**We are Still Nine**

Greg Friedmann

If you reach the age of nine with open eyes

and a hungry mind, your moral universe,

your character’s core, will be largely formed.

At nine, I knew the desolate chasm of

separation; I knew charlatans, fakes, and

bullies; I knew of war and its piles of dead;

I knew the heartless habits of the world.

Descended now from that nine-year old,

I’ve been lucky to also know beauty.

The child *is* father of the man—like

Wordsworth, my heart still leaps at

rainbows. At seventeen, I was lucky enough

to meet a seventeen-year-old girl

who was also nine. I am happy to say

we are still nine.