

E-M-I-L-Y

Did you know, according to <http://www.babynames.it/> the number one most popular baby name in 1999 for girls was Emily? My mom definitely didn't know that--well, I guess she wouldn't have been able to find out until it was too late. I remember not minding much for a while. Six and seven year old me ran around on the playground amongst all the other Emily's with no problem. Each school year I would just automatically assume that I would be called Emily B because there was bound to be another one in my class. And then there was the fourth grade. Once again I strolled into class on the first day to see another Emily; however, what I wasn't expecting was to find *another Emily B*. My teacher took attendance and explained that the other Emily B just moved here and would be joining us in two weeks. Once she arrived, I would be called Emily Bev and she would be called Emily Bay.

I was infuriated! How could there be another Emily B!? Emily B was *my* name and now someone new decides to roll in and just take *it*!? I spent the next two weeks trying to figure out a solution to this. Adding the "B" to "Emily" made my generic name unique. How was I to be unique when there was going to be two of us? My only logical solution was to change something about myself. So, for the year of fourth grade, I spelled my name E-M-I-L-I-E. There is an entire school year worth of papers with the name Emilie Bevacqua written at the top. It didn't make my class stop calling me Emily Bev--it wasn't an official name change-- but it helped me solve my existential crisis. I felt like I couldn't be me without my name being unique and different. Of course my last name was huge part of my identity, but no one gets called by their last name. Emily Bev was a weird, sickening version of my name and I didn't like it being forced upon me. I needed to figure out who I was on my own and if that was Emilie Bevacqua then so it be. As soon as the year was over, I realized how stupid I was for changing the spelling of my name. My mom named me Emily for a reason (which is a whole other different story) and I totally ignored that! I became a proud owner of the name Emily Bevacqua and haven't doubted the name ever since. My name is unique because I make it unique.