

# The Golden Ages: The "Perks" of Being a Teenager

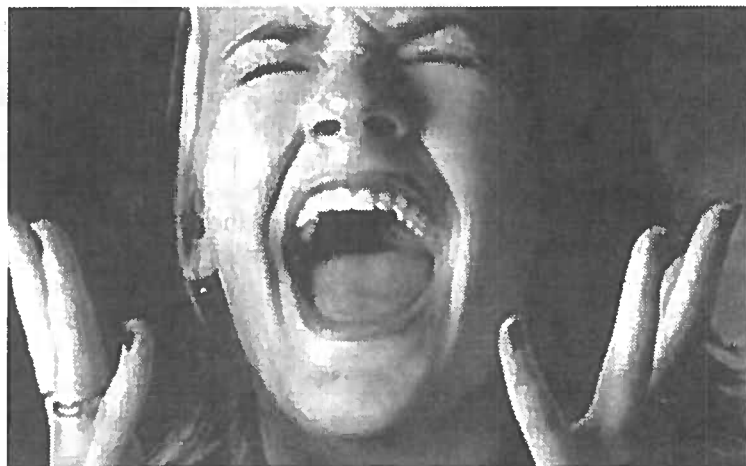
By Stephanie Tardieu

I belong to that classification of people known as teenagers. I am a teenager. And, not altogether the same, I am a young adult.

I have oft heard adults in their mid forties and fifties speak of youth as a wondrous dream; always wishing they could go back and starting sentences that frequently begin by 'Back in my days...' or 'That's how it used to be done in my time...' Adults who may be experiencing some sort of mid-life crisis or frustration with life always identify their teenagehood with ideals of purity, freedom and innocence. They are always reminiscing about their wishes to go back and look upon their teenage years as the golden age of their time. As I thought about their longings and frustrations it dawned upon me that, I too, would want to remain eternally young as a teenager. Why do I want to remain a teenager?

I want to go back to living under my parents' roof living by their time and their rules. I want to stay a teenager so that I can remain in an adult body but feel confused and mixed up between grown up and childish urges; and whilst inhabiting that adult body, I want to be controlled by my parents and feel watched over constantly during every waking moment. I want to go thru those painstaking heated arguments about that shirt that is too tight, or that skirt that is too short. And right after that argument is over, I want to bicker some more at the top of my lungs about how my curfew is too early comparing it to my other friends'. I want to be constantly reminded that I have to set 'a good example' for my brothers and sisters whilst being compared to them and never being good enough; not even knowing what being good enough is. I want to be reminded constantly how "back in my days" things were different and "I would never talk to my parents that way." I want to cry over that party I wasn't allowed to go to, and feel eternally haunted by those 2 and 4 word phrases: "You're grounded!" and "Go to your room!"

I want to go back to high school and junior high school, an eternal fashion show and popularity contest. I want to be judged by the clothes I wear and my extensive knowledge of urban and pop culture. I want to be under the reign of evil teachers (who I'm positive are out to get me) who impose their torturous methods of detention upon us helpless students. I want to be subjected to the mean comments and bullying of the popular kids whilst hating them and wanting to be them altogether. I want everyone to love me but I also want to be rebellious and reject society. I want to find my place on the social ladder



not knowing where I fit in. Am I a cheerleader? Punk rocker? Goth? Ghetto kid? Jock? Chess nerd? Computer geek? I long to make that decision all over again. I want to feel nervous about rejecting drugs, cigarettes, and drinking at parties for fear of being teased and ridiculed. And lastly, I want to be extreme and know the right thing but do otherwise because it's 'cool'.

I want to be treated with contempt every time I walk into a mall or store with my teenager friends. I want to be glared at atrociously by the store clerk just waiting for us to shop lift some lipstick or a candy bar so he can sound the alarm for security. But I also want to annoy the store clerk just to push and test his limits al-

though I know it's wrong and I'm playing with fire.

I want to be completely uncertain of just about everything: my life, my body, my sexuality, my future... I want to constantly be reminded of college and career choices and look upon it as just an ambiguous blur. I want to constantly question my individuality. When I see a 'beautiful' and 'skinny' model in seventeen magazine, I want to look just like her and be self-conscious about my appearance. I want to have new and alien body parts and functions that fascinate me and frighten me to death at the same time. I want

to deal with friends who have issues such as anorexia, bulimia, cutting, depression... I want to worry about sex and boys. When a boy walks, by I want to rock his world yet I want him to have respect for me as well. I want to worry about rejection and being a wall flower; only to overwhelm and burden my mind with thoughts that something is gravely wrong with me. I want to hate and love the world on an eternal seeming see-saw of complex contradictory surreal emotions and feelings. I want to scream till I die, laugh till I cry, faint, fly, drown, run away, jump high all at once as I try to 'find myself'. I want to be in the dark not knowing who to turn to, always being rash and quick to think it's the end of the world; feeling every emotion and breath, in my little ripened body, amplified to the extreme! I want to strive to be unique and defy convention yet be like everyone else coming into my own through the wonders of this golden age.

Upon my word, who wouldn't want to remain a teenager?

## FIGHT BACK AGAINST IDENTITY THEFT



DETER  
Deter identity thieves by  
safeguarding your information.

**Celebrating 100 Years of The Campus  
(1907 - 2007)**

**Communications Alumni Group  
Annual Hall of Fame Dinner**