

July 4th (Peter Schjeldahl's in Bovina) and Central Park

by [Kirby Olson](#) (July 2018)



4th of July, Butterfly Beach, Thomas Van Stein, 2001

July 4th (Peter Schjeldahl's in Bovina)

He sends the Japanese lanterns across first.
Then the Katyuskas fire & finally the mortars.

Hipsters revel in the double sensation
of firearms & enormous bangs.

"It's the American Revolution!"

"No, it's the War of 1812!"

"It's Normandy!"

"It's the fall of Saigon!"

Shades of red illuminate children's faces.

My least favorite holiday does generally end
not with a bang but a whimper,
as my kids settle into sleep.

Midnight, July 4, 2011.



Central Park Pond, Lazlo Tar, 2008

Central Park

Park historians chronicled
the origins of the park among the monocled.
Many oracles prophesied the garroting of women
and that the children sleeping in tenements
would fail to appreciate flowers and elms,
and tear the wings off of orioles. Today,

there are real estate developers,
rapists, muggers, eyeing the park.
But law and order are kept,

from the beginning until now,
by the park ranger on her stallion!

On a summer morn, women in unitards on bicycles
regard men in three-piece suits;
older women offer popsicles
to grandchildren on tricycles.
In unison, rollerskaters stride through the park.

Pink babies and black babies toddle –
older nannies waddle after them;
ducks in the pond paddle
as older children spot a unicycle,
and workers on a bench play pinochle.

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