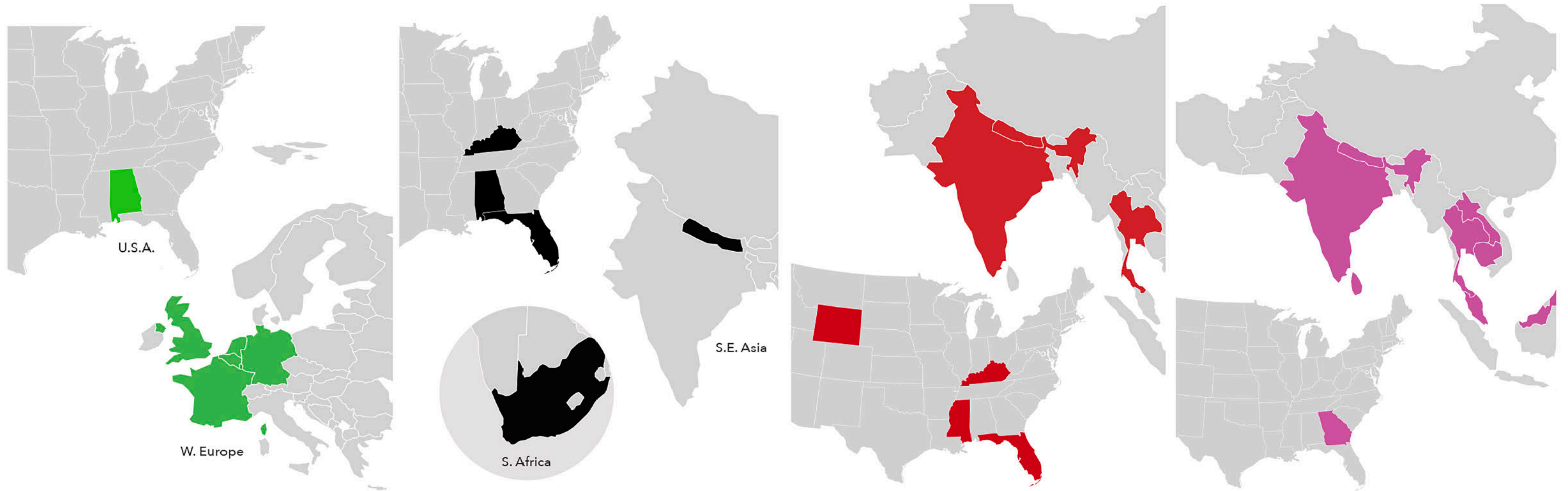


About This Project

The infographic memoirs that follow are about four distinct books that defined or characterized my life at the time I read them. I let the content of the books and the way I was moved by them dictate the format of the infographics and the stories the data of my life tell. It's all as factual as my memory can be.

I'm pretty sure this idea came from a Barbara Kingsolver quote: "...believing every crack in my soul could be chinked with a book."

Quotes are funny because when you hear one that resonates, you think, "I already knew that," but someone else said it so much more eloquently. I knew when I read this quote I could do that. I could label the crazy times or intense changes in my life with a book that found its way to me and either helped me get through a hard time or helped shape that part of my life.



Goosebumps

1984 - 1997
birth to 14 years old

THE HOLY BIBLE

1998 to 2005
15 to 22 years old

Jitterbug Perfume

2006 - 2010
23 to 27 years old

the passion

2011 - 2017
28 to 32 years old

THE GIRL WHO CRIED MONSTER

Goosebumps

When I got all A's, or didn't talk too much in class (rare), my reward from my father was a brand new Goosebumps book. By his bed, in his car, in the bathroom were 3-4 books he was in the middle of reading. It was through his love of reading that I adopted mine. To this day I can rub the corner of a paperback between my thumb and forefinger and see him nodding off next to me, trying to read a Grisham novel. Goosebumps books were scary, dark, humorous and twisted and they got me through my very own twisted childhood.

MONSTERS Of My Childhood

- INSTABILITY** Family Structure
- ABUSE** Sexual, Emotional
- ILLNESS** Alcoholism, Disease, Mental Health

MEDIUMS of My Fear

- ▲ FATHER
- MOTHER
- ✕ STEP-FAMILY

EVERY 9 SECONDS

a woman is assaulted or beaten in the US.

30 - 40% of all incest cases involve an alcoholic parent.

9 - 13 ✕ After my step father moved in, I was sexually abused for about 4 years by my step brother. At age 9 it is hard to understand affection and love from someone older, especially if affection is given sexually.

Children who suffer the death of a parent have a **50% HIGHER MORTALITY RATE.**

14 ▲ When I found his body, he had been dead for 2 days.

5 ■ She was admitted to a psychiatric clinic for depression. Over the years and to this day I'd watch her battle alcoholism and depression.

Since I Can Remember - 9 ■ ▲ My parents were unhappily married. My father was abusive, physically and emotionally. Things at home were explosive and unpredictable and it stayed like that until their divorce when I was 9. I witnessed him beating her and I was often pitted between them.

9 - 10 ■ ▲ ✕ The year that my mother and father divorced, my step father moved in months after they met.

11 - 28 ✕ My step father did everything he could to make me feel unwelcome in my own home. He accused, belittled and emotionally abused me to make me feel insignificant.

11 - 28 ■ Her alcoholism worsened over the years. It wasn't until I was an adult that I realized she was affecting my life. We haven't spoken in 5 years or seen each other in much longer.

5 - 14 ■ My father was extremely sick, both physically and mentally. He battled throat cancer, skin cancer, arteriosclerosis, over 10 heart attacks, 3 strokes, 3 triple bypass surgeries and intense bi-polar episodes during our short fourteen years together.

1986 1989 1990 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997

THE HOLY BIBLE

TRUTH-SEEKING



2.2 billion

of the world's 6.9 billion population are thought to be Christian adherents.

FANATICISM



1 in 3

pentecostals say they speak in tongues weekly or more often.

TEMPTATION



31%

of Christians say the Bible is the Word of God and should be taken literally.

FREEDOM



8%

The percentage of Americans who do not consider themselves Christians dropped 8% from 2007 - 2014.

Jitterbug Perfume

A PERSONAL PUJA

After painstakingly following Christianity's many rules for 7 years, I spent the next 7 breaking all of them. I lost my virginity, smoked weed, drank a lot of alcohol and generally enjoyed a debauched lifestyle. Jitterbug Perfume was my new bible, guiding me to live life to the fullest, to not look back and to not apologize for my appetites and desires. My heart was set free; this was the best time of my life. The items in this diagram comprise a personal religious ceremony (puja) dedicated to the 7 years I spent living my life for myself, traveling through SouthEast Asia.

JAL

Water is sacred and used to symbolize the cleansing of the soul. It was through Nepal and travel that I dissolved Christianity's constricting hold on my heart and life.

SEL ROTI

Eating sweets reminds us not to take ourselves too seriously. The most important lesson I learned in Nepal was how to let go and be present, enjoy this moment and stop asking so many questions.

NARIWAL

The breaking of a coconut symbolizes sacrifice. In this way our body is broken and what is left is given in hopes of renewal. Breaking away from Christianity broke me in many ways but traveling and living in Asia gave me a new understanding of life.

DHOOP

Incense is burned in petition of desires and are lifted like smoke rings to the gods. My one desire during this period of my life was to live it to the fullest. I did just that.

MACHHA

Eating a fish's head symbolizes derailing your enemies. I learned an extremely hard lesson about enemies, who to trust and who I should not. I let people in my life who shouldn't have been there.

TEL BATTI

Oil lamps are lit in honor of those we have lost and still deeply love. My father wanted me to travel and I honored him in every country I visited by lighting lamps at temples from each culture and religion.

the passion

What choice have I in the face of this wind but to put up sail and rest my oars? Jeannette Winterson *The Passion*

I have spent a lot of time on the back of a motorcycle riding through the electric green mountains of Nepal, camera in hand and guitar on my back. We would drive about three hours to the next village where we would meet local people, smoke their weed (usually out of garbage bags), eat their local food that had Kathmandu-reputation and then get back on the bike and drive 3 more hours through cold misty rolling hills and sticky hot dirt roads dotted with banana trees.

I learned how to stop asking questions that didn't matter. Questions like 'where are we going' (many places didn't even exist on a map), 'what time will we get there' (no one is actually on time in Nepal), 'how long will it take' (let's be honest, you haven't had to be anywhere in months). What choice have I in the face of this wind but to put up sail and rest my oars? I told myself, "I could love anyone, live anywhere and do anything if I could just be in a different country than the US."

The Passion spoke to the extremes in me. From living a chaste Christian life to what I would call debauchery at the time; from trying to love men to quickly loving women only; from lower Alabama to South East Asia, I've cultivated many passions over the years. Then I follow them and allow myself to put up my oars and see where they take me.

How To Read It

Using a series of parameters, this is a map of my passions over the years. The large circles at the bottom are passions that had influence over the course of my life. The smaller circles each represent one relationship during the time that passion raged through my life.

