

Sad sack droopy drawers

This of course comes from the famous [South Pacific](#) by Rodgers and Hammerstein. However, the latter part refers to boys and their shorts (or pants). It would seem that the older or darker the kids are, the lower the shorts. There have been many times I have had to tell them to pull the shorts up. Of course, just like runners in the hall continue when the teacher is out of sight, the shorts will come back down as well- I'm realistic. But I tell 'em anyway. I recall one black student who had his pants down past his buttocks. He had to have a belt buckled tightly or they would have finished the journey down unhindered. I have had another student tell me it was okay to wear his shorts so low because he was black. But of course it isn't just black students, but as I said older students like to do this as well, as I witness in eighth grade especially and some of the high school leaders in church. In fact, during the camp meeting a few weeks ago the camp (and high school) director flatly said the shorts stay up or he will give them a rope to hold them up.

I have gotten softer on this lately and will usually tell them if they want to wear them low, they have to compensate with a long shirt. Basically, as long as I can't see what color their underwear is I'm happy. The problem is when they sit. The amount the shirt covers is a lot less than when they are standing, so I constantly have to say thing like, "I'm pretty sure I'm not supposed to know you are wearing red plaid underwear." They usually take the hint and pull them up.

This fashion I am told started in prisons, where guys would show they are "available," if you know what I mean. How this got out of the prisons and to our youth I have no idea, but sadly it shows why black boys tend to do it more as they are vastly over-represented (by demographics) in jail. It can't be comfortable. I certainly know how uncomfortable it feels when I forget to put on a belt and my pants are just a bit

loose. I suppose they do it for the same reason adolescents do most things adults don't like- because the adults don't like it ("heh, heh- I have to live in the old man's house following his rules, so I'll get him back by doing stuff he hates!").

Then there are the younger boys. Usually there is no problem with them, but today I ran into the opposite case. I was in a very low LD class today and one of the students had his shorts pulled *up* as high as possible. This is often seen on more, ah, *senior* men (covering up the *tire*- I have been tempted to do the same, which I resist by picturing what I would look like to others if I did!) but not so much on kids. Perhaps part of what made it look odd was that the shirt was tucked in, another rare occurrence among our youth. In any event, I didn't say anything as no one had a problem with it and at least the shorts pulled in this direction didn't reveal what was underneath.

Another trend I've noticed is age affects the size or length of clothing as well. With the girls the clothes get smaller (see [this picture](#) for an example that is sort of an analogue to this topic- it shows undergarments by year, but the outerwear by age follows the same trend...) and with the boys the shorts get longer. Girls seem to want to reveal more as they get older (and they wonder why teenage sex is a problem) while the boys want to reveal less. I think this was true in the eighties too. Some I know didn't wear shorts at all no matter the heat. My brother was one of them.

Well, I think I will stop here. Some of you are already wondering about me, a guy, writing about something like this. Yes, I'm done. Definitely done.

Middle school

Middle school is an interesting age. Not quite child anymore, but not completely adolescent either. It is a transition state. Many teachers stay away from this age, but I don't mind it so much, depending on the class. They can range of course from not-a-problem to watch-your-back depending usually on the area. It is my belief that the family income has a lot to do with it, though really only because it leads to parental involvement. With low income families, kids are often left to their own devices much of the time when not in school, and I think we can all, by experience □, attest to the fact that young pre/adolescents don't always make the best choices in life, especially when they are starting to listen to their peers more and the parents become even less active in their kids' lives, meaning if they were already less active then that almost leaves it at, "Hello son/daughter" and little else. I am not saying this to blame these parents, as they are often just trying to make ends meet with sometimes two or three jobs and are often the sole parental figure doing it. I am merely trying to explain why sometimes students are very hard to handle.

Another group of kids that tend to be a problem are ELL kids. Often, but not always, low income is an issue here as well, but another factor causes these students to be a problem. That factor being that the school system they come from is far more disciplined and strict than our own. When they come here then, they see school as something to blow off. Detention has no effect as they just see it as a break instead of a punishment. Some see getting in trouble as an opportunity to see the teacher get steamed because our options are limited compared to back where they came from. They learn, in other words, to play our system knowing serious consequences (as they would see it) can't happen because then the *teacher* would be in trouble for improperly discipline. Typically I just

warn these students, maybe move them, but other than that just leave a note to let the regular teacher deal with the problem. There is actually a school where I no longer accept ELL jobs.

Anyway, I just bring this up because for the last two days I was at middle schools. Thursday was my unexciting science day I already wrote about, and yesterday I did language arts/life skills at another school. Apparently they were short a sub at that school because they gave me an extra class one period and I know they were doing that throughout the day for that one teacher- every class period had a different sub. I actually worked with all three grades as a result. This teacher's (the main one I subbed for) normal schedule had language arts with 7th grade and life skills (cooking, sewing, ironing, washing clothes...) was with 6th grade. My added class was with 8th grade. It was certainly more interesting than the day before.

Well this post is getting really long so I think I will just wrap it up now. I will probably post tomorrow about drama this week at church and how my teaching goes in the morning- I will be teaching about Saul. The king, not the pharisee turned Apostle.