

How I Invented the Designer Jean in 1968 (Memoir)

by Rick Rofihe

Before I was 18 years old, in my small hometown of Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, Canada, I invented the designer jean, about a decade before Calvin Klein and Jordache—and even Gloria Vanderbilt.

But the men in our family clothing business dismissed my idea, and wouldn't back me. So I bid a sad good-bye to Mother and headed for the big city—Halifax—where, three years later, and, still months shy of my 21st birthday, I established two publishing companies, including Anderbo Books, today anderbo.com.

Then somehow I got it into my head to be an actor—eventually I got to New York in 1978, and was soon in the personal class of Lee Strasberg. But, one morning before class, Lee's wife Anna, seeing me with my face buried in *The New York Times*, said, "How can you read the newspaper with so many interesting people around you?"

I left acting; soon my writings were appearing in the *Times*, the *Village Voice*, *SPY*, *The New Yorker*, *Grand Street*, *Open City Magazine*, and on Mr. Beller's *Neighborhood*.

But as the years went on, designer jeans were—are—all around me, and it's not unreasonable to think of what might have been.

Oh, look—there goes another pair now....

