

Please Don't Pimp the Babies

by Lori_Borgman

Another poor misguided soul is attempting to bridge the generation gap. I've long been a proponent of widening the gap, not shrinking it.

Can we all just get along, waving to one another from opposite shores? A generation gap isn't so bad, not really. A gap enables us to have our own space, our own music, our own friends, our own clothes.

Now comes a clothing manufacturer marketing a line of children's clothes that "bridges the generation gap between parents and kids, allowing babies and tots everywhere the opportunity to hit the playground with fresh gear and street cred."

For those of you on the side of the gap accustomed to using real English, gear refers to clothing and cred means credibility.

The clothing company is hoping that parents desperate to be hip will buy shirts for infants emblazoned with "Diva," "Bling" or "Jr. Pimp Squad." Won't that last one make Grandma proud?

Given the choice between a baby tee that has puppies on it and one that screams the wearer is a junior pimp (with obvious hopes of one day not only being potty trained, but ascending to the rank of senior pimp), I'm gonna go with the puppies every time.

Or maybe you'd like to purchase "Baby Beaters" a scaled-down version of the wife beaters, the sleeveless white undershirts Stanley Kowalski wore in "A Streetcar Named Desire." Stanley was the character with a mean temper and a mean right hook, both of which he unleashed on his wife. As though this is a character and style a parent would wish a small child to emulate? Who in the world is a baby going to beat? Stuffed animals? Other babies? The pediatrician?

If we are that determined to drag small children into the rough and tumble world of street smart adults, why stop with clothing? Let's get serious and put bass boosters on the baby monitors, spinners on the Big Wheels and neon lights beneath the strollers. Yes, little ones, yo mamma is getting down!

Not too long ago I saw a well developed young lady, about 14, wearing a tight-fitting pink T-shirt that said "Pimp Me." She appeared to be with her mother. They may have closed the generation gap, but they had yet to address that sizable gap between their ears.

Some of the most spirited discussions I had with my mother were when I was a teenage girl and we stood on opposite sides of the gap regarding clothing. Thank goodness she challenged me to think and served as a challenging adversary instead of trying to become my best friend. I knew a girl in high school whose mother bridged the generation gap and, let me tell you, it was a pitiful thing. Her mother wore blue eye shadow, white leather boots and poured herself into a pair of hip huggers. Not pretty.

Two years ago, Healthtex began using "growing slow" for their marketing message for children's wear. Their goal has been to promote age-appropriate clothing for children - clothes that let kids look like kids. Put another way, more puppies, fewer Jr. Pimps.

Does the idea of not bridging the generation gap when it comes to clothing have any viability?

I was in a department store recently when a voice came over the public address system and said, "Attention, ladies, now on the third floor Not Your Daughter's Jeans." It's a new line of denim for women with curves. Popular?

I was lucky I wasn't crushed in the rush to the escalator.

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