

Life and Art

LIFESTYLES · TRENDS

X hats represent fashion, activism

By PATRICK HEALY
The Tufts Daily, Tufts U.

While bills of rights have documented beliefs of peoples throughout the world, a hat has recently symbolized a powerful ideology that is gaining attention across college campuses.

Designed to invoke memories of Malcolm X, the slain civil rights leader who advocated unity among oppressed blacks, the hats have struck a chord in a new generation of college students — a chord similar to the one his effect had on students during the 1960s Black Power movement.

"The hats themselves symbolize a renaissance among the youth recognizing the importance of Malcolm X," said Lyle Mays, a freshman at Tufts U. who wears one of the hats, which are generally black with a large centered X. "What applies to 1963 applies to 1992 — that is that black people need to get off the streets and get some economic solidarity among themselves."

Gerald Gill, a Tufts history professor, credits trends in popular culture, as well as the power of Malcolm X's messages of racial pride and uncompromising values, as reasons why students identify with the black leader.

According to Gill, in the past five years filmmakers like Spike Lee and rap groups like Public Enemy have used Malcolm's tenets as a basis for their works.

"Over the context of his whole life, Malcolm X can be seen as a strong figure, a role model. Young blacks might gravitate more to him than other black leaders for many reasons," Gill said. He said that conservatives like former President Ronald Reagan, who espoused ideas not always conciliatory to black people, quoted Martin Luther King often. Therefore, he said, blacks may have been turned off to King's beliefs.

Malcolm X spent much of his youth in urban centers like Harlem and served some time in prison. After converting to the Nation of Islam while in jail, Malcolm X wrote several books and became a minister following his release. His message was clear: black unity and defense through violence.

Karen Johnson, operations manager at the African Institute at Northeastern U., said she was "not sure" how to react to the popularity of Malcolm X and the hats.

"I question why certain groups of people would be embracing the



JOHN CHUNG, THE DAILY BRUNN U. OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

A generation of American youths are identifying with Malcolm X.

teachings of Malcolm X, like white Anglo-Saxons... and union types," said Johnson, who owns an X hat. "You have one group of people who understands what the X hat symbolizes, and another group of people wear it because they think it is in fashion right now."

Because of Spike Lee, who owns an X hat, many students have been purchasing the hats. Karla Bounin, an employee at Urban Outfitters in Cambridge, Mass., ascribes interest in the hat more to trend than ideology. "Spike Lee started the whole thing to promote his movies, and people have been buying them up. But other people do want to make a statement by wearing them," she said.

Although the X hat is in vogue, students like Tufts senior Anthony Barfield believe the interest in Malcolm X should be based on the leader's convictions, not on popular culture. "A way of expressing admiration for the man is to wear the hat, the jacket, other paraphernalia," Barfield said. "He is the perfect example of a strong man who stood his ground and stood up for his beliefs."

LIFE AND ART BRIEFLY

Pick up schticks... Before going to college, Lisa Ruskanen received a warning from one of her father's best friends. He said if a young man approached her at a party and said, "Was someone in your family a thief? He stole that twinkle from the stars and put it in your eyes," she had better stay away from him. That line, he said, was in use in the 1960s. Ruskanen's father's friend intended this as a warning, but Ruskanen took it differently. She wondered how many pick-up lines were floating around college campuses these days, especially at her own school, Kansas State U. She began to listen to them at parties and write them down. Now, she has an extensive list pinned on the door of her dorm room. Some of the pick-up lines are seemingly simple, from, "My roommate is out of town," to the innuendo, "That's a nice shirt, but it'd look better crumpled up on my floor," to the lines from an old country song, "If I told you you have a beautiful body, would you hold it against me?"

Some other famous or infamous lines:

- Your pants are so clean, I can see myself in them.
 - Can I see your tan lines?
 - I'm not trying anything. I always put my hand there.
 - Wanna go back to my place and do the things I'm going to tell my friends we did anyway?
 - Do you want to order a pizza and have sex? What — you don't like pizza?
 - Beauty is only a light switch away.
- Does Lisa actually use these lines?
"Just for fun," she said. "It's funny to see the initial expressions on people's faces. Then they usually laugh and tell you one." ■ Tara Hun, *Kansas State Collegian*, Kansas State U.

Breakfast cereals: They're Grrreat

By SUSAN WILLIAMS
Daily Utah Chronicle, U. of Utah

As one of the few remaining extensions of youth, those old favorite sugar-coated cereals are being gobbled up by students across the country.

And some cereals have become such a part of the morning routine, many students can't get through the day without their daily fill. That's the reason Willie Boldt, executive chef for the U. of Utah Union Food Services, has to fill cereal bins with 10-pound bags of Cap'n Crunch every day.

And everyone has an opinion why certain cereals are selling better than others, including Boldt. "You'd be surprised how many adults and college students are watching Saturday morning cartoons," he said.

Phil Gyori, Quaker Oats Co. brand manager, said college students are affected by advertising aimed at children. The fair Cap'n holds about 3 percent of a 200-cereal market. "I think it's got a good-natured, almost a reverent, kind of humor," Gyori said of the Cap'n and his appeal to college students. In fact, Cap'n Crunch was created by the creator of

such personalities as Bullwinkle and Moose.

Randy Shields, a U. of Utah student, said Cap'n Crunch is his favorite cold cereal, and he thinks he is affected by the commercials during Saturday morning cartoons. Although he generally doesn't eat cereal for breakfast, he eats it when he gets the munchies.

But Thomas Spivey, senior food services manager at the U. of California at Berkeley, said the favorite cold cereal of students on his campus is Frosted Flakes. The cafeteria only sells Kellogg's assortment packs. "We've tried Kellogg's and somebody else, and ... Kellogg's was the vote," Spivey said.

Although Tony the Tiger, the Frosted Flakes' spokesperson, is not specifically targeted toward a college market, Karen MacLeod, Kellogg's publicity manager, said students like Tony for various reasons. "He, we feel, communicates vitality and energy," which are associated with youth, she said.

Both Boldt and Spivey said Raisin Bran is another cold cereal favorite of students. But when it comes to the most popular, college students seem to enjoy the cereals their mothers never let them have when they were kids. At the U. of Buffalo, students follow this rule without much variation.



JUDD HILLMAN, DAILY UTAH CHRONICLE, U. OF UTAH

Students at the U. of Utah chomp down 10 pounds of Cap'n Crunch per day. But SSSHHHHHHH. Don't tell their moms.

Cap'n Crunch, Crunchberries (a Cap'n relative), Fruit Loops and Lucky Charms are the most popular cereals. And a few years ago, students at the U. of Notre Dame boycotted meals when the Cap'n was banned from the dinner menu.

Whether the Cap'n or other cereals will attain cult status is still up in the air. "It isn't just something that's happened in a year or two," Gyori said of Cap'n Crunch's success.