
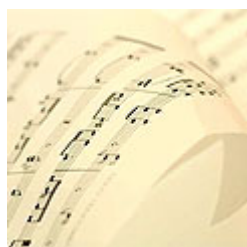


## Archive: Around Town

### ☆ As Time Goes By and Albert Einstein

Around Town | Friday, November 20, 2015 | By Randy Wayne 



#### Do the Fundamental Things Still Apply?

*As Time Goes By* was made famous after Ingrid Bergman, playing Ilsa in the movie *Casablanca*, said: “Play it, Sam. Play ‘As Time Goes By.’” Reluctantly, Dooley Wilson as Sam the piano player in Rick’s Café Américain, began singing *As Time Goes By*. Although Humphrey Bogart, playing Rick Blaine in the movie was clearly displeased to hear Sam sing the song again, the general public felt differently. *As Time Goes By* immediately became a sensation, and it is considered the number two movie song of all time by The American Film Institute, second only to *Over the Rainbow*.

*As Time Goes By* was written by Herman Hupfeld in 1931 for the play *Everybody’s Welcome*, which played at New York’s Shubert Theatre from October 31, 1931 to February 13, 1932. Frances Williams, who played Polly Bascom, sang *As Time Goes By* in the play and Rudy Vallee first recorded the song. Murray Burnett, while a senior at Cornell University, heard Vallee’s rendition of the song and it became one of his favorite songs. He played it so much that his *Pi Lambda Phi* fraternity brothers threatened to throw him and his Victrola out the window. After graduation, Burnett got a job as a substitute teacher at Central Commercial High School in Manhattan.

In the summer of 1938, after receiving a small inheritance, Burnett and his wife Frances, who were Jewish, went to Europe for a summer vacation. While in Europe they decided to go to Vienna to try to help his wife’s relatives leave Vienna after the *Anschluss* with their money and belongings. The American Consul was unsympathetic to Burnett’s plea for help. Following his personal experience with indifference in the face of evil, Burnett and his wife traveled to Cap Ferrat on the French Riviera. There they found a seedy café called *La Belle Aurore* where they were entertained by a black piano player. Murray turned to Frances, commenting that the café would make a great setting for a play. Two years later, back in the United States, Burnett co-wrote with Joan Alison an anti-Nazi play entitled, *Everybody Comes to Rick’s*. In this 1940 script, Burnett used *As Time Goes By* in the play for Rick Blaine and Lois Meredith’s love song.

Because of the script’s risqué implication that Lois had sex with Rick in order to get the letters of transit for herself and Victor Lazlo, Burnett and Alison could not get *Everybody Comes to Rick’s* produced on Broadway. The play however did go on, when the times changed.

On December 7, 1941, “a date which will live in infamy,” the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and the next day Franklin Delano Roosevelt addressed a joint session of Congress hoping for a declaration of war. Subsequently, Warner Brothers began looking for scripts with war themes to turn into movies. On January 12, 1942, Warner Brothers bought, from Burnett and Alison, the rights to *Everybody Comes to Rick’s* and produced it as a movie entitled, *Casablanca*. In the movie, American Lois Meredith became Norwegian Ilsa Lund to match Ingrid Bergman’s looks and accent. On November 26, 1942, *Casablanca* opened, and in 1943, it won Oscars for Best Picture (Warner Brothers), Best Director (Michael Curtiz), and Best Screenplay (Julius Epstein, Philip Epstein and Howard Koch) and received Oscar nominations for Best Actor in a Leading Role (Humphrey Bogart), Best Actor in a Supporting Role

(Claude Rains), Best Black & White Cinematography (Arthur Edeson), Best Film Editing (Owen Marks), and Best Music (Max Steiner). Hupfeld and Burnett were all but forgotten. However, on June 1, 1991, in a letter to the *Los Angeles Times*, Oscar winning writer Howard Koch acknowledged his debt to Burnett. The characters in the movie were Burnett's creations, and Rick Blaine was the kind of man Burnett wanted to be.

In *Casablanca*, Dooley Wilson did not sing the Prelude to *As Time Goes By* that was written by Herman Hupfeld for the play *Everybody's Welcome*. What was in the disremembered Prelude to *As Time Goes By*? The Prelude published by Harms Inc., NY in 1931 refers to Albert Einstein. It goes like this:

*This day and age we're living in  
gives cause for apprehension,  
With speed and new invention,  
and things like third dimension.*

*Yet, we get a trifle weary,  
with Mr. Einstein's the'ry,  
So we must get down to earth,  
at times, relax relieve the tension.*

*No matter what the progress,  
or what may yet be proved,  
The simple facts of life are such  
they cannot be removed...*

Most performances of *As Time Goes By* lack the nearly-forgotten Prelude. Such versions available on YouTube were sung by Paul Anka, Louis Armstrong & Nat King Cole, Chet Baker, Smith Ballew and the Columbians, Shirley Bassey, George Burns & Bobby Vinton, Lynda Carter, Petula Clark, Rosemary Clooney, Perry Como, Gal Costa, Bing Crosby, Sammy Davis Jr., Neil Diamond, Arielle Dombasle, Jimmy Durante, Billy Eckstine, Bryan Ferry, The Flamingos, Dick, Haymes, Woody Herman, Billie Holiday, Engelbert Humperdinck, Julio Iglesias, Jack Jones, Tom Jones, Dianna Krall, Amanda Lear, Peggy Lee, Wang Leehom, Julie London, Vera Lynn, Seth MacFarlane, Barry Manilow, Mina, Jane Monheit, Anne Murray, Johnny Nash, Willie Nelson & Julio Iglesias, Harry Nilsson, Johnnie Ray, Jacques Renard, Cliff Richard and the Shadows, George Sanders, Carly Simon, Frank Sinatra, Nancy Sinatra, Carol Sloane, Kate Smith, Jo Stafford, Barbara Streisand, Steve Tyrell, Barry White, Widespread Panic, Andy Williams, Danny Williams, Dooley Wilson, and ZZ Top.

Indeed, this version, without the Prelude was the one that Burnett and Alison used in *Everybody Comes to Rick's*, when Lois said,

*Play "As Time Goes by", Sam.*

Rabbit (Sam): *I can't remember it, Miss Lois.*

Lois: *I'll hum it for you.*

Rinaldo: *But surely you know it, Rabbit.*

Rabbit: *I can't seem to get it.*

Lois: *Somehow I didn't think you would. Let me play it for you.*

Rabbit: *No, Miss Lois, I think I got it now.*

Lois: *Sing it, Sam.*

Rabbit: *Ah dunno the words.*

Lois: *I'll give them to you.*

*"You must remember this,*

*A kiss is just a kiss*

*A sigh is still a sigh..."*

Recordings that include the Prelude to *As Time Goes By* that are available on YouTube have been performed by artists, including Tony Bennett, The Duprees, Michael Feinstein, Binnie Hale, Johnny Mathis, Mandy Patinkin, Rod Stewart, Tiny Tim, Rudy Vallee (who sang the version that Burnett had) and Lee Wiley. Interestingly, Marcia Bartusiak (*Einstein's Unfinished Symphony: Listening to the Sounds of Space-Time*, Joseph Henry Press, Washington, D.C., 2000. page 225), a science writer at MIT, and Lisa Randall (*Warped Passages: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Universe's Hidden Dimensions*, HarperCollins, New York, 2005. page 63), a string theorist at Harvard, transformed the phrase "*third dimension*" into "*fourth dimension*." Natalie Cole sang "*fourth dimension*" in the version of *As Time Goes By* that is on the album *Love Songs* (2001). Clifford Will, a mathematical physicist, also sang this version of the song during a lecture he gave at the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical physics, which is available on YouTube. The lyrics that include the additional dimension make more sense given the context of the song since Einstein postulated that space and time were united into a four dimensional space-time continuum. According to Clifford Will, George Gershwin called up Herman Hupfeld and told him, "*Hupfeld, you idiot, its fourth dimension, not third!*" The *fourth dimension* did make it into popular music. In 1937 Irving Berlin wrote a song entitled, "*He Ain't Got Rhythm*," which describes a professor who "*attracted some attention, when he found the fourth dimension.*"

Hupfeld's Prelude to *As Time Goes By* suggests that Einstein's Theory of Relativity, while ubiquitous in the modern culture of the 1920s and 1930s, was inconsistent with the fundamental facts of life. This year is the centenary of Einstein's Theory of General Relativity, and Einstein is as popular as ever. However, my own research from the perspective of a life scientist on the physical phenomena that gave rise to Einstein's theories as well as the prediction that two twins can age differentially in a manner that depends on their relative velocity confirms Hupfeld's claim that "*the simple facts of life are such they cannot be removed.*" That is, my research shows that by taking into consideration the neglected and all but forgotten properties of photons, all the physical phenomena analyzed by Einstein to establish the notion of relative and interdependent four dimensional space-time in the Special and General Theories of Relativity, including the deflection of starlight, the precession of the perihelion of Mercury, the gravitational redshift, the relativity of simultaneity, the fact that charged particles cannot exceed the speed of light, the optics of moving bodies, the fine-structure of the spectral lines of hydrogen, and the mass-energy equivalence can be explained using the commonsense notion of absolute space and absolute unidirectional time (<http://labs.plantbio.cornell.edu/wayne/>). Commonsense solutions may be as important for scientific problems as they are for political problems.

Absolute and unidirectional time running through three-dimensional space is the single most fundamental independent variable upon which the facts of cellular, personal, relational, family and community life are based. In this day and age we're living in, the fundamental things still apply, as time goes by.

Copyright © 2005-2020 by L-Star Publishing, Inc.