

THE OLD MAN - By Bernard Bujold

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Presentation of the story of the old man

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PREFACE

Here are some reflections on my life!

"Life is like a book with characters and actions and each person has a story... "

I wrote seven other texts about my life between 1977 and 2021, the first ones in paper format, but all texts are available in the bilingual internet collection, in French and in English: [**A BEAUTIFUL PLACE TO DIE.**](#)

I present here, in 2022, a new text which is a summary of my main thoughts on life and some anecdotes about my adventures: [**THE OLD MAN.**](#) This book is a sort of conclusion to my other texts of the collection.

I wanted this book to be of its time and in this sense, it is published exclusively on the digital platform of Google and free in PDF format. A book remains a text and its format must reach as many readers as possible. The virtual distribution gives access to an infinite number of readers. It is always possible to print the PDF on paper if you want an archival copy.

I was inspired in my choice of the virtual platform by the major media, including The Wall Street Journal, of which I have been a daily reader since the age of 20. Here in Canada, the WSJ is no longer available in paper format since 2021, due to the coronavirus crisis. At first I was completely lost but after a few months I had forgotten how to read on paper and was a convert to virtual. Many other media around the world including La Presse in Montreal have also adopted virtual exclusivity and they all seem to be surviving well and better.

I dedicate this text to my two grandchildren, Ava and Emma, and to my two children, David-Bernard and Stephanie.

Enjoy reading!

Bernard Bujold

July 4, 2023

1. The Secret of Happiness and other thoughts

A friend of mine once asked me if, as an old man, I still had moments of happiness in my life and desires to achieve. The question took me by surprise, but I had the answer!

I am happy for 90% of my life, unlike in my other lives when I was younger. The explanation is simple! In the past, when I was 20 to 50 years old, I was "up for" anything: theater and concert outings; galas and social events; restaurants; various professional and personal projects; love affairs, etc.

I estimate, however, that 90% of my activities in the past ended up being a waste of time and went nowhere. So in total, only 10% of my life activities were fruitful and made me happy. Today, as an old man, I accept only 10% of the proposals that are made to me...

I should have applied this concept from a young age except that youth makes us believe that we can change the world, but it is an illusion.

Today, as an old man, I am a happy man!

If I have one piece of advice to pass on, it is to do what you love to do and nothing else.

I have known and been around many people in my life, male and female, poor and rich, and I am always surprised to find that the journey of life is unpredictable for all.

This morning, for example, I was reading in the media about a woman I knew many years ago who had everything to succeed. Beautiful, intelligent, an exciting job, etc. Today she has been in prison, she has become the mockery of those around her and she herself identifies as a failure...

Why such a direction in life? I don't have the answer except to conclude that life is a journey and that the destination is often unknown at the time of departure...

A friend of mine was telling me how sad he was about the immigrants who arrive in this country and have to start their lives over again. My personal vision is that there is always a risk in leaving for somewhere. A departure can lead to a new paradise or a new hell.

For example, my life changed the day I wanted to leave my Gaspé Peninsula for the big city. I wanted to conquer the world and change it. However, with the hindsight of the old man that I have become, I can affirm that we do not change the world and that it is rather the world that changes us. I often regret having left the Gaspé and I miss it, but once the ship has left the port,

there is no turning back. We must assume our departure and survive in our new life.

As William Shakespeare wrote: "There is a wave on the ocean of life, which if caught at the right time on shore will carry the ship to new lands full of hope and promise..." - (Julius Caesar)

But if the lucky wave is missed, then the ocean of life will lead us to failure and misery.

Everything in life begins at birth and is then influenced by the decisions we make in youth, before the age of 20. Inheritance, both financial and genetic, determines our character and decision making and consequently makes who we become as adults.

At my age, I have seen, on myself as well as on many others, that who we are at 20, personality and temperament wise, will stay with us for the rest of our life journey. I believe that luck or misfortune comes from chance, but also from genetics and the way we react to the opportunities or obstacles that life offers us.

Shakespeare's phrase about the wave caught in the harbor sums up my vision of life.

I am always sad to hear about the departure of people I have known, but even sadder to not be able to hear about it when they leave. Every month, I learn of the death of friends or

acquaintances who have been dead for two, three or five years, sometimes longer...

The way we learn about the departure of people around us is a bit like the chance of the waves, because even though our society has become highly technological, there is no way to quickly learn about the end of the people we have known and been close to.

The last person I heard about was a Montreal journalist well known in the arts community. She loved the arts and in particular the Montreal World Film Festival which we attended together as journalist for many years. When I learned of her death, she had already been dead for two years. I often sent her links to my reports on her Facebook, thinking she would like them, when in reality she was dead...

Another example is last year, I learned by searching on the Internet the death of a photographer with whom I had done some projects. I wanted to know how her career was going and I found out that she had died five years earlier from my social media search.

A final example is the spouse of a friend of mine, a spouse I liked. I knew the couple had separated, but I wondered what happened to the wife. Well, she too had passed away almost ten years ago from cancer.

On the other hand, social media has brought us a kind of immortality. Indeed, a person can be physically dead, but his or her virtual presence is still alive in social media.

But social media also has its disadvantage. People have always loved to watch the show, but with social media, the actors become each of us. There is no longer a role for the spectators who have become the actors.

Social media is comparable to sports arenas and the participants on the media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) are like "stage managers." The unfortunate thing about the situation is that everyone has become a stage manager and the stage has become the arena! There is no one left to simply watch the show like in the past!



Virtual life, like real life, is often unpredictable. For example, at a time when I had lost all my life's passions, I lived between 2016 and 2020 the best years of my life when Donald J. Trump was the President of the United States. I had met him briefly in 1984 and his personality matched mine. Had I been younger in 2016, and an American, I would have been active directly in Donald Trump's environment. I had to settle for acting from a distance and virtually.

I have cried three times in my life! When my father died in 1976; when my two children, David-Bernard and Stephanie, were born in 1982 and 1983; and when Donald Trump was declared elected president on the night of November 9, 2016 at about 3:30 a.m.

To me, Donald Trump was a kind of Robin Hood, the vigilante who stands up for ordinary people against the abuses of society's elite. I'll talk more about that later in this story.

There is in our civilization, a symbol that will always be a personal vision of each individual and that is God. The vision that we have of it is specific to the thought and the beliefs of each one and there is not only one god...

God is neither virtual nor real, he is a thought!

Personally, I grew up in a Catholic rectory where my aunt was the housekeeper of the priest, a Canon. I am not religious, but I have always loved the atmosphere of the churches.

There would have been many cases of abuse by the clergy, including sexual abuse. As Jean Chrétien, who spent a few years in a Catholic boarding school, said, "I must not have been very good-looking, because I was never abused...." I could say the same thing, because my fondest memories of my life, now an old man, remain those of my childhood rectory and the good

priest. Obviously no one abused me sexually! I must not have been very handsome...

On the other hand, despite this "New World" with the internet and social media, the whole civilization has changed because of the coronavirus. For me, the passage of time has always been marked by the seasons. Since the March 2020 virus, I have lost the passage of seasons. It is as if time passes without stopping to mark the visit of each season.

Another irreversible situation that makes me sad about my life is the missed meetings. Those people I would have liked to know and who would have made my life more beautiful. However, the opposite is also true. There are those people who crossed my life and whom I would have liked never to know and whose absence would have made my life more beautiful.

As an old man, I can also conclude that instinct plays a very important role in life. If one always listened to one's inner voice, success would more often be the destination than when one acts to follow the group or social customs.

For example, I got married because I wanted children and was afraid of dying before I conceived any. My father's death in June 1976 made me worried about my own death.

I got married thinking that you choose a spouse like you choose a house. A project you work on, but without ever asking yourself if you love the person you are marrying. Yet, on the morning of the wedding, June 28, 1980, I had an inner voice telling me to back off and not get married. But because my mother, my aunt and my two brothers had traveled to attend my wedding, I could not back out! I left my marriage in December 1991 and got divorced in 1995.

How do we define love and know that we have achieved it?

Is it a feeling of peace and security or a passion and outward attraction to the other? Yet if there is one richness in life it is love. Life is nothing but love. Unfortunately, the challenge is to recognize what love is and not to confuse it with the joy of the moment or the satisfaction of a temporary desire.

Love is a deep feeling of the soul.



2. The successes and failures of the trip

When I was 20 years old, I had to make a choice between staying in Gaspésie and living in my father's house, or leaving for the big city.

At the time, I was working as a host and journalist at the local Baie-des-Chaleurs television station, CHAU-TV in Carleton.

At the time, we were two young colleagues of the same age and with the same ambitions and we were both hosts at CHAU-TV. He was in charge of commercials and I was in charge of news.

The boss offered me to stay on and develop the information sector, but I preferred to leave and seek success in the big city.

I often reflect on my departure and sometimes wonder what my life would have been like if I had stayed?

I chose to apply Shakespeare's phrase about a wave on the ocean of life, which if caught at the right time on the shore will lead the ship to new lands full of hope and promise...

Over the years, my colleague became the general manager at the local television station and is still there today in 2022.

I, contrary to the romantic legend of Ulysses in the Odyssey, after my travels, the wave forgot to bring me back to my native land of Gaspésie, and I am sometimes nostalgic...

If the virtual world is captivating, the beauty and reality of nature still remain, at least in my mind, the ultimate beauty.

Thus I often think of my father who loved flowers and trees. He surrounded his gaspesian home with many varieties of trees and he embellished the garden with many flowers, including roses. My mother used to pick these roses during the summer to make homemade honey, according to a recipe handed down by her own mother. Recently, during a bike ride, I came across a rose garden that reminded me of my childhood garden in Gaspésie. Today in 2022, the trees and roses of my childhood home no longer exist in reality, but their memory remains. The memory of the roses is eternal...

I am an Acadian by birth and this is reflected in my thoughts and outlook on life.

If there is a symbol that represents the Acadians, it is the trees! In fact, the first sentence of the legendary poem Evangeline begins with trees: "Salute the old forest...". Throughout the poem, trees are central to the story, either for their beauty or as a way to hide and fight the English military occupation.

I grew up surrounded by trees and for my father, a gaspesian lumberjack, it was his life. He loved to walk on his woodlot and he had planted several trees around his house in the village of Saint-Siméon de Bonaventure, including two magnificent larches, the official tree of the Acadians, which were installed on either side of his driveway. He called his two trees "violins", the Acadian nickname for the larch.

My father (Léonard Bujold 1915-1976) was an Acadian descendant whose ancestors had taken refuge in the Baie-des-Chaleurs before the deportation of 1755. It should be remembered that the English army formally forbade the Acadians, under penalty of death, to leave the Grand Pré region, as it was feared that they would join the French soldiers in Quebec to fight against England. Instead, the English army secretly organized a maritime deportation of the Acadians to the American coast, first the Acadians of Fort Beauséjour in August and those of Grand Pré on September 5, 1755.

The English wanted to deport the Acadians as far away from the territory as possible in order to prevent them from reaching Quebec, but also to prevent them from returning to their Acadian homeland. A good number of Acadians managed to escape the English military occupation, however, through the forest and by sea, risking their lives, to take refuge where there were French inhabitants.

In a way, in a smaller proportion because of the small population of the time, the history of Acadia in 1755 resembles that of Ukraine in 2022...

My ancestors were among those who managed to escape and reach the French fort of Restigouche and then settle all over the northeast of the Baie-des-Chaleurs. A dozen Acadian families founded the parish of Bonaventure in 1760, then Carleton in 1766. My village of Saint-Siméon was only founded in 1915, as a parish with its own church, because the one in Bonaventure was no longer sufficient to meet the needs of the inhabitants of the region, which was too far from the church in Bonaventure.

Personally, every time I look at trees, I think of my father, his ancestors, and the Acadian culture of the deportation years. I also think of my native Gaspésie that I once left.









Author's Childhood home

3. Loyalty, trust, admiration and betrayal

To be able to consider everyone around us as a friend would give an ideal world, but it would be naive to believe in this possibility.

Loyalty is a personal perception and a philosophy of life.

Looking back on my life, I can say that one should never do business with friends and never consider our business relations as friends, nor expect loyalty from them.

The two definitions of friend and business contact are like night and day.

According to the dictionary, the definition of a friend is:

"A person with whom one is united by affection: a childhood friend, university friend, a neighbor. Said also of animals and familiar objects, or of all things or persons for whom one has a sentimental attachment".

The definition of professional contact is the opposite:

"A relationship that is established between a person or representative of a business and a customer for the purpose of conducting financial transactions or providing services related to a financial transaction. "

Personally, I consider loyalty to be the essential quality for there to be friendship with another person. A business contact does not need to be loyal since our relationship is based on the exchange of a product or service for a monetary value and the exchange must be renewed and decided upon with each transaction.

In life, everything is emotion! We like or dislike a person or an object. So we will become friends with one person, and not with another.

It is said that the emotion of a person is formed before the age of one. There are 7 human emotions. These basic emotions are the first ones that children experience. The emotions are: joy, sadness, disgust, fear, anger, surprise and contempt.

My admiration for some people is also an admiration of their soul. I don't explain friendship to myself, I see it. The soul of a person cannot be explained, it can be felt. You can't explain why you like or dislike a person, an object or a work of art. It is internal. You either like it or you don't! And anyone who claims to be able to explain why he or she likes or dislikes, does not realize the reality of his or her feeling. In short, friendship, love, and emotion must reach our deepest interior.

It's like with music. Why do we like one music and not another? It is in our soul! The emotion that is provoked in us determines

our behavior. The emotion in music is what makes it successful or not with the public.

I am a very emotional person and this emotion makes me also very loyal to the causes or people I adopt and love. I have fought many battles relentlessly for causes and I continue to do so today, even though I have become an old man...

Have I ever suffered betrayal?

Rarely, but sometimes...

The secret to not being betrayed is not to trust easily.

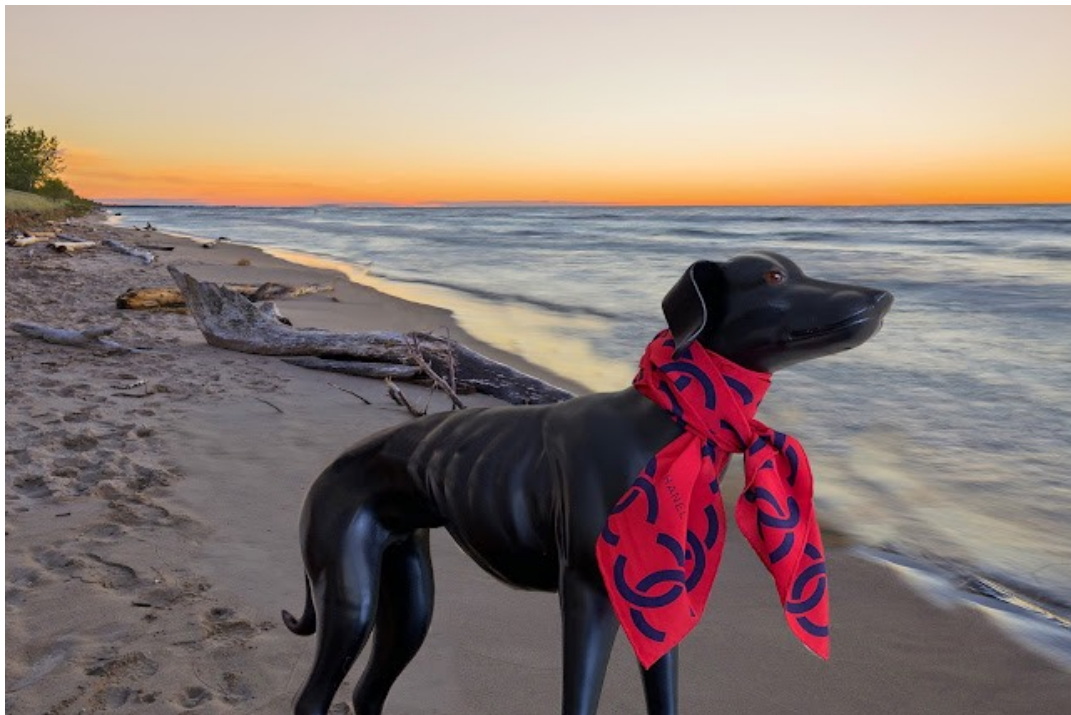
The worst betrayal I ever experienced was from the financial establishment of Quebec, Quebec Inc. Indeed, when I was the assistant of the founding president of Quebec, Pierre Péladeau from 1991 until his death in 1997, I had regular direct contact with most of the top executives of Quebec companies or institutions. Many of these business leaders called me by my first name and called themselves my friends.

When Pierre Péladeau died on December 24, 1997, most of the senior executives who had claimed to be familiar with me stopped talking to me overnight and no one took my phone calls anymore. Some even declared in public that, according to them, Pierre Péladeau was an unpleasant and classless character...

This was for me one of the worst, if not the worst, betrayals I have ever experienced in my life!



The author at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (2019)



4. Politics and politicians

My daughter Stephanie asked me the day after the American election of November 3, 2020, following the inexplicable electoral failure of my idol, why I admired and loved Donald Trump so much and why I was sad to know that he should leave the presidency.

I had often asked myself this question before and in the end, I concluded that I was never really concerned with the political life of the United States, but that it was the character Donald Trump that fueled and still fuels all my passion. I have always enjoyed the company of warrior-type people, from Brian Mulroney to Pierre Péladeau, including Paul Desmarais, Steve Jobs, René Angélil, and René Lévesque.

I myself am a passionate guy who doesn't back down from a battle...

Donald Trump represents the energetic spirit of the warrior with a presence that stands out from the crowd. For this reason, he has become a kind of world star that one loves and admires if one is a challenger of the self-righteous and the elite; but that one hates and despises if one is for the established order and the conventional system of society. If Donald had lived in Quebec in

the years 1837-38, he would have been a leader of the Quebec patriots!

Personally, I miss my idol Donald since 2020 and even if he is no longer President, simply seeing him in the media always reminds me of the beautiful times of 2016.

I had the opportunity to be part of the Canadian Prime Minister's cabinet and it was a work dynamic comparable to that of the American President Donald Trump's cabinet. Indeed, the dynamics of all political cabinets are similar and it is only the scope and detail that are different! As early as 2016, I often recognized in the behaviors of Donald Trump's team that I observed in the media, the same behaviors that I had experienced in person with the Mulroneys team. It was for me like a return to one of my former lives!

By the way, the crisis and polarization situations in Washington from 2016 to 2020 between Republicans and Democrats remind me of the current politics in Canada in 2022 when the country is divided in two in terms of ideas, the right versus the left.

In terms of personality, however, Brian and Donald, who were once close friends, are very different. Brian is less aggressive than Donald.

Donald Trump's personality is much closer to another leader I have worked with and known intimately, Pierre Péladeau Sr.

I don't know Donald intimately, except for having observed him a lot from a distance and having met him briefly once, but I find in his words, his gestures, his ideas, his coquetry, and his will to win, the same behaviors that Péladeau had. In fact, Pierre Péladeau's entire line of thought was oriented around his famous theme: "PLAY TO WIN".

Another similarity between Péladeau and Trump is the "hatred" of the elite towards them. Pierre Péladeau was adored by the common people, but hated and despised by the elite, especially the academics.

I remember a petition by professors at UQAM who wanted to have the name "Péladeau" removed from the poster of the university's performance hall, for which Quebecor had donated a million dollars. The professors said that it was shameful that UQAM was identified with the name of Pierre Péladeau. The rector had almost lost his job because of this affair he was defending.

The elite does not like the kind of characters like Péladeau and Trump probably because these characters are not afraid to upset the traditions, which are the *raison d'être* of the elite.

Finally I would add that Donald's energy is unique and exceptional. I would have long ago given up wrestling and

bickering, but he continues to fight against the odds. By the way, Donald once answered in an election debate whether he admired anything about his political adversary Hillary Clinton's personality and he answered that she never gives up.

I love politics, but my vision is one of a sportsman. For me, politics is like a competition.

An election is a horse race and nothing is taken for granted for the favorites and everything is played out between the start of the gates and the last stretch of the race track!

To win an election, you have to be like a top athlete. You have to know how to reach your public and well beyond the political program, the leader's look and image are determining factors in victory or failure. Brian Mulroney won in 1984 by raising his finger and telling John Turner: "You had a choice..." The image projected was that of a winner and Turner appeared to be a loser!

It should be noted that the art of winning the election is quite different from the art of managing a government once in power.

I have loved watching Donald Trump since 2016 and am anticipating 2024. But even if he did not participate in the 2024 election as a presidential candidate, I will continue to admire and watch him because he aligns with my personal beliefs, and I am always true to my beliefs no matter what the neighbor(s) think.

Life is made up of departures and rebirths and no more than Donald Trump is eternal. Everything passes away eventually, including each of us, and we all become "anecdotes" for campfire nights!

As far as Donald is concerned, there should be no illusions and a second Donald Trump presidency would be far from easy, as the United States is more polarized than ever as a country. It is as if there were two countries or even two planets!

Our current era closely resembles the years of the Quebec Patriots (1837-38). Quebec's history is closely tied to the one of the United States and it was a close call for Quebec not to be an American state. Louis-Joseph Papineau is a central figure in French-speaking Quebec and those who have read about Papineau's history will notice his very direct links with the United States.

One could also draw a connection between Papineau and Donald Trump in terms of their style. Both are known as exceptional orators and they lived surrounded by the love-hate relationship. Papineau, like Trump among Americans, was admired and loved

by his patriots, but the English hated him deeply, as much as the American Democrats and do-gooders deeply hate Donald Trump.

The history of the rebellion of the Quebec patriots resembles the struggle of the American colonies to gain independence from England. In fact, the objective of the Quebec patriots was to copy the path of the Americans and to free themselves from the English, except that they failed because of a lack of military means and a lack of communication in their attack strategy.

The English were deeply afraid that the patriots and Quebec would join forces with the Americans to become an American state, which almost became a reality and which would have granted independence to Quebec from the rest of English Canada. A fascinating work to read about the patriots is the historical work of Jules Verne: ["FAMILLE-SANS-NOM"](#), a novel available for download on the internet and which deals with the struggle of the patriots of 1837-38.

If Donald Trump returns to his private businesses of the Trump empire, then he will regain the true power of his actions, for political life is one where power is illusory while in business, the power of accomplishment is real and it truly belongs to the leader. The real power is the power of finance!

When I was with Brian Mulroney, I noticed that the political journalists were constantly at odds and they were always trying to prove wrong every word or intention of Brian and his government, which made the daily life comparable to trench warfare where the objective is the continuous defense.

When I reached Pierre Péladeau, I immediately noticed the opposite as the financial journalists never questioned Péladeau's statements about Quebecor. Probably because it is difficult to interpret finance and it is a private matter whereas in politics, the universe belongs to everyone and we can all be an expert, because it is, in the end, about opinions. For this reason, it is difficult not to become a "stage manager" when it comes to politics and politicians, which is not the case in financial affairs.

In conclusion, there is another point in common between Donald Trump and Pierre Péladeau and that is their helicopter! I loved to ride with Péladeau in his helicopter and seeing Trump riding in MARINE ONE reminded me of the rides I used to have with Pierre Péladeau.

The year 2022 is also the centenary of the birth of the legendary Quebec politician [René Lévesque](#).

I was born in a neighboring village, Saint-Siméon de Bonaventure, to René Lévesque's childhood village of New Carlisle, one of the few English-speaking villages in the Gaspé.

René and my mother were both born in 1922.

I met René Lévesque directly in 1977 when I was a young journalist at the Quebec National Assembly. We were, however, from two different worlds, he who loved alcohol, playing cards and women and I who was at the time a young man barely of age and very naïve about life as I had just come out of the Gaspé Peninsula. For me Quebec City was a very big city, and let's not forget that I had grown up in a presbytery...

Later, after his death, I would be the first to propose the creation of the René Lévesque Foundation and I wanted Pierre Péladeau senior to be its first president. That was in 1991. René Lévesque's childhood home belonged at the time to an old lady (Georgette Bujold - no relation to me) who wanted to sell it for less than \$100,000, negotiable. I had suggested to make a museum of it. In the end Pierre Péladeau did not want to get involved in the project.

René Lévesque was not a politician at heart, but a journalist at heart, a mass communicator who was shy in private. René

identified a lot with Americans and loved the New England states (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont).

Politically, he had a kind of insecurity in front of his ministers, many of whom were intellectual elites. He believed in democracy and debate, whereas in politics you have to impose your leadership from behind the scenes. Lévesque was afraid to impose his ideas without debate, unlike, for example, François Legault or Trudeau, both father and son.

If Lévesque had been more dominant, and less democratic, I am convinced that he could have imposed the separation of Quebec during his first majority mandate in 1976.

But this judgment is a perception, my perception!

One thing is certain, Quebec is still part of Canada...

Happy Centennial Year, my dear René!



Brian and Mila Mulroney - Baie-Comeau- 1984



The author in Ottawa - 1984



Pierre Péladeau and the author - 1996



René Lévesque - 1987



The author - 2016



Donald Trump - 2016



5. Possessions and memories

If I have one regret in my life, it is that I had to get rid of my books and various personal objects due to lack of space, and this several times in my life.

"A personal library, however, is like a garden that must be cleaned up, otherwise it becomes a jungle, » said Bernard Pivot.

The last time I got rid of my books was in January 2010. I had accumulated over 3,000 books, but with my move, I was able to keep only my 500 favorite titles. The others I gave away, threw away, or returned to their author...

My favorite classic book is still Homer's Odyssey; my favorite biography is Andre Agassi; and my favorite novel is A Man In Full by Tom Wolfe.

One of the moments I hate the most in my life is moving. My worst move was in January 2010.

I had to empty an apartment that contained two in one. Indeed, after Pierre Péladeau's death in 1997, I had been immediately dismissed from my job by his family, and I had to quickly move

the personal belongings from my office to my residential apartment.

You have to understand that in the 90's, people set up their office as a kind of personal living room and at Quebecor, my office had become a kind of museum-lounge where I displayed various career souvenirs. This was long before the telework that we know in 2022. Today, no one has a closed office in their workplace.

So when I moved in 2010, I had items from two residences to move. I ended up having to throw away or give away almost 90% of all my personal possessions. Note "throw away or give away" because I hate garage sales. Selling a personal item is like selling a part of your life, selling a friend...

I am too loyal to do this, even to objects...

I still remember those dozens of trips to my apartment building on Nuns' Island with an old metal grocery basket, filled to the brim each time, which I would push down the hallway to the elevator to the garbage cans in the basement of the building. I threw in books, work souvenirs, old documents and archives, various knick-knacks, and many other possessions that I could no longer carry with me due to lack of space. I had kept only the essentials that I would store in a rented storage locker.

With the passage of time, however, I find that I could also have thrown away or donated the things stored in the rental locker, as most of these items will be abandoned in turn after two or three years of sleeping. But it's always hard to leave our items, even if the accumulated items have become useless. A storage locker then becomes a kind of residence for old things, a place we will visit from time to time and where the objects will wait for their death!

However, thanks to a neighbor's suggestion, I discovered a solution to facilitate the end of life of objects without locking them in a locker: the Renaissance counters, a kind of bazaar that recycles old objects, an adoption center comparable to SPCA-type animal centers, but for objects.

It was in 2019 and I had been using two small storage lockers for three or four years, which had replaced the larger one rented after the 2010 move, but I now wanted to reduce my storage again and get rid of one of the lockers, as it was becoming cumbersome to keep so much storage space for inactive objects.

This meant reducing my remaining collection from 500 books in boxes to fewer than 100 titles, which would be on one shelf, and giving up various knickknacks. Thanks to the good advice of my neighbor, I was able to move my excess items and books to the Renaissance on Nuns' Island. I felt less guilty about abandoning them... Such is the life of objects!

Every time I go down to my current storage locker, for the past year or so, I pass the locker of a neighbor who died suddenly of a heart attack. This neighbor and I shared the same gym-going habit. However, he was more "granola" than me and drank coconut water and ate natural foods. He had decided to retire in July 2020 after a 40 year career with Hydro-Quebec as an engineer.

Every morning after his retirement and in the midst of the coronavirus crisis in 2021, he would book the gym in the condo building at 11 a.m. and I would book an hour later at noon. One day after an afternoon workout, the man suffered a ruptured aorta. He died suddenly and unannounced at the age of 63...

Life is unpredictable, even if you train at the gym!

What makes me wonder and sad every time I visit my neighbor's storage locker is that none of the items have been moved since his death. It's almost as if the objects of his life had been left behind with no one to continue their life as objects.

I sometimes wonder (existential question) what is sadder: the death of my neighbor or his abandoned objects? Life can take a different direction in a matter of seconds and that's why you have to be resilient to survive and be able to abandon your material possessions in a matter of minutes.

On the morning of Tuesday, September 11, 2001, I was in the offices of AIR FRANCE in Montreal where I was acting as a consultant for their communications in Canada.

The company had announced in early July that they were investing over \$1 million in Montreal for their call center. The morning of September 11 was perfect with a beautiful fall sun. I was downstairs around 10:00 a.m. at the small café located at the entrance of the building on Mansfield Street in Montreal. I then noticed on the TV in the café images of a plane entering a building wall and I thought it was a fictional program. The plane hitting the wall was real! From noon, all airplane flights were banned and AIR FRANCE announced a few months later the cancellation of its investments. The aviation sector was entering a dark period and it will take years before the confidence of the travelers returns!

I am upset when I think of all those people who were on their way to work on the morning of September 11, 2001, and who fell with the crash of the buildings in New York. They never went back to their home!

The same reality and sadness can be concluded with the people of Ukraine who had to flee before the military attacks of Russia in March 2022.

In the end, life is like a waterfall. Drops that pass in time!

A legend tells that there would be a fountain of youth whose water would bring eternal life...

Personally, I have always loved to watch and especially listen to the sound of the water in the fountains. My favorite fountain is the one in the garden where I live and, even if it does not guarantee me eternal life, this fountain brings me a form of happiness and peace to the soul.

In my opinion, eternal life is a concept and I would say that the most favored in its pursuit of an endless life would be an object, such as my bronze sculpture of the dog Odysseus.

Bronze is qualified as eternal in time. This metal, bronze, has no known corruption, and it would last as long as our planet Earth will last. This is why bronze is considered the best friend of sculptors whose works, thanks to this alloy, can last through time.

In conclusion, regarding the objects of life, I really like Mark Twain's phrase: "It is not what a man has that constitutes wealth, but it is being satisfied with what one has..."



The author moving - 2010







6. The love of women

I have always loved women very much, but I have always been a very bad lover...

Personally, there are two kinds of events that I never attend: weddings and funerals. I have made the occasional rare exception for certain friends...

I got married on my birthday on June 28, 1980. On the morning of the wedding, I knew I didn't love the one I was going to marry.

I don't believe in marriage as a symbol of love, having experienced the failure of divorce, but I do believe in love!

The failure of my marriage, despite its pain, will have given life to two children whose value is priceless!

I have loved several dozen women in my life over the years.

The unpleasant side of love is that sometimes we make sentimental statements that are rejected! It is always a little sad to learn that the person we are attracted to does not have the same friendly feelings towards us. But the reverse is also true,

and sometimes a person makes a statement to us and we are not interested at all!

I have identified in time a dozen of my love stories, among all those I have lived, and here are some brief anecdotes about them:

1. The Italian woman;
 2. The Member of Parliament's daughter;
 3. The lawyer;
 4. The banker;
 5. The artist;
 6. The grocer;
 7. The art director;
 8. The stewardess;
 9. The french actress;
 10. The seamstress;
 11. The writer;
 12. The impossible love;
 13. The eternal love.
-

1. The Italian -

It was the fall of 1984 and Brian Mulroney had just won the Canadian election with a total of 211 elected members out of a possible 282. A majority that I had contributed to in the province of New Brunswick.

At the time I was married and the proud father of two children born in 1982 and 1983. My relationship was stable, but it was not true love, because my wife was very close to her Acadian family who lived in Dieppe. For them, my departure for Ottawa and the Prime Minister's Office was a failure in life, because I was moving away from New Brunswick while for me, moving to Ottawa was the ultimate victory in my life!

You could say that my relationship with my wife started to break down with the move to Ottawa, because my wife, although wanting to support me in my success, was experiencing this same event as a failure in her life, the separation from her family.

What had to happen happened and I quickly established a relationship with a work colleague.

I also discovered, for the first time in my life, that love is fundamentally a communion between two souls. This communion most often begins in the eyes of the two people.

His nickname was "Sunshine" and because of his life experiences in Ottawa (her Italian parents lived next door to

photographer Yousuf Karsh) we had the same life ambitions, that is, to follow our aspirations and dreams.

I quickly fell in love with her, but I was living that love internally, as I was married with two young children, and she was a co-worker.

I tried very hard to forget this feeling of love that was inside me, but every time I saw "Sunshine" I entered another world where love totally inhabits the space.

I finally confessed my passion to this young Italian woman who liked me, but who didn't want to start a relationship with a married man with two young children. She would never forgive herself for ruining the lives of two children.

I tried to convince her that I no longer loved my wife and that she would be happier living in New Brunswick with another man, but the "bella" did not want to be in a relationship with me, not because she didn't love me, but because of my relationship situation.

If I deeply regretted having said yes on June 28, 1980, it was during that day when "Soleil", while admitting her attraction for me, refused to go further.

For me, I saw the happiness of a whole life pass before me and move away to leave me alone with my moribund couple.

My love for "Soleil" was the first time in my life that I understood what love for a woman was! It is happiness deep in

the soul and life becomes beautiful. All obstacles become challenges and nothing is impossible.

Unfortunately, I had to give up happiness and cling to the dream that maybe one day fate would bring me back to that unattainable love.

2. The Member of Parliament's daughter -

It was 1991 in Westmount in the great city of Montreal, and I was invited to dinner by a colleague of my new employer Quebecor.

I had left Ottawa on October 7 to join the Quebecor media empire as an assistant to the president. I was not yet separated from my spouse, but my departure from Ottawa was in my mind the door to end the marriage, at least in my mind.

I would announce my decision to divorce on December 24, 1991.

I had noticed my co-worker for several months as I negotiated my new job with the president of Quebecor. I liked the smile of the young girl and I quickly came to convince myself that I had to forget "Soleil" and discover love with another.

That Sunday evening in late October 1991, while I was temporarily staying in a Montreal hotel while waiting to settle down, my work colleague had invited me to her family in Westmount. Her father was a former Member of Parliament and

her mother a socialite with origins in the Quebec upper middle class of the turn of the century.

I was literally charmed by the atmosphere of the dinner and I told myself that it was with a woman of this milieu that I should live my life. I began to love the colleague, but the love became difficult because of my boss who discovered the situation and who did not share my admiring feelings for the person I had become in love with.

There were more dinners in Westmount; romantic confidences with the MP's daughter; and dreams of love. But in the end, the boss's objections and my situation as a man on the verge of separation put an end to the hope of love.

I liked the congressman's daughter and I believe I could have been happy with her, but even then, my decision to marry in June 1980 prevented me from experiencing true love.

The MP's daughter helped me to settle permanently on Nuns' Island, but our love project never came to fruition.

3. The lawyer -

It was in 1993 and I was a single man with two children living with their mother in Dieppe, but coming to visit me in Montreal once a month for a few days. I separated in January 1992, but the judge would not sign my divorce until April 9, 1995.

In the meantime, I acted as any father separated from his spouse and I received my children in visit once a month for a week.

During this period, I met a young lawyer at Quebecor with whom I got along well. We went out together a few times for corporate events, which led to a romantic relationship.

The lawyer loved my two children and my children loved her. Personally, I loved the lawyer and was convinced that I had found love. I also liked her mother who lived in Quebec City.

We had a good time together and the relationship could have been a success, but our characters were different. I am a kind of unfiltered style in my thoughts while the lawyer was more shy and always concerned about the image she projected to her entourage.

It was at a wedding that our courtship ended...

We had gone to attend the wedding of a couple of her friends and on the way back to Montreal the discussion went on about the life values of each of us and the difference in our visions of the future.

Back in Montreal, the lawyer told me that she loved me, but that we were not meant to be together because we were too different. She cried as she explained to me that it was better to break up now than later when we would be too invested.

I was very sad about this breakup, because I loved this woman very much, but fate denied me love once again!

4. The banker -

I met the banker in 1995 while walking at noon in the street in front of Quebecor. I still remember that it was a beautiful spring day and it was a colleague who introduced me to the banker.

The first meeting gave way to a more formal invitation and then another to a romantic relationship. This relationship was interesting because it also meant a form of alliance between two large Montreal companies. Me as assistant to the president of Quebecor and the banker as head of a large Canadian bank.

A few months after our first meeting, we moved in together and this was the beginning of a life together. We had a great time together and since we were the same age, our experiences were comparable. We knew the power and we were at the center of the economic action in Quebec.

Our relationship lasted several months until the day when romantic exhaustion began to appear and the love went out without warning, a bit like a candle. We became like brother and sister!

5. The artist -

At the end of 1995, after my break-up with the banker, I met again at a social event a recording artist I had met briefly in

Ottawa in early 1990. I liked this artist and I liked her as a woman. So I started to court her, but I was very careful about expressing my feelings towards her.

She said she was interested in my kind of personality, but I was afraid and I felt like I couldn't seduce her and convince her of the possibility of love between us.

Somewhat because of this shyness on my part, I set out to convince the artist's mother of my love for her daughter. I thought that it would be easier to convince the artist if the mother was favorable to me and if she supported me. I must not have been very convincing or too convincing, because it was the mother who became convinced that I was in love with her and that I was courting her...

She had even confided to her daughter, the artist, that she was reluctant to have a love relationship with me, because she thought I was a little too young for a woman of her age...

Finally, after a few months of trying to woo the artist and her mother, I learned one morning that the artist had met a lover. The new man in the artist's heart had been bolder and more direct and had won the day.

For a long time I blamed myself for not being as bold with the artist as I usually was with other women I was in love with. With the artist, I had a kind of false modesty, a shyness that made me believe that I was not up to love with this woman. It was this

shyness on my part to wait too long for the right moment that made me lose.

For many years afterwards, I often dreamed about the artist and I told myself that if I had been more daring and if I had not been afraid of rejection, I could have experienced her love!

Probably my failures in love since the Italian had made me too careful with love!

6. The grocer -

At the beginning of 1997, a few months before Pierre Péladeau's death in December of that year, I met with the public relations director of a large Quebec grocery store chain who wanted to invite my boss to give a talk to the executives of the grocery distributor.

The young woman and I had a lot in common, but she was living with a lover whom she said she wanted to leave.

We had some good times together, but any long-term plans were impossible until she left her boyfriend in residence, which never happened!

So I forgot about the grocer and her love and went on my way...

7. The art director -

In 2001, a few months before the World Trade Center tragedy, I invited the director of a Montreal art institution to a corporate event.

I was then in charge of public relations for Canada for Air France and we often held fundraising dinners or other social events.

From our first meeting, I was literally seduced by the art director and especially her humanistic side. She was my age and of French origin.

A bit like I had been with the artist of the song, I was however shy and hesitated to confide in her my love for her, preferring to wait for the clear signal that she was also interested in me.

I invited her to a couple of other social events, but never told her that I liked her type.

Eventually time passed and 9/11 happened.

I left Air France and started my own internet media project, LeStudio1.com. I often interviewed the art director for my media and photographed her many times, but never admitted that I had a love affair with her.

One can conclude that our love will never see the light of day.

However, still in 2022, I kept in touch with the art director and in my soul every time I talk or write to her, I feel a sweet inner

warmth, a feeling of happiness and peace that looks like love that could have been...

8. The flight attendant -

During my time at Air France in 2001, I met a former flight attendant who had been retrained as a public relations officer. I invited her to accompany me to an Air France fundraising event one night and we ended the evening as lovers.

I liked the stewardess, but she had a little secret side that troubled me, as if she wasn't telling me what she was thinking. This secrecy made me suspicious. I was never really in love with the stewardess, but she came to fill a solitude in me.

Our relationship lasted a few months until the day she accompanied her parents on a trip to Florida for a week. I was supposed to pick her up at the airport upon her return, but she told me the day before that it would not be necessary and that she would go home with her mother and father instead. I learned the following Saturday that she had returned from Florida with a friend of her parents who was staying at the same hotel in Florida and that he and my hostess had begun a romantic relationship during the weeklong vacation.

Who says flight attendants have lovers in every airport?

9. The french actress -

In 2003, during the Montreal World Film Festival, I met a young French actress, the daughter of a very famous father.

This meeting was love at first sight for me and I was ready to move mountains to live her love, even to move to France. My feelings could be described as a dream and it lasted for several months. I tried to join her in France, but it was impossible.

The year after I met her, I read in Paris Match magazine that she had a new lover, a musician, and that the two of them were living a beautiful love on a farm in the suburbs of Paris and that they were raising chickens...

My French dream would never come true...

10. The seamstress -

At the beginning of 2004, while visiting a fashion exhibition, I met a dressmaker. She admitted to me that she did not have a lover and this was the beginning of our love relationship.

We had beautiful exchanges and I liked very much the entrepreneurial side of the dressmaker who had her own business. We dated for a few months, but it wasn't easy financially for the seamstress and that complicated our relationship.

One day she asked me to introduce her to my former lover, the banker, to try to find ways to revive her business. The introductions were made and at one point I learned that the seamstress had contacted the boss of my ex-lover, the banker, and that the two of them, boss and seamstress, had been seen leaving a large Montreal hotel in the early morning!

Obviously, my seamstress had spent the night in the arms of the banker...

11. The writer -

In early 2005, a writer acquaintance of mine, to whom I had indicated my single status, introduced me to a writer friend of hers who was also single.

This meeting could be described as a "blind date".

I was personally in a precarious financial situation compared to previous years and was looking for ways to get back on track professionally. In March 2005, I was launching my internet magazine LeStudio1.com and I was putting all my financial assets on this project, which was weakening my personal finances.

The writer was also in a precarious financial situation, because although she was a very talented writer, her dozens of books did not sell and were still considered best sellers. The writer did,

however, have a very wealthy father who had been a prominent lawyer for a large Quebec industrialist family and who was busy keeping his daughter, the writer, comfortable in a luxury apartment in downtown Montreal.

The writer and I had a beautiful love affair, but it soon became clear that we were both looking for financial recovery. The writer had told me early on in our relationship that she would like to have a rich lover with a cottage and a sports car; while I dreamed that her father could be the rich investor I was looking for for my internet project.

The writer and I were both looking for what the other couldn't offer her.

We were two people in financial difficulty, like two blind people trying to cross a street in traffic...

12. Impossible love -

On a few occasions, since my teenage years, I have been courted by gay men!

Obviously, none of these potential relationships ever had any possibility, as I have no sexual interest in men. My only attraction to men is to those older than me, and I am looking for a father figure, probably a consequence of my father's death when I was not yet 20 years old.

Whenever a homosexual man has approached me to offer love, I have always explained from the beginning of the opening that I was not interested at all, because I am heterosexual and I like women. The situation always stopped immediately, but an existential question always remained in my mind: how to elegantly reject advances of friendship and love if you are not interested at all, especially if they come from someone who does not have the same sexual attractions as you?

We can refuse to receive love, but we can't prevent another person from loving.

13. Eternal love -

After all these dreams of love, I finally found love and it will last forever because it is an illusion, and it is made of bronze! It is my faithful dog Ulysses!!

Moreover, at my age of old man, one does not seek love any more, but friendship. Ulysses is a faithful friend, the most faithful there is!

We will say that Ulysses is an illusion and that his friendship is just as much! But according to my vision of life, as everything is an illusion and especially love and friendship, I am very happy with the feelings between me and Ulysses...

During the changes of each season, I like to remember past lovers. I like to go on Facebook and see where these women are in their lives today.

There have been several that I loved, and that loved me back, but for all sorts of reasons, the relationship died in time. I often wonder what our lives would have been like if we had continued together. But I tell myself that in the end, love is a dream and that only the dream is romantic.

Love is not a reality!

Love is a feeling of the mind, but a wonderful and magical feeling. The problem is to discover it and above all, it is essential that the feeling is mutual.

Personally, I am very sad about all my failures in love, but this sadness becomes with time a kind of sweet nostalgia and warm memories of life; a kind of inner happiness to have known these exceptional women that I loved, and who could have loved me...

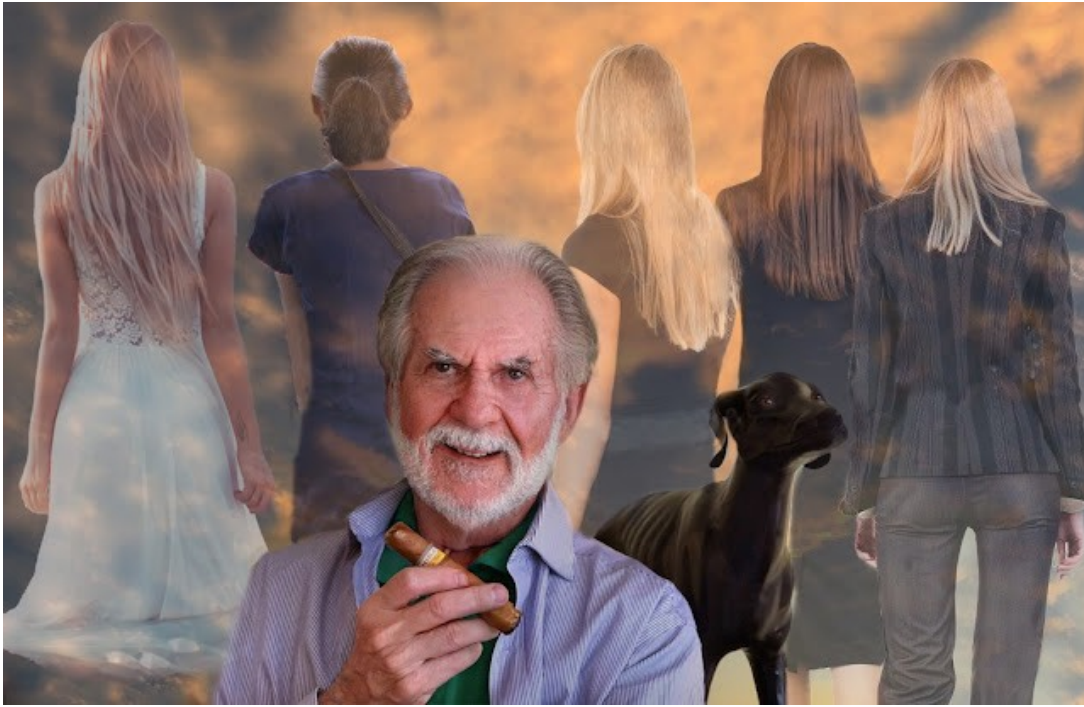
For these loves of the past, the situation is however irreversible today, because the women to love have become with time something else. Most of them have families and, like me, they have grown old...

As one gets older, one usually becomes a different person with a different temperament than before and when I look on social

media about the women I once loved, and when I see their daily lives in 2022, I think that today I would not be in love with these women.

I conclude that the dreams of my youth are now only illusions and have become sweet memories and legends...







7. Changing the world

I can say that I was able to observe and live the evolution of the planet on a technological level and that I saw the world change.

I first experienced life when communication was done by voice, person to person, and village to village. It was the Gaspé Peninsula at the end of the 1950s. The only means of mass communication was the radio (CHNC New Carlisle), for news and death notices... Then came the telephone with common lines where several families of the same sector were connected on the same wire. The ringing was different for each subscriber, like two long sounds followed by a short one. However, all the subscribers in the same area could pick up the receiver and hear each other's conversations. It was like a church stoop! Later, you could subscribe to a private line, but you had to pay extra!

But the most important evolution in mass communication was the television that entered homes in the early 1960s. First in black and white with a lamp system, color television arrived with the transistor.

When I was a young journalist at the National Assembly in 1977, "fax" machines were beginning to appear in the

newsrooms, but it was a revolution. The weekly newspapers of the Bellavance family in Rimouski did not have it yet and I had to send my written reports over the phone by reading the text verbally to the office secretary.

It was the same situation for my reports at the Carleton television (CHAU-TV) and I read my texts on the phone while a technician recorded them. During the newscast, they would use a slide of my face with my voice from the recording. The situation was not much more advanced in the major urban media, and if there was a more vivid image in the reports, it came from 16 mm film that the cameraman had to develop in the lab after the shooting.



Then came the cell phone in the 1990s, which started out as a kind of square box, about the size of a wine bottle, with an antenna. I remember that only the big bosses had a device, including a president of a large Quebec bank who refused to let his vice-presidents have cell phones. When he had them get into his limousine, he would ask them, half-seriously and half-jokingly, if they wanted to impress their girlfriend by calling her from the president's cell phone...

Around 1995, the computer started to become accessible, but with a very primitive Internet, almost comparable to today's "dark web". Businesses used computers mostly to replace

typewriters, and for the few who had a computer at home, it was necessary to use a Radio Shack kit, the predecessor of today's Best Buy.

Then the telephone line providers realized that their wireline tunnels could also carry the internet signal and this was the beginning of the general public's access to internet communication, but only in the big cities. One can say that the world really changed with the Internet!

At the beginning of the Internet, the formula was very simple with the sending of text content, the e-mail, which was an electronic version of the letters in the post office. The first providers were AOL in 1990, Hotmail in 1996, Yahoo in 1997, and Gmail in April 2004. In February 2004, Facebook offered a more developed exchange of text emails by allowing them to be accompanied by photos and Twitter followed in March 2006.

Since the 2000s, I have personally been a big fan of four brands: Facebook, Google, Apple, and Photoshop. I have followed their evolution with great interest for the last 20 years.

-Founded in 2004, **Facebook** has risen to prominence through acquisitions such as Instagram and several other companies that complement its core platform. The most recent development from founder Mark Zuckerberg is the Metaverse project. In fact,

Metaverse is a sort of Second Life, version 2022. It's surprising that Facebook didn't acquire Second Life, because then it would have got all its experience since its creation in June 2003.

-As far as **Google** is concerned, I can say that life has never been the same for me after the creation of this company and its internet management services. I still remember the date of June 30, 2005, at 8:00 p.m. My son had sent me an invitation a few days before to subscribe to the G-MAIL service, to which he was subscribed, and I had just received my official acceptance from Google. It should be noted that at the beginning, you had to be invited by another subscriber before you could open a Google account. If at the start, Google was just another messaging service and an encyclopedia-like search engine, in 2022, the company has become an essential and unavoidable tool for computer management, both for the Internet and for private electronic archives.

-**Apple** for his part, and his founder Steve Jobs, has conquered the world market by offering a product (hardware) always of a better quality, fashionable and with very efficient operating programs and always more advanced than competitors like Microsoft. The Apple Computer has totally revolutionized society and organized life while the iPhone has transformed photography. If we feared the death of photography and cameras, the iPhone has instead placed a camera in the hands of all humans.

-Finally, as far as I am concerned, **Photoshop** has totally transformed the art of my photography. Today in 2022, thanks to Photoshop created in 1988, all the photographers in the world can transform their images.

However, it must be said that Photoshop is not a recent invention. First of all, the very concept of photography comes from painting on canvas where it is possible to reproduce an image according to our personal vision and interpretation. Several great photographers were directly inspired by painters for their photographic structures, including Henri Cartier-Bresson.

The desire to modify a photograph began with the invention of the camera in 1826 when some photographers were already manipulating their images by taking two images on the same negative, in the era of glass plates. They could add clouds, trees; or on the contrary, remove some details of the photo by overlaying a second image stronger than the first one.

Photoshop's inspiration also comes from the cinema and the theater with the overprinting of images during the projection of images for the creation of sets.

My master photographer, Yousuf Karsh, employed an assistant whose job was to paint or erase details on his portraits. A misplaced hair or a shadow in the wrong place. Look at the hands of some of the subjects in Karsh's early portraits. Karsh's

philosophy was that the subject of the photograph should be happy with his or her picture and should feel beautiful when looking at it...

Even my mother, the one who first got me interested in photography, used to add hair with a pencil on the pictures she took of my father...

Today in 2022, we can say that nothing is impossible with Photoshop. For this reason, the old belief that if it's on a photo it's true, has become completely false. And now video images have the same easy transformation possibilities as still images, while artificial intelligence (AI) allows to create programs comparable to Photoshop in terms of efficiency and precision for video. The term "Fake News" now has a real meaning.

The world has changed and we can see it in the way we live. Whether it is in photography as with Photoshop or with digital prints rather than film and paper; in reading as in all news media, including this book; and in music with the end of the solid format (vinyl record, CD).

We will have to see what happens next, but one thing is certain, the virtual world is a reality that will influence the future of all of humanity.

It's the same change in traffic from one place to another. Who would have thought that cars would run on electricity and sometimes without a human driver...

If I had a prediction to make about the future of the world, I would say that every day we are living the birth of a new technological formula or a new tool that also brings, in a sense, its New World. The teleworking of the Coronavirus period in March 2020 is another precise example of this transformation of humanity.

Personally, when I was younger, in my thirties, I dreamed one day of owning my own paper magazine, like Maclean's or Actualité, to communicate and give opinions on society. I also wanted to publish my best photos. You could say that with the internet and the various social media, this dream has been realized. That's what we call taking advantage of technology...

If there is a secret to change, its success as well as its failure, it is that of "FEAR".

Indeed, the fear of using another way of doing things is what prevents change and the evolution of civilization. For example the virtual work at home. Business owners would not have dared to move in such a direction. It took the global epidemic of the Coronavirus to make this societal change happen. In the end, it was not humans who changed the world but the world that imposed the change by eliminating fear! Humans had no choice but to accept the change.

We must never forget that the past no longer exists; the future does not yet exist; and that the only reality is the present moment!



8. Blood ties

If there are two human beings I will love until I die, they are my two children. For me, blood ties are the most important.

I still remember June 5, 1976 when my father passed away at the age of 60. This event marked me deeply when I was only 20 years old. A deep fear of death began to inhabit me and I was convinced that I too would leave the world within a few years. In my mind, the solution was to have children to ensure the survival of my family line.

I made no connection between having children and loving a woman. I had lived in a family where my father and mother did not share a great love for each other, but they had a common goal of raising and loving their three children.

After my father's death, I lived with my mother for a year before moving to Quebec City in 1977 as a journalist for the National Assembly. Two years later in 1979, I accepted an invitation to act as a host for a sports program on Radio-Canada television in Moncton. My goal was to take advantage of my time in Moncton to join Radio-Canada Montreal.

After the death of my father, I had two goals in life: to have children and to reach professional heights. My stay in Moncton was in my mind an opportunity to develop my career and at the same time find a spouse and have children. The shock of my father's death had deeply traumatized me mentally, as I had lost my mentor and life coach.

Once I settled in Moncton, I became friends with various Acadians, including a fur coat salesman I met in English classes we were taking together at the Université de Moncton. As I told him I was single and looking for a partner, he offered to introduce me to a group of three girls who frequented his downtown store.

When, a year later, after the furrier's offer, I made the decision to marry, the woman would be my third choice, as my preferences had initially been for the other two in the group, but both had declined my offer...

My favorite, personality-wise and physically, had told me that she was interested, but that our relationship was doomed to fail, as she knew I wanted to move back to Montreal for my career and she didn't want to leave her Acadia. I was a good guy, but she suggested that I focus on another of the three. She strongly recommended the one who would become the mother of my two children. I was very disappointed with her suggestion, as she was the one of the three that I was least attracted to...

This third choice did not appeal to me at all and I should have given up the idea to continue my search for love elsewhere, but I told myself that a marriage was like buying a house. I wanted children and the third choice wanted them too. The important thing for me was to have children and I never at any time asked myself if I loved the person who would be their mother, except on the morning of the wedding, but between true love and having children, I decided to take the available choice to create children.

My married life was relatively pleasant during the first months and soon on May 1, 1982 and then on October 23, 1983 we had children, David-Bernard and Stephanie. During the first four years of my marriage, I was a relatively fulfilled man, because my fear of dying without leaving a new generation was cancelled, especially with a son who bore my family name.

But despite my happiness as a father, I had never forgotten my professional ambitions and in September 1984, I managed to join the cabinet of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney for whom I had worked as an organizer in the New Brunswick election. We won 9 of the 10 seats in the province to total 211 MPs across Canada out of a possible 282.

If for me, my move to Ottawa was the highlight, it was not so for the mother of my children, but since I had never liked her as a woman, I never thought it important to consider her emotions...

I lived in Ottawa until 1991, but by the fall of 1984, immediately after our arrival in the Nation's Capital, I could feel my marriage-destroying itself and it took only a few months before, by the beginning of 1985, I knew in my head that I was deeply unhappy with the mother of my children and that I had made a serious mistake in my marriage.

I was faced with the cruel question: could I leave my wife without leaving my two children whom I loved more than anything else in my life?

I chose the bet of the departure as in Shakespeare's wave.

In English, the expression "love" is better defined than in French. If we say: "I like you", it means that we respect a person; and if we say: "I love you", it means to love. In French, if we say: "Je t'aime", there is only one formula applied without any difference regarding the true feeling whether it is respect, friendship, or love. This sometimes confuses our perception of the true feelings we feel, unlike the person who thinks in English, whereas verbal expressions allow us to evaluate our feelings properly!

I should have chosen my spouse using the English language...





**The author and his two children :
David-Bernard and Stéphanie - 1996**



The author's father - Léonard - 1975



The author's mother - Anita Cyr



**The father and mother of the author:
Leonard Bujold and Anita Cyr - 1974**

9. The journey through time travel

The story of life is a wheel that turns and repeats! People often ask me how I survived the many crises in my life? I answer that, in my opinion, the world is always changing, but the important thing is to survive.

In my life story, one can conclude that I have survived, even if I often had to hold the pieces of my life together with a wire!

I like the song by the Quebec musical group Les Cowboys fringants, SUR MON ÉPAULE, the line that everything holds with wire! (...tout tient avec de la broche...)

In the end, if there is a conclusion to my look at the past and my life as an old man, it is that the important thing is to survive.

What are the elements that influence our place in human destiny? Talent; drive; luck? Probably a little of all three!

I was recently reading a story about a homeless man who lived under an overpass in a cardboard shack. In the same newspaper, on the same day, there was a story about a house for sale, that of an ex-senator (Leo Kolber) with 20 rooms and 10,000 square feet or 929 square meters with an appraisal of \$15 million. Legend has it that he entertained up to 200 guests at a time and that his caterer never rented a plate or utensils...

One could see in these two situations, the homeless man and the ex-senator, a human injustice, but as the world is unfair to begin with, the situation is normal and especially frequent.

We are like pebbles in the universe. There are small pebbles and big rocks. It is the chance of the universe that determines the size of each one. It is useless to want to be a big rock if our destiny is to be a small pebble. The reverse is also true!"



We must not believe that we can reinvent life and change the world.

I remember as if it were yesterday the day the coronavirus was announced. After the announcement in the media, I went to Complexe Desjardins in Montreal to get masks and I came face to face with a gathering for the Chinese New Year. Hundreds of Chinese people...

It was Saturday, January 25, 2020!

The world has never been, nor will it ever be the same as it was before that date.

While I managed to survive the Coronavirus, I have lost my ability to dream that we can change the world. You don't change the world. We are resilient and adapt to the world rather than it to us.

In addition to the virus, I have had to deal with some personal disappointments since the covid 2020 crisis began including of course the failure of Donald Trump in the 2020 US presidential election.

But we have to accept what we cannot change, as Marcus Aurelius wrote in his texts *MEDITATIONS*, and live in the moment because nothing else is a reality, neither the past nor the future.

And to make matters worse, the least we can say is that the world is polarized...

Half of the world does not like the other half, so divided is the planet in terms of opinions. There is no common space. Here in Canada, half of the people don't like their federal Prime Minister, and it's happening at all levels of government, whether it's in this country or around the world.

I thought I would find harmony in my residence and live peacefully in a condo community, but now the bickering is on between the residents who are divided into two clans, so divided that at the last annual meeting, it was impossible to elect a new

council. It took a second meeting and a six-month wait for one half to prevail over the other half...

I miss the good old days of neighbors greeting each other and sharing an apple pie or fresh cookies.

June 28 is my birthday every year and on every birthday I like to have a celebration with a theme.

Note that I was born on the same date on the calendar as Elon Musk (Tesla, SpaceX, Twitter) but not the same year, him being from 1971. The whole concept of the little pebble and the huge rock is reflected in our birthdays. The scope of Musk's destiny is much larger than the scope of my destiny...

In 2022, my birthday theme is a look back at my life as I publish this collection of my life's philosophies and recount some of the adventures I've had: [THE OLD MAN](#).

In 2021, the theme of my birthday was the gym and that year I also gave myself a gift, from me to me, in the form of a photo book. It was not a photo guide, because I had written the texts as if I were telling my personal story to my two children David-Bernard and Stéphanie, and to my two granddaughters Ava and Emma, to whom I had dedicated the book. A book that presents my impressions, anecdotes and my path in photography. The book has more than 340 pages and is illustrated with some 400

photos that I chose from my collection which I estimate to be more than 100,000 images taken since my adolescence.

The book [**THE ART OF PHOTOGRAPHY**](#) is available in PDF format for free download at the web address of the hosting site.

Let's never forget that the most important thing in life is love and photography is a way for me to immortalize and share love.

I love photography which is my great passion in life but I also have other passions like sports. That's why I celebrated my birthday in 2021 at the gym because I love the atmosphere of sports training, a way of life that I have adopted since my teenage years. I love the atmosphere of sports training but I like a quiet gym preferably in solitude with the props. The solitary gym is a lifestyle I have adopted since my teenage years with inspiration from Ben Weider, a personal friend I got to know well towards the end of his life.

For me the solitary gym is like a church, a place to meditate and after workouts I love to read various media, including my favorite The Wall Street Journal. I used to read paper newspapers but now it's on the internet!

In 2021, I also received as a birthday gift a beautiful picture of my idol Donald Trump, a picture that I have framed and hung prominently in my living room and that I will keep as a kind of icon for the rest of my life! Thank you, Donald...

In the living room, next to the picture of Donald, there is another gift that my son gave me for Christmas 2021 and it is a silver coin with the image of Donald Trump. This coin is one of my most prized possessions and I compare it to a medal of honor.



Unfortunately, time passes too quickly! I sometimes think of good moments in life, or not so good, and in my mind it happened a few months ago while in reality it's already been a few years!

Fortunately, my philosophy is to live in the now moment, with a slight look to the future, and ultimately to survive.

Human civilization is largely based on four principles of survival: tolerance; fear; revenge (punishment); and resilience.

Personally, I am more of a resilient type but I am never afraid. However, I have experienced revenge, especially when the founder of Quebecor, Pierre Péladeau, died. As I mentioned above, among the hundreds of Quebec executives (Quebec Inc)

who said they admired him while he was alive (for fear of his financial influence), the majority openly displayed their contempt immediately after his death.

The Quebec Inc of the time reminds me of some modern politicians, republicans and world leaders, who tolerated out of fear Donald Trump during his mandate but who today show their contempt, including Justin Trudeau...

Let's never forget that everything eventually passes, misfortune as well as happiness. For this reason, resilience is the best and least painful option.

When I told a friend that I missed the good old days, he answered that I would survive them!

Can we survive the end of a beautiful period of our life? Yes, we survive and move on, but the good times are over.

For me the good times were with a Serge Losique and his World Film Festival; the helicopter trips with a Pierre Péladeau; the walks in the streets of Ottawa near the Parliament with a Brian Mulroney under the morning autumn sun; the good times with a Julie Depardieu; and the 4 years watching a Donald Trump.

Yes, we survive the passage of time, but life becomes something else and the beautiful periods of life mere memories!

It is not death that is worrying or painful, but the way we die! The Coronavirus crisis has transformed the way many people die. The isolation, loneliness and suffering alone in the face of the slow onset of death is a hell of a way to turn the end of the world into a real tragedy.

I have a 62 year old friend who had a good life, a son and was financially well off. A few days after New Year's Day 2017, he went to his doctor for headaches that would not go away. He was found to have brain cancer and died that August. How can you live knowing you're going to die in a few months?

He will not have known the Coronavirus...

Dying quickly is like turning off the light but dying slowly is something else...

An existential question that many people ask themselves is the definition of solitude?

According to the Larousse dictionary, solitude is defined as a personal freedom from the astonishment and wonder of being alone in the world, alone in bearing one's destiny, alone in being able to share it. According to this definition, solitude is therefore

a great wealth. Yet many people are sad to be alone on holidays like Christmas!

Love, the opposite of loneliness, is impossible to choose and it is instinct that decides. Parents who divorce are often blamed for not trying hard enough! It is impossible to force love! The source of divorce is at the entrance of the marriage as I wrote in the previous pages!

People often think they can turn a bad spouse into a good one, but this is impossible. You have to choose well at the beginning. Being divorced myself, this is my observation. My instincts told me when I got married that it was not the "right person" or "true love" but I persisted, telling myself that it would work. For me, a wedding was like buying a house and I told myself that I would adjust to the person and that the important thing is to start the project. I was wrong about everything except that the union resulted in the creation of two beautiful children that I adore and that in itself is a great success.

Yes, "true love" exists and our instinct knows how to recognize it and not every person is suitable for us as a spouse.

If love is not in our lives, then we must accept and appreciate the great beauty of solitude.

On average, we spend a third of our lives sleeping and many of us dream! I often wonder if the real beauty of life is in the dream or in reality. Life often seems so much more beautiful in dreams...

Personally, I dream every night and often of beautiful stories. Last night, for example, I dreamt about a woman I know who at one time was very attractive to me. In my dream, she was with me, at my parents' house, and we were discussing cooking recipes. My parents invited her to stay with us for a few days and offered her the guest room, which she accepted. Of course, that's when I woke up!

I recently created a kind of time machine based on the principle of dreams and the theory that the most important moment of our lives is our birth. Thus, according to me, the year of our birth is the most important moment of our life for each human being.

Thus, by looking at a picture of our year of birth, it is possible to relive, through thought and daydreaming, the passage of time to the present moment.

I recently gave this travel machine as a birthday gift to each of my two children David-Bernard and Stephanie; to my two granddaughters Ava and Emma; and to some very dear friends.

I took a photo of their birth year and modified it with Photoshop. In a way, it's like an artistic creation...

I call this personalized gift a time machine...

I often repeat that life is an illusion and that the only two realities are birth which comes from eternity; and death which brings us back to eternity.

Therefore, we must not hesitate to dream our life because it is the secret of happiness. In my opinion, we must never forget that a life without dreams is an unhappy life! So we must always dream and be passionate...

In the end, life is a struggle to survive and love is a way to make survival more beautiful, otherwise, it becomes a kind of shipwreck looking for a shore...

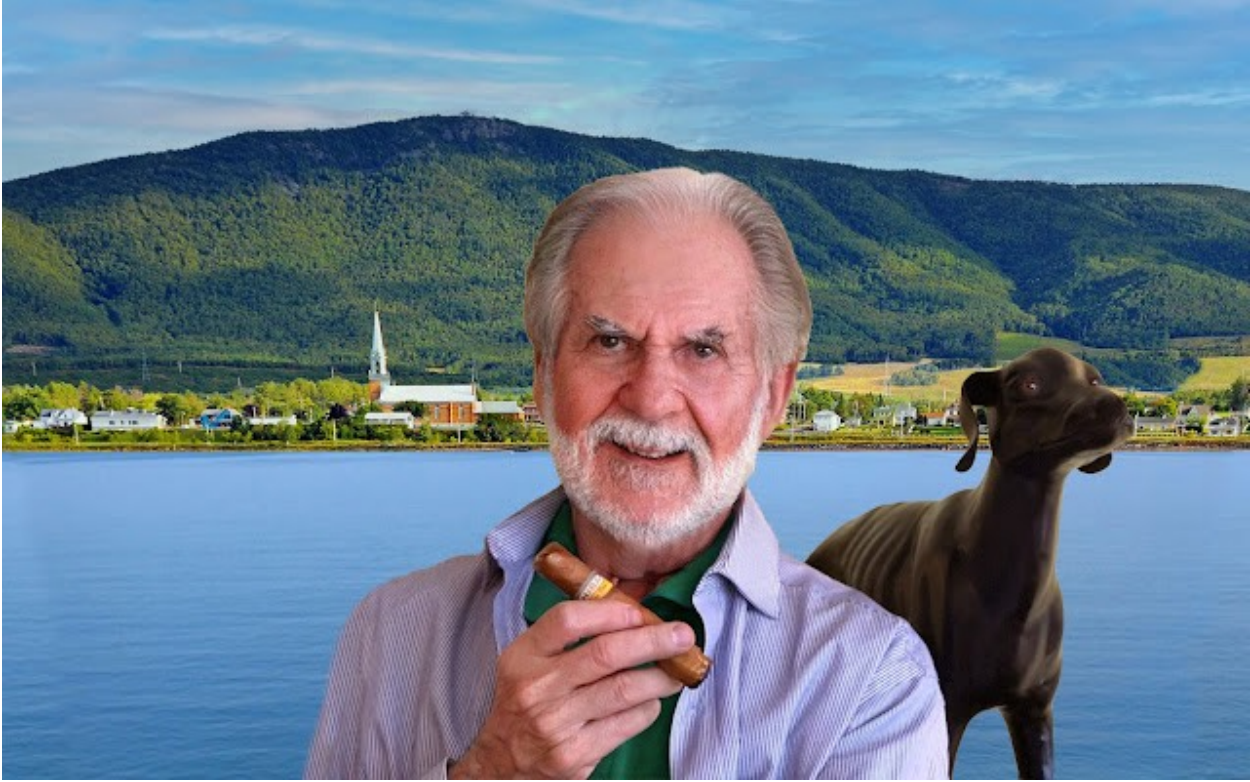
Good dreams, pleasant passions, and lots of love!







« Life is holding by a wire... »







June 28, 2022









TO BE CONTINUED

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