

# Which fads did you embrace while growing up?



**M**ost fads are short-lived—thankfully. Any story about them should be short as well. The silliness of my youth needs no more than a fleeting mention. But, some of you may be interested—probably only to have some proof that I may have been less dashing and debonair (for brief moments) than the model of mature respectability to which you have become accustomed.

There were the small bikes with banana seats. I had a large hand-me-down bike that worked, and my parents weren't going to buy me a new bicycle just because it was little. Some of my friends had the Stingrays, and I rode them a few times, but they weren't anything special.

## Jesse Hulse

Clothes fads were easier to fall into. My parent's weren't going to spend extra money for them, but I need pants. I often wore boots and kept having to pull my pant legs over them. Bell bottom pants helped solve that problem. I remember one pair I had in high school, beige with thin brown stripes. A woven cloth belt with a Native American theme was added to the ensemble. Now that I think about it, there was a blue Apache scarf around my neck part of the time. I was a fashion plate.

A friend made me a shirt in her home economics class. I had her make it out of lining material, thin and shiny. The shirt was hot pink with wide, long sleeves and a long pointed collar. Yes, I actually wore it.

Sometimes we had tie days at school. I had a wide necktie with a scribble picture design. Each space was filled with fluorescent colors. That was pretty special, but my favorite ties were some my granddad gave me. Grandma painted them by hand, probably in the 40s; those were awesome.

Hair was a big thing in my teens. Most guys in my school kept their hair short—I grew up in cowboy country. Short hair went with Copenhagen chewing tobacco and beer keggers. A friend gave me a pinch of Copenhagen when we were hauling hay—I nearly fell off the truck. I never knew where the keggers were. Forty some years ago I asked a friend why they never told me

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about the keggers. He said, “Well, you were a good church kid—but mostly we were afraid of your mom.” Sorry, I wandered away—back to the hair. My hair was never very long. I could pull it down over my face, but it didn’t touch my shoulders. Even that was a little long for Elgin High School standards. There was no rule; there was no need. When other guys thought it was too long they took me down and put bubble gum in my hair. Today, that would probably get people suspended from school. At that time, it went completely unnoticed.

Black light posters were pretty common, “Peace and Love” in wild, fluorescent colors. Add a UV light and they were something. My posters were also a defense mechanism. My mom helped me decorate my bedroom about the time I started junior high. When she asked what kind of wallpaper I wanted, I told her I wanted pictures of guns. I thought that was descriptive enough, but she forgot I was over four. The paper she came home with had little boys dressed in juvenile uniforms. Their guns were toys. It looked like it came out of an antique book of nursery rhymes. It stayed on my walls until I went to college. Black light posters were my best solution, and they were plastered all over that wall.

In high school I had a rifle stand on the opposite wall that held eleven rifles. There was one more rifle on the wall along with a pistol. My father stood in the doorway one day looking at my room. He smiled and said, “Looks like war and peace.”

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Protests were all the rage, and we had a sit-in one day. Some of the cheerleaders came to a basketball game drunk, and they were suspended. That was fine with most of the students; we thought they needed to have consequences. Their mothers came to school and cried on the principal's shoulder; all was forgiven. I don't know the details, and after fifty years they don't really matter. The only thing that really mattered was that we had an excuse for a protest.

We lined the hallway at the end of the lunch period and refused to move. Ted and I were sitting together, and Mr. Hendricks walked up to us. Don Hendricks was our shop teacher, with arms that could crush Volkswagens. He gave Ted a fatherly look and said, "Get up son." Ted looked up and said, "No." Mr. Hendricks placed his right hand on Ted's head and repeated his calm words, "Get up son." Ted said, "No." Mr. Hendricks sighed, with his hand still on my friend's head, and said in a voice that left no question of who was in charge, "I SAID GET UP!" At the same time, he grabbed a handful of hair and lifted Ted to his feet. The two of us decided we had made our point and it was time to go to class.