

NINE THINGS TO PUT IN A 2009 TIME CAPSULE

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It's hard to boil the past year down to nine things. Heck, including just Jon and Kate Gosselin and their eight kids would be too many. Ditto for Octomom and her brood. The year was a rough one for many, and it would be easy to focus only on the negative — the bottomed-out economy, the bitter debate over health care, even a hoax that had all of America needlessly worried about a balloon boy. But there's a lot worth remembering, positive and negative. Here's what we'd choose to represent 2009 in a pop culture time capsule.

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1. Pittsburgh Steelers Super Bowl ring

We know it's the last thing you want to include, Browns fans, but the team did become the first in history to achieve six Super Bowl victories by beating the Arizona Cardinals.

2. Michael Jackson's glove

The King of Pop is dead. Long live the King.

3. Susan Boyle's eyebrows

No one expected anything from the frumpy-looking Scot singer on *Britain's Got Talent*. Her rendition of "I Dreamed a Dream" — the most popular clip on YouTube this year — proved us all wrong.

4. Flu mask

You could call this the fashion accessory of 2009. They were everywhere, from Mexico to Japan to airports across the United States, as the whole world tried to hide from swine flu.

5. Elin Nordegren's wedding ring

The wife of the world's top golfer is not wearing it any more, reportedly, so we're free to include it as a symbol of Tiger Woods adulterous fall from grace (and every other cheater in the news — that means you Eliot Spitzer and Mark Sanford).

6. Newspaper from Jan. 21

No matter how his presidency turns out, Barack Obama's inauguration as the first black president of the United States always will be historic.

7. *ER*'s finale

The show's power may have dimmed over its 15-year-run, but it's worth a final tribute. When it comes to dramas, only *Gunsmoke* and *Law & Order* lasted longer.

8. 1998 Ford Windstar

We missed out on this summer's "cash for clunkers" program to help the auto industry, so we'll just dump this in the time capsule and wait for the electric, 230-mpg Chevy Volt to come out next year.

9. iPhone

Want to know more about what 2009 was like? There's an app for that.

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