



Back details are important (Photographed by Iona Askins)



He's jaunty in a Robert Truth t-shirt (Courtesy of the Haberdashery)



He's tough with his panama and cane, bold with his suit

## Fop returns with cane, hat, tight pants, vanity

By CHRISTINE WALDEN  
The fop is back and boy, he's a dandy. He carries a cane and tilts his hat. His shirts are snug; his pants, tight; his shoes, nothing but the best and polished.  
Suave and debonair he may be too concerned with his looks, but he looks good. And vanity of men for their clothing is a relatively new concern.  
This year's fop is different, though. He's young and kinky. His cut is European, his look is lean, hard and decidedly sexy. He's con-

cerned, not with the latest Bill Blass or Cardin suit, but the latest from Robert Truth or Boulet or Malcolm Hill.  
And he is setting a trend that casts aside convention, replacing it with a Bohemian sophistication.  
By DAY he starts with a t-shirt. Its sleeves are mere extensions of the torso and end above the bicep. He tucks that shirt into belted, just below the belly-button trousers. In moods of real daring he ties a scarf at his neck.

He may prefer something more tropical and less binding. So the shirt is silk and lightweight. It barely meets the top of his pants and the sleeves join the torso with a puff. It's covered with print, varying from geometrics to seagulls in flight to palm trees on sandy islands.  
At night his dandiness dazzles. He wears white and puts it with colorful but sheer (or at least slinky) shirts. And he never, ever buttons the top three or maybe four buttons. Instead a gold med-

allion dangles on his chest.  
His suit coat is always fitted and stays closed with a wrap or one button. His pants don't bag, they hug and they stop at his spectator shoes without a cuff.  
WHEREVER HE GOES, either out for a night or play for a day he puts on wrist bangles, scarves and hats. He plays with colors and fabrics. Most importantly he wears what he wants to wear.  
He may be caught in a trend but he still has his own style.

America's new fop is the same guy who wore blue jeans two years ago. But blue jeans get boring and it wasn't until recently that local upstairs and cubbyhole boutiques began to offer the best from Montreal, Toronto or London.  
Robert Melton, part owner of the Haberdashery in Birmingham and something of a fop himself, said customers are "young people who want to look good. We don't really get the college students because they don't have the money. But the young, well-to-do subur-

ban kids are buying the clothes."  
Testimony to the rise of the fop is a recent fashion show at the Latin Quarter in which men's fashion got equal play to women's. And men's fashion is equally exciting, from one-piece mechanic suits to sleeveless, boldly and brightly patterned t-shirts.  
The return of the fop is refreshing. He is taking a fashion trip that eliminates the dowdy, staid look of the brown suit syndrome. And he's having a great time in the process.

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