Misunderstandings

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I used to think I could see through my hand when I put one over my eye and saw the transparent lines of my fingers. I didn't understand why if I slammed my foot down on the kitchen floor, my glass of milk would move. I wasn't sure if everything had lines around its edges, like cartoons, so I would concentrate on one thing and try to spot the lines. My mother told me my eyes turned green when I lied, but my eyes were green anyway.

I thought the word 'suicide' was 'sewerside', so when my cousin died, I imagined her living in the sewer. When my Aunt Bea died, I thought that if I mixed an ant and a bee together, she would come back.

My mother's puppet shows depressed me, because I thought about her dying during her performance.

My sister told me skim milk was skin milk, and flakes of skin floated on the top. She also told me wrinkles were in style.

I thought E.T. lived in the unfinished part of the attic behind the little door in my room.

I tried to mix the perfect amount of flower petals and hose water to create perfume, but I all I ever produced was rotting leaves in stagnant water. I used to pretend to call the house and my dad would pick up, and I would tell him Saddam Hussein was on the phone, and laugh to myself as he pretended to believe me. I thought I was the best drawer of brontosaurus in Mrs. Pearson's kindergarten class, because I would always draw a house next to it, to convey to my viewer the scale of the beast.

I thought the sun and the moon followed only me.
Now I understand a great many things less than before. The simple questions and misunderstandings of childhood have been cleared up, yet the world seems a much more confusing place.

Every once in awhile I look through my hand and pride myself on my x-ray vision.

_Tessa Berg is a graduating senior in Anthropology and International Studies. She enjoys reading, movies, art, music, and discussing all of the former. This is her first non-fiction story about this subject, but she is fascinated in the way children rationalize the world around them, and believes each person has their own interesting misunderstandings from childhood._