

You Say Po-tay-to, I Say Po-tah-to... Turns Out We Both Like French Fries



It is sad to say... but we live in a world that is becoming increasingly polarized. And that is a shame. Why must our focus be on the differences that keep us apart when there is so much that we have in common? As Yul Brenner once declared in *The King and I*, "It is a puzzlement."

Four years ago, when I started my Home Video Studio business, I can't say that I expected it to teach me any major life lessons that would affect my perspective of the world and its denizens. So the epiphany came as a bit of a surprise.

People would come to my studio with tapes or films or audio recordings... and they would ask me to digitalize them. And as I accepted their order, they took the time to tell me about the memories they wanted to preserve. As I listened to them, I noticed a familiar anomaly that occurred time and time again. Within their stories, I started recognizing details that were familiar to me. Experiences that I shared. Locations that I have visited. Emotions I have felt.

As more people came into the studio to share their memories with me, I started expecting their memories to somehow

intersect with mine. Their ancestors came from Italy... so did my wife's. They just retired from a career in public education... my father was a public school teacher and my mother once edited the county public school bulletin. They were military... my grandfather was a Navy Rear Admiral, my father was an Army Air Force bombardier, my son is currently serving in the Coast Guard as a diver.

The point I am making is that if we decide to look for the commonalities between us, we will find them... regardless of the socio-political sides that we may take. It is far healthier to draw people to us because we relate to their experiences than to shun or keep them from us because we disagree with some of their beliefs. Po-tay-to, Po-tah-to... it doesn't matter how you say it... it still makes a tasty french fry.

Memories matter. They unite us like no other force can. Start sharing yours with others. Who knows? Maybe it will start a trend that will lead to a lessening of the rancor and the bellicose posturing that is accepted as "normal behavior" in today's world. If you have a better suggestion on how to resume a more civil society... I'm all ears.

Michael Ondrasik and Home Video Studio of Mount Dora specialize in the preservation of family memories through the digitalization of films, videotapes, audio recordings, photos, negatives and slides. For more information, call 352-735-8550 or visit our [website](#).