

Don't Call Me Generation X

Don't call me "Generation X,"
call me a child of the eighties

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published in The Reflector
January 20, 1995

I am a child of the eighties. That is what I prefer to be called. The nineties can do without me. Grunge isn't here to stay, fashion is fickle and "Generation X" is a myth created by some over-40 writer trying to figure out why people wear flannel in the summer. When I got home from school, I played with my Atari 2600. I spent hours playing Pitfall or Combat or Breakout or Dodge'em Cars or Frogger. I never did beat Asteroids. Then I watched "Scooby Doo." Daphne was a Goddess, and I thought Shaggy was smoking something synthetic in the back of their psychedelic van. I hated Scrappy.

I would sleep over at friends' houses on the weekends. We played army with G.I. Joe figures, and I set up galactic wars between Autobots and Decepticons. We stayed up half the night throwing marshmallows and Velveeta at one another. We never beat the Rubik's Cube.

I got up on Saturday mornings at 6 a.m. to watch bad Hanna-Barbera cartoons like "The Snorks," "Jabberjaw," "Captain Caveman," and "Space Ghost." In between I would watch "School House Rock." ("Conjunction junction, what's your function?")

On weeknights Daisy Duke was my future wife. I was going to own the General Lee and shoot dynamite arrows out the back. Why did they weld the doors shut? At the movies the Nerds got Revenge on the Alpha Betas by teaming up with the Omega Mus. I watched Indiana Jones save the Ark of the Covenant, and wondered what Yoda meant when he said, "No, there is another."

Ronald Reagan was cool. Gorbachev was the guy who built a McDonalds in Moscow. My family took summer vacations to the Gulf of Mexico and collected "Muppet Movie" glasses along the way. (We had the whole set.) My brother and I fought in the back seat. At the hotel we found creative uses for Connect Four pieces like throwing them in that big air conditioning unit.

I listened to John COUGAR Mellencamp sing about Little Pink Houses for Jack and Diane. I was bewildered by Boy George and the colors of his dreams, red, gold, and green. MTV played videos. Nickelodeon played "You Can't Do That on Television" and "Dangermouse." Cor! HBO showed Mike Tyson pummel everybody except Robin Givens, the bad actress from "Head of the Class" who took all Mike's cashflow.

I drank Dr. Pepper. "I'm a Pepper, you're a Pepper, wouldn't you like to be a Pepper, too?" Shasta was for losers. TAB was a laboratory accident. Capri

Sun was a social statement. Orange juice wasn't just for breakfast anymore, and bacon had to move over for something meatier.

My mom put a thousand Little Debbie Snack Cakes in my Charlie Brown lunch box, and filled my Snoopy Thermos with grape Kool-Aid. I would never eat the snack cakes, though. Did anyone? I got two thousand cheese and cracker snack packs, and I ate those.

I went to school and had recess. I went to the same classes everyday. Some weird guy from the eighth grade always won the science fair with the working hydro-electric plant that leaked on my project about music and plants. They just loved Beethoven.

Field day was bigger than Christmas, but it always managed to rain just enough to make everybody miserable before they fell over in the three-legged race. Where did all those panty hose come from? "Deck the Halls with Gasoline, fa la la la la la la la," was just a song. Burping was cool. Rubber band fights were cooler. A substitute teacher was a baby sitter/married woman. Nobody deserved that.

I went to Cub Scouts. I got my arrow-of-light, but never managed to win the Pinewood Derby. I got almost every skill award but don't remember ever doing anything.

The world stopped when the Challenger exploded.

Did a teacher come in and tell your class?

Half of your friends' parents got divorced.

People did not just say no to drugs.

AIDS started, but you knew more people who had a grandparent die from cancer.

Somebody in your school died before they graduated.

When you put all this stuff together, you have my childhood. If this stuff sounds familiar, then I bet you are one, too.

We are children of the eighties. That is what I prefer "they" call it.

Ways to Tell If You're Stuck in the 80's

1. Your fondest childhood memory is when Skippy got his head stuck in the banister.
2. You relax by putting on your legwarmers and dancing to the "Flashdance" soundtrack.
3. You think the two Coreys are "totally awesome."
4. You're still bitter that Wham! broke up.
5. Punky Brewster is your hero.
6. You type all of your term papers on a Commodore 64.
7. You still resent your parents for not installing a dumbwaiter in you house like Webster's.
8. The only video games you play are Frogger and Pac Man.
9. You're building your own Clockwork Smurf.
10. Your summer attire is Jellies and Jams.
11. A-ha's "Take on Me" is still your favorite video.
12. You consider yourself truly, truly, truly outrageous, much like Jem and the Holograms.
13. You wonder why more people don't wear high heels, Jordache jeans and lacy white ankle socks.
14. You call all motorcycle cops "Ponch."
15. Every time you go to the beach you look for Snorks.
16. You're still upset Madonna and Sean broke up.
17. You know who Stinky Sullivan is.
18. You work out with "Get in Shape Girl."
19. You want to be Molly Ringwald when you grow up.
20. You enjoy dancing on the ceiling and wearing your sunglasses at night.
21. You know who Loverboy is.
22. You think there should be a Kids Incorporated original cast reunion.
23. You think of Janet Jackson as "that girl who used to date Willis."
24. You can sing the theme song to Small Wonder.
25. Every time you see a fountain you want to dance around it and yell "Fame!"
26. You still have a shoebox full of Garbage Pail Kid cards.
27. You write your congressman asking him to introduce a bill to make "Born in the USA" the national anthem.
28. You still use your Snoopy Sno-cone Machine.
29. You know it's not "comma, comma, comma" it's karma.

30. You stay up nights wondering what Bastian's mother's name was in the "Never-ending Story."
31. You have nightmares about the Peculiar Purple Pieman of Porcupine Peak.
32. You still practice your Care Bear stare.
33. You know that girls just wanna have fun-un.
34. You can name all of the Wuzzles.
35. You harbor a secret dream of being slimmed by Alistair.
36. You can do the Safety Dance.
37. In your spare time you are writing the "Breakfast Club 2."
38. You like to "connect the dots, la la la la!"
39. Someone mentions Jennifer Beals and you don't say "Who?"
40. Your prized possession is a collection of "Return of the Jedi" Shrinky Dinks.
41. You know whose number is 867-5309.
42. You get depressed thinking about Anthony Michael Hall's career.
43. You're starting a write-in campaign to MTV to bring back Remote Control.
44. You drink Diet Coke because Max Headroom told you to.
45. You consider Jo vs. Blair the major philosophical conflict of the 20th century.
46. You have a duck phone and ride around your house on a little train.
47. You want to be one of the Solid Gold dancers.
48. You still watch things on Beta.
49. You want to change your name to Rio and dance on the sand.
50. Your favorite proverb is "some like it hot and some sweat when the heat is on."
51. You always waited for the Sweet Pickles Bus to visit your house.
52. Your favorite party game is Hungry, Hungry Hippos.
53. You know that "Weird Science" was a movie before a tv show.
54. You saw the New Kids on the Block when they were Tiffany's opening act.
55. You liked Tom Hanks better when he was a crossdresser.
56. You know which Hollywood Square Jim J. Bullock was in.
57. You practice getting in and out of your car through the windows.
58. You have the tendency to trun up the collar of your polo shirts.
59. You're still wondering who really was the boss.
60. You know what the "P" in Alex P. Keaton stands for.

61. You keep asking your teacher's if instead of the quiz you can take the physical challenge.
62. You organize weekend tournaments of TV tag.
63. You still drink New Coke.
64. When you watch "Terminator 2" you wonder where Vincent is.
65. You know ALF's real name.
66. You never go out for a night on the town without frosted blue eyeshadow and feathered bangs.
67. You can name all of the Thundercats.
68. You got a hankerin' for a hunk of cheese.
69. Everything in your wardrobe is either fluorescent or pastel.
70. Your musical inspiration is Sonny Mann.
71. Sometimes you just want to shout, shout, let it all out.
72. You're planning a dream vacation to Mepos.
73. You use your Speak and Spell to phone home.
74. You know the original members of Menudo.
75. Sometimes out of the blue you just got to shake your love.
76. When you're stuck in traffic you tell your car to engage Turbo Boost and are surprised when it doesn't talk back.
77. You remember when Vanessa sang karaoke to "Locomotion."
78. You know that Mr. Steele functions best in an advisory capacity.
79. People are constantly gagging you with spoons.
80. Your idea of appreciating ancient cultures is "Walk Like an Egyptian."
81. The only thing you know about the Nazis is that they threw Indy to the snakes.
82. You still use your hair crimper before going out on a hot date.
83. You hatch plots to break Murdock out of VA hospital.
84. You know which five people Serpentor's DNA came from.
85. You have the "We Are the World" on 45.
86. You're still sending death threats to Mr. Rubik.
87. You can feel St. Elmo's fire burning' in you.
88. You watch NYPD Blue thinking, "Well they're no Crockett and Tubbs, that's for sure!"
89. "Goonies" is your favorite movie of all time!
90. You get thrown out of classical music concerts after interrupting a Mozart piece yelling "Ooooo, rock me Amadeus!"
91. You still mourn the death of Rudy's goldfish, Lamont.

92. If someone says, "Who are you gonna call?" the first thing you say is "Ghostbusters."
93. When someone calls for someone more than once in public, you start saying, "Bueller, Bueller, Bueller."