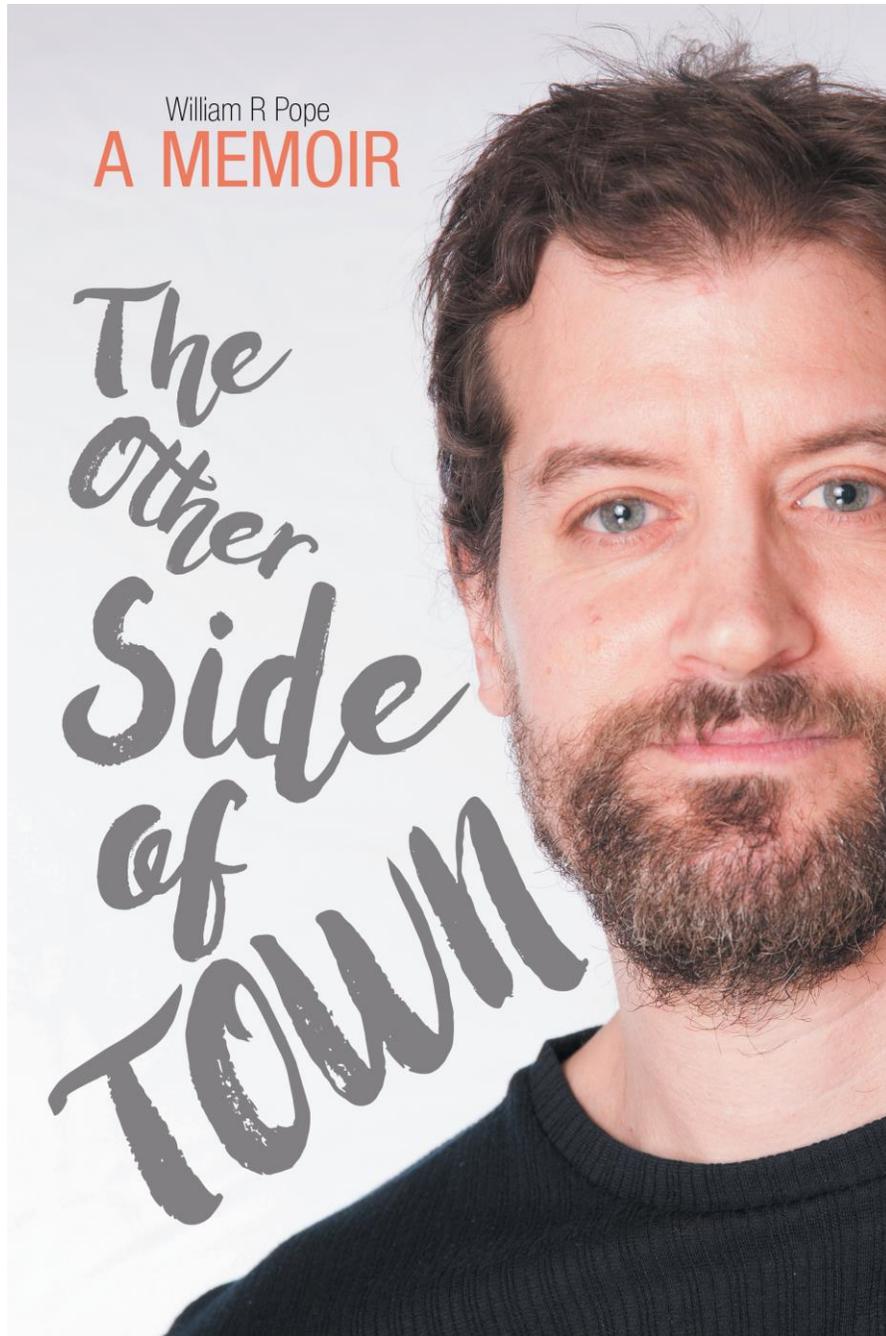


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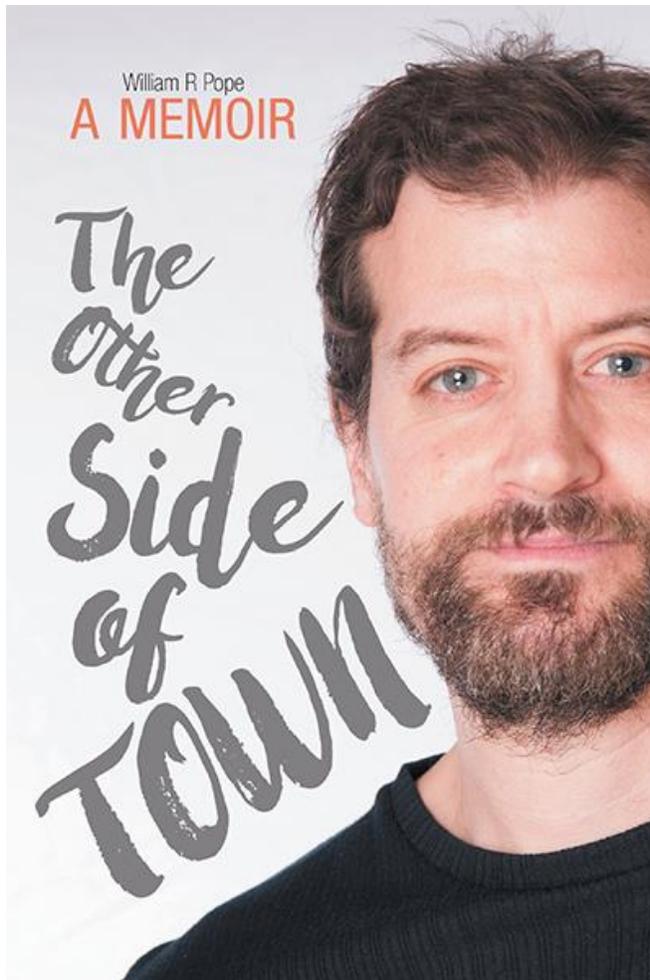
**The Other Side of Town: A Memoir**

**William R. Pope**



## ABOUT THE BOOK

### The Other Side of Town



*The Other Side of Town* is a collection of short stories based on the life of William R. Pope. The book depicts his life growing up in the New Jersey sub burbs from the time he was 6 all the way into his late 30's. The stories that were chosen were often chosen for their humor and deep connection to the author and not necessarily for their life-changing significance. "I really wanted the readers to get a sense of the little things that made me tick early on," William once said in an interview.

The book features regular people often doing absurd things and William does his best to bring these odd moments into the light of day. While definitely adroit at describing the oddities of others, William is certainly not shy about reviling his own personal history and inadequacies, once

saying "I wanted to make sure that I was sufficiently self-effacing and honest so it didn't sound like was I criticizing others from on high."

The book reads like a series of short, chronological vignettes connected by the reoccurrence of a hysterical, yet troublesome, friend that carries it through. In the later chapters, William sums up his life's experiences, seemingly satisfied with how it ended up, but now, taking on a more somber melancholy tone.

## AUTHOR'S BIO

### William R Pope



William R Pope was born in Summit, New Jersey and lived in Bridgewater, NJ for the first nine years of his life. Later his parents would sell the house in Bridgewater and buy the house his grandparents owned in Berkeley Heights, New Jersey. William would eventually attend Governor Livingston Regional High and graduate in 1990. In high school, William started playing the bass guitar and continued to play into adulthood, even landing a professional gig at the Crossroads Community Church in Hillsborough, New Jersey. William would stay on as church bassist for nearly three years from 2008 to 2011. William also played with: *Groovers and Shakers* in 2002 out of Lakewood, New Jersey and singer/songwriter Liz Clark out of Brooklyn, New York in 2005, among others.

In 1991 William attended Somerset Technical Institute, getting his diploma in commercial art in 1993. But after an unsuccessful bid to gain employment in the commercial art field, he would remain at the gas station job he worked for another year until finally leaving it to take the first of, what would end up being, a string of thankless, low-wage jobs attained through a local temp

agency. Soon though, William would get a high-paying job in sales and eventually move from his father's condominium.

After leaving his sales job, William landed a position at the BOC where he eventually got his degree in media design from the *Art Institute* thanks to BOC's generous tuition reimbursement program. Shortly after graduating, William would leave his job at the BOC to embark on a career in web design. Absent of real-world experience, William started teaching himself computer programming, building the online dating website "Equal Match" as a learning tool to practice coding techniques. (Before equalmatch.com was taken off-line, it was host to around a1000 users at its height).

With his new-found skills in computer programming firmly in-hand, William moved to New York City to take a job as a front-end developer in the Flatiron district of Manhattan. As a web developer, William built a few other moderately successful sites along with the mobile group app: Beanbag. You can still download the Beanbag app free from iTunes and Google play.

"Writing prose and writing code are a lot alike", William once said, "in that they both require logical consistency and take long hours in isolation behind the computer to accomplish".

*See last page for contact information.*

## **ABOUT WRITING THE BOOK**

### **Q&A with William R Pope**

#### **Q: What inspired you to write this book?**

**A:** “I guess the desire to tell my story and make people laugh inspired me the most. It’s odd that I ended up writing a memoir because I’m not that sentimental normally. So, I really had to force myself to become that way. I was actually going through a rough patch in my life at the time which helped. I’m not sure if I’m a natural storyteller or not but I felt there was probably enough that was interesting in my life that, if I could just write it all down, I might have something like a book.

My friends and family helped a great deal recounting my history, actually. Sometimes I was able to use their suggestions and other times I wasn’t. But in either case, they certainly gave me lots to thinking about. I remember having a conversation with my brother over Skype one night about the time I spent in L.A. while he was living there. That conversation yielded a wealth of funny stories. My friend Andrew has a near photographic memory so was able to provide me, in precise detail, exact occurrences of events and the names of employees we both knew at the sales job we worked. I think that sales job ended up in the book mostly because of that conversation.”

#### **Q: When did you start?**

**A:** “I started writing maybe three years ago. But the book I started with was not the book I ended up with. The original manuscript wasn’t a memoir. It was a fictional story based loosely on my friend, Andrew’s life. At the time I thought his circumstances were interesting enough that, between the both of us, there was more than enough material there to write a book. It’s obvious to me now, although it wasn’t then, that that manuscript had a lot of problems. At some point during the writing of it, it grew into a huge mess of made up stories, strange recollections, and crude intellectualizing. At the time, I still thought I could turn it into War-and-Peace sized epic though. To verify my suspicions, I submitted the first 200 pages of the manuscript to an editor to be professionally reviewed.

When I eventually got it back, her detailed analysis exposed many more problems than I thought existed. Even though I was very frustrated with the critique, I knew she was probably right about almost everything. So instead of trying to fix it, which I didn't think I could anyway, I salvaged what I could and I started over.

I never really planned on going back as far in the past as I eventually did though. I think I was still in denial that my book was going to be a memoir, actually. But one thing I couldn't ignore was the fact that this new book needed more of a backstory. Luckily my parents had inadvertently helped me out by reminding me of some of the more shameful moments in my life when I was really young. At the time, I guess, I was embarrassed by them. But now, of course, I'm glad they told me. Other stories from my past trickled in slowly at around 3 in the morning, just as I was falling asleep. Ugh!"

**Q: What, if anything, did you learn from the experience?**

**A:** "Being a first-time novelist, I learned a lot from my mistakes. I first learned I should probably write one book at a time. (Laugh).

I made a handful of basic literary mistakes as a novice, like: overusing clichés in my puns and trying to tell inside jokes to outside folks without fully explain my-self. I guess I was trying to give the reader space to infer my sarcasm by being intentionally vague. I also occasionally would go into these long-winded stories of future events. This, as I learned, is also bad form; and only began to notice the problem after my editor started calling this style of writing 'time-travelling' in a not-so-glowing way.

I also found it fairly difficult to adhere strictly to the plot all the time; and would go off on these wild tangents occasionally. I remember writing a part about a neighborhood community in my hometown of Berkeley Heights known as Free Acres. Since I hung out there a lot as a kid, I went to great lengths to describe the artists that used to live there, the spring-fed swimming pool that was cold as ice and even how much taxes residents paid. Believing I'd just written my masterpiece, I was very confident sending it off to be edited. Upon its return, however, he replied—'are you trying to sell me some real estate?'

Aside from the technical parts about writing prose, I learned how agonizing it could be to publish a book if you're expecting success. I should say *especially* if you're expecting success. I was doubly tormented over the fact that I was about to release a whole book full of personal, and often, embarrassing information about me and others to the public. And while I tried to disguise people's identities by changing their names, I feared the context would ultimately give them away anyway."

**Q: Are you satisfied with your work?**

**A:** "Actually, there are few things I would change even now. But like someone once told me: 'A book is never truly finished. You just stop writing it.' At this point I gage satisfaction on the reviews I'm receiving and the sales I'm making. I'm especially interested in reviews from my family and friends since a lot of them are in the book. If I receive positive reviews and high sales, that will tell me that I did something right and give me the motivation to write more."

**Q: What's next for William R Pope?**

**A:** "That's a good question. I'm probably going to write a screenplay. I've already written several outlines for scripts that I may try to pitch to people in the movies. One is based loosely on the book, another is a spinoff story based on a character in the book, and yet another is completely unrelated to the book."

## **BOOK DETAILS**

*The Other Side of Town* is available for order from most major online book retailers, including the FriesenPress Bookstore, Amazon, Barnes & Noble and Chapters Indigo. The ebook is available for Amazon Kindle, iTunes Bookstore, and Google Play. Consignment orders are available through the author.

### **List Pricing**

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Hardcover: \$32.49 USD

Ebook: \$2.99 USD

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- Biography & Autobiography
- Humor

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