



A GENTLEMEN IN STYLE ON AND OFF THE FIELD, DARION WEATHERSPOON

👤 Rachel George ⌚ 3 weeks ago 📁 Bossy, Interviews, The Bosses

Since the release of the *How to Be a Gentleman* etiquette book by Enitan Bereola II five years ago, men have often battled with the ideal of being the ultimate gentlemen. What to say. How to say it. When to say it. How to behave. But many leave out one thing, what to wear; what is the “gentleman look?”

Darion Weatherspoon, a Clark Atlanta University student athlete, plans to help other men find their “gentleman look” on and off the field. His hands are good for intercepting passes and stitching loose hems.

The Las Vegas native plays the defensive back position for the Clark Atlanta University Panthers; learning culture and tradition from an HBCU perspective while juggling practice and his course studies in Fashion Design.

He was groomed to be a successful gentleman, made to speak with poise, walk with dignity and to never embarrass himself. “Being a gentleman is not all about what you wear, it’s a lifestyle,” he explained.

His acquired love for fashion came in the seventh grade, styling his typical collar shirt uniform with sweater vests and bow ties. Fun fact: he has over 40 bowties. “As men, we are a dominant force and we have to look like such,” he notes.

He is self-restrained and full of excitement and knowledge, including all the makings of a true renaissance man at 21-years-old. He buys his clothing from Goodwill, Salvation Army, Lucky Exchange and any other unique thrift shop in Atlanta, adding his own alternation and accessories.

Weatherspoon knew early on that he wanted to be a suit manufacturer. He is currently working to enhance his knowledge of men's tailoring to soon open his own custom men's tailoring shop – providing every customer with a custom suit made by hand with some of the best material.

“We as a society, we have to understand fashion is cool, but the suit will never leave,” he said. “You will always have an appreciation and love for suits. The knowledge of how to dress like a gentleman is slowly fading away and I want to change that.”

Head to the following page to hear about Darion's business, Style By Spoon, and what he has planned after graduating.

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A Gentlemen In Style On And Off The Field, Darion Weatherspoon



So tell me about your business #StylebySpoon?

Darion Weatherspoon: With all the publicity that I've gotten, I realized that I really need to focus on my business. I really want to brand myself and make myself an influencer. You know, I'm starting to get into men's fashion blogging, which I'll begin releasing my own articles and things soon, once my website is done getting set up. I just got my logo created and it's in the process of getting trademarked.

Have you been overwhelmed with orders?

Darion Weatherspoon: Since the first article came out, I feel like I've been put under a lot of pressure to produce quality work. I feel like it may have put me under pressure to where I feel like now I need to be the best. I've been pushing hard but now I have to push harder.

How did the campus perceive you once you started to receive this mass



amount of publicity? Were you afraid of how others would perceive you playing such a manly sport and majoring in fashion?

Darion Weatherspoon: When I first started getting all the publicity, it boosted my business. A lot of people came to me asking for fashion tips and asking for alterations. It boosted my notoriety on campus. Now I have so many people that know me and I don't know them but they know me because it's [story] been shared. It also boosted my notoriety within the HBCU community because now I'm on [HBCU Digest](#), [HBCU Buzz](#), and receiving support from other schools. It's been a blessing to have this

type encouragement.

As far as the manly sport, that's something I was cognizant of but growing up my mom, Stephanie Arthur, and grandma, Yvonne Arthur, always told me to be secure in himself. So I just had that level of self-confidence; I was secure in myself and knowing who I am. You know, I hear all the jokes but I don't let it affect me because I understood that traditionally this is a field mostly women get involved in. Being a man and playing one of the manliest sports there is, you know, it's going to raise some questions and some eyebrows. But that's what makes me unique. I'm not anybody else, I'm my own man and this is what I want to do for my life.

Talk to us about some popular men's fashion trends. What should guys, I mean gentlemen be wearing?

Darion Weatherspoon: I like the cropped pants look. There are trends that I don't like that, for example, tight fitting clothes. Just because it fits tight

doesn't mean its tailored. I actually prefer more tailored looks, more tapered looks, just not extremely tight clothing.

You talk about signature. What's unique about your brand and your line of tailored suits that's different from what's already out there?

Darion Weatherspoon: There's trademarking going on right now, so I can't say some of the things I will do. With my brand identity, all of my pieces will have the same signature color lining. I have a developer right now, who works in textiles overseas, and he's come up with a nice pattern and that signature look that I want.

Is there any specific line that has influenced your brand or one that's your favorite?

Darion Weatherspoon: The three lines that I'm infatuated with one is overseas in London, [Maurice Sedwell](#) tailoring shop, owned Andrew Ramroop, the first black tailor to own a shop on Savile Row. [Waraire Boswell](#) in Los Angeles, and [Malibu Clothes](#) in Beverly Hills. Those are three brands I pull influence from. I like their looks, especially Waraire Boswell because he does a lot of looks for NBA players and celebrities.

Ok we've talked about men's tailoring. Have you thought about going into women's fashion at all?

Darion Weatherspoon: I've looked into women's fashion and I appreciate the art of women's fashion. I just see myself as more involved in men's tailoring. One of the blessings with coming to Clark Atlanta's fashion program is I know have the capability and capacity to do both but I want to focus more on menswear. I want to be a master in one area. I also see the current downfall of men's fashion and I want to change that and go back to the 50's and 60's looks of fashion.



You mentioned being inspired by the 1950s and 1960s, what about those decades inspired you?

Darion Weatherspoon: Maybe it was the booming 50s, everything was going good with the economy so people were spending money, they actually cared about their appearance and you had men dressing like gentleman. I feel like that culture of respect and carrying yourself like a gentleman enticed me to that era. You get into the 60s, pants start to get more tapered, the European cut started to matter. We started to look at the Italian cut and combining the two. I appreciated the cuts, that was a time period where

dressing like men, behaving like men, and manors of being a gentleman mattered.

Do you see any of those trends coming back into fashion now?

Darion Weatherspoon: Actually, I see the decline and that's what pushes me to dress the way I do more now because I want to set an example that this is how we should dress. I mean, in today's fashion for men, it has become a lot more asexual. You have men wearing, in my opinion, women's garments. The masculinity behind what you are wearing is no longer there. Yeah, you're wearing a button up shirt but it's so loose and so long it looks like a blouse. I believe you should dress and behave like a gentleman, when I say gentlemen it's like a lifestyle. The manors you show, the respect you show to other people, I feel like that's going away in future generations and I want to see that return.

Do you seen yourself educating other men about the importance of dressing like a gentlemen or having that "gentlemen look"?

Darion Weatherspoon: I actually would be interested in developing a forum but as of now I can't take the time. If I can't put my 100% into something at this point, I tell myself don't do it. There's a young man on our campus, he's an excellent rapper from Atlanta, but his style is going to knock you down because what he's wearing is so typical of a rapper. I tell him to look at artists like Outkast, they had a gentlemen look. They dressed appropriately.

Being a gentleman, I believe everyone should know etiquette. That you should always put your lapel pen on your left side, that you should never button your bottom button. Little things like that, that our generation is starting to forget.

What are your plans after graduation?

Darion Weatherspoon: My plans after graduation, if God sees fit, I'll return

home and continue to study and work with the master tailors. I currently work with Gary Franzen Custom Clothing in Las Vegas of Vo's Tailor Shop. Maybe venture into working for some major brands or a brand in California. My third option is to go to London and study abroad with some other tailors. I just want to be a master of my undertaking. The Savile Row Academy runs a tailoring program in London, Andrew Ramroop, and hopefully with acceptance, my plans will take off from there.

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