

English 100, First Place; Professor, Dr. Jacqueline S. Wilson

Lace Up for Reality

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First Grade

No one really cared about what they had on their feet. Everyone pretty much had Sketchers, Shaqs, Fubu, K Swiss, Champion, and Roca Wear shoes on. Anything basic that you could get at a low price out of Payless. Kids our age were more interested in Dragon Ball Z toys and Tarzan video games. We also learned how to tell time and we were more knowledgeable about cooties. Morgan and Susie had the deadliest kind so all of the boys in the class refrained from playing on the monkey bars with them at recess.

Second Grade

Reeboks were fashionable for many students in my class around 2005. It was Valentine's Day and the rule still applied that everyone was to give something to every student to make them feel equally special as everyone else. Being romantic to girls grossed me out. But I gave my share of Valentine's Day cards out and I felt special from the type of gratitude I received. Girls were saying "Thank you" to me. When did girls get so nice? What was I to do with all of this female attention? Although I handed out simple Valentine's Day cards to the female population of my class, I felt like the man. Well, the little man boy that is. I gave a card to this pretty girl named Jazmine and she gave me a big hug with her Coach shoes on. I could tell she had style and money from day 1 so I was kind of nervous when she approached me. I felt fine afterwards, so from that point on, I didn't believe cooties existed.

Third Grade

The infamous inner city trend of wearing Air Force Ones began. I even had me a pair. The girls started coming to school looking nicer. I wasn't crushing or anything, but I could tell something was different. Girls started coming to school shinier and they smelled like baby powder. Maybe they already started this "look nice" trend and I just wasn't paying attention, but I definitely noticed it now. The boys in class started become more competitive at recess as far as sports. I had just finished watching Space Jam that morning so I wanted to show my MJ dribble skills off. Too bad I was too short to grab the rebound.

Fourth Grade

The shoe era took off to a whole new level. While some kids, like Weird Sergio, wore Heelys, others wore Air Force Ones. Those were still trending from last year and now some of my friends caught on to wearing Jordans. Not everyone could afford Jordans and that is what made you cool in 4th grade. What also made you cool in the fourth grade was if you could run fast and if you could hang out past the time that the streetlights came on. I was still sporting New Balance because unlike every other parent, my father wasn't getting me Jordans. I was basically wearing anything my brother was wearing. I was happy just because I wasn't weird like Sergio.

Fifth Grade

Adidas made a strong appearance on everyone's feet as well as Timberland boots. Hip hop caused a strong influence on what people wore on their feet. You hear it in a song from your favorite artist, that's what people were going to wear, like the popular songs "Air Force Ones" and "I Got Me Some Bapes". Every trend didn't catch on, but some trends never died. The Air

Force One Nike brand continued to flourish; Jordans continued to flourish; and Adidas continued as well. Classes got slightly harder so I focused more on having good grades than anything.

Eighth Grade

My guy Nick started the trend of wearing Vans at my school all because of the popular rap group The New Boyz. Nick had his red Vans that he bought right before the school year started. His shoes made a bright impression every time he stepped in the room. Vans weren't popular amongst the African American culture because Vans were a skateboarding brand shoe. After seeing The New Boyz Jerk Dance, everyone hopped on the bandwagon to become the next best jerker. Some people didn't dance because they weren't coordinated enough, but they still wore Vans. Even though Vans were the trend at the moment, my classmates still kept pairs of Jordans and Air Force Ones in the backs of their closets.

Ninth Grade

Coming into high school, the guys and girls found designer apparel more appealing to wear to school. Along with Jordans, there was a new addition for the guys to have Gucci belts, Louis Vuitton belts, and Ferragamo belts on their waists. The freshman guys only did it because they saw the upperclassman guys doing it. It showed that they had money, but most of the people who wore designer were asking their friends for money. Jordans were a must, but wearing a high quality brand shoe was something that also made you relevant too. Shoe brands like New Balance, Nike, Adidas, Puma, Timbs, and Converse were decent to wear. Practically wearing anything else made people consider you lame. It's a shame that people think like this because I had so many friends who were actually great people and they didn't have the best shoe on their

feet. I accepted them for who they were because of their personality. One of my good friends named Roberto always came to school with these old Reebok shoes on. I treated him like he was my best friend in the whole world. Everyone else didn't accept him like me.

Tenth Grade

The amount of time people spent on being cleaner than everyone else was ridiculous. I started to notice that people buying white shoes of all kinds; Adidas, Nike, Jordans, even Timberland boots. It's extremely hard to recover dirt marks from white shoes, so the ones who wore white were rich enough to replace the same shoes when they got dirty. Instead of white shoes, I was more into a darker colored shoe. I preferred my shoes to be either navy blue or black. Anything else was crossing the boundary line as far as continuous extensive care.

Twelfth Grade

At this point certain people had about twenty pairs of shoes in their closets. I had about four pairs of shoes, and I was still cooler than most of the rich kids. Growing up I realized that it's not about who got the newest shoes; it's about personality. The younger generation came in with money and the same thing was happening all over again. Popularity was being based upon who had the most money to buy more of the better name brand shoes. Wearing bogus shoes to school meant that you would get humiliated and laughed at. Little did they know, the ones with the "bogus" shoes got better grades than anybody who made fun of them.

Prom Night

I arrived at the scene and I saw some of the most elegant, lavish footwear known to man on this night. I peeped some Christian Louboutin, Versace, and Louis Vuitton. Everyone was so well dressed; I felt like I was about accept an award on the red carpet. I wore a white suit complemented with a mint green vest and bow tie with white Stacy Adams dress shoes. The night of all nights, and I spent it dateless, but I still had a good time. Every female had pumps or high heels; it was great. I got a chance to show off my cool dance moves and I got to drive my Granny's Van. My night was smooth, but the next day I discovered that a good friend of mine died in a car accident on Prom Night.

Epilogue

Over time, different tastes started to affect how people perceive you, but actually what defines you is substance. A real friend doesn't care about what you wear on your feet. It's about how good of a friend you are towards people in the long run. I never switched up on a friend over any type of shoe. I still had friends who wore the off brand Jordan Flights, which is a torn down version of the regular Jordan shoe. It didn't bother me. What bothered me is how cruel people are towards others who don't have enough money to keep up with today's trends. A nicer society comes from fairness and equal opportunity and some people weren't given that chance.