

Futures

'If I could travel in time' by Zed 5755

History lessons. By **Jessy Randall**

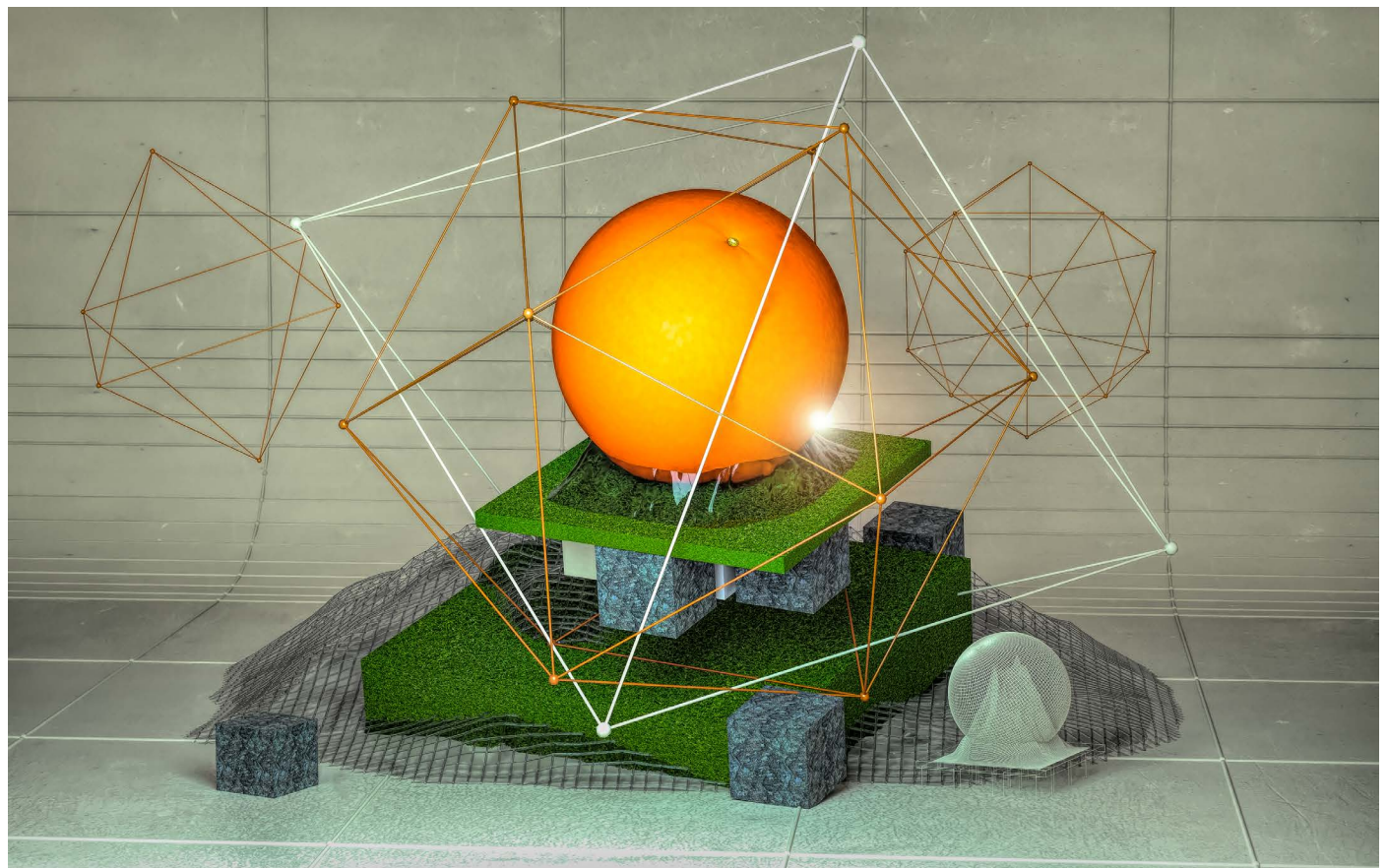


ILLUSTRATION BY JACEY

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7th Grade English
Mx Quurnz

IF I COULD TRAVEL IN TIME

This is a question teachers have assigned since the beginning of history or even before. The answer will be based on what a person cares about. Like, if you like sports you would want to go back in time to whenever your sport was popular and you could play it. Or if you like to sing you would want to go back to a time when singing was legal. If I personally could time travel I would choose the period between the second and third world wars when things were simpler.

In that period people lived at a slower pace than we do now. They took time to have actual personal interactions with each other instead

of just always gleeing and fxtng on their schmrgdons. {}Leave me alone can't you see I'm recording my homework?{} They didn't even HAVE schmrgdons or any idea how important they would be! {}I mean it get off my foot I have to finish this.{}

The very first thing I would do when I got out of my time machine is strip down to my single-layer and feel the warmth of the actual sun right through that layer. It would be amazing. I think it would feel like being inside a Florida Orange™. It would feel orange and yellow and juicy, probably. I would like to find out exactly how it feels instead of just imagining.

Other things I would be able to find out about are wind, snow, rain and seasons in general. My guess is that these things would be a combination of pleasant/unpleasant that overall would be pleasant. {}I already did my chore ask someone else.{} My travels

in time would pay for themselves because I would record the experiences of these things (weather, etc.) in 6D and then come back to the present and share the 6D to the whole world so that everyone could experience it too. I could make a career of this because it would be innovative and entrepreneurial to monetize the physical and emotional sensations of the past. People would pay a lot to experience my experiences and I could use that money to fund further trips in the time machine. In this way I could be successful and rise to the top level of society and fulfil the Earth Dream.

Another thing I could bring back from the past would be music freedom. In the olden days there were few if any restrictions on music, sometimes none at all. People could listen to whatever they wanted. Their music wasn't like today's phony sanitized music all made from previous {}Yes please I'll take green

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with speckles and tinch} music by computers. Their music was REAL and authentic and I want to know what it sounded like. I would wear ear protectors of course because I wouldn't want my ears to go deaf like theirs did!

Also, if I travelled in time I would be able to answer many unanswered questions about the past, such as how people between the second and third world wars thought about cleanliness and whether or not 'sunburn' was a real thing and if they understood photosynthesis. I have also heard that sometimes inside a building they would be too hot or too cold, which is so sad.

One of the greatest challenges I would face during my time travel would be dealing with the gender binary. In order to fit in I would have to use only terms such as he and she. I couldn't survive in this time period without doing this. I guess I would have to choose a gender for myself, or maybe they would tell me what I was.

I would also have to smell and eat their disgusting animal food. This would probably be the biggest problem I would face. Other hardships would include dealing with toilets, staircases, shoelaces and buttons, not to mention all the diseases. I think I would like to try 'vomiting' once, though, to see what it's like. {}I'm almost finished it's supposed to be 900 words I'm at 700 I'll be there in a minute. {} Probably the food would make me 'vomit'. I could also perhaps try that thing they used to do where they mashed their mouths together and shared germs, just once of course for scientific purposes.

All this would be worth it so I could {}Can't someone else press it? I'm doing my homework and it's due next hour!{} learn about other ways of being and experience the human condition from another point of view. My horizons would be expanded, literally and figuratively, by time travel to the past. But I would not want to go

too far into the past and die from something stupid.

In conclusion, the best time to time travel would be the time between the second and third world wars because of the way things were more natural and also the music and the opportunity to get rich from selling the 6D {}OK OK SHUT UP!{} recordings and then I could get my own dwelling and not have to share with so many sibs. Also back then I would be done with school much younger and would not have to complete sixteenth grade before being allowed to drive my own transport.

Jessy Randall's work has appeared in *Analog*, *Asimov's* and *Strange Horizons*. Her most recent book is *How to Tell If You Are Human: Diagram Poems* (Pleiades, 2018). She is a librarian at Colorado College and her website is <http://bit.ly/JessyRandall>.

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY

Jessy Randall reveals the inspiration behind 'If I could travel in time' by Zed 5755

I'm a librarian at Colorado College, and I occasionally teach a class called 'The history and future of the book'. Anyone who corrects student papers knows that essays often begin with wide, sweeping statements such as "Since the beginning of time..." or "Throughout history...". I figured that even in the far future, students would still think they were supposed to make grand pronouncements in their papers.

I'm also a mother, and I once was a student myself. So I was thinking about how young people in the future might try to slam through an essay assignment without doing any research, and how they might use some kind of voice-to-text technology to speed things up further, maybe not even checking to see if their side conversations accidentally got included.

Zed 5755 is a secondary character in another story of mine, 'The Hedon-Ex Anomaly' (*Lady Churchill's Rosebud Wristlet*, August 2011). In that story, owing to an anomaly, Zed experiences sharing germs with another person.

Oh, and I should say that I didn't invent the idea of using 'Mx' as an all-inclusive title (in place of Mr, Ms, Mrs, Miss). Starting around 2015, Mx became an acceptable title in the United Kingdom, and can be found in English dictionaries produced in the United States and the United Kingdom.

