Scotty shows, while there is place for nostalgia for older punks, it is also a living genre, as Chambers and Hebdige argue. Scotty’s is motivated by the young, he recognizes himself in them, both in the punks in the park, as in Lulu.

The novel ends with Bennie and Alex searching for Sasha when they pass her old apartment. Just as Sasha feared, Alex remembers only her bathtub. He instantly feels nostalgic, although Sasha has long moved on. When they walk away, they hear a woman and whirl around, but it is another young woman. They expected Sasha, not thinking about the fact that years have gone by and that the chance that she would still live there is extremely small. The young woman represents the fact that time goes by and for every old person, a new young person comes in his/her stead.

Chapter 2: Identity

According to Simon Frith “the academic study of popular music has been limited by the assumption that the sounds must somehow 'reflect' or 'represent' the people” (108). However, the connection between identity and music is often traced back to the social groups that produce the music. His argument rests on two premises: identity is not a thing it is a process and thus mobile. Second, music making and music listening is an experience of this process. Frith calls music “both performance and story” (109) and it “describes the social in the individual and the individual in the social, the mind in the body and the body in the mind; identity, like music, is a matter of both ethics and aesthetics” (109). According to Turino, many ethnomusicologists agree that music is “a key resource for realizing personal and collective identities which, in turn, are crucial for social, political, and economic participation” (221). Turino argues that identities are not only individual but also social. Identity is composed of what we know about our relations: family, friends and acquaintances. Turino argues that although identity is made up about what we know best about these relations to ourselves, others and the rest of the world, it is also constructed of what we least talk about or are able to talk about. Turino argues that “the crucial link between identity formation and arts like music lies in the specific semiotic character of these activities which make them particularly affective and direct ways of knowing” (221). Peirce’s semiotic theory helps explaining the “special potentials of music for the construction of personal and social identities” (249). Peircean semiotics include a concept of sign “in the widest, most flexible way as something that stands for something else to someone in some way, thus allowing for many different types of signs outside propositional language” (99). Peirce frequently mentions the “mysterious” and “untalkable” quality of music. This allows for more personal and group appropriation. As Turino argues, the untalkable quality that makes people love a certain genre of music also connects these people. The power of music to affect identities comes from its

status as “a potential collective activity” (222). North and Hargreaves investigate the idea that musical preference is strongly linked to someone’s identity in their adolescence. Adolescents also “hold normative expectations about the values and characteristics of fans of particular musical styles” (75). They point out that the relationship between adolescents’ musical preference, self-respect, self-concept, and expectations of a stereotype fanbase is positive. Besides, they show that adolescents favour people with the same musical taste but do not necessarily denigrate those with different tastes. Sotirios Bakagiannis and Mark Tarrant delve deeper into the possibilities of music. Earlier research has applied social identity theory to indicate “how individuals use music as a basis for intergroup differentiation” (129). Bakagiannis and Tarrant’s study shows that “adolescents’ perceptions that their own groups and outgroups have similar musical preferences can facilitate development of positive intergroup relations” (134). Instead of researching the interrelationship between music and identity, Saarikallio researches how music’s meaning can influence adolescents’ physical development and mood regulation. Saarikallio comes to the conclusion that mood regulation through music is possible. It has “significant implications for adjustment of well-being” (35).

Bruce K. Martin explores how *Daniel Deronda*, *Ulysses*, and David Lodge's *Nice Work* face the challenge of the attraction of popular music. The temptation to make connections with is music strong, according to Martin It has dogged artists since antiquity. By referring to music the author can evoke a historical or social setting. When time passes, the effect of an older quotation of lyrics or a title declines since other music becomes popular and older quotations might not be known to new readers. Even though there are dangers to using music in fiction referring to songs, quotes and bands has become a popular way to describe what it means to be alive in a certain time. For example, Bennie in *A Visit from the Goon Squad* compares music from the 80’s to contemporary music. He listens to the Sleepers and

Dead Kennedys, which reminds him of a time where he worked tirelessly to produce music that people would love. He knows that those songs were good quality, and the music he produces now is too clean and too clear. No more muddiness and quality has become fake. While he is essentially talking about music here, he also compares two decades. This shows that, as Coontz argues, Bennie forgets about the bad parts of his pasts. He compares the good aspects of his punk years to the bad aspects of his contemporary life.

Jocelyn writes the lyrics for Scotty and Bennie's band The Flaming Dildos. When she meets Lou while she is hitchhiking, in a rebellious stage of her life, he is a music producer. Because of his status as a much older and powerful man, he has control over Jocelyn. This control never really disappeared, which shows when she feels nostalgic about him when she is older. Her whole identity as an adult has been influenced by Lou's promises and presence in her life when she was a teenager. The chapter where Jocelyn and Rhea feel like they become adults is very prominent. They bring Lou to a concert of The Flaming Dildos and for the first time they watch from the back, instead of joining the party in front of the stage. While they watch, they feel their identity changing into something else, something older. This moment is a turning point for both Jocelyn and Rhea. However, it does not lead to the same future. They panic when the crowd starts throwing ice at The Flaming Dildos, but Lou holds them back. When Rhea looks for Jocelyn, she is gone, on her knees giving Lou a blowjob. The music has turned in a disguise, a cover for what's going on. Only Rhea notices and in contrast to Jocelyn feels like this is not a normal situation. This contrast shows when they are older: Jocelyn has let Lou influence her identity, which led to a troublesome future. Rhea however, moved on. When Jocelyn is older, she looks back at her teenage years, afraid to let go. She realises that this part of her life, when she was a band-member and dated a much older music producer, was the best time she had, but it is also what ruined her future. She is an example of North

and Hargreaves' theory that your preference in music has influence on your identity and your future, in Jocelyn's case negatively.

Bennie also starts out as part of The Flaming Dildos. He is not only the bass player, but also the one behind the whole idea. He and Scotty do not talk to each other, but are still the ones where the whole band revolves around. Bennie desperately tries to make them famous, Scotty is the big talent. Their differences in their views of the band and music show later in life: Bennie's love for music gives him the strength to get through his divorce. Scotty never had to work for his talent. When he becomes older, he does not work either, living a low life. Without Bennie's love for music, Scotty never would have performed again. Bennie becomes Lou's protégé after the failure of The Flaming Dildos. He did not end up in a band himself but turns others famous instead. As music genres changed, so did Bennie. When he visits the Go/Stop Sisters, Sasha mentions that his ideas about music have changed. He used to be really invested, saying five months in the music industry might as well be five years. Later on, he forgets it has already been five years since he saw the Go/Stop Sisters, thinking it was only two. He loses not only his passion for life, which he tries recover by eating gold, but also his passion for music. Music, according to Bennie, has to be pure and raw, a sound contemporary music misses. Saarikallio argues that mood regulation through music is possible, which shows when Bennie listens to Dead Kennedys, which makes him feel nostalgic. He keeps listening to American punk bands, refusing to go with the time. Turino argues that music is crucial for collective and personal identities and thus for social, political and economic participation. Scotty is Bennie's redemption and he leads Benny to his true identity. The concert they organize together brings them both back in the social music scene and they both start participating in the economy again. By finding a pure sound and making the concert work, Bennie rediscovers his passion, together with his lust for life.

Sasha is only six years old when her father disappears, which turns out to be the root of her kleptomaniac behaviour. She starts shoplifting when she is thirteen years old. This starts out small, but grows into a problem. Pickpocketing is not only part of her lifestyle, but also part of her identity. She never really shakes the habit. She is a thoughtful person, which shows in the way she takes care of Bennie, even when his music induced moods hit him. Music influenced her young self when she lives in Naples; Bennie's moods influence her when she is a young adult. She and Bennie never converse about their connection, but their taste in music connects them deeply. Their relationship and identities are made up about what they both know best, but least talk about, just as Turino argues. Sasha reminds Bennie of who he used to be before he lost his faith in music. She gives him strength to change, although not as strongly as Scotty does. However, Sasha gets fired for stealing after twelve years of being Bennie's assistant. Again her kleptomaniac behaviour and past influence her life strongly. She realises her life has to change after this and moves to Pakistan, where she meets Drew. She has two kids and is a great mother. However, she still has some tendencies from her past: she makes scrapbooks from desert trash and old toys, indicating she still has trouble letting go of items. She also waits every night until her husband comes home her father never returned, so she makes sure Drew does. She grows as a person and finds her strength through trial and error: music and her relationships manufacture her identity.

Scotty is a legend as a teenager. Not only the punk rockers in their school gather around to listen to him, but also the football players. His music breaks the boundaries of subcultures: "Everyone gathers around there is no way not to when Scotty plays" (47). Scotty has a mesmerizing quality, what Peirce calls the untalkable quality of music. His music has the power to connect people. Rhea calls him magnetic, a quality he still has later in his life, described by Alex as a ghost. When they have the Flaming Dildos concert Scotty is struck a couple of times with ice and a guy runs up to him. Scotty kicks him in the chest and grins.

Rhea realises here that Scotty is the angriest of them. Through his music he is able to abreact this anger. He is angry at his parents, and the only thing he has left of this period later in his life are the spots before his eyes which he received from looking in the sun too long when his mom died. He deals with the time going by through music. He tries to process his mother's deaths by playing his self-made guitar. Music is a big part of Scotty's identity. Without it, he feels meaningless and angry. The fact that he is extremely angry and only shows emotions through his music shows that he can hardly function without it. He stops playing music when he grows older, which makes him lose hope on a meaningful life. Even so, he cannot help but give Bennie's business card to two young people sitting in the park. They do not recognize him, but he sees them every day and knows the boy makes music. By giving them Bennie's card, he hopes music can give them a better future. He recognizes himself in them, two junks with nothing but their love for music. He tries to secure a better future for them than for himself, showing a caring character. His anger disappears when he is in contact with the music from his past, even if it is just portrayed through two teenagers he has never met in person before. Years later Bennie finds Scotty, and Alex assures there is a crowd at his first concert as an adult. Scotty is scared and feels too old to perform. However, Lulu convinces him and for an instant he becomes the old Scotty again. Once again, it is a young person who brings out the best in Scotty, because she reminds him of a better time, just like the two teenagers in the park did. On stage, the crowd recognizes in Scotty what Rhea saw so many years ago: he is magnetizing, his music is mesmerizing and strikes people around him. Hargreaves argues that music can connect people, whether they enjoy that style or not. Scotty is capable of this. He connects the people at the concert the same way he did years ago at high school. He causes what Bakagiannis and Tarrant call "positive intergroup relations". Playing music brings the best out of Scotty. Frith calls music "both performance and story" (109)

which applies directly to Scotty's situation, who loses his identity and thus his story until he performs again.

Conclusion

Egan's characters feel nostalgic about a past that seems better than it was in reality, just as Clark argues. Scotty and Bennie are the most influenced by music. Music dominates their identity and moods. Their teenage years, when punk rock was at its prime, they were at their best too. Bennie cannot cope with the change of what's popular music. It gets so bad, that it influences not only his work but also his moods, leading to his divorce. Scotty is nothing like his former self when he stops playing music. Coontz argues that because of nostalgia, people tend to forget the bad things from a period of time. This is also strongly the case with Bennie: he compares the decades to music, and is not happy again until he organizes Scotty's concert. Scotty reminds him of the days where music was still raw. Scotty is mesmerizing when he plays his guitar; he connects people with his music. Peirce calls this calls the untalkable quality of music. He creates positive intergroup relations, even though the people part of this usually do not listen to punk. Benny and Scotty both only flourish again when they find each other. Their new meeting leads to their redemption: they make new, pure music, as music in their eyes should be.

Sasha and Jocelyn's identities as adults are strongly influenced by nostalgia. Sasha, although she stops stealing, never quite shakes the impact her father left on her life, the same way Lou affected Jocelyn. Su describes this as images of loss and yearning. Jocelyn feels that her future is ruined and that her past was better, even though she recognizes the faults of her life as a teenager. Jocelyn, Scotty and Sasha's childhoods were ridden with sadness, leaving parents and lies, even so, at a certain point in their lives they are certain that those were their best years. Sasha's father left a big impact on her life, and on every stage she goes through, he leaves his footprint. Even after she quits her life as a kleptomaniac, she is still burdened. Her

identity is stained by him. The night that has the biggest impact on Jocelyn's life is the night of the concert, where she becomes Lou's girl and realises how angry Scotty really is. Jocelyn remembers this night as the night where she becomes an adult. The music from that night and her decision to stay in the back with Lou influences the rest of her life. Scotty loses his anger over the years, never truly becoming his self again until he performs again, similar to the way Frith describes music. Egan's characters grown-up lives are heavily influenced by the 80s in America, the music they listened to and the people they met in those years. Their identities as adults are formed by punk music and nostalgic feelings to their teenage years. It shows that there are strong interrelationships between music, identity and nostalgia. In future research other characters of Egan's *A Visit from the Goon Squad* should be analysed closer. Other than that, there should be more research on the influence of punk rock on generation that grew up in the 80s in America.

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