

Change and continuity



Living temporarily in Seoul, South Korea, makes me reflect on my high school years... and see them in a particular light. High school students in Korea face an intense 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. competitive experience filled with studies, cramming, and little free time. School cafeterias remain open for dinner. A world away – literally and figuratively – from my Riverdale experience of the 1970s.

I'm in Asia with my spouse and our eight year old twins on a research leave from York University, where I'm a professor of political science. My wife was offered a transfer to Korea by her employer, and it made sense – in the way some decisions seem entirely rational to those making them, but not for any outside observer – for my entire family to take up a new

life in a city of 22 million inhabitants for several years.

Fortunately, technology allows me to keep in close touch with my RCI friends in Toronto and Ottawa, including on-line chess matches. A trend as my cohort reaches age 55 is for retirement to be a topic of conversation, if not an event. As I learned in Latin class from Ms. Hoy: *tempus fugit*.

Technology, undreamed of in the 1970s, also lets me stay in contact my colleagues and students at York University, even entering classrooms via video-conferencing. Next year I may teach a course at the university from Korea!

The world has shrunk in ways what would have seemed science fiction in the 1970s. Toronto's daily newspapers are a mouse click away, I can 'street-view' any part of the city (including Riverdale), watch any Canadian TV program and so forth.

But, of course, not everything changes. Friendships made at Riverdale in the 1970s remain. Memories, too, endure. That is as it should be.

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