



Back To School

May 31, 2007 By [Shawn Decker](#)

It's Thursday, 8:15 AM. I'm getting ready to go back to high school. Wish me luck.

10:52 AM

I should have written more earlier, but some things never change; I was always running late for school.

Went to speak at a local high school today. The morning announcements have really gone high tech since I was there. There was a live telecast of sorts on the TV, with students reading the news. Things about returning books, attending meetings. There were graphics and awkward segues between pieces, which must be tough. When I was in school, we just spoke over the intercom, I can't imagine worrying about looking stupid *and* sounding stupid at the same time.*

Of course, the more things change the more they stay the same. I was transfixed by the strides that have been made in high school morning announcements, but the students still ignore them just the same.

Unitard

Speaking without Gwenn is a tricky proposition, particularly to a high school English class. There's just something self-conscious about the entire way public school is set up, and as I exited my car? where I feel safest of all**? I was immediately riddled with self-doubt. "Where's the main entrance?" I asked a couple of kind students, who helpfully pointed me in the right direction.

Once I got rolling, I was OK. I read a few bits from the book, and talked about all kinds of things in a hodge-podge fashion. The topic of high school wrestling came up, and I made a faux paus of sorts. "What's that thing they wear... a unitard?"

"... A SINGLET!", the assumed wrestler grunted.

Now, usually I'm not for the banning of words, but this is the second time in my life that I've heard the word "unitard" cause havoc. The last time was during a game of Catchphrase with friends. You get a word, and have to get your team to say it as fast as possible, passing off a hot potato buzzer before it goes off on ya.

Well, my gay and straight friends and I were having a great time, until my friend came face-to-face with the word. Frantically, her mind raced, and she could only muster, "... it's what gay people wear!" (She meant Freddie Mercury and "leotard", not that it particularly helps out some of this stories inherent flaws.)

Everyone laughed, it was good time but that word. That damn word. It's gotta go, there's nothing good that come of the English language or our civil discourse as straights, gays, and wrestlers so long as "unitard" is hanging around on the tips of our well-meaning tongues.

Alright, I'm going back to sleep. Will post again after my next class this afternoon.

4:57 PM The Death of MySpace

My old friend Denial has been hanging around recently. Whenever Gwenn and I speak at colleges, and I ask if anyone has a MySpace page, a few hands go up. Then Gwenn asks who is on Facebook, and the place erupts. Denial would say, "Nah man, MySpace is cool. All the musicians, porn stars and high school students are on there."

Well, I can't speak for the latters, but after speaking to the second class today, I had to accept the obvious. MySpace? No hands. Facebook? 90% of the students had a page. "I think they got it mixed up," Denial said. "They thought you said "Ice Age"."

Well, either way all of us on MySpace are facing an Ice Age if we don't adapt and move to warmer locales. It's not that I'm leaving here, but I will belatedly set up a MySpace page so millions of people will know my book exists.

I can't keep doing this for the pornstars alone, you know.

"High five!" Denial.***

Positively Yours,
Shawn

***In 1992 Shawn Decker sang a line from Modern English's song, "Pillow Lips", over the intercom during the morning announcements.**

****Cheap Gary Numan reference**

***** Yes, Shawn left Denial hangin'.**

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

<http://beta.docker.poz.com/blog/back-to-school>