Grandma was a Lifelogger

Extracting meaning from lifelogs as historic documents

Presented by: Kitty Ireland
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About Me

- Working on Saga – the essential lifelogging app – at A.R.O. in Seattle
- My grandma Pat was my primary parent until I was 12 years old
- I read this diary for the first time this fall
Port Angeles WA, 1942

- Olympic Peninsula logging town & wartime Navy port
- Grandma turned 16 in October
- Lived with single working mom & older sister
More Lifelog Than Diary

Typical entry:

- Went to the afternoon show with Nola today – W.C.Fields
- And then went to her house
- + ate there
- Went to the rink to see who was there
- Kenny was with us + we walked Nola home
- He came home with me
- I got mom a pink blouse for her birthday

List of outfits:

- Red jacket, red and white striped T-shirt, green pleated skirt, white and black striped blouse, gray skirt, white pleated skirt, green print blouse, red and blue gingham blouse, white tie, gray skirt
- Yellow sweater, gray shirt, white t-shirt, black tie, gray skirt, red and blue gingham blouse, white skirt, red and white striped T-shirt, gray skirt
- Yellow sweater, gray skirt, white t-shirt, black tie, gray skirt, red and blue gingham blouse, white skirt, red and white striped T-shirt, gray skirt
- White blouse, gray skirt, red and blue gingham blouse, gray skirt, yellow sweater, gray skirt, white t-shirt, black tie, gray skirt
- Yellow sweater, gray skirt, white t-shirt, black tie, gray skirt

Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad Company

American's Longest Electrified Railroad
What did I do?

Extracted data from grandma’s lifelog & from my own

Looked for patterns

Asked what I could learn about my grandma & myself
What Grandma Tracked

Favorite songs:

- Weather
- Outfits
- People
- Location
- Boys
- Food
- Movies
- Music
- Household chores
- Shopping
- Walks
- Moods
- Time to bed
- Dances
- Books/ Magazines

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"Favorite Songs - Jan. 1, 1942
On the Banks of the Wabash, My Boyfriend, I Fell in Love with a Sailor"
"White Christmas"
"I Have a Gal in France"
"Dancing in the Dark"
"Too Late for Us"
"I Had the Craziest Dream"
Grandma mostly tracked boys.
Mentions of Boys in 1942

- Kenny
- Basil
- Heinie
- Gerald
- Del
- Bob
- Zip
- Dave
“I love Zip more than any girl could – ever!”

“I want him. I miss him. I wish I was dead.”
# Food Tracking

August, 1942

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<th>Sunday</th>
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<th>Tuesday</th>
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Media Consumption
Location Tracking
What’s missing?

- Her mother & sister are seldom mentioned
- No meals at home, ever
- School is somewhat rare & never important
What’s the story?

A young girl in a small western town during wartime falls in love. With little parental supervision, she eats her meals in diners, goes to movies, and rides around in cars with dozens of boys.
A Revelation

Grandma at 16 wasn’t much different from me at 16.

- Living with single mom, no supervision, no meals at home
- Out dancing several times a week
- Staying out all night, drinking
- Hub of activity @ home; mom as peer
- Fooling around with boys (though far more for her!)
The Digital Lifelog
Confession

☞ I am a terrible lifeloggler.
Passive Lifelogging
I never eat at home.
Food = Love
What Did I Learn?

- My legacy began before I was born
- My grandma’s influence goes beyond our 12 years together
- My life even now reflects aspects of grandma in 1942
- Food = Love = Men = Lipstick?
Family Legacy

Abandoned girls
Lipstick Legacy

“Mom bought me a one-dollar Max Factor Lipstick – um-m-m” – October 22 (16th birthday)
Quantified Lipstick
Searching for Mr. ______

Grandma didn’t stop kissing boys in 1942

1st pregnancy 4 years later

3 babies by 2 men by 1949

The reluctant housewife
The Life Grandma Wanted

- The life she wanted: independent & childless
- Relationships with men: Quality over quantity?
- Not bogged down by domesticity
- World travels & confidence to travel alone
- My lifelog could be an extension of hers

“Lifelogging” – get it?

Minor rock star with whom I’ve never “necked”
# Details tell the story

## Grandma’s lifelog:
- Apricot Pie
- Max Factor lipstick
- Brown slacks with tan sweater
- Watching falling stars
- Singing Auld Lang Syne in mom’s formalwear
- Coke & aspirin

## My lifelog:
- 39 Arctic Monkeys tracks played 9/28
- 17K steps taken in Amsterdam
- 18 visits to Aoki Sushi Bar this year
- Instagrams of cocktails
- Responded to 28/180 OK Cupid messages in 3 years
- 10 hotels so far in 2013
Life After Death

30 years after her death, I feel closer to her than ever.

The little details in her diary help me know her better.

Reading her diary is like having more time with her.
Patricia Jacqueline Sumner Bevard

October 22, 1926 – December 1, 1983
Thanks

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SAGA