

This Just In: Status Symbols are Still a Symbol of Status!

The Goyard Trend on Campus, and the Class Divisions it Reveals

by Zoe Hansen, October 2024

Goyard's signature interlocking "Y" pattern has become inescapable on Syracuse University's campus since the French fashion house's painted canvas and lambskin tote bags rose to fashion stardom. Propelled by the online excitement of fashion influencers, Goyard's [St. Louis](#) and [Artois](#) styles gained enormous traction among consumers in the past few years, driving up the amount people pay, and [Google search for them](#).

Starting at ~\$1600 (if you can even get your hands on one), Goyard's popular tote styles are a status symbol that is out of the question for many consumers.

There's no way college students are paying those prices though, right?

Although they don't make [Business Insider's list of the most commonly duped bags](#), the complex pattern and simple construction of Goyard totes make knockoffs difficult to spot and easy to produce.

These convincing counterfeit versions make Goyard's designs attainable to fashion lovers across tax brackets.

Speaking through WhatsApp messages with a sales rep from [Birkin Craft](#), a Guangdong, China-based counterfeit bag seller, I learned that demand for knockoff Goyard totes is on the rise. However with their prices starting at \$460, even the cost of a knockoff Goyard is prohibitive to many consumers.

I hear so much online discourse about Gen Z breaking the stigma around buying fake designer, so when I set out with my \$17 Amazon schoolbag to ask my fellow students about their Goyards, I was on a mission to learn where my peers were finding affordable dupes. I wanted to hear their thoughts on being a part of the changing culture around these status symbols.

Strolling around campus in search of Goyard-toting students, I hit the jackpot at Schine student center.

My first victim was Basha Perkins, who I found tucked away in a corner working studiously with her colorful Goyard St. Louis at her feet. She accepted my interest in her bag and told me her parents gave it to her for Hanukkah last year, confirming the bag was real.

When asked about her bag's price, she said that's something she should probably figure out, but because it was a gift, she doesn't know.

Next, I spotted Dylan Gottfried in the line for [Corelife Eatery](#), her smaller kelly-green [Goyard Artois PM](#) tucked under her arm. She was surprisingly friendly, considering I'd just cornered her as she waited to get food, and she told me her mom bought her the bag as a part of this year's back to school shopping.

"A bunch of girls in my sorority all have this bag and I really liked it so I was like 'I *have* to get it,'" Dylan said. She chose the green version to add a pop of color to her generally neutral outfits.

Zhe Zhong's [neutral-toned Goyard St. Louis tote](#) caught my eye as she worked on her computer at a table outside of Schine. As soon as she said she'd gotten the bag while in Paris with her mom I knew I'd come across another authentic one.

"I was choosing between the [Louis Vuitton Neverfull](#) and this, but I feel like it was a little over-done for me, like I've seen it for way too long, so I wanted to be different," Zhong said.

Inspired by the videos of niche fashion TikTokers, Zhe got this bag two to three years ago when the trend was in its infancy. She said it cost between \$1,000 and \$2,000 at the time, but the item's trendiness has driven up the price significantly since then.

She also mentioned a tax writeoff for buying designer bags in Europe that I was too poor to understand.

I noticed Genae Horst's Goyard bag as she sat on a bench sharing pizza with a friend and enjoying the sunny day. Kindly accepting my intrusion, Genae told me she was surprisingly able to find her bag used for only \$200 on Depop, with its authenticity papers included.

After her first semester on campus last fall, Genae said she realized her school backpack stood out against the dominant culture of tote bags at S.U., inspiring her to make the switch. Her Goyard was a Christmas gift from her parents.

Everyone I spoke with expressed their support for the fashionistas who opt to buy a knockoff Goyard, “if they can’t afford it or whatever,” but everyone I spoke with had also opted to buy the real thing.

As I headed home, reflecting on the surprising experience I’d just had, I passed the main bus stop on College Place, and doing a quick scan, I noticed a distinct lack of the interlocking “Y” of Goyard bags among the crowd of public transport-users, especially compared to the influx I’d encountered at Schine.

I guess the Goyard-toters of S.U. have also opted not to take the bus.