

# Were We Smarter Back Then?

- Shanna Smith

We've all done it— look at an old photo and think, “What possessed me to wear that?” I can name a few: the gauchos that took over my wardrobe in elementary school; the turquoise-and-pink crocs with sparkly Jibbitz I wouldn't leave my house without. As trends change, many of us shudder at the thought of our old wardrobe and decide that we are much more stylish now. But maybe we had it right before.

Pants have gone through a whirlwind of change in the past ten years. Picture thin, baggy pants that dance when the slightest movement is made. They come in all colors, but most prefer darker shades. The width of a girl's thighs doesn't matter; the airy pants sway loosely around a girl's legs as if they couldn't care less about her body type. They go crazy in the wind—leaping back and forth effortlessly—yet they are loyal to their wearer and never expose an inappropriate amount of skin. What you are imagining is gauchos.

Now picture girls' pants in 2013. Skinny jeans and leggings— the tighter the better. In all colors: light, dark, bright, and pastel. Some girls are modest and wear looser-fitted pants; others feel no shame.

I must put a disclaimer in here that not all teenagers dress this way, and there is certainly nothing wrong with the style choices of the girls who do.

Anyway, think of the easy mobility, the comfort, and the airiness of gauchos. Now take skinny jeans, a much-thicker, stubborn pant material that hugs a girl's thighs, only allowing stiff movement. The buttons on the bottom can make sitting down uncomfortable and, most importantly, a girl's thighs are much more noticeable, which introduces the risk of self-consciousness.

Yes, maybe skinny jeans “look better”—or at least we believe they do at the moment. But now do you understand what plagued you to wear those baggy pants in the would-have-been cute family photos? And pretend you live in 2005 instead of 2013. Aren't those baggy pants actually kind of cute?

Here's an even bigger former-fad: Crocs. Look at any picture of me from 2004-2006 and your eye won't miss my bright, plastic, sandal-like shoes punctured with intentional holes to allow for ventilation. Jibbitz, small shoe charms that fit in the holes of the shoe, covered my Crocs. The idea is kind of like charms on a charm bracelet; you buy the shoes first and then you acquire charms one-by-one, often putting them on your birthday list. The back straps are cool, too; you can switch backings with someone who has different color Crocs to allow for even more color. The result was a bunch of young girls wearing multi-colored Crocs everywhere they went. Embarrassing, right?

It shouldn't be. The inside is covered in elevated dots, sort of like the braille writing you might see on hotel door room signs. This sounds strange and almost painful, but it couldn't be more

comfortable. Also, the back strap flips upwards, so you can wear them backless when you're playing outside with your friends. Then, if you want to go on a long walk, you can put the straps back down. You don't even have to worry about Crocs getting damaged in the water; they're waterproof! Look at all the options you have with Crocs: swap straps, put in Jibbitz, raise the strap, splash in puddles! All my flip flops let me do is break the Y-shaped strap. And then end up in the garbage.

So, as weird as it sounds, maybe there's intelligence in former trends. And maybe society will go back to these trends one day. I would like to point out that both Crocs and gauchos are still desired by consumers and are still being sold; they're just not seen as often. In other words, they might be paving the way for a comeback. So the next time you ask the inevitable, "What was I thinking?" after seeing your old style choices, remember: there was a completely adequate reason for it.

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