

# The Idyllic Present

Things that seem idyllic to us from the 1950's were probably commonplace or even annoying to people then.

The alley full of kids playing kick the can was a dirty mosquito trap. The sandlot was an eyesore. The drug store was just a store. But to us, these are idyllic representations of things we long for.

What normal or annoying things today will seem idyllic in the future?

I started wondering this while sitting on a bench in front of Wal-Mart with my son. We were waiting for my wife and looking at a small fenced enclosure between us and the vast, nicely landscaped parking lot. The enclosure had large trees full of chirping birds. SUVs meandered in and out as we watched the birds and people coming and going from the parking lot.

Retail parking lots seem unsightly and annoying to most people. But as I sat I realized it was all quite pleasant. It reminded of some of the greatest attributes and ideals of our culture. Peaceful commerce. Exchange. Strangers greeting each other. Efforts to make parking both convenient and nice looking. Order, community, spontaneity, and individualism all at once. Convenience and attention to detail.

The suburban shopping scene is taken for granted or looked down on today. Someday, someone will see it in a movie and long to experience such an idyllic setting. They won't be wrong.