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Craving Analogue Sensation in A Digital World:  
Exploring The Collecting Behaviour of Digital Native Vinyl Collectors

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*“A magic disc that, as well as looking great, makes a noise and is often contained within a book  
full of information and pictures. What’s not to love about that?”*  
– Ollie Teeba

## **Abstract**

This thesis looks at consumer behaviour of digital natives in the resurgence of analogue consumption during an era of digitalisation. More specifically, the resurrection of vinyl culture among digital natives, who accounted for the highest vinyl turnover over the last five years. The curious case of why digital natives collect vinyl after it was considered ‘obsolete’ and ‘dying’ is studied using interviews and ethnographic data in an explorative approach. This thesis addresses past work on vinyl consumption that only looked at ‘typical’ vinyl consumers, stereotypically middle-aged men over the age of 40. The research objectives were set out to explain why digital natives consume analogue items in an era of digitalisation and how they experience nostalgia through analogue items originating from a time before their existence. The research findings showed that digital natives formed a countermovement to escape the fast pace of the digital in slower forms of consumption by means of analogue items like vinyl. Also, it revealed that the concept of nostalgia can be perceived through three timeframes: the past, present, and future. The past revealed the concept ‘anemoia’ which captured a romanticised longing for a past beyond your own. The present of nostalgia revealed that the concept of nostalgia is everchanging per generation as its timeframe had become smaller among digital natives. In the future of nostalgia, it was uncovered that nostalgia is more than a passive longing for the past and that it can inspire to look forward in a process conceptualised as ‘prolepsis’. At last, the research implications were elaborated according to Consumer Culture Theory to describe the dynamic relations between the revival of vinyl culture, consumer behaviour of digital natives, retro-marketing, market development, and the effects of digital and analogue consumption on entrepreneurship and societal well-being.

Key Words: Consumer Culture Theory (CCT), Consumer Behaviour, Vinyl Collecting, Digitalisation, Digital Natives, Analogue, Nostalgia, Anemoia, Prolepsis

## **Preface**

‘Craving Analogue Sensation In A Digital World’ was written to meet the final graduation requirement of the Master’ specialisation Innovation & Entrepreneurship. A challenging and exciting course established by the Business Administration department of the Nijmegen School of Management at Radboud University.

During my first semester at Radboud University, I was told that a researcher must be thoughtful in choosing a research topic because one will need a genuine interest in the knowledge that unfolds throughout a research period. Therefore, I decided to stay close to home and delve deeper into the analogue resurgence among digital natives in the case of vinyl, being a record collector myself. Given my personal interest in this topic, I felt compelled to challenge myself and exceed my expectations. Therefore, I hope that the readers will recognize the effort and heart that was devoted to writing this thesis.

In the final stages, I became more aware of my limitations as a researcher, but more importantly, of all the exciting things I learned from the ethnographic fieldwork and literature. It was fascinating to explore how the traces of an analogue era still run through a digital world, and how different perceptions of time tied together in the everchanging concept of nostalgia. In the end, taking on an explorative and ethnographic approach proved to be challenging, but well worth it.

The participants I met were able to inspire me during each interview, in which we discussed all that is to discover about our shared passion. I am very thankful for their time, reflectivity, and most of all their honesty. I also want to thank my thesis supervisor for his outstanding guidance. Dealing with my ADHD was tricky during this demanding period, but your patience and understanding were a real game changer. You were involved and always prepared to provide feedback in short notice, which was constructive and encouraging. Dr. Paolo Franco, your supervision was much appreciated, and I am certain that many students after me will feel the same way.

At last, I want to thank my family, friends, fellow students, and partner for their unconditional support throughout the thesis period. You are amazing.

Enjoy the read and do not forget to take those records out of your shelf.

Nijmegen, August 10, 2022

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## Introduction

An intriguing resurrection of vinyl records occurs after facing “a slow death” during the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Plasketes, 1992; Hayes, 2006). Vinyl records have strongly re-emerged in the marketplace with significant growth in sales, reaching their highest turnover levels in 2020 since 1991 (Smith, 2020). Currently, vinyl records are still a niche market considering that market sales account for only 2 per cent of global music industry revenue and, therefore, does not yet capture a significant market share (Sarpong, Dong, & Appiah, 2016). Nonetheless, turnover of vinyl increased in the Netherlands by 11 per cent in 2020, accounting for 7.6 per cent of the national music industry revenue and thereby surpassing the compact disc (CD) format for the first time since 1988 (Milner, 2018). In terms of global music industry revenue, the Netherlands comes in tenth place and thus remains an essential market in terms of music consumption (Dutch Association of Producers and Importers of Image and Sound Carriers, 2021).

In reviewing literature to understand the revival of vinyl in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it became clear that music collecting was progressively theorised among qualitative theorists but remains limited in explaining the partake of digital natives (Sonnichsen, 2013). Research by Goulding & Derbaix (2018) only included participants that represented ‘typical’ vinyl consumers, namely, middle-aged men over the age of 40, and, therefore, suggested extending the scope of analysis. Also, the socialization and everyday environments of digital natives primarily involve digital and technological forms of consumption. Moreover, consumer research in music acquisition reported in 2016 that 72 per cent of vinyl record buyers are under the age of 35 (MusicWatch, 2016), and also the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (2021) reported statistics (derived from 43,000 internet users worldwide), revealing that vinyl is purchased in larger amounts among 25–34-year-olds than 55-64-year-olds, see I. Who Buys Vinyl in the Appendix.

Past research on vinyl consumption left a theoretical gap regarding digital native consumers. Therefore, most of vinyl consumption remains unexplained to academics and practitioners. Burdett (2016) did conclude that there is a connection to be made between the resurgence of vinyl records and urban, middle-, upper-class youth. Nonetheless, the consumption patterns of digital natives is relatively unexplored, even though digital natives have different life histories, modes of consuming, consumption experience and even vinyl biographies compared to older generations of vinyl consumers (Goulding & Derbaix, 2018).

Recent ethnographic research by Fernandez & Beverland (2018) examined how the material nature of analogue technology, and in particular vinyl, makes its users passionately prefer this type of technology over its digital alternatives. The qualitative study was conducted by means of 22 in-depth interviews, out of which 16 participants were also men between the age of 35 and 60 and, therefore, also primarily concerned middle-aged men. Throughout the study of Fernandez & Beverland (2018), vinyl consumption was associated with ‘luddites’ who “view technological development as destructive of nature and authentic

ways of life” (Kozinets, 2008). This term primarily applied to consumers categorized according to the prior mentioned age class and consists of men who mostly stick with vinyl because of nostalgia. However, digital natives who grew up with mp3’s and streaming, but consume legacy technology, do not fit into this type of ideology as they experience vinyl records as an exciting ‘new’ music format. This suggests that the legacy technology use of vinyl records among digital generations is worth a study in its own right (Fernandez & Beverland, 2018).

As for digitalisation, it has to be acknowledged that the ever-growing digital connectivity and stimulus draws concerns about mental health, especially among young adults (Berryman, Ferguson, & Negy, 2017). Ironically, the constant connectivity of social media and the internet leads to loneliness and depression according to which existing literature suggested that this could explain the resurgence of analogue consumption in a deeply digital age (Humayun & Belk, 2020; Hunt, Marx, Lipson, & Young, 2018; Magaudda, 2011; Bartmanski & Woodward, 2015). This suggests that digital natives might share common characteristics with luddites in their escape of the relentless march of the digital by means of non-digital analogue objects, even though, digital natives seem to do so to find freedom and true expression (Belk & Costa, 1998; Humayun & Belk, 2020).

In contrast to the analogue consumption by luddites, digital natives are unable to experience the same nostalgic sensation from analogue objects, because it is a matter of a time beyond their own. Here, a romanticized form of nostalgia came to mind, which is also referred to as ‘anemoia’; a new and nearly unheard-of word, which not represents the actual past, but rather, the past as we imagine it (Barlament, 2019) Thus far, little to no research papers directly refers to ‘anemoia’ or ‘unexperienced nostalgia’, only to the context of nostalgia in terms of conceptual issues and existential functions, the imaginary power of nostalgia, and how narratives of the past provide resources for articulating future possibilities in a process known as ‘prolepsis’ (Medalie, 2010; Bradbury, 2012; Sedikides, Wildschut, & Baden, 2004; Nieland, Mahendran, & Crafter, 2022). Though, Hamilton et al. (2014) briefly referred to Lowenthal (1975) who explored nostalgia for a shared cultural history beyond personal memory wherein reconstruction not only reorders past scenes, but also creates new ones. In a similar sense, Barlett (1967) stated about remembering that the non-existent scenes and events are what the participants considered their most brilliant recaptures. It is therefore speculated that excessive digital connectivity evokes nostalgia, and among digital natives in particular anemoia for a non-existent pre-digital age. This presents anemoia to be a questionable effect of the digital by being a mean to counteract digital entrepreneurship (Barlament, 2019; Roundy & Bayer, 2022).

This triggered interest in examining how the ambiguous concept of nostalgia unravels among digital natives in relation to handling analogue technology and collecting analogue objects. If digital natives are truly inclined to purchase ‘nostalgic’ products, marketers can take advantage of such knowledge by



designing marketing programs that evoke or intensify the emotional experience of nostalgia (Sierra & McQuitty, 2007).

In light of the above weaknesses on current scholarship on the vinyl revival, this thesis explores the following research questions:

- What drives digital natives towards consumption of analogue items in an era of digitalization?
- How do digital natives experience nostalgia through non-digital analogue items originating from a time before their existence?

The above research questions were addressed through the lens of Consumer Culture Theory (CCT). CCT refers to a family of theoretical perspectives that revolve around the dynamic relationships between consumer actions, market development, marketing practises, and cultural meanings regarding the study of consumer culture (Franco, 2015; Arnould & Thompson, 2005). CCT insights proved suitable for investigating how collecting vinyl records manifested in cultural meaning and influenced the consumer behaviour of digital natives (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). When looking at nostalgia through the CCT lens, nostalgia is considered an emotional state that influences consumer behaviour by creating a sense of authenticity and legitimacy through memories that collectively constitute personal and cultural meaning (Baker & Kennedy, 1994; Kalinina, 2016). Nowadays, media, popular culture, and creative industries are the central platforms of nostalgic productions that bring consumer attitudes from the past to the present (Kalinina, 2016). This constructed the speculation that anemoia influenced the resurgence of analogue consumption among digital natives by evoking nostalgia to a non-existent past, which is similar to 'typical' vinyl consumers experiencing 'true' nostalgia by analogue items.

Gaps and perceptions in academic literature warranted relevance for further research to explain why digital natives collect vinyl records. It contradicts previously held notions that typical vinyl consumers are older individuals that rush back to record stores to relive memories of their past (Hassan, 2016). At last, Kong (1995) argued successfully that music, as a perpetual feature of everyday life and cultural existence, deserves greater attention and respect among researchers, and also Pietrzykowski & Clark (2007) stated that the next generation's relationship with recorded music may turn out to be different from any other group in history.

The rest of this thesis is structured as follows. It offers a review of prior literature on vinyl revival, digital natives, nostalgia, and other subjects of relevance. Next, it covers the methods utilised to gather and explore ethnographic data from the social environment. Following this, a theoretical framework developed to structure the consecutive thesis' finding sections. Finally, the thesis concludes by outlining the theoretical and practical implications, suggestions for future research directions, and an overall conclusion.

## Theoretical Background

The following sections includes concepts and insights that were useful in explaining, predicting, and understanding this research's objectives, theoretical relevance, and social context. This chapter begins with explaining and addressing past work on vinyl collecting and legacy technology. Next, the participant sample of digital natives is conceptualised. From there, a closer look is taken into the concept of nostalgia and how it is connected to society and music. At last, it is explained how vinyl functions as collector's item, followed by identifying what is meant by consumer collecting behaviour in general. These subjects were used as the starting points for analyses to answer the research questions.

### Legacy Technology and Vinyl Revival

In past research, vinyl was commonly referred to as 'legacy technology', which is a term that has been strongly associated with the revival of vinyl records (Fernandez & Beverland, 2018). Even though literature has barely paid attention to legacy technology, it can be considered old or obsolete technology that is destined to be replaced by new types of technology as part of technology cycles (Tushman & Anderson, 1986; Anderson & Tushman, 1990). Raffaelli (2019) indicated that legacy technology is expected to follow one of two possible trajectories: technology displacement or technology retrenchment. The prior refers to technology being abandoned through the emergence of new technology whilst the latter relies on demand of the environment that allows legacy technology to exist in a niche market that is often sustained by factors such as nostalgia (Tushman & Anderson, 1986; Adner & Snow, 2010; Raffaelli, 2019).

Technology retrenchment supports the common justification for preferring vinyl because of personal nostalgia (Fernandez & Beverland, 2018; Plasketes, 1992). Nostalgia is not an uncommon concept in consumer behaviour as it imposed preference towards objects from when one was younger and reinforces self-identity (Sierra & McQuitty, 2007). However, as aforementioned, the majority of vinyl consumption nowadays is from digital natives that did not fit into this ideology since nostalgia is impossible to be experienced the same way by this group of consumers (Fernandez & Beverland, 2018). This indicates that the revival of vinyl went through a third path for legacy technologies: re-emergence, which is a trajectory that is only possible under the right conditions (Raffaelli, 2019). The right conditions are stated by Eleftheriadis & Alexiou (2020) to be caused by a ripple effect that began by vinyl record enthusiast but departed from initial technological determinism and reached the general public through generation of online and offline traction. However, how, and why digital natives contributed to these conditions remained unexplored.

## Digital Natives

Net generation, Google generation, millennials, and digital natives are just a number of labels to describe modern generations wherein the significance and importance of new technologies are a defining feature (Gibbons, 2007). Prensky (2001) described this generation as digital natives because they are all “native speakers of the digital language of computers, video games, and the Internet”. For Prensky, age was the defining factor and considered those born after 1980 digitally native (Prensky, 2001; Palfrey & Gasser, 2008). However, this category shifted as a second-generation of digital natives was created through the rise of Web 2.0, which is the second generation of the web wherein user-centered web applications and services promote social connectedness, information sharing, user-created content, and collaboration among individuals and organizations (Wilson, Lin, Longstreet, & Sarker, 2011). Consequently, digital natives were distinguished in first-generation digital natives, born between 1983 and 1990 (currently between 32-39 years old) and second-generation digital natives, who are born after 1990 (currently 32 or younger) (Helsper & Eynon, 2010). Since consumer research in music acquisition by MusicWatch (2016) reported that 72 per cent of vinyl record buyers are under the age of 35 this research emphasizes second-generation digital natives. Besides, the youngest generation is also more likely to have grown up with modern technology and be unfamiliar with any other context (Helsper & Eynon, 2010). Nonetheless, first-generation digital natives were initially not excluded if any findings provided substantial contributions to the exploration of next generation vinyl collectors.

## Nostalgia

As an emotional attachment to previous experiences, nostalgia is an emotional state defined as a preference towards people, places, or things that were common or defining when one was younger in early adulthood, adolescence, childhood, or even before birth (Kessous & Roux, 2008; Holbrook & Schindler, 1994). For several decades, the concept of nostalgia can be found in a wide variety of cultures and across all ages (Sedikides C. , Wildschut, Arndt, & Routledge, 2008). Nowadays, nostalgia is considered an ordinary, everyday experience for most people, even though, it was labelled a pathological disorder from a historical point of view (Garrido & Davidson, 2019; Dickinson & Erben, 2006).

Boym (2007) conducted thorough research about how nostalgia unfolds in the modern world and associated it with discontent with the present, stating that nostalgia is “a rebellion against the modern idea of time, the time of history and progress... the mourning of displacement and temporal irreversibility”. It is even believed that there is a global epidemic of nostalgia in the twenty-first century that is caused by the accelerated pace of industrialization and modernization, which increases longing for the slower paced life of the past (Boym, 2007). From a modern psychological viewpoint, nostalgia is therefore considered a

coping mechanism to deal with the challenges and uncertainties that come along with the rapid changes of the modern world (Pickering & Keightley, 2006).

As aforementioned, digitalisation raised concerns about mental health in terms of loneliness and depression, especially among younger generations (Berryman, Ferguson, & Negy, 2017). Correspondingly, psychological literature concurred that nostalgia can be triggered by the feelings of loneliness, depression, and discontent with the present and continuous course of life. This comparison of cause and effect might explain the global pandemic of nostalgia in an era of digitalisation. Therefore, it was decided to adopt these phenomena in examining the digital and analogue consumption behaviour of digital natives in relation to nostalgia and in particular anemoia.

In relation to vinyl, it has to be point out that just a few bars of a tune can evoke a longing to another place, another time, and the events and people surrounding these, which makes music one of the most powerful triggers of nostalgia (Barret, et al., 2010). It was even found that nostalgia is triggered by music more often than any other stimuli because of the way music expresses and reflects emotion (Juslin, Liliestrom, Västfjäll, Barradas, & Silva, 2008). Music that carries nostalgic value can help people to process and reinterpret past events, construct identity, and biographically hold particular connections to the past in an individual's mind (Cassia, 2000; De Nora, 2000). These understandings of nostalgia and music triggered further interest in how nostalgia is evoked by vinyl in its physical form, considering that the wide range of digital alternatives that digital natives grew up with are an intangible music experience.

## Vinyl Records as Collector's Item

Acquiring and retaining arrays of objects is not a unique modern disposition, though collecting practises do have the ability to reflect and constitute unique social and personal formations of taste (Atkins, 2006). In terms of collecting vinyl, it is very unlikely that individuals share an identical collection unless they habitually purchase music collectively, which denotes that collecting vinyl functions as a differentiating power of preference and taste (Giles, Pietrzykowski, & Clark, 2007; Csikzentmihalyi & Rochberg, 1981). Pearce (1993) distinguished three modes of collecting: souvenirs, fetish, and systematics, based on the relationship between the collector and objects. These are not exclusive as an individual can embody all three (Pearce, 1993). Most vinyl record collectors interviewed by Atkins (2006) confirmed the three features by their desire for systematicity, the hunt on the market, and the attachment to the object as inseparable elements in the transition from curious record listener to collector. However, a collection does not need to be of significant size for someone to consider themselves a collector (Atkins, 2006).

According to Spaid (2018) there are several traits necessary for a vinyl collection to exist: 1. The items in a collection must be interrelated, carefully considered based on personal interest in which the collector often appeals to become the controller of a "little world" (Belk R. W., 1995), 2. The collected

objects are a result of a highly selective process, because selectivity helps define the interrelatedness of the collected set (Belk, Wallendorf, & Holbrook, 1991), and 3. The collected objects are made sacred by being removed from their contexts and given immortality within the collection (Pearce, 1995). Consequently, these three traits were to be met by the participants.

## Consumer Collecting Behaviour

Before elaborating on consumer collecting behaviour, it is essential to provide definitions to what constitutes collecting and collector. Collecting has been defined as “the process of actively, selectively, and passionately acquiring and possessing things removed from ordinary use and perceived as part of a set of non-identical objects or experiences” (Belk R. W., 1995). The activity of collecting is inseparable from the collector, which is an individual either intrinsically or extrinsically driven to accumulate series of similar objects and does not plan to dispose the objects anytime soon (McIntosh & Schmeichel, 2004).

Three paradoxes came to light throughout the concept of collecting behaviour literature. First, the paradox between materialism and anti-materialism, to which Belk (1995) stated that collecting seems to be the height of materialism by describing it as “a form of materialistic luxury consumption”. In contrast, collectors were also considered anti-materialistic because they defy consumption by removing objects from the marketplace and monetary value (Belk R. W., 1998; Eisenberg, 1987). Second, there is a paradox between the social and solidarity side of the activity. The social behaviour of the collector refers to the perpetual habit of collaborative or competitive hunting, networking, sharing, and consulting (Long & Schiffman, 1997). In opposite, solitary behaviour from the collector included activities such as researching, cataloguing, displaying, and admiring (McIntosh & Schmeichel, 2004; Hughes, 2006). Third, there is a paradox around collector’s rational and irrational attitude in a sense that there are rational decisions to be made during the foregoing trade-off in which the price is weighed against quality and the personal attachment that determine if the object is ‘worthy’ of being added to the collection (Long & Schiffman, 1997). Simultaneously, it was believed that the passion for collecting may override rational concerns to an extent where price may become no barrier, dreams dominate thought, and the urge of collecting could even alienate the collector from loved ones (Baekeland, 1981; Gelber, 1992; Long & Schiffman, 1997).

These paradoxes in collecting behaviour literature formed the foundation for Spaid (2018) to develop a framework for consumer collecting behaviour in relation to identity. Consumer behaviour, such as collecting, is closely intertwined with perceptions of self-identity (Langner, Hennigs, & Wiedmann, 2013). Especially young adults, like digital natives, are known to express their self-identity through consumption as they often struggle to be both unique individuals and a part of a group (Thompson & Haytko, 1997; Murray J. B., 2002). With these thoughts in mind, Spaid (2018) outlined numerous perceptions of how collecting activities dynamically construct self-identity and social identities. Thus far,

the perceptions are purely theoretical but provided groundwork for ethnographic investigation of collecting behaviour in relation to self-identity of digital natives (Spaid, 2018). The theory from Spaid (2018) was utilised as frame of reference during preparation of the first set of interview questions and in obtaining thorough insights of consumer collecting behaviour. Note that this research is not set out to test the model empirically, but that the empirical results could support managers in the music industry to activate the younger collector's salient identity and optimize marketing efforts, collecting-oriented services, and brand management accordingly (Kleine, Kleine, & Kernan, 1993).

### Identity Theory in CCT

Consumer Culture Theory was recognised in capturing the ways in which consumers acquire mythic and symbolic resources in marketplaces through which they construct narratives of identity and creation of self-representations (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). In that sense, collecting possessions allows individuals to extend themselves into physical objects that express their individuality and emotion (Spaid, 2018). The strength of an individual's self-identity as collector depends on its identity salience, which is a concept that asserts that individuals have numerous distinct identities organized in a hierarchy of importance (Stryker & Burke, 2000). Meaning that the higher an individual identified with its collector's identity, the stronger the extension of self through acquiring physical objects such as vinyl records. It is to be taken in consideration that a participant that collected more actively could be closer self-identified with its collector's identity.

Rochberg-Halton (1984) explained the influence of the collector's identity on a collector's perception of its surroundings: "Valued material possessions act as signs of the self that are essential in their own right for its continued cultivation, and hence the world of meaning that we create for ourselves, and that creates ourselves". How the cultivation of vinyl and music creates understanding of self shall remain underexamined, as the experience of self is one of the most complex experiences there is for mankind (Vollenweider, 2022). Still, this study examines how collecting vinyl influences the understanding of self among digital natives, who are generally known to discover and express their identities through imaging, keyboarding, and posting on digital media (Weber & Mitchell, 2008).

Belk (1982) stated that in the past accumulating collections were a necessity for future security, but today humans often assemble collections of non-necessities for self-definition. In that sense, it is only natural that a collection may be seen as part of one's identity rather than isolated consumption items considering the thoughtfulness and the commitment of time and energy devoted to building a collection (Belk R. W., Possessions and the Extended Self, 1988).

## Methodology

### Data Collecting: Ethnographic Fieldwork

Considering the qualitative nature and demographic context of this research topic, the study took on an exploratory and ethnographic research approach in which data was gathered through moments of social interaction (Genzuck, 2003). Here, ethnography is used as a consumer-oriented research method that relies heavily on fieldwork in order to identify consumer-related phenomena such as consumer culture and behaviour (Arnoud, 1998). In that sense, ethnography provides the opportunity to experience up-close and personal interactions of a particular group of consumers. This research, like typical ethnographic research, employed three kinds of data collection: interviews, (participant) observation, and literature (Genzuck, 2003). The data was collected over a course of six months approximately. During this period, existing research was compared to the empirically gathered data to make more precise statements about the studied phenomena. Ultimately, it was a matter of examining the interaction, social behaviour, and experiences of a specific group to provide explanatory understandings of consumer behaviour that either address or deepens existing theory (Ajzen, 1991). In short, the research was theoretically iterative and an empirical exploration in the field of consumer-oriented ethnography.

### Interviews

The in-depth interviews were semi-structured and conducted through a social constructivist lens that perceives interviews as cultural conversation and epistemic practise that invites both interviewee and interviewer to contribute to knowledge production (Arsel, 2017). The semi-structured interviews involved pre-formulated questions but there was no strict adherence to them as improvised questions emerged during the interviews. Nevertheless, the primary role of the interviewer was to listen, encourage, and direct the interviewees in the pursuit of collecting substantial primary data (Myers, 2020).

Since the interviews were conducted by an individual researcher in a limited period of time, fieldwork was restricted to a limited number of interviews. According to Guest et al. (2006), 12 interviews are generally considered to achieve theoretical saturation, which is the exact number of interviews conducted. The interviews were transcribed in edited transcription and were independently engaged in open and chunked coding, and subsequently engaged in more focused, selective coding (Spiggle, 1994).

A set of provisional interview questions was prepared in advance for the preparation for the first round of interviews, see Appendix II. Interview Guide. By following a neo-positivist approach these questions were changed after assessing each interview to detect patterns and quasi-causal explanations between interview findings and similarities and/or contradiction to existing theories (McCracken, 1988). The initial interview questions were retrieved from the consumer collecting behaviour theory from Spaid

(2018) along with three different platforms that were known to widely interact with vinyl collectors: Vinyl Sound Radio, Kratkruipers, and Dust & Grooves.

Before the fieldwork, a list containing over 20 potential participants was organized, consisting of record collectors between the age of 18 and 35 from two neighbouring provinces in the Netherlands: Overijssel and Gelderland. At first, the list included mostly male participants, which indicated research limitations in terms of gender. Utilizing a snowball effect mediated access to more female record collectors as well as additional interviewees and sources. Fernandez & Berverland (2018) already suggested future research to examine why males are more likely to collect vinyl, given that prior research on technology acceptance by Venkatesh et al. (2000) concluded that males have a higher propensity to accept ‘new’ technologies than females. In addition, vinyl is considered an exciting ‘new’ music format for digital natives. In terms of the research scope, the demographic focus was specified on ‘age’, not ‘gender’, which did not focus gender-related matters. See an overview of participants in the table below:

#	Name	Age	Gender	Collection Size	Notes
1.	Teodoras	21	Male	380	Collector, Reseller
2.	Felix	29	Male	225	Collector, DJ, Event Organizer
3.	Chiel	24	Male	200	Collector, DJ, Hobbyist
4.	Mark	25	Male	700-800	Collector, DJ, Event Organizer
5.	Marijn	29	Male	1000	Collector, (Resident) DJ, Record Dealer, Event Organizer
6.	Ennio	29	Male	400	Collector, DJ, Event Organizer
7.	Madelief	22	Female	90	Collector, Hobbyist
8.	Jochem	25	Male	190	Collector, Hobbyist
9.	Koen	28	Male	510	Collector, DJ
10.	Kim	28	Female	350	Collector, (Resident) DJ
11.	Sander	27	Male	1500	Collector, DJ, Event Organizer, Radio Host
12.	Lizzy	31	Female	300	Collector, (Resident) DJ, Radio Host

*1. Table of Participants*

## Participant Recruitment and Research Ethics

The participants were contacted through networking at Paak, a vinyl-only listening bar located in Nijmegen, and a shared message on social media with a request to forward any (relatively) young and active record collectors that are prepared to contribute to this study. The message included a short introduction of the research topic along with assurances of adhering interview ethics. The latter emphasizes on compliance being voluntary and that participants were allowed to withdraw from the interview at any time as well as having the right to remain anonymous by use of a pseudonym or first name only. Moreover, if an interviewee was forwarded, he/she was assured to be contacted in a polite and informative manner (Genzük, 2003). Before the interviews, all participants were asked for their approval for audio recording and, since voices are harder to anonymise, ensured that the recordings were stored in a secure file location (Braun &



Clarke, 2013). Throughout the research, the Golden Rule was followed at all times, which was described by Maylor and Blackmon (2005) as “Treat others as you yourself want to be treated and provide benefit to the organizations and individuals involved in your work”. Therefore, all participants are granted access to this thesis after completion, if desired. At last, all the interviews were conducted at the participant’s home with the exception of two interviewees. Kim was in the middle of a move and Marijn was interviewed for almost two hours at Paak (while he was spinning records!). Administrative matters related to academic integrity and research rights and obligations are included in the Appendix, see III. Research Integrity Form and IV. Consent Form for Radboud Thesis Repository.

## Observation and Photography

Genzuck (2003) stated that in the art of ethnography, researchers rely on up-close, personal experience and possible participation, not just observation. The main idea of participant observation was to not only observe the environment and people, but also interact with them in an attempt to gain understanding of their beliefs and activities from the inside. By talking to people, the meaning or importance of a particular thing or activity in the observed culture was better understood (Myers, 2020). Numerous photographs were taken and included into the thesis to verify and support the conducted participating observations and interviews. The photographs captured collecting behaviour, cultural meaning, and space use, which proved useful for unpacking cultural content, analyses of fieldwork data, and in visualising the social environments for the readers (Ruby, 2000).

### *2. Record Section at Paak*

The locations for participant observation and interaction were selected based on my personal experience and social background that aligned with environments known to attract digital natives. Most photographs during the fieldwork were taken in the homes of the participants where the vinyl collections of the participants were stored. Gaining access to the research sites did not pose any significant difficulties since most locations were publicly accessible during opening hours and access was personally granted for publicly disclosed sites in advance. In addition, all (retail) staff was informed about any photographic related matters to prevent any disruption of personnel or customer activities (Myers, 2020). Despite being familiar with an abundance of research sites, time constraints limited the amount of participant observations to a handful of locations. Also, during the research, the interviews were more time consuming and of higher relevance compared to photography. The main emphasis of the fieldwork was therefore on conducting interview. Nonetheless, all photographs taken during observation and interview can be found in the Appendix, see V. Ethnographic Fieldwork: Photographs.

## Data Analysis

In a qualitative study such as ethnography, a researcher collects an abundance of textual data from interviews, photos, and field notes to describe actors and activities. Once the data was gathered it had to be ordered, interpreted, and explained in order to understand it (Myers, 2020). To do so, a hermeneutic approach was taken, which is a philosophical approach to human understanding that provides philosophical grounding for interpretivism (Klein & Myers, 1999). Frost et al. (1985) stated that culture is to be treated like a text that needs to be interpreted and understood. The hermeneutic approach revolves around a text, or a text-analogue, that in some way is unclear to which interpretation aims to bring to light an underlying coherence or sense (Myers, 2020). Here, the hermeneutic circle was applied, which refers to a circular relationship wherein the whole is conceived by understanding of its parts, that once again was determined by the whole (Gadamer, 1976). Following this, the textual data was divided into units by labelling these with chunks of codes that function as a brief summary of the main attributes or features of the social environment (Van Thiel, 2014). Since this research was inductive, the codes were gradually developed and refined during the process of analyses, paying attention to patterns of similarities and differences between collected fragments. Analysis of interviews was repeated until there was no newly found themes, indicating arrival at a so-called exhaustive coding scheme (Van Thiel, 2014). This involves open-, thematic, and in the final stage, selective coding, which was an iterative process of continuous interpretation of interview transcripts and literature (Spiggle, 1994). The table below provides an overview of the thematic codes and total number of citations per theme derived from the interview transcripts:

<b>Thematic Codes</b>	Anemoia	Nostalgia	Digital Escape	Escapism, Fantasy	Identity, Expression	Novelty	Selectivity, Authenticity	Tangibility
<b>#</b>	32	30	27	25	43	13	25	24

3. Table of Thematic Codes, ATLAS.ti

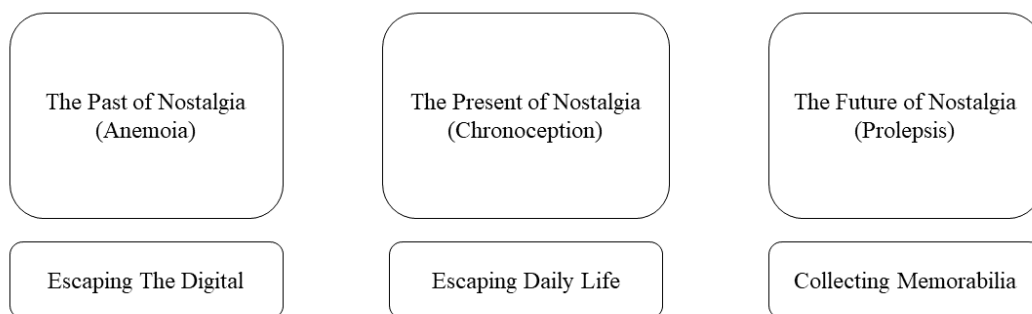
## Findings: The Past, Present, and Future of Nostalgia

Three major themes were outlined from the research findings, with each theme demonstrating a different form of nostalgia that influenced consumer behaviour of digital natives in the case of vinyl. These are chronologically presented as the past, present, and future of nostalgia, in which each form of nostalgia includes a distinct form of escapism and reflection.

First, the past of nostalgia, reveals a longing for a time beyond your own. This does not represent the actual past, but rather a past imagined through the analogue sensation of vinyl. This form of nostalgia is conceptualised as ‘anemoia’ and captures a romanticised sense of longing for a past beyond personal existence. Since this romanticised past is associated with a period of time without the digital stimuli of today, this form of nostalgia goes hand in hand with escaping the digital.

Second, the present of nostalgia. This theme reveals through the habit of collecting vinyl that the perception of nostalgia – in particular its timeframe – is ever changing per generation. The rapid pace of technological development that digital natives are to keep up with quickens the sense of time, which is conceptualised as ‘chronoception’. Participants counteract the fast pace of life by slow forms of consumption. Here, the analogue consumption of vinyl pauses or slows down the acceleration in which digital natives use these moments of analogue consumption to reconnect with thought and emotion to reflect upon the self.

At last, the future of nostalgia, reveals how vinyl records help shape an envisioned future in the process of ‘prolepsis’. As resources from the past, vinyl orchestrates actions of the present that align with future goals. With vinyl covering a timespan from past to future and everything in between, vinyl records act as memorabilia that captures and revokes reminiscence. The conceptual framework below illustrates the themes introduced above in an overview:



4. Conceptual Model

## The Past of Nostalgia: Anemoia

The first major theme that emerged centres around ‘anemoia’, which captures how participants imagined the past based on romanticised stories and self-made interpretations through the (secondhand) records they listen to from the late 60’s, 70’s, 80’s, and 90’s. Even though the large majority of participants did not feel like they were born in the wrong time, almost all of the participants either fantasize about unattended events from the past or feel nostalgic about a time in which they did not live in themselves. Nevertheless, participants found it somewhat difficult yet intriguing to define their yearning to a time beyond their own:

I can't really put into words how I feel about it... Maybe nostalgic is the right word even if it's a bit weird, because with nostalgia you long for the past, but I did not experience that past and I also didn't listen to vinyl when I was younger. So actually, that is not possible, because I think nostalgia is something from the past of your own life, so that may no longer be nostalgia. – Madelief

Participants in this study did not stand alone in either experiencing this type of nostalgia as in their struggle to define it. The concept of anemoia was recently covered in a New York Times Bestseller ‘Dictionary of Obscure Sorrows’ wherein Koenig (2022) defined it as “nostalgia for a time you never experienced”. This book was specifically written for emotions that we all feel but do not have the words for to express. Still, the participants found creative ways to explain why anemoia occurs through vinyl and to what extent they experience it without being informed about the concept beforehand:

Vinyl is like a window to the past, but I do not feel like was born in the wrong time. I really like the nostalgia of pretending how it used to be, just like I do with my typewriter. I often fantasize about the past with several things. When I see old photos or hear stories, I idealize it and find it very interesting to think about. – Jochem

Where most participants referred to anemoia in an abstract manner as simply ‘the past’ or as a period of time such as the 70’s or 80’s, others were more specific by referring to particular historical events and locations. This implies, that anemoia, like nostalgia, comprises a nexus of time and space (Wilson J. L., 2015):

I really wanted to be there in New York at the love parties of David Mancuso and those in the Paradise Garage of Larry Levan. To me, that’s just the everything I want from a party, and when I read the stories about it, I think ‘I would have loved to be there!’. Now everything is here, and everything is almost always taken for granted, so in that sense, I would really like to go back and experience the beginnings. – Sander

According to Hirsch (1992) nostalgia is a yearning for an idealized past, which is not a true recreation of the past, but often a combination of many different memories wherein the negative emotions are filtered out. In that sense, what separates anemoia from nostalgia is that anemoia does not require one to filter out any personal negative emotions or experiences, simply because these cannot be associated to a time beyond your own existence and memory. This means, that anemoia must always be idealized, or rather

romanticized, since it is interpreted in an unrealistic, idealized fashion. Remarkably, this is a matter that most participants were well aware of:

...I am referring to certain images and sound fragments from the late 1970s, early 1980s. These I do romanticize, while things were not always rosy in these times either. Back then other problems arose, and inequality played a much greater role. There was also a lot less tolerance for certain subcultures. So, somewhere I can long for these times, but then I have the feeling that I idealize it and consider modern times very appropriate, and it is very nice that we go back to a certain togetherness in the sense of listening to sounds from something tangible. You put on a record and can listen to it and enjoy and dance to it together. – Kim

In the second to last sentence in the quote above, Kim refers to the ability of ‘listening to sounds from something tangible’, which is the physical characteristic of vinyl that aligns with previous studies about vinyl resurgence and preference (Bennet & Rogers, 2016), and is especially referred to as a characteristic that lacks in digital alternatives in comparison to analogue (Plasketes, 1992; Styven, 2010; Harper, 2018; Fernandez & Beverland, 2018). Subsequently, tangibility is a characteristic of vinyl that partly provokes anemoia among the participants in terms of being able of holding something from the past, which every now and then literally carries a message from the past:

...the character part in vinyl is a personal preference, because when I hold a new release in my hands it quickly feels like a piece of plastic, while when I hold a secondhand record in my hands that still has a sticker on it from the disco where it was played, or someone who has put in a sweet note for his lover saying: 'hey dear, have fun with this record', that's just really cool. Then you see that there is a past life in the records itself. – Marijn

As aforementioned, it can be determined that most participants were, to a certain extent, familiar with experiencing anemoia through their vinyl collection. However, nearly all of the participants stated that they did not feel like they were born in the wrong time. Only Lizzy, the oldest of the participants, was a noticeable exception:

As a child I always went shopping for secondhand clothes and was always fascinated about the 70s, 80s, and 90s. So, I definitely felt like I was born in the wrong time. That's just my taste. My preferences strongly go out for vintage clothing and music. - Lizzy

So, even though nearly all the participants experienced anemoia, most considered being alive in a deeply digital age appropriate along with the use of modern technology such as smartphones and laptops. Still, the constant stimuli of the digital world was too much at times and encouraged the participants to consume analogue items such as vinyl to take a break from the endless march of the digital (Humayun & Belk, 2020). Based on this understanding, anemoia seems to go hand in hand with escaping digital stimuli:

...I have the feeling that life was a bit more real back then because you were more involved with tangible products. Your world was smaller and the people you spoke to, you spoke to in real life, and you only saw what they were like in real life and that's completely different

now. I think for a lot of people it doesn't feel real, but it's a kind of hyperreality that we live in. It feels real, but it really isn't. – Madelief

### Anemoia: Escaping the Digital

Nearly all participants found it considerably difficult to escape the clutches of the digital and to break away from their smartphones, laptops, social media, and the internet in general. Especially since it has become a normality, or rather a necessity in day-to-day life, whether for work, studies, or social matters. Though, as argued by Humayun and Belk (2020), immersion in the digital is unavoidable, but not inescapable, even if the escape is only temporal or partial. Therefore, it is not surprising that analogue items from a pre-digital age help the participants to temporarily escape the constant presence of the digital:

...it is occasionally that I consciously think 'I'm working on my laptop a lot now, let me close it and grab some records for tonight or see what I bought last weekend'. It's kind of a break from the digital, and I think it's similar to sitting in front of your laptop all morning and thinking to yourself 'I need to go for a walk'. – Marijn

Smartphone devices are evident to generate habit-forming, also known as the 'checking habit' (Oulasvirta, Rattenbury, Ma, & Raita, 2012). This is the habit of brief, repetitive inspection of dynamic content that is quickly accessible on a device like our smartphones. This habit has been acknowledged among most participants, which is a habit that was frequently conceived with annoyance. Similar to the results by Ruding & Kuss (2020) about problematic smartphone use, half of the participants raised their concerns about their screentime and addictive relationship with modern technology:

... you really have an abundance of information, and the endless information is useful on the one hand, but paralyzing on the other, and I think that's why so many people are burned out. You can lose yourself endlessly in the search for new information and stimuli, and I think this certainly has to do with the fact that I like analogue items such as vinyl so much. – Lizzy

Still, the majority of participants rely on their smartphone and laptop for either work or studies, leading to an excessive amount of screentime on a daily basis with overstimulation as an occurring outcome. One of the participants therefore uses a Nokia phone to reduce screentime aside working hours. At the same time, vinyl-related professions and activities from various participants also depend upon social media platforms as it mediates their marketing and bookings for events, radio shows, and so forth. Meaning that even in the handling of analogue items for an income there is digital interference nowadays. Additionally, the increasing popularity of working from home became a normality for a number of participants, who became completely depended on their smartphones and laptops during working hours:

...technically I am working with it every day. In the end, I do spend a good number of hours in front of a screen. It can be too much, and I do notice that sometimes. Then I must

really get away from the screens in the evening and get behind my turntables and spin some records for example. – Ennio

Derived from the interviews, vinyl evidently functions as a medium to escape digital stimuli, which further raised the question whether the difference between the use of digital and analogue items was notable over a period of time. Through a more in-depth conversation about this matter with Kim, it seems that there was:

**Kim:** When I lived in [city] seven months ago, I was predominantly more involved with analogue items in comparison to digital ones. Now I have become more aware that I regularly drown in my phone when I grab it.

**Interviewer:** And during this period wherein you spent more time with analogue items compared to digital ones, did this affect how you felt?

**Kim:** I find that difficult to measure in a conversation now, but when I think about it, I have to say that I did feel more fulfilled, and because of vinyl I could be more present in the here and now, and not let myself stupidly immerse in everything I'd see digitally.

**Interviewer:** You wouldn't get stuck in your smartphone that often anymore?

**Kim:** Exactly. You start to listen more consciously and get a better focus because of it, and you can get carried away by the beautiful things you hear and see around vinyl...

There is, however, a seeming paradox as vinyl gives Kim both the feeling of being 'more present in the here and now' as well as the feeling of getting 'carried away'. So, where vinyl provides most participants with a pleasant distraction from their screens, there is still a particular similarity between digital and analogue stimuli, which is losing the track of time. Numerous participants have stated that this is a commonly occurring sensation when either listening, spinning, or collecting records. Advantageously, one of the participants was able to identify the nature of this paradox:

I think that if you are not on your phone, you are more in the here and now, so it doesn't matter what you do. I feel that when you're on your phone your sense of time is warped and you don't realize how much time has passed by, but on the other hand, when I'm spinning vinyl, I can get lost in that too, but in a different way. It's more that you're in a state of flow, but when you're on your phone you apparently long for distraction and want to escape from reality. So that's a different kind of escape and often a waste of time. – Lizzy

Not only smart devices cause excessive digital stimuli, but also game consoles are known to capture the attention of many individuals for hours on end (Griffiths, Kuss, & King, 2012). One of the participants was familiar with the addictive nature of videogames, but by becoming aware of it, has found a unique solution through vinyl to resolve the extent of it:

**Interviewer:** Does gaming only function as relaxation or would you say that there are forms of escape involved?

**Jochem:** It certainly functions as an escape. I definitely do it to disconnect from reality for a while. The thing is, if I decide to game at 11 o'clock in the morning, I will continue to do so for the rest of the day, because I can't stop. I think that listening to the game soundtracks on vinyl is a perfect compromise. I can escape to this setting without gaming all day. Then

I can be busy with other things and still lose myself a bit in the, let's say, positive associations I have with these atmospheres without it taking up a lot of precious time.

According to at least half of the participants, vinyl is deemed a healthful way to take a temporal or partial break from digital stimuli, wherein losing the track of time may be used as an indicator for the extent or duration of the digital escape. Even so, we shall remain to be bound to our digital devices as nearly all participants, and society at large, has become depended on their smart devices, whose shall continue to influence our ways in both the positive and negative. In contrast to the need for escaping the digital, smartphones and laptops are also embraced by the participants as they also increase motivation and efficiency in discovering vinyl:

I think I am in a beautiful and special time in terms of buying records. No, I am perfectly satisfied with the time in which I was born. It is now so easy to find information and connect with people, which is really nice, because the record community is also very active online.  
– Marijn

It is unavoidable that we shall continue to use our digital devices intensively for work, studies, social matters, and for most participants, the purpose of going on online expeditions for vinyl records on databases such as Discogs and sources alike. In doing so, McLoughlin (2012) presented evidence for a link between technological advances in modern life and the pace of time. In this study it was concluded that individuals who use information communication technology in their daily lives are more likely to experience the pace of time to move at a faster rate than those who do not (McLoughlin, 2012; Hartmut, 2013). Accordingly, the following chapter reveals how acceleration in the perception of time, conceptualised as 'chronoception' (Prieto-González, Stantchev, & Colomo-Palacios, 2014), influences the timespan of nostalgia as reflected by digital natives collecting vinyl.



## The Present of Nostalgia: Chronoception

The second theme that emerged centres around the ever-changing perception of nostalgia, which in its present conceptualisation is influenced by the accelerating chronoception experienced by digital natives. Looking back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when nostalgia became popular, the concept was focused on space, more specifically, on being homesick, and overtime it began to manifest itself around time (Boym, 2001; Wilson J. L., 2015). The concept of nostalgia changed as overcoming space in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries was a challenging obstacle. Along the invention of commercial airlines, high speeds trains, and the internet, overcoming space became easier, and as technological development rapidly accelerated, it began to feel like we were unable to keep up with it (Michielse, 2022). Consequently, it was time that became precious, and so our present understanding of nostalgia started shifting its conceptual definition from space into time. At creative culture talk ‘Digital Nostalgia in an Era of New Media Technologies’, Dr Maarten Michielse, lecturer in media at Lancaster University, discussed how nostalgia unfolds in the modern world in relation to digital and analogue consumption, see photos 31 till 34 in V. Ethnographic Fieldwork: Photographs. He stated the following about the conceptual shift of nostalgia:

When we think about the relationship between nostalgia and time, there is a straightforward item. One thing, for example, to mention, is that the timeframe of nostalgia seems to become smaller and smaller. When new generations are nostalgic, they aren’t nostalgic about something that happened three decades ago. No, they are nostalgic about something that happened last year. In Internet culture, you can even be nostalgic for a meme that was posted six months ago. I even think that the first ‘back to the 90s’ party was hosted in January 2000.

The shortening of the conceptual timeframe of nostalgia was also a notable point of interest during the interviews as various participants spoke in a nostalgic manner about vinyl records that they bought only a few years ago:

When I’m at home I take a record out of the shelf and then I just recall ‘oh I found that record there’ and think ‘oh this song on the album is great’. Then I put the song on and then I recall memories associated to that record, and you really start listening more attentively to the music. Then you look into your record bag again and you think ‘oh I bought this four years ago’ when I was very into Boogie and Disco, and this sound suited my taste very well back then. – Marijn

Similar to the relation between nostalgia and time described in the quote from Dr Michielse, one of the participants expressed to recall memories in a nostalgic sense about a record attained a little less than a year ago:

In that sense, you can think of the records as memories of a personal timeline. To give you an example, every time I put on the album ‘In The Heat Of The Night’ from Imagination, that a friend acquired for me last summer, I think back to that friend and summer. – Felix

The reason for vinyl records to reflect this shortening in the conceptual timeframe of nostalgia may be explained in the physical and phonological attributes that are prerequisite in handling the analogue item:

The music is all the same, but the experience of listening to it on vinyl is a whole different thing. You have the cracks and pops, memories, and even the smell of it makes it a special thing. If I hear a crack in a record, I mostly recognize it as a moment where I put the needle wrong on the record or displaced it in a sleeve. Every crack or scratch is in fact a memory that I can recall. – Mark

It has to be noted that the quote above is from a DJ who, like eight other participants, is more likely to have a more intimate relationship with handling vinyl records, which putatively enhances the interpretation of its musical content and memory (Fernandez & Beverland, 2018). Even so, the other participants also referred to be paying closer attention to music because of performing the so-called ‘vinyl ritual’ of holding the album cover, taking the record out, carefully placing the needle, and so on (Harper, 2018). So, where the interpretation of music is enhanced by vinyl, it is reinforced by the fact that music in itself is among one of the most powerful triggers of nostalgia (Barret, et al., 2010; Zentner, Grandjean, & Scherer, 2008). This clarifies why vinyl is closely intertwined with experiencing nostalgia and why digital generations of vinyl collectors revealed the shortening of its conceptual timeframe. One of the participants clarified why this reinforcing phenomenon strengthens memory recollection and, thus, triggers nostalgia in such a powerful way:

... vinyl can function as markings of your life and for many records that I would pick out of the shelf now I can still remember where I got them and where I played them. During my studies I also had a bit of psychology, and I took this insight with me that might explain it: because music has a lot to do with feeling, you store the memories associated to it in a different way; the amygdala is triggered when it experiences a strong emotion and then your memory of that moment is stored more deeply, and once you hear the music again it becomes easier to retrieve that memory. – Sander

By now, the timeframe shortening of nostalgia can be derived from the tendency of a digital generation to collect vinyl and has thus far been conceptualized in how participants look and appreciate things from the past through the lens of the present (Michielse, 2022). In coming sections, nostalgia will be perceived through the future, but first it is revealed how vinyl helps participants to counteract the fast pace of the digital by slow forms of analogue consumption (Roundy & Bayer, 2022). Here, the participants escape the present through the imagination evoked by the way vinyl is consumed and how its content full of sound is interpreted.

“...indeed, anything substantial would keep things too earthbound and boring. What the public wanted – perhaps needed – wasn’t information, but escape.”- McCall, (2002)

## Chronoception: Escaping Daily Life

Scientific literature has widely embodied that vinyl records helped shape cultures and subcultures (Bartmanski & Woodward, 2015; Woodward, 2016; Hayes, 2006), and also patterns derived from the interviews for this particular study clearly point out that vinyl holds social collecting motives among nearly all participants. On the contrary, analogue objects are also considered as a largely 'asocial' escape in which consumers reconnect with themselves (Humayun & Belk, 2020; Cetina, 1997), indicating that vinyl also holds solitary collecting motives. Here, collecting, and consuming vinyl seems to provide a private refuge from the wider world (Shepherd, et al., 2003). This, as implied by the vast majority of participants, functions as a way to unwind by engaging with a slow form on consumption that counteracts upon the sped-up pace of daily life (Huseman & Eckhardt, 2019), allowing the participants to reconnect with the self:

...every now and then when my head is full, I sit down specifically to listen to vinyl, and I also know what kind of records I want to listen to at that moment. Then I sit against this wall opposite to my speakers and listen to a record for fifteen minutes or half an hour and go on a holiday in my head... It is to strengthen or slow down my mood, but I don't listen to happy music when I'm sad. Then I'd rather put on a record that allows me to get through those emotions and give it a place. I am very much against playing the opposite music just to suppress something. I do not think that it is a good way to handle your emotions... – Koen

So, where our nearest and dearest cannot always be present or are able to find the right words to comfort emotional distress or dissociation, vinyl records seem to take shape as inanimate objects that form a constant presence by always being around for its owners regardless of the hectic of digital environments. For example, one of the participants, Mark, stated that during a very low point in life, his records were always there for him to relieve his sorrows and struggle. Still, it is not that vinyl records nor its musical content literally embodies emotion, but rather, projects the emotion that one feels into the music that is perceived through an emotional state (Budd, 2003), and therefore, generates unique emotional interpretations per individual:

In the sense that it is an emotion enhancer or more a corrector of emotions. It is certainly an emotion enhancer, but I also like to listen to my records when I'm not feeling well. There are certain songs, albums or artists that can really help me relax. Both in a meditative way but also to get more energy. - Kim

For other participants, vinyl did not merely function to reconnect with emotions, but on the contrary, to forget about these too. Without the need for emotional reconnection, it becomes a matter of going somewhere completely different with thought and emotion by centring solely about what is heard around vinyl. In that regard, half of the participants stated that vinyl functions as an activity to enter a meditative state wherein escape is experienced through attentive handling and interpretation of the analogue object and its soundful content:

You listen to vinyl with more concentration; you open yourself up to the sounds you hear. To put on a record where you can lay down on the couch and just listen too brings peace of mind. Just no disturbers for a while; it's purely the music you hear in that moment and nothing else. It gives a lot of peace for the mind and all the disruptors go away. – Ennio  
I definitely use the moments where I take the time to listen to vinyl to transport myself to other dimensions. This can be both different places and different times... It's a way of forgetting all the daily struggles and difficulties around me. – Chiel

Similar to the wide context of nostalgia and the imaginary power it holds, it is notable that the escape of the present is not narrowed to expression of 'local' longing, but results in an understanding of time and space that emphasises the 'universal' nature in the moment of escape (Boym, 2001). So, the physicality of vinyl is bounded to the world, but its musical content allows the participants to go beyond that if the imagination allows, similar to the concept of *anemoia*. By diving more deeply into this topic, it even seems that the local and universal can get intertwined and create something anew:

**Interviewer:** So, this escape is a personal construction and interpretation of what you are listening to?

**Ennio:** Exactly, it's your own headspace so it's basically an escape to yourself... Maybe if I look even deeper, and I don't know if this is really the case, but in the end, I would prefer to spend my whole life searching and playing records from Monday to Sunday, and make music in the process, so maybe somewhere in the back of my mind I really long for such a life. So, doing what I actually want to do all my life is why I feel so good in that moment of escape. You could almost call it a double life.

In the quote above, it seems that Ennio's escape in handling vinyl does not merely function as an escape, but simultaneously as a set of resources for envisioning a desired future; creating possibilities for the future that were previously considered impossible (Oliver, 2001; Pickering & Keightley, 2006). Here, the influences of the past orient the actions of the present to align with future goals in a process conceptualised as 'prolepsis' (Nieland, Mahendran, & Crafter, 2022; Brescó De Luna, 2017). The understanding of how prolepsis through vinyl shapes a vision of the future draws us away from the present and leads to the third and last theme derived from the findings, the future of nostalgia.

## The Future of Nostalgia: Prolepsis

Throughout the different perceptions upon the timeframe of nostalgia it becomes clear that nostalgia is more than a passive longing for the past (Rees, 2021). Many theorists even started to realize that nostalgia is not only about the past nor the present through which we perceive it, but that it can inspire to look forward in a process known as ‘prolepsis’ (Michielse, 2022; Nieland, Mahendran, & Crafter, 2022; Brescó De Luna, 2017). Here, the vinyl collecting habit of the participants revealed that nostalgia is not solely retrospective, but also prospective (Boym, 2001). Nostalgia, in that sense, is a dynamic instrument for (re)envisioning and (re)creating the past, as in the concept of ‘anemoia’, as well as the future in both short- and long-term through prolepsis (Wilson J. L., 2015). In the short-term, several DJs relate to vinyl records in a prospective manner by knowing in advance for what kind of events their records will be utilized in the near future. These are selected from an existing collection based upon past experiences and associations, but forthcoming events are also a driving factor for purchasing new records:

In the near future we will play an opening set and work towards that in the coming weeks. That means that you want to expand your repertoire for that particular occasion. Recently we had a closing set at the Brebl and then you collect records for that event for a few weeks. Then you want to have those fresh records again, regardless of whether it is for an opening or a closing set. – Ennio

This indicates that future events are imaginarily visualised preceding the occurrence and shape the repertoire of vinyl records selected, whereas the newly acquired records gain their nostalgic value when utilized during the event(s). In the long-term, various participants envision a more distant future based upon records currently in possession, whose remains to motivate the collectors to keep collecting records to realize that vision:

It is still a dream to have built up a nice collection as an old geezer and to have a solid hi-fi corner in the living room with a vintage record player, high-quality amplifier, and sound system. In addition, a separate room or studio with quality DJ gear and a suitable record collection for spinning vinyl. Digging and purchasing records is and remains a never-ending journey, records from my collection come and go, but I keep the real pearls for life. – Felix

Thus far both the short-term and long-term vision shaped by vinyl records primarily evolved around utilization and materiality, but vinyl also shapes visions that carry emotional value. In that regard, a few participants mentioned how vinyl contributes to building a legacy that may last longer than their own lifetime:

**Sander:** There is also a kind of separation between my listening selection and club selection. I think that my listening collection is for life. I will still play that later when I have children and I want to let them hear certain music.

**Interviewer:** You just mentioned that you would like to listen to records with your children in the future, so you are already deliberately creating memories for later?

**Sander:** Yes certainly. Music can say a lot about what I liked back then, why I did, and where I heard it, and you can add a story to that. It is a marker for certain moments in your life.

The preoccupation of building a legacy through collecting vinyl can be linked to prior studies about consumer collecting behaviour that involves the concept ‘mortality legacy’, defined as “the need to create a legacy to live beyond death” (Levasseur, McDermott, & Lafreniere, 2015). This concept suggests that the concerning participants collect vinyl to distract themselves from their mortality by symbolically immortalizing their self-identity with physical objects that are filled with personal meaning (Landau & Sullivan, 2015; Spaid, Exploring Consumer Collecting Behaviour: A Conceptual Model and Research Agenda, 2018). The physical objects, in this case vinyl records, can then be passed on to their children to keep their music, stories, and, to some extent, their personality alive. Here, it seems that vinyl has already proven to the participants that it is suitable for creating a legacy as the origin of vinyl, as well as numerous records collected, stem from a time beyond their own, ensuring the participants that it can stand the test of time:

The future purpose of my records is to build a collection that stays with me, and the thought that when I later have kids that I can share my collection with them and can inspire them with music that is timeless... unlike myself. – Chiel

Then again, it has to be acknowledged that only a few participants can be linked to the mortality legacy concept by their vision to share their collection with descendants, even though the participants have not brought any children to the world at present. However, in the next section it becomes clear that a larger number of participants seemed to be aware of the fact that aging is inevitable, which shows by their commitment of expanding their record collection in times to come to remember times that have passed. For now, it can be concluded that the accumulated vinyl collection has supported nearly half of the participants with envisioning what the future should hold, whether a career as DJ and producer, materialistic desires, or building a legacy.

### Prolepsis: Collecting Memorabilia

A perception beyond the past, present, and future marks the last section of the findings and concludes the extensions of nostalgia that have been revealed by digital generations craving analogue sensation. The final section suggests that the accumulated vinyl collections not only inspired various participants in envisioning an idealized future, but that their collecting motives were also based on a vision of a future wherein memories from the past, present, and even times ahead should remain to be cherished.

Besides being digital natives, the participants varied in demographic variables such as gender, occupation, and education. Still, the one thing that undoubtedly united them is that vinyl records were

considered cherished possessions by all. Objects that are cherished by their owners over a longer period of time are known for their capacity to provoke reminiscence of memories about persons, events, or times from the past in general, and are therefore conceptualized as memorabilia (Sherman, 1991). Subsequently, nearly half of the participants consider their vinyl records memorabilia, which reflects their personal and musical development similar to an autobiography. Participants that considered vinyl to comport as memorabilia seem to be preoccupied with nostalgia, meaning that they know in advance that accumulated vinyl records will evoke nostalgia in the future:

It mainly gives me a hold-on to my memories. I always remember my records to a specific time period in my life along with my music taste at that moment, the people I was hanging out with, and everything surrounding this. It eventually becomes a cabinet filled with nostalgia. – Felix

Nearly all of the participants directly referred during the interviews that the tangible sensory appeal of vinyl records play a major role in collecting and consuming. Similar to how the tangibility of vinyl stimulates the sense of anemoia and nostalgia, it also largely influences how vinyl is perceived as memorabilia. It becomes a tangible reminder of an otherwise intangible experience, consciously selected, and stored in a personal collection that has been given a designated space (Belk R. W., 1988):

I would really like it if later, when I'm a bit older, I still have some kind of memory of my music taste over the years and I think it's very nice that I have that tangible in my house. Music binds you very much to certain times or situations that you experience and the emotions that it evokes. – Madelief

That vinyl differentiates from its digital counterparts by its physical form is a common understanding that has long been established in scientific literature (Franco, 2015; Harper, 2018; Goulding & Derbaix, 2018). Nevertheless, all the participants in this study use both digital and analogue mediums for consuming and collecting music, but solely rely on vinyl to function as memorabilia. This was confirmed by the fact that vinyl is a tangible possession in contrast to the digital, and thus, intangible alternatives:

I try to make a kind of rule for myself, but I don't always follow it, but a lot of new music that is for sale digitally, I buy digitally. Unless I come across something that makes me think 'this is so timeless, so special', then I want to be able to easily have it with me and be able to find it for the rest of my life. Being able to hold onto it and not lose it...I also have a lot of digital music and that can just get watered down the moment you don't have it in one place and get remembered by it. Vinyl makes it a mental mnemonic. – Sander

According to all the participants, only certain albums and singles are worth of being bought on vinyl, which is a mutual understanding of selectivity among collectors in general (Belk, Wallendorf, & Holbrook, 1991; Saridakis & Angelidou, 2018). The foregoing trade-off in purchasing vinyl determines whether it can become memorabilia. This depends on the affordability and personal value attached to the

artist, pressing, label, site of purchase, but also in the assessment of how it reflects a part of ourselves (Ahuvia, 2005). Especially, the latter contributes to how a current reflection of oneself, displaced into an object, can trigger nostalgia in the future when being physically remembered to who we were:

...I think I'll keep most of my records because I obtained them through blood, sweat, and tears. I also just found a few records in Mexico, so that's special. Usually, you remember roughly where you found a record and it kind of turns into a feeling of pride and remembrance. – Lizzy

After the decision is made to acquire a vinyl record, its tangibility along with the foregoing trade-off constitutes a sense of ownership that is unmatched by a digital version (Sonnichsen, 2013), which explains why participants conceive vinyl as memorabilia instead of its digital counterparts. Besides the apparent distinctions between vinyl and digital alternatives in functioning as memorabilia, such as the (in)tangibility and form of consumption, it can be concluded that it is the personal meaning reflected - and effort invested – in acquiring and handling a vinyl that repositis nostalgia into a record for decades to come:

It has always been the case for me that when I'm 40, I can listen to music from when I was 20 and I don't forget that with vinyl... I have this feeling that when I still own all these records, and I'm 40, I can get them all out of the shelves at once and bring back memories. – Jochem

The substantiating quote by Jochem is the last of the many derived from the field. In the following chapter, the findings will be evaluated in both their points of parity and difference in relation to existing literature. This primarily concerns nostalgia, collecting behaviour theory, and analogue and digital consumption. These matters are further reviewed in respect to theoretical and practical implications, research limitations, and suggestions for future research.



## Discussion

In the previous sections, it became clear that nostalgia can be perceived through different timeframes: the past, present, and future. Each timeframe reflected and extended current understandings of nostalgia through the vinyl collecting behaviour of digital natives. The insights derived from the fieldwork revealed how digital natives are bounded to an analogue era by their current, and potentially, remaining fascination for collecting vinyl. In the following sections, the theoretical implications from the findings shall be linked to existing theory on vinyl collecting, analogue and digital consumption, and nostalgia. In the social and managerial implications, anemoia and the collecting behaviour of digital natives are related to ongoing trends like the 80's revival, post-digital consumption, and corresponding marketing and communication strategies. The last discussion section describes the research limitations along with suggestions for future research.

### Theoretical Implications

Several theoretical contributions came to light from the pursuit of answering how vinyl resurged among digital natives. The first set of theoretical contributions was elaborated by a comparison between previous research findings on 'typical' vinyl consumers, stereotyped as middle-aged men over the age of 40, collecting behaviour theory, and the findings derived by the participating digital natives in this study. The second set of theoretical contributions covers the notable shortening of the timeframe of nostalgia, along with an extension of our understanding of nostalgia by linking the concept not only to the past and present, but also to the future.

The overarching research topic was primarily inspired by prior research on vinyl collecting and legacy technology from Fernandez & Beverland (2018). Specifically, by being eager take on their suggestion to research the collecting behaviour of digital natives, which was considered an underexamined group of consumers in relation to vinyl consumption. By investigating the curious case of digital natives, this thesis addresses past work that only looked at 'typical' vinyl consumers who were stereotypically middle-aged men over the age of 40 (Goulding & Derbaix, 2018). This group of vinyl consumers was previously associated with 'luddites' because of their strong preference for legacy technology over digital technology (Fernandez & Beverland, 2018). Clear segregation between luddites and digital natives appears in the prior group of consumers having lived through the technological evolution from analogue to digital, whereas the latter group of consumers, as the name implies, has grown up surrounded by digital stimuli. Considering this understanding, it was particularly interesting how nostalgia also became visible among a generation of consumers that was not alive when vinyl was widespread at its peak.

Both groups of consumers collect vinyl and share similarities in the need to escape the digital whilst having different life histories, modes of consumption, consumption experience, and even vinyl biographies (Goulding & Derbaix, 2018). In that regard, luddites “view technological development as destructive of nature and authentic ways of life” whereas most digital natives seemed to be perfectly fine being born in a deeply digital age along with consuming digital technology on a day-to-day basis (Kozinets, 2008). However, the constancy and intensity of digital stimuli among digital natives created a need to take breaks from the endless march of the digital by consuming non-digital analogue objects (Humayun & Belk, 2020). Considering the groups of comparison, this phenomenon suggests that when the need for digital natives arises to escape digital stimuli, they temporarily share similarities with luddites in their preference for consuming legacy technology. Still, in contrast to luddites, digital natives only escape the digital temporarily and shall remain to excessively use digital devices and information technology.

As digital natives remain to emerge with the digital, it became evident that excessive digital interference causes an acceleration in sense of time, which fastens the pace of life (McLoughlin, 2012; Hartmut, 2013). During the interviews, the participants were asked to assess their personal experiences with vinyl, which revealed that the digital acceleration caused a notable shortening in the conceptual timeframe of nostalgia. The accelerating pace of the present and shortening recollection of the past, collectively seem to trigger a countermovement among digital natives. This strongly aligns with the findings of Humayun & Belk (2020) that detail how analogue consumption acts as an escape of the fast pace of the digital by requiring a pause, a slower, or more thoughtful form of consumption. Comparably, research by Husemann & Eckhardt (2019) implied that consumers increasingly seek to escape a sped-up pace of life by means of slow forms of consumption, including references to slow fashion (Pookulangara & Shephard, 2013), slow travel (Dickinson, Les, & Robbins, 2011), slow food (Binkley, 2008), and even slow academia (Berg & Seeber, 2016). So, what about slow music?

In terms of these ‘slow’ trends, vinyl could be considered the slow form of consuming music, even more so considering that the ‘vinyl ritual’ requisites attentive handling and does not require any digital interference. Moreover, interpretation of the soundful content of vinyl encouraged the participants to slow down and reconnect with thought and emotion. On the other hand, an online music platform like Spotify could then be considered a fast form of consumption as a few clicks enable one to consume music for hours on end. Could this then be defined as fast music? According to Franco (2015), collecting music digitally is indeed faster than physically, but is therefore very prone to change in meaning and composition, and is relatively more unstable and faster to change in comparison to physical music collections. These insights about digital music consumption help clarify why the participants solely conceived vinyl records as memorabilia, even though, they collected music digitally and physically. In their physicality, vinyl records

are less sensitive to change and therefore provide a sense of ownership over a longer period of time, which increases their capacity to provoke reminiscence of memories later in life (Sherman, 1991).

Sherman (1991) researched from a backward-looking, retrospective view how cherished objects functioned as memorabilia among participants between the age of 60 and 102. As for the results, “memories” was the most frequently chosen meaning for the cherished objects in possession (Sherman, 1991). In contrast, research findings of this study among participants younger than 35, revealed that memorabilia can also be applied prospectively, in anticipation of the future. This was derived by participants being preoccupied with reminiscence and, thus, nostalgia, for times ahead. In relation to the three categories of reminiscence identified by Romaniuk and Romaniuk (1981), digital natives seem to fall into the “problem-solving” type, which includes “to make plans for the future” as one of its three uses. Envisioned by their vinyl collection, participants were indeed shaping plans for the future in terms of a career, materialistic desires, and creating a legacy. In the findings, creating a legacy through collecting was referred to as ‘mortality legacy’, which is a dimension of the Multidimensional Mortality Awareness Measure and Model (MMAMM) (Levasseur, McDermott, & Lafreniere, 2015). This model stems from Terror Management Theory, which suggests that humans ultimately act upon either avoiding death or distracting themselves from it (Greenberg, Pyszczynski, & Solomon, 1986).

To date, Spaid (2018) and Matthes (2021) were the only one in the attempt to explicitly link mortality awareness to consumer collecting identity and behaviour. Though, several empirical findings from the interviews imply that participants envision sharing their vinyl collection with their children, who are not even brought to the world at present. This suggest that the concept of mortality legacy appears to exist among digital natives. They can be linked to the problem-solving type “to make plans for the future” and simultaneously to the legacy mortality concept as they immortalize their self-identity into physical objects that may endure after their passing (Landau & Sullivan, 2015). The legacy that is created by an accumulated vinyl collection is expected to be passed onto descendants who can then reminiscence their parent through physical objects that are associated with their stories, personal meaning, and, to an extent, their personality. In the end, this further raises the question how the concept of mortality legacy unfolds on a larger scale, such as museums or exhibitions with a reach far beyond family.

The last set of theoretical contributions is aimed at extending the perception of nostalgia. Here, a romanticised form of nostalgia, conceptualised as *anemoia*, was revealed through the controversial relationship of digital natives escaping digital stimuli by analogue consumption. Principally, it is essential to look at the concept of nostalgia itself. Aforementioned in the findings, Hirsch (1992) defined nostalgia as a yearn to an idealized past instead of an actual past because it does not relate to a specific memory, but an emotional state. It is a composition of different memories that are separated from negative associations, which idealizes remembrance of the past. The emotional state is then manifested in the attempt to recreate

the past by reproducing activities using symbolic representations (Hirsch, 1992). So, in that sense, what separates anemoia from nostalgia is that in a longing for a time beyond your own, no real memories are combined and reproduced in creating a representation of the past. In short, where nostalgia is idealized based on recreations of real events from the past, anemoia is romanticized based on interpretations of an envisioned past.

Though, what nostalgia and anemoia seems to have in common is that both forms of nostalgia can be displaced onto inanimate objects, and in the case of vinyl, onto sound (Barret, et al., 2010; Hirsch, 1992). The displacement of anemoia into vinyl runs parallel with the concept “aura attribution”, which, in a partially confirmed hypothesis by Lepa & Tritakis (2016), was used as argument to explain the observable vinyl revival among digital natives. Aura attribution was referred to as a generational “phantom pain”, which is defined as a collective longing for something that never existed (Bolin, 2015). The arguments altogether implied that the sound and sensory appeal of vinyl increases the symbolic aura surrounding it, in particular in the perception of digital natives (Lepa & Tritakis, 2016; Prensky, 2001). Digital natives experience more emotional arousal through music by analogue forms of consumption, because of being exposed to a type of aura that is uncommon in their everyday, digital environments. Conversely, vinyl consumers that origin from a pre-digital age do not experience this particular type of arousal and experience “technostalgia” instead, which refers to ‘true’ nostalgic sensation when using a familiar, but increasingly obsolete medium (Lepa & Tritakis, 2016), which similar to luddites utilising legacy technology (Fernandez & Beverland, 2018). Hereby, it becomes clear how aura attribution shares similar characteristics with anemoia as both were detected among digital natives in comparison to older consumers. Moreover, both concepts were retrieved from research concerning the vinyl collecting behaviour of digital natives. Since the analogue stimuli are unusual in their everyday, digital environments, consumption of vinyl consequently triggers a nostalgic longing for a time beyond their own. Therefore, I close this section by suggesting that the influence of “aura attribution” in the resurgence of vinyl consumption among digital natives is reinforced by the nostalgic sensation of anemoia.

### Social and Managerial Implications

In a digital age where information is so easily retrieved and forgotten, life appears to pass by faster than ever. In doing so, we seem to counteract the rapid pace of the digital by falling in love with analogue objects and ideas. Not only vinyl, but also polaroid, books, board games, vintage clothing, and even notebooks seem to re-emerge into our consumption patterns (Sax, 2016; Cassidy & Bennett, 2015). The research findings revealed that also digital natives have become willing to break loose from their screens to gradually step back into the physical reality by means of analogue consumption.

Anemoia can be associated with “retro-marketing”, which refers to marketing strategies and activities that “use the past to sell the present” (Pollán, López, & Pereira, 2022). To clarify, anemoia may not only have influenced the resurgence of vinyl, but perhaps the overall revitalization of pre-digital, analogue trends among digital generations. Though, among digital natives the idea of retro-marketing ought to work the other way around since normally retro-marketers use nostalgia to increase the appeal of modern products (Gajanova & Vidrová, 2020), whereas anemoia increases the appeal of ‘obsolete’ analogue products like vinyl, books, and polaroid. Based on the findings and conceptualization, applying anemoia in retro-marketing could be more successful than nostalgia, because anemoia is based on romanticized interpretations of an imaginary past and not on recreations of an actual past. Therefore, anemoia minimizes the risk of being mingled with events of the past that may cloud the positive perceptions of nostalgia amongst consumers. Still, the general idea of retro-marketing is more or less the same, whether applying anemoia or nostalgia, marketing strategies and activities that “use the past to sell the present” remain to successfully influence and respond to the remarkable growth of the “retro” and “vintage” market (Pollán, López, & Pereira, 2022).

Controversially, retro-marketing can also be recognized in modern digital products and services. For example, in the binge-worthy, on-demand, Netflix series ‘Stranger Things’, which had resounding success among digital natives with a signature 80’s ambiance. The series is even argued to have caused a comeback of 80’s fashion and music with ‘Master of Puppets’ by Metallica and ‘Running Up That Hill’ by Kate Bush spiking in streams after being used as soundtracks in season four (Gupta, 2022; Jenke, 2022). If a percentage of those streamers also own a record player, there might even be an increase in turnover of the vinyl pressings.

In business language, marketing activities represent a bridge to the external environment (Twin, 2022), whilst according to Sax (2016), analogue is also re-emerging at the very core of businesses. Entrepreneurs, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and even large corporations increasingly find success in not selling apps or virtual solutions, but in selling real, tangible things (Sax, 2016). Nowadays, businesses, and especially SMEs and non-profit organisations (NPOs), should reconsider if the capital-intensive investments in the newest technology are a necessity in their field of expertise and whether their target market truly demands more digital interference in their already digitalised environments. In a time where we evidently return to analogue to escape the digital, entrepreneurs should ask themselves if the digital solutions are always better or if consumers actually long for more physical and personal interaction.

The latter seems to become more appealing knowing that the constant connectivity of information technology and smart devices draw out behavioural, affective, and cognitive concerns, with negative consequences such as lowered social skills, self-motivation, emotional intelligence, and empathy, as well as increased conflict with others, ADHD, and depression in younger generations (Scott, Valley, & Simecka,

2017; Flisher, 2010). Over time, these concerns have become more evident and shaped a countermovement against the consequences of digital entrepreneurship, which, in its own doing, created new opportunities in the pursuit of analogue entrepreneurship (Roundy & Bayer, 2022). With this in mind, the analogue resurgence could prove to be beneficial for the well-being of business and society when appropriately balanced with digital innovations of the modern world.

In the entire spectrum of the analogue resurgence, vinyl seems to be a mere fraction. Yet, the research findings implied that vinyl holds unique characteristics in the way it evokes emotional experiences in retrospective and prospective forms. It can take digital natives to a time in the past that lays beyond their own and orchestrate actions of the present to pursue future desires. The participating collectors revealed how music, in a slow form of consumption, can capture and revoke cherished memories, and can help gain a greater understanding of the self, even during dull times where one feels like searching through a dark wood; the right way blurred and lost (Alighieri, 2010). A vinyl collection emotionally reflects its owner as an individual being, and in that sense, acts as an unconditional, soundful autobiography that is unmatched by self-centred digital narratives like an Instagram feed, wherein most feel that only the brightest sides of life are worth being represented (Fallon, 2021). Instagram feeds and photographic digital narratives alike seem to create a short-lasting, disposable feeling, opposing the purpose of analogue photography that gave consumers the power to freeze time (Murray S. , 2008). Eventually, also digital music gets worn down or lost in a Cloud (Franco, 2015), whereas vinyl, in either practical or symbolic form, carries the potential to thrive for a lifetime and every so often beyond that.

## Research Limitations & Suggestions for Future Research

As a curious newcomer in the field of academic research, the timelines of nostalgia were the most exciting and promising group of patterns that emerged from the ethnographic fieldwork findings. Other thematic codes derived from the interview transcripts carried the potential to elaborate upon but were of less additional value since these themes were thoroughly represented by established academics with more expertise and experience. Due to the timeframe of the thesis period and nature of qualitative research, it was a necessity to narrow down to a handful of concepts for which I had to make tough decisions in what to include and exclude.

As I was weaving a thread of patterns from the research findings, cognitive flexibility became fundamental to integrate content from the social environment for generating novel ideas that depart from existing practises within the academic field of business and management (Perry-Smith & Mannucci, 2017). In the process, I encountered various limitations and shortcomings that are identified in coming paragraphs, after initially addressing several theoretical suggestions for future research.

First, there are remaining gaps about how anemoia may unravel among digital natives in their consumption of other resurging analogue objects, such as polaroid cameras, books and boardgames (Sax, 2016), and whether anemoia also occurs among older generations regarding a past beyond their existence. Future research could focus upon these matters as well as on how anemoia is represented in retro-marketing, and how its application compares to that of nostalgia.

Second, it became apparent that Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) intertwined with entrepreneurialism, which indicates that CCT does not specifically evolve around sociocultural conceptualisations of consumerism (Franco, 2022; Arnould & Thompson, 2005). Intersections between CCT and entrepreneurialism were discovered in the dynamic relationship between digital native consumer behaviour and digital and analogue entrepreneurship (Roundy & Bayer, 2022). Therefore, I suggest that future research examines how the process of consumption-driven market emergence (CDME), or rather re-emergence in terms of analogue culture, influences entrepreneurial activities, business models, and market development (Martin & Schouten, 2014; Sarasvathy, 2001).

Third, there were signs of the legacy mortality concept detected among the participants, which implied that the concept appears to occur among collectors. This suggests that further research of the legacy mortality concept is worth being conducted among collectors in its own right (Spaid & Matthes, 2021). In addition, the scale of the mortality legacy concept could also be enlarged by, for example, a focus on museums and exhibitions with public reach.

Fourth, previous studies evidenced that being overly exposed to digital stimuli can cause mental health concerns and generates a sped-up pace of life (Scott, Valley, & Simecka, 2017; Hartmut, 2013; McLoughlin, 2012). According to the findings, this was counteracted by the participants through slow forms of consumption, enabled by analogue objects like vinyl (Roundy & Bayer, 2022). Therefore, it could be studied whether analogue consumption could be a healthful way to treat addictions related to social media, gaming, and the internet in general. For example, a fascinating experiment could be to let those who are dealing with a gaming addiction come together to play boardgames instead while measuring the effects on social skills, self-motivation, emotional intelligence, and empathy. In that context, balancing analogue consumption with digital consumption could positively enhance mental well-being and behaviour patterns.

Per my prior suggestions for future research, potential research outcomes on topics like anemoia, and the behavioural effects of analogue and digital consumption seem promising through perspectives of scholars with a thorough background in psychological, sociological, and anthropological studies. Chains of thought and methods from these academic fields of expertise could shine new light on these matters. Therefore, I suggest that the appointed concepts are further investigated from these exciting contexts.

Furthermore, various practical research limitations were a result of the time duration of the thesis period. During the last six months, I took an explorative and ethnographic approach with no fixed directions

set in advance. Patterns started to emerge throughout the research process instead of beforehand, and even though I was aware that it would be time consuming, in the end it required more effort than previously anticipated. On the other hand, it is doubtful whether similar research outcomes could have been established if I had not taken this approach. Overall, the ethnographic fieldwork, and especially the interview transcripts, led to a significant mass of data that was holistically related to a particular context (Myers, 2020). It therefore became a significant challenge to narrow down the findings and write down the results within a fixed period of time. In that sense, a Masters' thesis period was not enough for sustained immersion in the social context. Future research should consider longer periods of fieldwork, which is better suited for established academics or PhD trajectories. This would allow one to delve deeper into the patterns and concepts that surfaced during ethnographic fieldwork.

The final mentionable research limitations are methodologically related. Considering the time constraints along with working individually, the number of interviews conducted were limited. At first, it was considered to complete approximately 15 to 20 in-depth interviews, but it soon became clear that this was not feasible with most interviews lasting over an hour. Fortunately, according to the study by Guest et al. (2006) "if the goal is to describe a shared perception, belief, or behaviour among a relatively homogeneous group, then twelve will likely be sufficient", which happens to be the exact number of interviews I conducted. Still, I am convinced that more detailed descriptions could have been retrieved with additional interviews.

As predetermined, all participants were digital natives, but they were relatively closely located to one another, being spread over two neighbouring provinces in the Netherlands: Gelderland and Overijssel. These demographic limitations justify further research into the vinyl consumption of digital natives throughout the Netherlands and also beyond its borders. Furthermore, one third of the participants were female, which, besides being a minority compared the number of male participants, represented a larger percentage than in previous qualitative studies that applied interviews for examining vinyl consumption (Fernandez & Beverland, 2018; Goulding & Derbaix, 2018; Yochim & Biddinger, 2008). Nonetheless, I suggest conducting future research on the vinyl collecting behaviour and analogue consumption of females in particular. Especially, given that prior research has shown that males are more likely to collect vinyl and accept 'new' technologies than females (Fernandez & Beverland, 2018; Venkatesh, Morris, & David, 2000). Also, among the participants, eight utilized their vinyl records for the purpose of DJing and four participants for the sole purpose of listening. I suggest that these two groups of consumers are segregated in future research to examine whether the differences in forms of consumption affect collecting behaviour and motives.

It has to be acknowledged that before conducting this research I was familiar with vinyl culture, being a hobbyist record collector myself. This suggests that it has to be considered that interpretation of



fieldwork data and literature was influenced by my positionality (Manning, 2018). My insider position as ethnographic researcher is closely related to my familiarity with analogue consumption and in particular vinyl. This was beneficial in recruiting and interacting with the participants along with other fieldwork matters, but my position was also a hindrance in remaining unbiased when interpreting context from the social environment and literature. Therefore, it would have been beneficial to involve viewpoints of researchers with no prior associations with vinyl culture to extent interpretation of the social context. In that sense, an ethnographer could broaden interpretation by adopting at least two standpoints: that of an insider and of that of an outsider (Roberts & Sander, 2005).

At last, only few expectations crossed my mind preceding the research. In fact, many outcomes were opposing my expectations. For example, it was initially anticipated that nostalgia could not occur among digital natives, because vinyl originates from a time before their existence. Though, all the findings eventually evolved around nostalgia once it became clear that the concept of nostalgia could be perceived through different timeframes. In the end, this journey through the past, present, and future introduced me to different perceptions of time and reality that led me to new understandings of our complex world.

## Conclusion

After a semester of gathering and exploring ethnographic fieldwork data and literature, it was essential to look back at the ultimate purpose of this thesis: answering the research questions. In light of the weaknesses in academic literature on the vinyl revival amongst digital natives, the following research questions were formulated:

- What drives digital natives towards consumption of analogue items in an era of digitalization?
- How do digital natives experience nostalgia through non-digital analogue items originating from a time before their existence?

The answers seem to evolve around digitalization itself. Digital technologies intensified the pace and extent to which digital natives are to process information from an early age onwards. It filled life with an abundance of digital stimulus, making it extremely complex for digital natives to deal with the endless streams of information that lay in the palms of their hands every day. These developments created a countermovement to the digital consumption patterns of digital natives, who increasingly seek slower forms of consumption by means of the analogue. Here, the consumption of vinyl records helped digital natives to step back into the physical reality and temporarily escape the constant digital connectivity. In the past of nostalgia, vinyl provoked the sensation of *anemoia*, which gave digital natives a taste of a romanticised past beyond their digital existence. A past wherein non-digital analogue objects reflects visions of simpler, more authentic times that valued physical interaction over intangible ones.

On the other hand, digital natives shall continue to honour their name by remaining to process information through smart devices and digital technologies alike. As a result, it became apparent that excessive use of the digital quickened the pace of life and shortened recollection of the past. In the present perception of nostalgia, these effects showed that the conceptual timeframe of nostalgia is becoming smaller among digital generations. Digital natives experience nostalgia in reminiscence of vinyl records acquired a few years ago or even less, whereas nostalgia among older generations covers a timespan of decades. Stimuli from hectic digital environments accelerated the sense of time of digital natives, which at times, can distort their existential awareness. The consumption of vinyl and its soundful content provided digital natives with moments to pause or slower the acceleration and reconnect with thought and emotion. It was during these moments that the sense of self returned into the present and visions of the future re-emerged.

In the future perception of nostalgia, vinyl collections functioned as resources from the past that orchestrated actions of the present to align with future goals in a process conceptualised as *prolepsis*. This process showed that nostalgia is not only about the past, but also about looking forward. Personal associations with accumulated vinyl collections influenced digital natives in their vision of what the future should hold, whether it centres around a career as DJ and producer, fulfilling audiophilic desires, or building

a legacy. With vinyl covering a timespan from past to future and everything in between, the analogue possessions provided digital natives with a cherished sense of physical ownership over longer periods of time. Over the years, vinyl records came to function as memorabilia that captured and revoked reminiscence of memorable people, events, and times from the past, and even of times to come. For digital natives, a record collection is therefore not a mere pile of 'obsolete' media, but a physical, soundful autobiography that reflects who they were and will influence who they will become.



*5. with Sadar Bahar aka The King of Disco, Paak*

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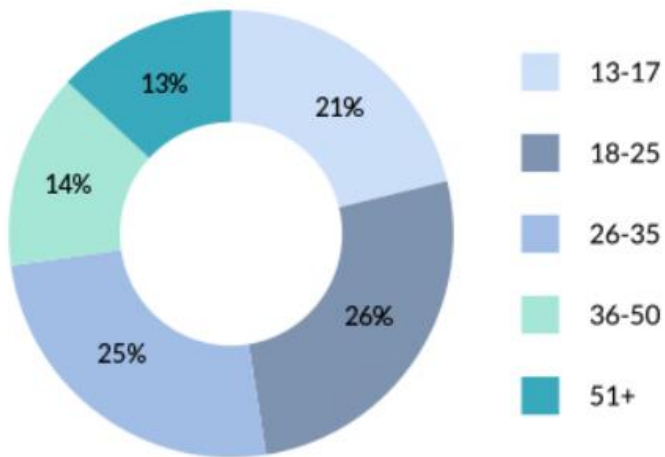
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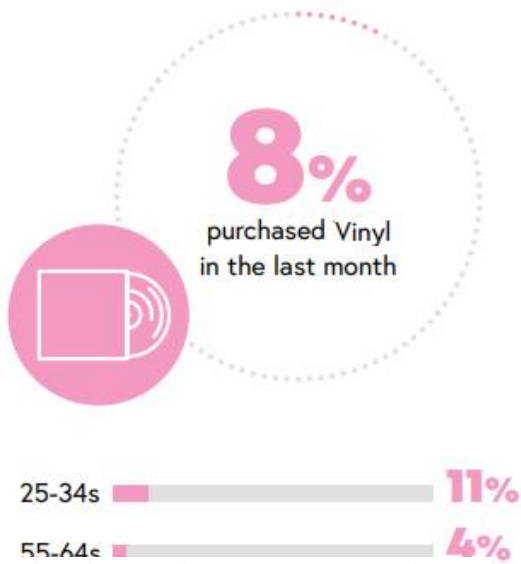
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# Appendix

## I. Who Buys Vinyl



6. Age of Vinyl Consumers



7. Vinyl Purchasing Behaviour, Age Demographics

## II. Interview Guide

### **Project: CRAVING ANALOGUE SENSATION IN A DIGITAL WORLD**

INTERVIEWER:	Dennis Dingelhoff
DATE & TIME:	DD/MM/YY
AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDED	Yes/No
OTHER COMMENTS:	

### **PARTICIPANT DETAILS**

Name:	
AGE (CIRCLE RANGE):	18-24   25-34
GENDER:	Male / Female / Nonbinary / Transgender / Prefer not to say
RELEVANT SCOPING/DEMOGRAPHIC INFO TO TOPIC	E.g.: Collector, DJ, Event Organiser
RELEVANT SCOPING/DEMOGRAPHIC INFO TO TOPIC	

### **INTERVIEW START: DON'T FORGET BACK-UP AUDIO RECORDING**

#### **VERBAL CONSENT FORM**

- I WILL START WITH SOME GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU. AFTER THESE I WILL ASK MORE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TOPIC I AM STUDYING.
- FEEL FREE TO ASK ME IF QUESTIONS AREN'T CLEAR, AND ALSO IF YOU ARE UNCOMFORTABLE TO ANSWER CERTAIN QUESTIONS.
- YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION SHALL REMAIN ANONYMOUS BY USING A PSEUDONYM OR FIRST NAME ONLY
- FEEL FREE TO WITHDRAW FROM THE RESEARCH AT ANYTIME OR TO PROCEED ANOTHER TIME IN ANY CASE OF DISCOMFORT

## Interview Questions

### Introduction

- I. Can you tell me a little about yourself? (Name, age, etc.)
  - and the town or city you live in right now?
- II. What do you spend most of your time doing (study/work or in between things)?
- III. Who lives with you at home right now?
- IV. What do you do in your spare time aside work and collecting records?

### Background

1. When did you start with collecting/buying records?
2. How did you start collecting records?
  - What do you think of digital alternatives?
3. What excites you most about collecting records?
  - What motivates you to keep collecting?
4. What don't you enjoy so much about it?
5. What is one record that would define your beginnings as a collector?
  - Do you still have that record?

### Purchasing Behaviour

6. What is the most recent record you bought, and can you tell me about it?
  - What is your next purchase or a record that you would still really love to own, and why?
7. How much records do you have in your collection?
8. Have you thought about the future purpose of your record collection?
9. Do you have a preference to the composition of a record; album, maxi single, 45' single?
10. What is your favourite genre for collecting records?
11. Where do you buy records preferably?
  - Do you prefer buying 'new' or 'old' (secondhand) vinyl?
  - What do you pay attention to when you buy a record?

### User Experience

12. Would you consider any aspect of your habit of collecting as obsessive?
  - If not, do you consider yourself to be a selective collector?
13. What do you feel and experience when you listen to records?
  - Do you associate this feel and experience with daily life?
14. Does the process of collecting records influence the expression of your identity?
15. How does collecting records influence your social life?
  - Is group identity a driving factor in your collecting motives?

16. When do you listen to records?

- Do you listen to different records when you are alone?
  - Do you experience records different when you listen to them alone?
  - Are you comfortable with being alone?

17. How often do you use digital technology?

- Could you define your relationship with modern technology?
- Would you consider the handling and consumption of vinyl records as something to escape the digital?
- Considering the analogue nature of collecting vinyl, do you feel like you are born in the 'wrong' time?

### **Extra**

18. Do you own any coloured records or records that are made in a certain form that is not conventional?

19. What kind of record players/turntables/speakers/etc. do you own?

20. Do you collect anything besides vinyl records?

### **Closing**

21. Considering the subject of my research, you are familiar with the revival of vinyl records. What do you think about this?

22. Is there anything I have left out? Is there anything else you would like to add/discuss or inform me about?

23. Is there anyone you recommend I should talk to or interview?

24. Could I make (or could you send) photos of your set-up and/or record collection?



### III. Research Integrity Form

<b>Name:</b> Dennis Dingelhoff	<b>Student number:</b> 1066669
<b>RU e-mail address:</b> dennis.dingelhoff@ru.nl	<b>Master specialisation:</b> Innovation & Entrepreneurship

<b>Thesis title:</b> Craving Analogue Sensation In A Digital World: Exploring The Collecting Behaviour of Digital Native Vinyl Collectors
<b>Brief description of the study:</b>  This thesis looks at consumer behaviour of digital natives in the resurgence of analogue consumption during an era of digitalisation. In particular the resurrection of vinyl culture among digital natives. The curious case of why digital natives collect vinyl after it was considered 'obsolete' and 'dying' is studied using interviews and ethnographic data in an explorative approach.

It is my responsibility to follow the university's code of academic integrity and any relevant academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of my study. This includes:

- providing original work or proper use of references;
- providing appropriate information to all involved in my study;
- requesting informed consent from participants;
- transparency in the way data is processed and represented;
- ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data;

If there is any significant change in the question, design or conduct over the course of the research, I will complete another Research Integrity Form.

Breaches of the code of conduct with respect to academic integrity (as described / referred to in the thesis handbook) should and will be forwarded to the examination board. Acting contrary to the code of conduct can result in declaring the thesis invalid

**Student's Signature:**  **Date:** 10/08/2022

#### To be signed by supervisor

I have instructed the student about ethical issues related to their specific study. I hereby declare that I will challenge him / her on ethical aspects through their investigation and to act on any violations that I may encounter.

**Supervisor's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## IV. Consent Form for Radboud Thesis Repository

### **Consent Form for submitting a thesis in the Radboud thesis Repository**

Radboud University Nijmegen (hereafter Radboud University) has set up a thesis repository. The purpose of this repository is twofold:

1. To archive theses for a minimum period of seven years, in accordance with legal requirements (Wet versterking kwaliteitswaarborgen hoger onderwijs, Art. 7.3, lid 5).
2. Wherever possible and allowed, make theses available to potential users inside and outside Radboud University.

This supports the process of creation, acquisition and sharing of knowledge in the educational setting.

The repository serves as an archive in which all theses will be included. This consent form serves to also enable the publication of those theses.

By submission and publication in the theses repository copyright is not transferred. Therefore, students can at any time revoke their consent for publication.

### **Rights and obligations of the student**

If the student grants permission to Radboud University to make his/her thesis available within the thesis repository to users inside and outside Radboud University, the student states that:

- Users are allowed to use the thesis private study and/or educational and research purposes, in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright Act (Auteurswet), with full mention of the name of the student and the location of the thesis.
- Neither the organization offering internship nor the client of the thesis has any objections against making the thesis publicly available in the thesis repository.
- The student has obtained permission from the copyright holder of any material used in the thesis to incorporate this material as part of the thesis in the theses repository and make it available to others inside and outside Radboud University.
- The student grants Radboud University the right to make the thesis available in the thesis repository for a minimum period of seven years, barring earlier withdrawal by the student. Permission to make the thesis available to third parties will take effect on the date indicated on this form.
- The student grants Radboud University the right to change the accessibility of the thesis and limit it if compelling reasons exist.

## Rights and obligations of Radboud University

- The student's non-exclusive license grants Radboud University the right to make the thesis available to users inside and outside Radboud University.
- Radboud University is allowed to include the thesis, in accordance with legal requirements, in the theses repository for a minimum period of seven years.
- Radboud University can make the thesis freely accessible for users of the theses repository inside and outside Radboud University and allow them to use the thesis for private study and/or educational and research purposes, in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright Act (Auteurswet), with full mention of the name of the student and the location of the thesis.
- Radboud University will ensure that the author of the thesis is listed and make clear that if the thesis is used, the origin must be clearly stated.
- Radboud University will make clear that for any commercial use of the thesis the student's explicit consent is required. In relevant cases, explicit consent of the organization offering internship or the client of the thesis is required as well.
- Radboud University has the right to change the accessibility of the thesis and limit it if compelling reasons exist.

## Rights and duties of the user

As a consequence of this consent form a user of the theses repository may use the thesis for private study and/or educational and research purposes, in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright Act (Auteurswet), with full mention of the name of the student and the location of the thesis.

Student number : 1066669

Student name : Dennis Dingelhoff

Thesis title : Craving Analogue Sensation In A Digital World

- ☒ Yes, I grant permission to make available my thesis with the above title in the Radboud thesis Repository.
- ☐ No, I do not grant permission to make available my thesis with the above title in the Radboud thesis Repository, but the thesis is allowed to make available with effect from ..... (temporary embargo).
- ☐ No, I do not grant permission to make available my thesis with the above title in the Radboud thesis Repository (permanent embargo).

Signature:



Date: 10/08/2022

## V. Ethnographic Fieldwork: Photographs

**Participant collections and set-up, and record stores in random order:**



*8. Record Collection and Set-Up, Chiel*



*9. Record Collection, Felix*



*10. Set-up, Felix*

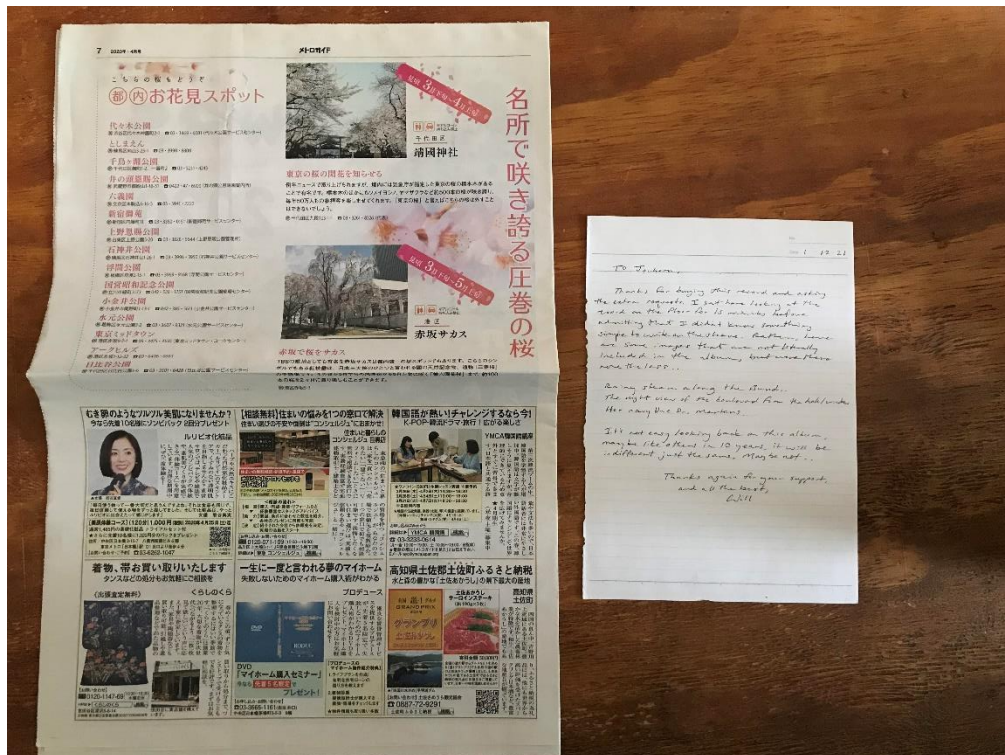




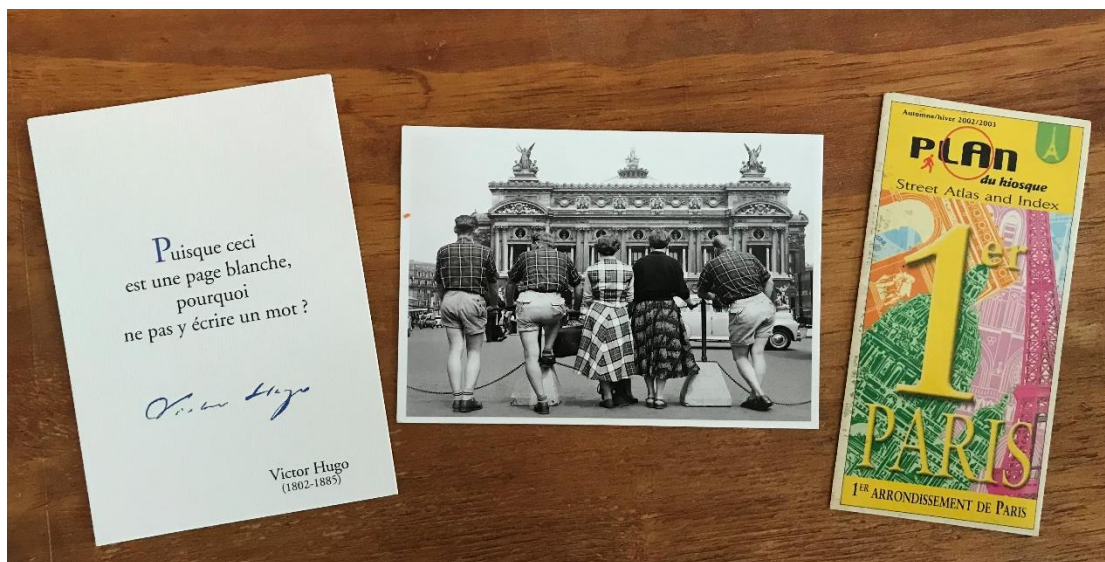
*11. Set-up, Jochem*



*12. Wall of Coloured Vinyl, Jochem*

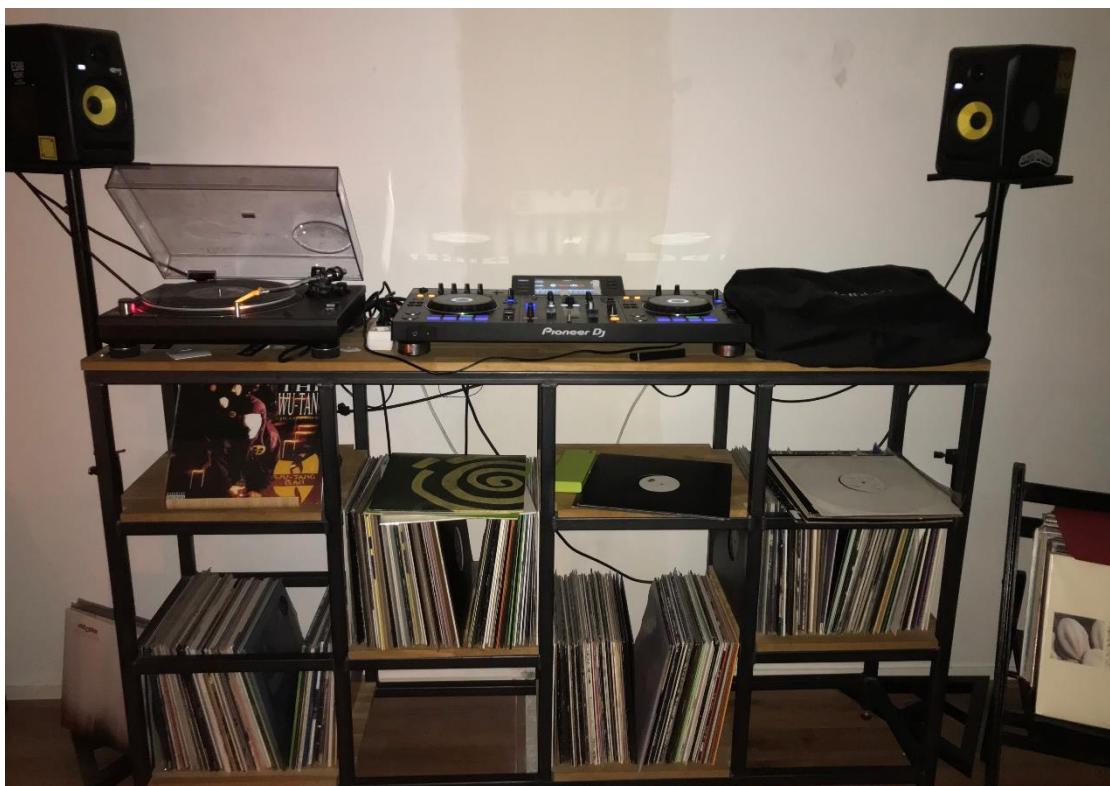


13. Japanese Souvenirs Enclosed with Discogs Order, Jochem

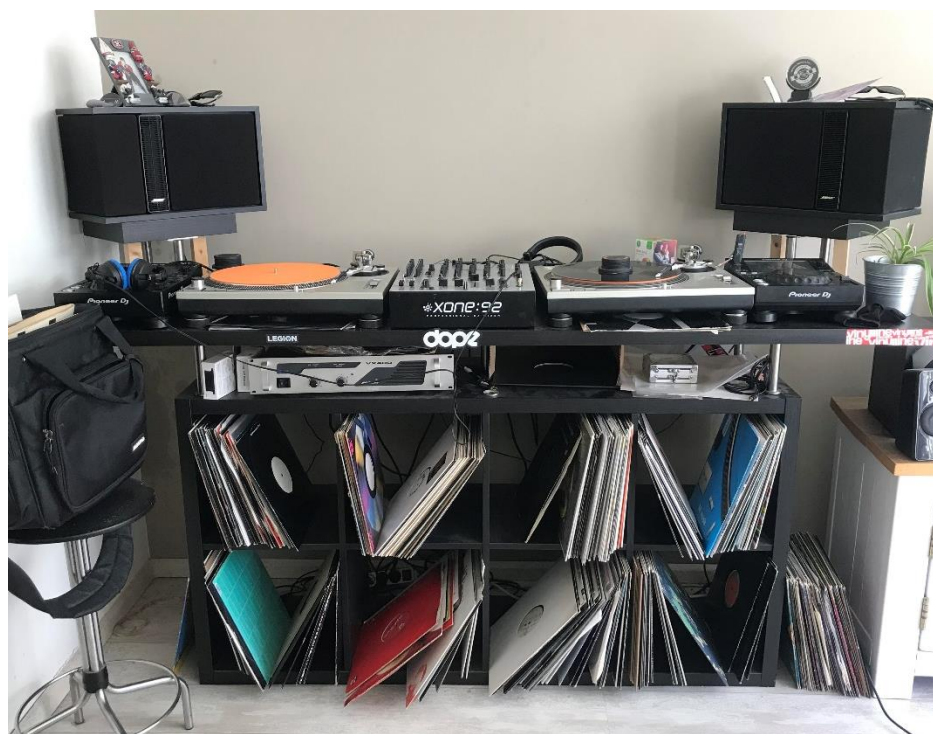


14. French Souvenirs Enclosed with Discogs Order, Jochem





*15. Record Collection and Set-up, Koen*



*16. Record Collection and Set-up, Ennio*





18. Record Collection and Set-up, Madelief



17. Artistic Vinyl Pressing, Madelief



20. Set-up, Sander

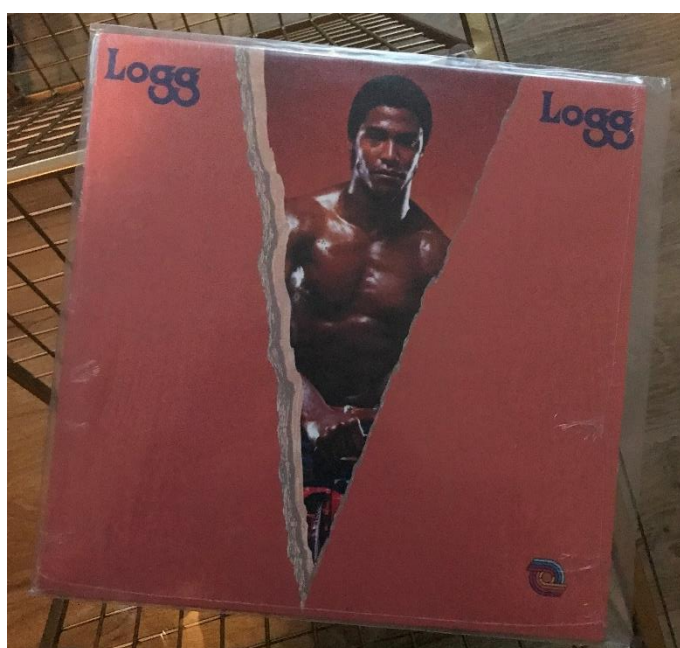
19. Record Collection, Sander



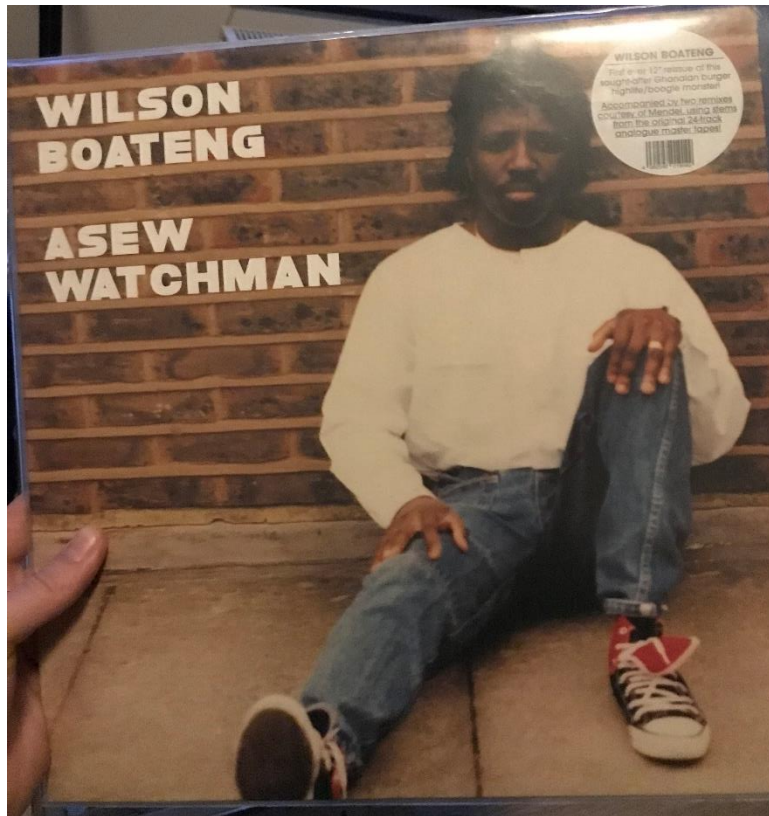




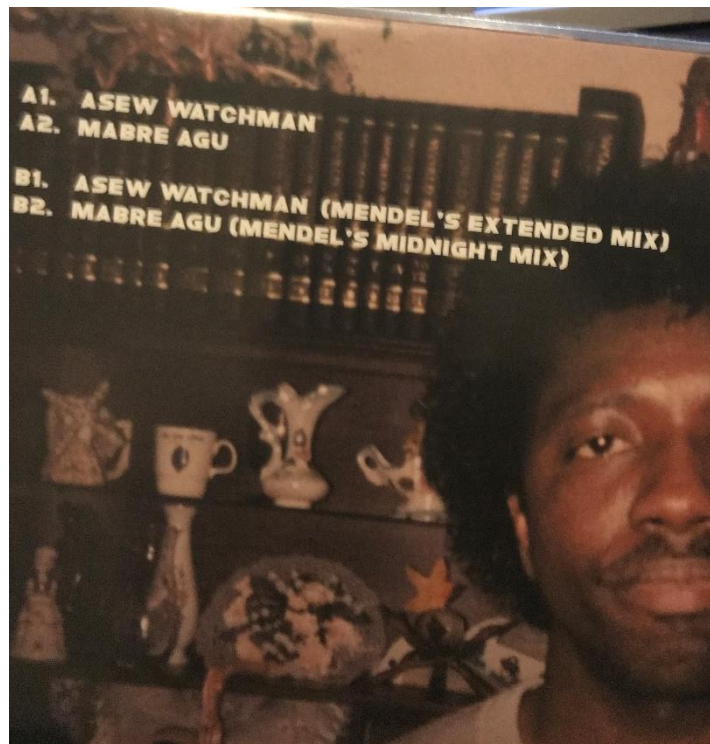
*22. Record Collection and Set-up, Mark*



*21. One of Kim's Favourite Records, 1/3*



24. One of Kim's Favourite Records, 2/3



23. One of Kim's Favourite Records, 3/3





26. Record Collection, Teodora



25. Record Collection and Set-up, Lizzy

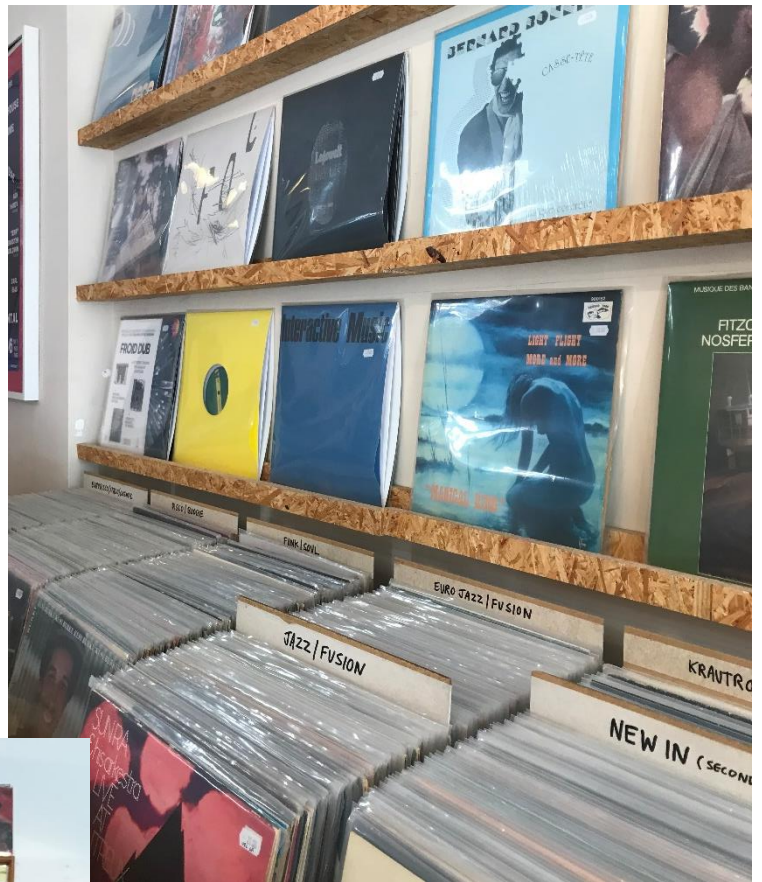




28. Dutch Punk Band from 80's, Including Lizzy's Mother



27. Red Light Record, Amsterdam



29. Record Section, Red Light Records

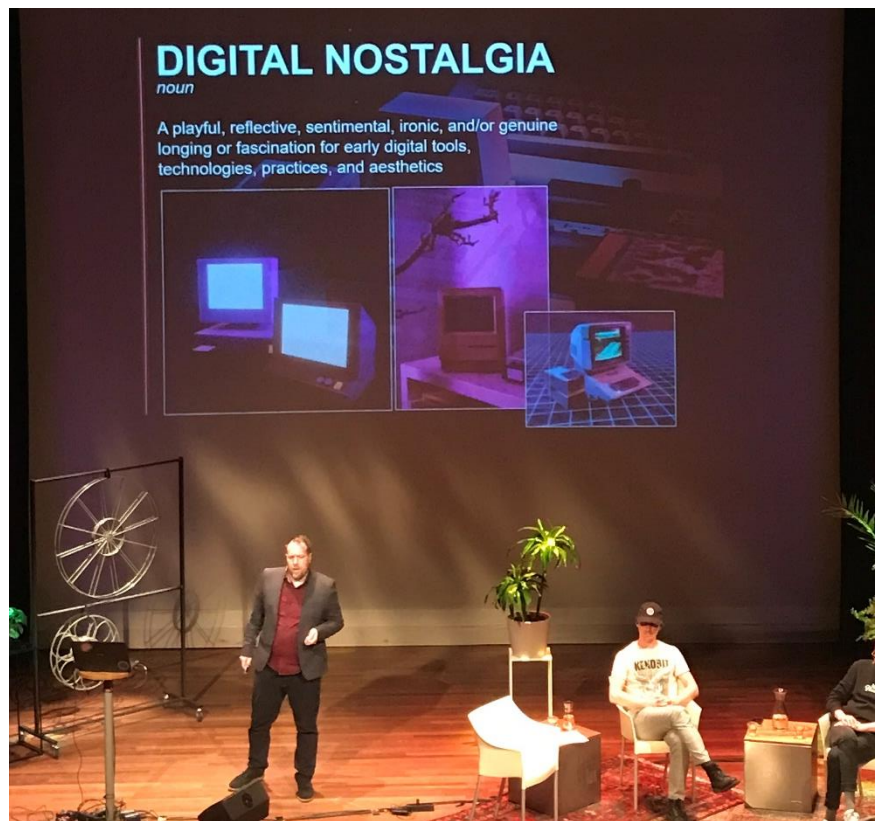


30. Record Section and Crates, Rush Hour



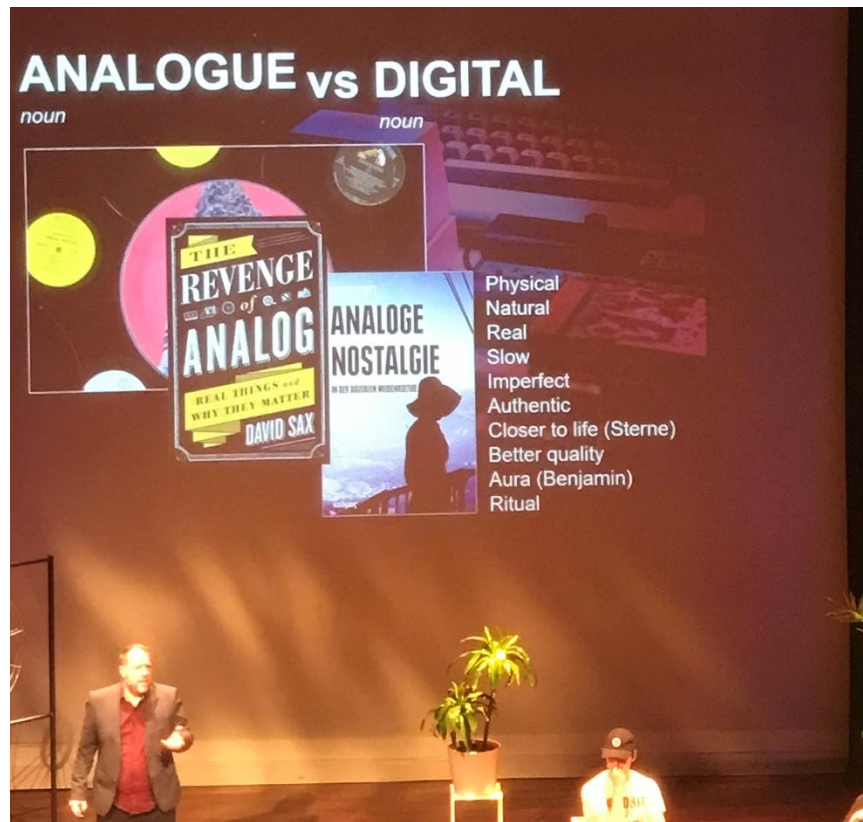


32. Culture Retro Talk 1/4, Nijmegen

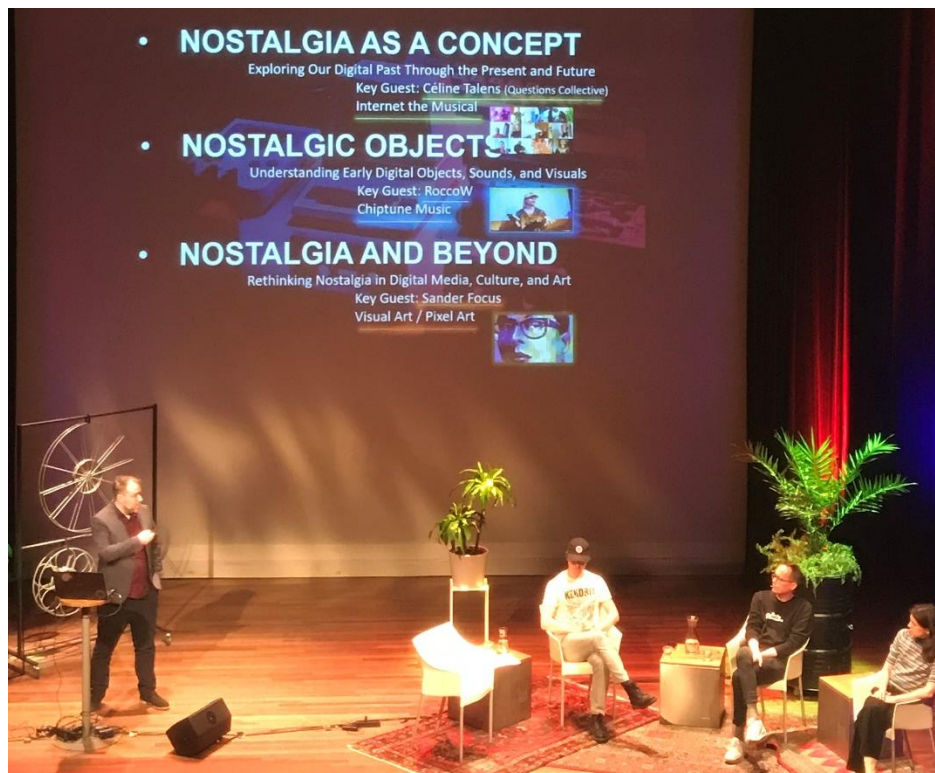


31. Culture Retro Talk 2/4, Nijmegen





33. Culture Retro Talk 3/4, Nijmegen



34. Culture Retro Talk 4/4, Nijmegen