

High school reunions can be competitive sport. At early reunions, classmates compete with each other about jobs and incomes; at the 25th it's spouses and children. After that, they brag about grandchildren and vacation homes, while regarding, with envy or glee classmates waistlines, hairlines, wrinkelines. With a 50th reunion comes a new phase of competition - the one described by Woody Allen when he said, "Ninety percent of life is just showing up."

It is said there are Three Ages of Woman, Youth, Middle Age and "you haven't changed, but change is the name of the game. Graduates of the class of ~~45~~³⁸ were before the pill and the population explosion, which, inexplicably, went hand in hand - - so to speak.

We were before television, before penicillin, polio shots, antibiotics and Frisbees, before frozen food, nylon, dacron, Xerox, Kinsey. We were before radar, credit cards and ball point pens. For us, time-sharing meant togetherness, not computers or condominiums. A chip meant a piece of wood, hardware meant hardware and software wasn't even a word.

We were before Israel and the United Nations. Before India, Pakistan, Indonesia, the Phillippines and Iceland were independent nations. And, God help us all, we were before the cataclysm of nuclear fission.

We were before pantyhose and drip-dry clothes; before ice makers and dishwashers, clothes dryers, freezers and electric blankets; before Hawaii and Alaska became states; before men wore long hair and earrings and women wore tuxedos.

We were before yogurt, Ann Landers, plastics, the 40 hour week and the minimum wage. ~~In our time, closets were for clothes, not for coming out of, and a book about two~~ young women living together in Europe could be called "Our Hearts Were Young and Gay." We were before Grandma Moses. We wore Peter Pan collars and thought a deep cleavage was something butchers did.

We were before Rudolph the Rednosed Reindeer, Snoopy, before DDT and vitamin pills, disposal diapers, Jeeps, and the Jefferson Memorial and the Jefferson nickel.

When we were High School students, pizzas, Cheerios, frozen orange juice, instant coffee and McDonalds were unheard of. We thought Fast - food was what you ate during Lent.

We were before Boy George, Citizen Kane, J. D. Salinger, the Beatles and Chiquita Banana; before FM radio, tape recorders, electric typewriters, word processors, Muzak, electronic music, disco dancing - - - and that's not all bad.

In our day, cigarette smoking was fashionable, grass was mowed, Coke was something you drank and pot was something you cooked in. We were before day-care centers, house-husbands, computer dating, dual careers and commuter marriages.

We were before coin vending machines, jet planes, helicopters, interstate highways.

In ¹⁹³⁸~~1945~~ American schools were not desegregated; blacks were not allowed to play in the major leagues; and the D. A. R. (Daughters of the American Revolution) would not allow Marian Anderson to sing in Constitution Hall. "Made in Japan" meant junk; and the term "making out" referred to how you did on an exam. In our time there were 5 and 10 stores where you can buy things for 5 and 10 cents. For just one nickel you could ride the bus or make a phone call or buy a coke, or buy enough stamps to mail one letter and two post cards. You could buy a new Chevy coupe for \$659.00 but who could afford that in ~~1945~~¹⁹³⁸?

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