



Written by [Wallis W. Wood](#) on March 2, 2012

When Spoiled-rotten Children Grow Up

In case you've never heard of it (I hadn't either), this is a special-edition basketball shoe that Nike introduced just days before the NBA All-Star Game. The House of Hoops by Foot Locker at Florida Mall had ordered a bunch of the shoes and announced that they would be sold (at \$220 a pair) on a first-come, first-served basis at midnight.

Hundreds of people showed up long before the sale was to begin. Police were called to maintain some semblance of order. But well before the sale began, several hundred people rushed the door.



Law enforcement officers in riot gear pushed back the crowd. The store decided not to open that night at all. By Friday morning, Foot Locker announced that it was canceling the All-Star weekend shoe release at six other malls because of "safety concerns."

So a near-riot broke out because some spoiled brats couldn't wait to get their hands on a \$220 pair of tennis shoes. Isn't that ridiculous?

Frankly, we shouldn't be surprised. This is just one more consequence of the entitlement philosophy our children have been taught. It's been going for several generations.

Let me begin the litany of who's to blame with these kids' teachers. What sort of messages have they been sending their young wards? How much of our history have they been teaching them? What kind of character have they been building?

Nationally, teachers' unions collect hundreds of millions of dollars every year from mandatory dues. They spend a ton of it lobbying for laws they want passed. Or, as they've proven in dozens of States, battling legislation they oppose. They are an almost perfect example of the "I want mine, and I want it now" philosophy — no matter the cost to the overburdened taxpayers who must foot the bills.

The teachers' unions defend a status quo that produces one million high-school dropouts a year and a graduation rate of less than 50 percent for black and Hispanic students. What sort of education do the kids who do graduate have? How much of this country's history have they learned? You don't want to ask. Heck, half of them can't write a literate sentence or give the correct change for a \$20 bill.

But let's not let the parents off the hook. How many of them are delighted to let the schools take all responsibility for training and teaching their young? How many try to give their kids everything they want, from the latest cell phone and video game to \$150 jeans and \$200 tennis shoes?

In fact, how many of those same parents bought more house than they could afford, then decided that somebody else had to pay for their mistake? Five of our largest banks have been pressured into creating a \$26 billion kitty to help bail them out. Of course, this won't begin to paper over the problems. So you can expect a lot more hands to be out, demanding that someone come to their rescue.

And let's not forget about one of the most feared and powerful voting blocs in this country: our senior



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citizens. Any politician with the temerity to try to change some of the entitlement programs that are bankrupting this country is sure to face some of the most vicious and dishonest advertising campaigns this country has ever seen. Remember the Democrats' response to Paul Ryan's efforts to reform Medicare? Their "throw grandma off the cliff" TV ad was a classic of the type.

The demagogues on the Left learned long ago that if they can portray an opponent as wanting to "eliminate Social Security" or "slash Medicare," they are almost certain of victory. So what if they are creating obligations this country can't afford to keep? They want political power now — no matter the obligations that will be passed down to our children and grandchildren.

The "Age of Entitlement" isn't limited to a bunch of spoiled teenagers threatening to riot if they can't get the brand-new basketball shoes they want. You'll find plenty of members in every age group in this country.

How much of a stake do these people have in preserving and protecting the system, when they pay almost nothing into it? Nearly half of the adults in America don't pay a penny in income taxes. What do they care how much your taxes have to go up to provide them with the goodies they are certain they deserve?

To quote an old phrase, anyone who promises to rob Peter to pay Paul can always count on the vote of Paul. And my friends, there are an awful lot of Pauls and Paulines in this country now.

And there are a lot of people willing to promise them almost anything in exchange for their votes.

We'll find out in November who will win the next round in this ongoing struggle.

Until next time, keep some powder dry.

Chip Wood was the first news editor of *The Review of the News* and also wrote for *American Opinion*, our two predecessor publications. He is now the geopolitical editor of *Personal Liberty Digest*, where his *Straight Talk* column appears weekly. This article first appeared in [PersonalLiberty.com](#) and has been reprinted with permission.



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