

KIM STOCK

Passing fame, happy memory

There are certain memories that will not leave my mind. At times, when I'm feeling down, I will think back to "Expressions." Let me explain.

Every May, my high school choir used to put on a variety/rock show for the students and parents. Under the added supervision of the choir director, 65 students "pulled" and learned music, choreographed dances and decided what costumes to wear for the performances.

During my junior year, I was lucky enough to be chosen to sing "Hey Jude" solo.

Stroll with me down memory lane as I reminisce about that night.

I noticed the smell of paint, mixed with the smell of 600 students and parents crammed together. The air was musky and seemed to steam like a sauna. I could feel the beads of sweat starting to form on my forehead. I walked over to the microphone and gently released it from the stand.

The spotlight suddenly shined on my face, blinding me for a second. The light was so intense that I could see the dust particles floating in the air. The particles looked like little, free souls as they came toward me.

I took a breath and sang the first words. "Hey Jude" rolled out of my throat and sounded cracked. I continued singing, "Don't make it bad. Take a sad song and make it better ..."

I said a mental prayer, thanking God I was singing in tune. I could hear James, the piano player, beginning to play the familiar chords to complement my singing. As I started singing the words, "So any time you feel the pain, hey Jude refrain ..." I heard the drums and cymbals keeping the beat with James and me. Occasionally, my backup singer would echo my words or sing harmony with me.

...My heart started beating faster.



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and I could feel my body loosening up. I was losing my inhibitions, and I felt free to jazz up my performance.

I started prancing around stage — like the singers do in MTV music videos. The crowd started clapping and screaming their approval, so I started hamming it up even more.

I could hear a few people scream out my name, which caused my ego to explode. My heart wasn't pounding anymore because I was scared, but because I was excited.

My eyes were adjusting to the light, and I could make out who the dark figures were in the front rows. I spotted my ex-boyfriend in the second row, watching my every move. This made me smile inside; I revealed in the attention.

At this moment, I understood why rock stars were so arrogant and flighty. All that attention can be addictive.

I was approaching the end of the song. "Nah, nah, nah, nah, nah ..." and I knew this feeling would soon end. I was trying to remember how many times I planned on singing this phrase — four? I eventually lost count and decided that I would stop singing. The piano and drums played on for another measure.

The speakers in the auditorium rang with silence for a second. Then, the crowd started clapping and screaming for me, sounding

like a massive thunderstorm passing over the building. That was an incredible and beautiful feeling.

I noticed my brows were wet with sweat, and the back of my silk shirt was cold. My mouth was suddenly dry, and I could feel a lump forming in my throat. I smiled at the crowd and took my bow.

I don't have a lot of memories like that night. Usually I'm not on center stage. But I know I'll never forget the feeling I had when I heard people applaud just for me. I felt like a star.

We all want to feel like stars. We all deserve to feel like stars, at least for a few moments. When the spotlight shines, we may pretend we desire to remain in the shadow, but we all yearn to warm our faces in the light.

Come on — I know that late at night, when you think no one can see through your bedroom walls, you dance around in your underwear singing at the top of your lungs. You watch yourself in the mirror, fluff your hair and think you look pretty good. "This is just practice for the real thing," you tell yourself.

It was Andy Warhol's theory that everyone has his or 15 fifteen minutes of fame. We must all be waiting for our turn.

Stock is a junior secondary education major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

E. HUGHES SHANKS

Youth not liberal, but so what

We're told that since the 1980s, there has been a trend toward more conservative values.

Is it a surprise that many of today's youth seem to be more conservative than the young people of yesterday? Is this trend a threat to our more tolerant society?

Cultural divisions are more prominent than ever, and the radical right remains strong. More and more younger people are attending church, and the Democratic Party is no longer their party choice.

Is it surprising that many 30- and 40-something people are finding themselves to be more liberal than the youth of today? As teen-agers in the '60s and '70s, we talked about a "generation gap" between us and our parents. We knew that we could stand up and speak out against anything and everything. And that's exactly what we did. Our parents didn't have that kind of freedom as teen-agers.

We used to say, "Don't trust anyone older than 30! Ban the establishment!" We, too, were at odds with adults when we were young. Today, we may feel more liberal than the younger generation appears sometimes, but so what?

There seems to be a fear that a youthful trend toward conservatism is all bad. The young in any society have a right and a responsibility to make that society better. Like the young people of today, my parents had a right to find out what they wanted. I'm glad they did what they did.

During the fight to end segregation, they were arrested for keeping me out of segregated schools. My mother also happened to be running for the school board at the time. She accuses me of being too conservative. I think she has a right to accuse me of that.

As a federal employee, my father



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was harassed at his job by FBI agents who went there to intimidate him. My father was organizing demonstrations to end segregation.

I have found myself ungrateful for the sacrifices they made. I've complained that they didn't do enough. I've believed that I would have rather died than accept segregation. I've questioned whether my parents gave enough.

I think the 30- and 40-something crowd is finding out what people older than 50 already know: Society changes, but only very slowly, even after the greatest efforts and sacrifices are made.

The young people of today are not a threat to our way of life — at least no more so than the young people of yesterday were a threat. Things haven't changed as much as we thought they would. Desegregation didn't wipe out the white race, as was feared by the segregationists. It is true that we sometimes have to eat, drink and live near people who are different from us, but we still can live separately if we want to.

Most people still have friends from the same social class and ethnic group as their own. Plenty of all-white schools are left. Most of us don't live much differently than our parents did.

If today's youths want to explore conservative horizons, let them. Sometimes it may look like today's young are more right-wing than

before, but that depends on your perspective. To some, today's young actually may seem more left-wing than ever!

I'm against putting crowns on the 30- and 40-something crowd for "paving the way for a more tolerant society" just because we were there. We just inherited it. Give credit where credit is due.

The people really responsible for paving the way are in their 60s and 70s. If anyone can claim credit for this "more tolerant" society, they can. They are the ones who made real sacrifices to get us where we are today.

Any black person who is at least 60 years old has lived half or more of his or her life in forced, legal segregation. They couldn't eat, drink or live where they wanted to. What is even more astounding is that at the time of the civil rights movement, they already had lived two-thirds of their lives that way. Now that's what I call paving the way.

It may seem that the sides have been switched. But have they really? Maybe it doesn't matter who is on either side. Maybe all that matters is whether at least one side is always working hard to improve the way things are.

Shanks is a graduate student and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

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