

Cheap comfort is important to grunge buyers

Students shy from designers, opt for inexpensive thriftware

By Elizabeth Gamboa
Staff Reporter

Grunge fashion is typified by old jeans, flannel shirts, T-shirts, and Converse All-Star shoes. Although many students at UNL dress this way, most do not consider themselves to be following a fashion trend.

"I think the (grunge) label is completely irrelevant and stupid," said Jason Merritt, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln sophomore fine arts major. "I think maybe with some people it's a trend, and some other people just don't care what they wear."

Nevertheless, grunge fashion became a major movement last fall when top designers like Ralph Lauren began marketing flannel-like silk shirts for \$150. Since then, most major designers have shown tattered jeans or flannel shirts in their collections.

"I think it's popular among rich brats who go and spend \$50 on a flannel shirt when you can buy one for 75 cents at a thrift store," said Jennifer Mapes, a UNL senior advertising and history major.

But the commercialization of grunge failed.

Designers lost money and grunge fashion disappeared from the runways. Rather than wearing overpriced, artificially-aged clothes, many students shop at thrift stores for inexpensive, comfortable clothing.

"I usually do shop at thrift stores. It's cheaper, and I don't really like the clothes you can get in department stores," Aaron Shear, an undeclared UNL freshman, said.

Goodwill Thrift Store employee Amy Miller said, "I can understand

why college students shop at thrift stores, because the clothes are cheap. I guess people buy grunge clothing because it's practical."

At Goodwill, flannel shirts cost approximately \$2.99, and jeans run from \$2.99 to \$3.99. Goodwill seems to have recognized the popularity of grunge clothes. In the South 56th Street location, flannels are displayed in one section along with vests, which are also popular sale items. The store has not suffered from the waning popularity of grunge fashion.

"I think thrift stores are actually doing pretty well because of grunge fashion," Miller said. "Sales are up. People are more interested in buying cheap clothing than something that's going to go out of style in two weeks."

The Salvation Army Thrift Store is also frequented by college students. Its flannel shirts run from 99 cents to \$2.99; pants run from 99 cents to \$2.49; and jeans run from \$3.79 to \$5.79.

"Flannel shirts are very popular sale items right now — and, of course, jeans. We sell a lot of farmer-type bib overalls, and long coats and, of course, T-shirts," Capt. Rubottom, Salvation Army Thrift Store administrator, said.

The Ozone is a popular thrift store that opened last year. Its prices are a little higher than the bigger chain thrift stores. However, many students find the prices reasonable because the clothing has already been picked through, making it easier to find wearable items.

"I sell basically comfortable, worn clothing," owner Jim Stevens said. "Some of the clothes we sell, like used Levis, you can't find in thrift stores."

"In most other thrift stores, you



From left, Carie Christianson, Brian Fitzgerald and Matt Klasler pose on the links statue at Lincoln High. The clothes they are wearing are examples of styles available in local thrift stores.

Jon Waller/DN

can only find flannels in small sizes, and we sell larger ones."

At the Ozone, flannel shirts cost approximately \$5, although this price is still considerably lower than a new flannel shirt, even at a discount store.

The Rialto Extra specializes in vintage clothing.

Rialto employee Carla Avena said, "People are buying a lot of jeans, a

lot of work shirts with names on them, and bowling shirts and dresses with flower prints."

Vintage flannel shirts from the 1950s can be found at the Rialto for approximately \$12; old jeans run from \$9 to \$12; and work shirts with names sell for \$5, while those without names sell for \$4.

Since college students tend to have

little money and little time to worry about what to put on in the morning, thrift stores continue to profit, and old, comfortable clothing continues to be popular.

"Grunge probably goes back a long time. People have been dressing sloppy for a long time," Shear said. "I think it's just been labeled grunge in the last few years."

Play provides glimpse into young black community

By John Fulwider
Staff Reporter

The producers of "Our Young Black Men are Dying and Nobody Seems to Care" hope their play will help the audience see the world from a different point of view — that of young black men. It will be performed tonight at 7:30 p.m. in the Nebraska Union Ballroom.

"Our Young Black Men" is the seventh program to be put on by the University Program Council this semester. Kim Spurlock, event director for "Our Young Black Men," said UPC chose the play both for its multicultural focus and for the reputation of Living the

Dream Inc., the group performing the play.

"As event director, I thought that there needed to be more multicultural programming and black programming. One reason was because they came in February and did 'What About Black Women' and a lot of people thought the play was good ... so they decided to try this for this year," Spurlock said.

Jeffro Johnson, one of the three actors in the show, said that some of the issues presented in the play could not be found in any of the mainstream media.

"The play will show the audi-

ence things that they cannot hear on the radio, see on television or read in the newspaper. We are opening a window to the black community and letting people take a peek for an hour," Johnson said.

The play is primarily a drama. "Our Young Black Men" is a drama with a humorous vein. It is not meant to be funny. ... It will make you want to smile, while at the same time you are wiping away a tear," Johnson said.

The play will be one hour long, and divided into two acts. Each act has several individual short skits, such as "I Was Killed on Prom Night," "I Found This Bag of

Drugs" and "Immune to Love." Johnson said the skits covered nearly every issue important to a young black male, including surviving, getting a job and losing a loved one to suicide or violence.

But both Johnson and Spurlock said the most important part of the show was not the play itself, but the 30-minute discussion afterward.

"You discuss your feelings about the play — not whether it was good or bad — but what you got out of it," Spurlock said. "And so it's a lot of interaction with the audience. And the audience can ask them questions about any-

thing." Spurlock said the audience would benefit from seeing "Our Young Black Men."

"I think this will give the audience a better view of what really goes on, not only in the United States but in Nebraska too, ... with black-on-black violence, and gangs, and AIDS," Spurlock said.

Johnson had a word of advice for the audience:

"Bring your heart and it'll definitely be fuller when you leave."

Tickets for "Our Young Black Men" are available at the door for \$3 for students and \$5 for non-students.

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