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The British Invasion struck my dad back in 1968 and he surrendered immediately. While most four-year-old boys were begging their parents for Lincoln Logs or baseball cards, my dad had a different interest. He fell in love with the Beatles' music and asked his mom for "Hey Jude" on a 45 inch vinyl record. The Webbers had plenty of records in the house, but my dad wanted one to call his own.

And then he bought every other Beatles record. He bought all the merchandise, too -- figurines, lava lamps, board games, t-shirts, pillows, phones, clocks, mugs, puzzles, cookie jars -- literally anything with a Beatles logo, he collected. When he became a father, he finally found someone to share it all with.

My mom was still pregnant with me when Dad took us to our first Paul McCartney concert. Sure, I was just an embryo, but the music must have struck a chord with me. Throughout my entire childhood, I believed that the Beatles were the only band that made music. I wore concert tees to school. I watched "Yellow Submarine" and "A Hard Day's Night" instead of Saturday morning cartoons.

My memories with my dad are different too. I don't really remember playing catch in the backyard -- I remember roadtripping to St. Louis to see Ringo. I remember my second Paul McCartney concert and how I had to cover my little ears for every explosion in "Live and Let Die." I remember painting a big Yellow Submarine on my bedroom wall. I remember playing "Hey Jude" at my fifth grade talent show, knowing full well that it was one of my dad's favorite songs. Our relationship, our bond, has always revolved around the Beatles.

From a genetic standpoint, we have nothing in common. He's 6'2", I'm 5'8". He's got brown hair and pale skin,

I've got black hair and dark skin. In fact, you'd be hard-pressed to find a single physical feature that we do share. When my dad shows off wallet photos of me to his friends, they probably assume the saintly white man adopted a needy child from Mexico. But there's no denying that I'm his son. I remember one particular trip to the record store when I was six and my sister was 10. Dad told us that we could each pick out a CD. My sister selected \*NSYNC's "No Strings Attached" -- I thought he was going to cry. But then I handed him "The Beatles 1," and he looked at me as if I had validated all his efforts as a father. He had raised a fan.

But it's not easy to simultaneously raise a child and a company. Dad's airport business frequently took him out of the country. He wasn't always there to see me off for the first day of school -- or the last. But, during those times, I found such great comfort in the music we shared. Even when he was across the world, I could listen to "Across the Universe" and he suddenly didn't seem so far away.

I grew up. My hormones and pre-teen angst brought me to the years where my parents became the most uncool people in the world. The stage where I begged them not to linger when they dropped me off at school. Where the Beatles were no longer the only band that I loved. I wasn't a baby anymore -- I was old, hardened and experienced. I wanted to do things my way and listen to the music I wanted. So I found a new band to adore: The White Stripes. But my dad supported me through it. He gave me their entire discography, bought me an imitation Stratocaster guitar and drove me to all my lessons at the Toon Shop until I could play "Seven Nation Army" to my heart's content.

The truth is, he was a fan of the band years before I was, but he wanted me to have an experience of my own. So he took me to their 2005 show at Starlight theater -- I was just eleven years old and had to stand on the seats to get a good view of frontman Jack White. Three years later, we saw Jack White with the Raconteurs at the Uptown. After the show, we stood outside the Uptown, "Icky Thump" CD in hand, hoping to get an autograph from Jack. I didn't get my autograph. My dad waited for three hours with me in the bitter February cold so that I might meet my rock idol. And when I got sick, (you know, from waiting outside in the cold for three hours) my mom was there to take care of me. Rock stars aren't the real heroes.

The music business has changed since my dad was a kid. The remaining members of the Beatles, the Rolling Stones and the Who have lost their edge to old age. My dad's beloved record stores like "Caper's Corner" and "Penny Lane" have disappeared and made way for digital music. It's a young man's game. I'm forever indebted to my dad for introducing me to the golden age of music, so I try to return the favor by sharing each new band or blog I find. I am no longer just a student of my musical sensei.

I'm a man now. I'm going to college next year to lead my own life and make my own mistakes and discover my own passions. I'll go to concerts on my own and illegally download music. But I'll never get tired of the way my dad answers every musical question with a lengthy "VH1 Behind the Music" type explanation. We'll still go concert hopping at the South By Southwest festival over spring break. And I can always make time to break out the XBOX and kick his butt at Beatles Rock Band. I'm growing up and going away, but I'll always be my dad's son -- a Beatles fan.

## WILL'S CONCERT TIMELINE *Will's top three favorite concerts he's been to with his dad*

