SMOKE & MIRRORS

by Paul beckman

There was a time when I was younger that you were either a good kid or a hood. The hoods wore motorcycle jackets, slicked their hair back in a D.A., wore pegged pants and kept their shirt collars flipped up in the back. I wasn't allowed to do any of those things because my mother thought that any or all would turn me into a hardened criminal.

Instead, I wore button down shirts, chinos, had a crew cut and shop-lifted my way through school while the shopkeepers were busy keeping their eyes on the hoods.

These days I wear a flag pin. What does that tell you?

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