

# The New Moneylife

Guide to Car Leasing  
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The lesson is not to lease

Bulls Lose Opener at Home  
Sports Sunday

Music's \$16.98 CD Scam  
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Sunday

# Chicago Sun-Times

\$1.25

Chicago Suburban \$1.00 Elsewhere

Late Sports Final

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## MALCOLM

In The '90s

A New Generation Discovers Him  
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Marketing The Man And His Message  
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Photo of Malcolm X by the Associated Press

## Suburban Crime Up

### Rises in Cook, Lake; Decreases in Du Page

By Phillip J. O'Connor  
Staff Writer

in Oak Park, 22 percent in River Forest and 15 percent in Evanston.

Major crime rose in three of the six Chicago area counties during 1991 and violent crime statewide was up 8.2 percent over the year before, new figures from the Illinois State Police show.

"Everyone is pointing the finger at the economy," said Art Baker, chief of detectives in Evanston. "However I don't know if that is the full reason."

Violent crime was up in some suburban areas, often fueled by more robberies, but the over-all picture was a mixed bag. Some suburbs recorded double-digit increases in crime, while crime dropped in others.

Where Your Town Ranks  
Pages 20-22

Statewide, major crime increased 4 percent in 1991. In the north area, Cook County led the way with a 4 percent increase. Lake County was up 2.8 percent and Kane County 1.1 percent.

What's clear is that many bedroom communities close to Chicago recorded hefty increases, with more modest hikes in outlying areas. Crime was up 41 percent in Elmhurst Park, 22 percent

But crime was down 5 percent in Will County, 2.5 percent in McHenry and 0.4 percent in Du Page.

Statewide, robbery was up 16.8 percent, murder 9.7 percent, aggravated assault 2.4 percent and

Turn to Page 21

## Chicago Tax Hike May Hit \$50 Million

Daley Seeks Property Increase; Page 3



MALCOLM X IN THE '90S

# The Renaissance Of Malcolm X

Almost 30 years after his death, Malcolm X is hot. His autobiography is a New York Times best seller again. His face adorns T-shirts and his one-letter last name graces baseball caps, jackets and other items. And this month, a big-budget picture on the life of the fiery civil rights luminary premieres.

Is the "X-plosion" a passing fad or a permanent movement? The Chicago Sun-Times today takes a look at the reasons behind the Malcolm X phenomenon.

By Lee Bey  
Staff Writer

It's a story Thomas Johnston tells often. He and several customers in a Chicago store were watching TV reports of rioting in Los Angeles last April when someone in the group wondered aloud what Martin Luther King Jr. would have done.

"Forget King," a young brother yelled," said Johnston, 31. "He said, 'Suppose Malcolm X was there.' Then the group just erupted in this chorus of 'Yeah' and 'That's right.' I was just listening because, I swear, most of them couldn't have been older than 20."

Such discussions have erupted in classrooms, on street corners and in homes across the country. Regardless of whether you agree with his philosophies, Malcolm X's surge in popularity cannot be denied.

Many young people especially are embracing the doctrines and image of the man who was a young criminal, became a Nation of Islam minister after his release from prison, and went on to become a civil rights leader.

And just as his political views were shifting—or maturing as some would argue—he was assassinated in 1965 by three gunmen in a New York ballroom while giving a speech.

The Rev. Henry Williamson, national director of Operation PUSH, said Malcolm X's appeal is partly due to his being one of the few African Americans in history admired almost exclusively by blacks.

"His popularity today shows that we in the African-American community choose our own heroes," he said. "And some of those heroes might not fit in the agenda of the white American experience."

The rap music culture has given the "X" explosion a national audience, but the phenomenon is not limited to youths. Some people over the age of 30, black and white, also are re-opening the book on Malcolm.

Meanwhile, stores are restocking author Alex Haley's *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, a 27-year-old book that's again on the New York Times' best-seller list.

Perhaps the biggest proof that Malcolm has hit the big time may be the \$34 million motion picture on his life opening this month and starring Oscar-winner Denzel Washington.

"People are waking up to the fact that what Malcolm said was right," said Tyrell Diggs, 23, of Austin.

"Malcolm wasn't about killing white folks. But he wasn't about us killing ourselves to get white folks to like us, either," Diggs said. "He was about us doing for ourselves."

"And the shame is that it took 30 years for us as blacks to figure that out."

PUSH's Williamson also said America is coming full circle on race relations again.

"In a time of struggle, riots and the Los Angeles rebellion, there is the question of blacks being disenfranchised again," he said. "So we are looking to the second force in the civil rights movement and that was Malcolm."

The 6-foot-4-inch Malcolm X first drew notice in the 1950s as the popular, fiery spokesman of the Nation of Islam, a Chicago-based black religious organization led by the Honorable Elijah Muhammad.

He was born Malcolm Little, in Omaha, Neb. After his father, a Baptist preacher, was slain, apparently by white men, and his mother was institutionalized, young Little lived on the streets of New York by his wits.

By age 20, he was a drug-addicted gambler who stole to support himself. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison for burglary before he was 21. Behind bars, he converted to the Muslim religion and upon



SUN-TIMES Photo  
Nine years after Malcolm X's death, movers carry a portrait of him into the DuSable Museum of African American History, 740 E. 56th Pl.

his release became a minister who rose through Nation of Islam ranks.

He changed his last name to "X" after his conversion, a common practice for Muhammad's followers. The "X" represented a rejection of slave masters' names that replaced African names during slavery.

As quickly as he rose in the Nation of Islam organization, he fell. In 1964, Malcolm X was ousted from the sect by Muhammad, who said the decision was caused by intemperate remarks by Malcolm X concerning John F. Kennedy's assassination.

But in his autobiography Malcolm X hinted strongly that his popularity—and knowledge that Muhammad had fathered children out of wedlock—led to his dismissal.

Early in his career, Malcolm X preached Muhammad's belief that whites were "blue-eyed devils" created centuries ago by a crazed genius named Yacub to plague blacks. And in stark contrast to King's integration movement, Malcolm X supported a separate state for American blacks.

But during a pilgrimage to Mecca in 1964, Malcolm X saw whites and others worshipping together freely. He returned to America proclaiming that he no longer viewed whites as devils and renouncing much of Muhammad's dogma.

He changed his name to El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz following the pilgrimage and founded the Organization of Afro-American Unity. Whites could not join the organization, but he urged them to work within their own race to bring about racial harmony.

His ideological shift, according to some, may have contributed to his death. Shortly after his group formed, he was slain.

Three members of the Nation of Islam were sentenced to life in prison for the murder. Members

## His Views Over Time

"It has always been my belief that I, too, will die by violence."

"All women, by their nature, are fragile and weak; they are attracted to the male in whom they see strength."

"The collective white man had acted like a devil in virtually every contact he had with the world's collective non-white man."

"I have often reflected upon the new vistas that reading opened to me. I knew right there in prison that reading had changed forever the course of my life. As I see it today, the ability to read awoke inside me some long dormant craving to be mentally alive."

"The black man had great, fine, sensitive civilizations before the white man was out of the caves."

"The white man has brainwashed us black people to fasten our gaze upon a blond-haired, blue-eyed Jesus! We're worshipping a Jesus that doesn't even look like us!"



"For the white man to ask the black man if he hates him is just like the rapist asking the raped, or the wolf asking the sheep, 'Do you hate me?' The white man is in no moral position to accuse anyone else of hate!"

"No sane black man really wants integration! No sane white man really wants integration. No sane black man really believes that the white man ever will give the black man anything more than token integration."

"In the Muslim world, I had seen that men with white complexions were more genuinely brotherly than anyone else had ever been. That morning was the start of a radical alteration in my whole outlook about 'white' men."

"In the past, yes, I have made sweeping indictments of all white people. I never will be guilty of that again—as I know now that some white people are truly sincere, that some truly are capable of being brotherly toward a black man."

"I am speaking against, and my fight is against, the white racists. I firmly believe that Negroes have the right to fight against these racists, by any means that are necessary."

"The white man is not inherently evil, but America's racist society influences him to act evilly."

"If I can die having brought any light, having exposed any meaningful truth that will help to destroy the racist cancer that is malignant in the body of America—then, all of the credit is due to Allah. Only the mistakes have been mine."

From *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, as told to Alex Haley





Malcolm X (right) greets Martin Luther King Jr. at the Capitol in 1964. King had just announced plans for "direct action" protests if Southern senators filibustered against a civil rights bill.

He believes the nation's 27 million African Americans would have been better off embracing Malcolm X's philosophy.

"King and the civil rights movement relied on assistance from the oppressor, and that's why I believe it failed us," said Murphy, a billing registrar at Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge.

"All that attitude has done is to breed a generation of welfare recipients."

Murphy said mainstream civil rights organizations should see the Malcolm X renaissance as a public indictment of their abilities.

"No one has had the message that Malcolm had," he said. "The [present-day civil rights movement] is viewed by people my age as a bunch of complacent do-nothings. They can go boycott Revlon for a few jobs; I don't care. They are out of touch. . . . They are part of the establishment now."

Long before Malcolm X approached the popularity his legacy enjoys today, Sebastian Williams, 31, a counselor at Corporate Community Schools of America on the West Side, read the late civil rights leader's writings. Nearly 10 years ago, he bought a record album of a Malcolm X speech.

"I have a son, Garrett, who is 15 months old," he said. "I want to tell him about Malcolm X mainly because he is someone who stood up for something. I want him to look at those historic black figures and say, 'This brother was on the right track.'"

The continuing comparisons between the legacies of Malcolm X and King generate much discussion.

Malcolm X advocated black separatism and didn't exclude violence as a way for blacks to protect themselves if attacked by whites. King supported racial integration and was against protesters striking back when hit in racial confrontations.

College student Benjamin Davis, 21, said he believes most people have unfairly classified Malcolm X as a hater in order to lend credence to King's "gentle" civil rights movement.

"But I say Dr. King didn't represent the interests of all our people, really," Davis said. "He taught us to beg from the government before we were taught to do for ourselves."

The irony of the comparisons is that while King was known for advocating peaceful demonstrations, those protests frequently drew violence. Demonstrations led by Malcolm X—viewed as a man of violence—rarely broke into even minor frays.

Ellis Dodson, 68, a retired postal worker from the Far South Side, is part of a growing group that is re-examining views of Malcolm X. Dodson said he was a supporter of King's movement and he believes its methods were the best route for African Americans at the time. He has watched the Malcolm X resurgence with interest.

"I guess you could say I was afraid of Malcolm X," said Dodson. "Now I wonder if they couldn't have worked together."

"On the one hand, the government has gotten better as far as the way it treated black folk and we can thank Dr. King. But [Malcolm X], I think, was saying that blacks should stick together and we don't. If we did, we would be in better shape."

The Rev. Al Sampson, a Chicago minister, was at King's side throughout much of the 1960s civil rights movement but also supported Malcolm X. He said Malcolm X's imprint on American society should be re-examined, but not at the expense of King's accomplishments.

"I think there should be a healthy balance among our people so they can study both Martin and Malcolm," said Sampson, who was one of only two pastors ordained by King. "There has never been the kind of tension [between Malcolm X and King] that a lot of people outside the movement have believed."

of Malcolm X's new organization suspected that Muhammad had ordered the assassination. Muhammad, who died in 1975, denied involvement.

During his life as a civil rights leader, Malcolm X preached black self-help in ways considered controversial in his time.

He said welfare made blacks "lazy." He spoke scathingly against "integration-mad Negroes." And, though widely seen as a violent anarchist, Malcolm X stressed the importance of voting.

Malcolm X gained the most notoriety for his views about white people.

"Our enemy is the white man," he quoted himself, according to Haley's book, as Muhammad's chief spokesman giving a typical speech. "When you know who your enemy is, he can no longer keep you divided and fighting and one brother against the other. . . . This Caucasian devil slave master does not want or trust us to leave him, yet when we are among him, he continues to keep us at the very lowest level of his society."

Roderick Watts, an assistant professor of African-American studies at DePaul University, said African Americans are now drawn to the candor exhibited in Malcolm X's speeches and writings.

"Politicians are often concerned with alienating or agitating certain segments of the population, so they may not say what they are thinking," Watts said. "Malcolm let the chips fall where they may."

Early in his career with the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X led caravans of Muslims to Chicago to hear Muhammad's speeches at the old Coliseum at 14th Street and Michigan Avenue.

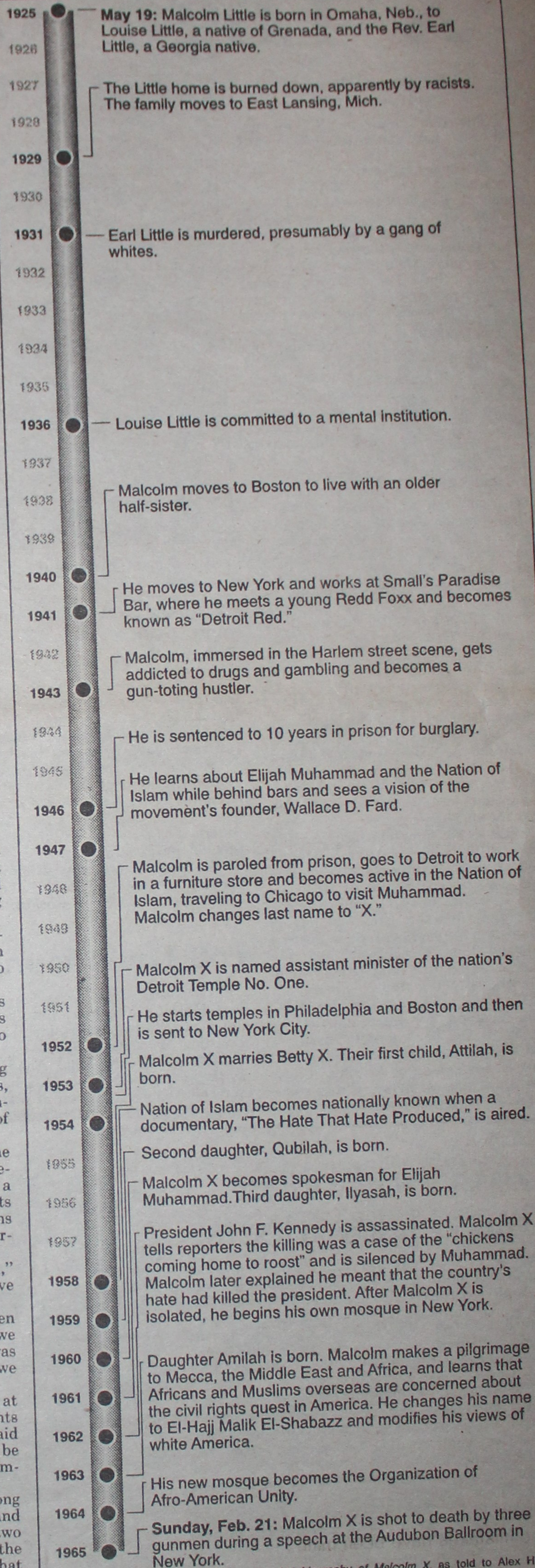
After his death, he remained popular with younger African Americans, notably in Chicago and New York.

When the City Colleges of Chicago decided in 1969 to build a \$21 million campus to replace Crane Community College, 5,000 students and residents polled wanted to name the college after Malcolm X. King, who had died a year earlier, came in second with 500 votes. The school was completed two years later bearing Malcolm X's name.

In 1970, more than 2,500 Chicago high school students walked out of class to mark Malcolm X's 44th birthday. That same year, Chicago black collegians started an effort to change the name of the South Side's Washington Park to Shabazz Park.

Henry Murphy, 27, was only 2 months old when Malcolm X was killed. He lives in a mostly white northern suburb and has a bachelor's degree from a predominantly white college.

MALCOLM X



From *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, as told to Alex Haley.



# 'X' Logo Already Has a Spot

By Bruce Horowitz  
Los Angeles Times

The film "Malcolm X" wouldn't seem to have much in common with "Batman."

But image experts say the "X" that symbolizes the "Malcolm X" movie may already be among the most recognized film logos of all time, rivaling even the eerie black bat used to market Gotham City's caped crusader.

For more than a year, the film's director, Spike Lee, has been wearing the "X" cap just about everywhere. And his high-profile friends, including Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson, also have donned the caps.

"The 'X' has become an instant icon," said Edward H. Vick, chief executive of the San Francisco corporate identity firm Landor Associates. "It doesn't just stand for a movie, but for a passionate, deeply rooted issue: black pride."

Now, Warner Bros. marketing executives, who turned "Batman" into a \$250 million box office hit, are trying to make the omnipresent "X" also represent the almighty "\$." The carefully planned marketing and public relations campaign is unlike that for any previous movie from a black filmmaker, industry executives say.

In part, they say, that is because "Malcolm X," Hollywood's depiction of the life of the slain black Muslim leader, is expected to be of wide interest to audiences of varied races, ages and income levels.

Because the film, which opens Nov. 18, cost so much to make—\$34 million—it basically must be marketed to everyone. But painstakingly so.

In a highly unusual, multipronged campaign, Warner Bros. is relying heavily on promotional clips portray Malcolm X as a relatively moderate man in order to attract older people and whites to the film.

"If people think that the film 'Malcolm X' stands for anger and fists in the air, it will be harder to market," said Joel Wayne, executive vice president of advertising at Warner.

While trying to make whites comfortable seeing the film, Warner Bros. acknowledges that the success of the



Denzel Washington plays Malcolm X in the Spike Lee film.

## 'X' opera mixes idioms of Europe, Africa; Arts & Show Pullout, Page 5.

film depends greatly on its appeal to blacks. Warner Bros. has undertaken an extensive public relations campaign to draw especially young blacks.

Last summer, Lee showed up at the annual gathering of the National Association of Black Journalists in Detroit, where he suggested that African Americans take Nov. 18 off to see the film on its opening day.

"We have set out to position it as a movie for everyone," said Robert G. Friedman, president of worldwide ad-

vertising at Warner. "We assume the film will first appeal to adults over 25, who have more of a knowledge of who Malcolm was. But we also have to find ways to make the film skew younger."

One of the nation's largest black advertising firms, Uniworld Group, was brought in more than a year ago by Warner Bros. to help it figure out how to reach black consumers.

Warner Bros. also developed a study guide for the film to be sent to history teachers in urban high schools in the nation's top 100 markets.

There are even two soundtracks to the film: one, aimed at adults, features period music from the film; the other, aimed at teens, contains contemporary popular music from the movie.

## Poll Finds Young Blacks Recall Hero

Most young black Americans consider Malcolm X a hero, but the approval rate drops among older blacks, according to a new poll.

Eight of 10 young black Americans say they consider Malcolm X a hero—even though only a quarter of that age group—15 to 24—say they know a great deal about him.

In the age group of 25 to 49, nearly six in 10 black Americans consider him a hero. But among African Americans over the age of 50, only one-third give him hero status.

The poll, by Newsweek magazine, queried 501 black Americans last week. The margin of error is plus or minus 5 percentage points.

## Role Rejected by Poitier Basis of Upcoming Film

By Lee Bey  
Staff Writer

They called him Mister Tibbs in 1967. And a year later, he was nearly Malcolm X.

Oscar-winning actor Sidney Poitier, was pegged to play Malcolm X in an ill-fated 1968 movie version of "The Autobiography of Malcolm X."

But Poitier never agreed to the role and the project was not launched.

The script, written by Marvin Worth and the late James Baldwin, is the basis for director Spike Lee's "Malcolm X," which premieres Nov. 18.

Columbia Pictures considered Poitier, who was one of the top 10 movie box office attractions between 1967 and 1969, on the heels of his portrayal of detective Virgil Tibbs in the film, "In the Heat of the Night."

Worth said he peddled the project to Columbia Pictures and Twentieth Century Fox in 1967. It was one of two hot properties he owned, the other being the rights to the life story of another acid tongue, the late comedian Lenny Bruce.

Worth won the rights to Haley's book in 1967 after six weeks of negotiations with the author and Malcolm X's widow, Betty Shabazz. But Poitier wasn't interested and the Columbia deal fell through. Worth and Baldwin considered other actors for the role throughout the 1970s.

"One person, Rupert Crosse, died of cancer," Worth said. Crosse was nominated for an Academy Award in 1974 for his role in "The Reivers."

"But we didn't pin down exactly who we wanted," Worth said. "I felt it would be an unknown [actor] because there weren't a lot of black movie stars then."

Worth said Baldwin envisioned actor Billy Dee Williams as Malcolm X.

"Billy was kind of young at the time," Worth said. "He was just a kid then."

Worth said that 10 years ago he again sought a deal. He said Chicago playwright David Mamet expressed interest in the project. Director Sidney Lumet and comedians Richard Pryor and Eddie Murphy also unsuccessfully sought to make the movie from Worth and Baldwin's script.

"And then Spike," Worth said. Worth said Lee's three-hour epic, with Denzel Washington in the title role, made the wait worthwhile.

"I'm thrilled," he said. "If you believe in what Malcolm said, you know this had to be made. We had to get it out there 'by any means necessary.'"



Sidney Poitier

## Cover No Longer Touts Haley 'Roots'

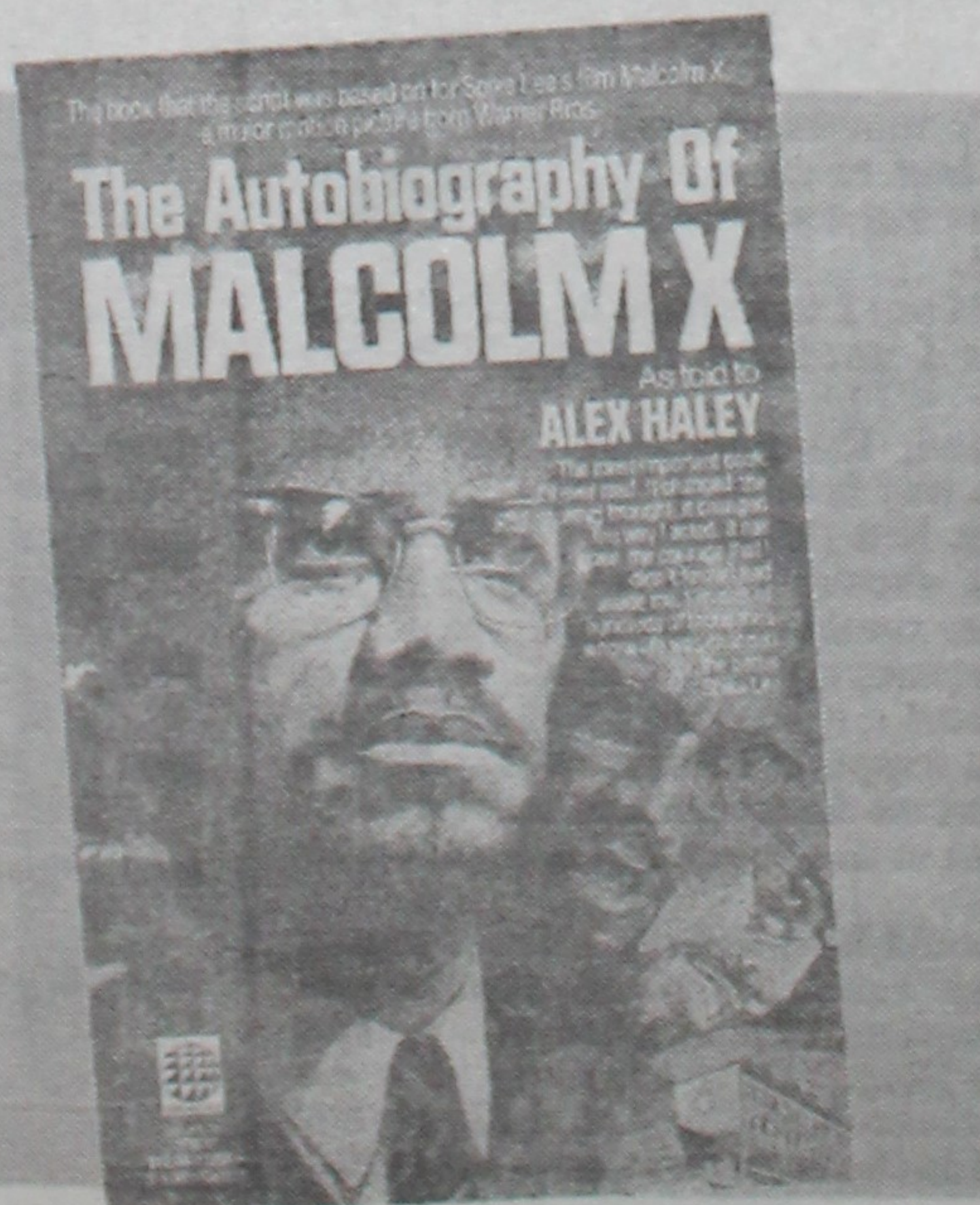
An earlier front cover of *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* notes that Malcolm X told his autobiography to Alex Haley, author of "Roots."

The new front cover doesn't mention "Roots." Instead, it refers to Spike Lee's upcoming movie, which is based on the book. In a blurb, Lee proclaims the autobiography "the most important book I'll ever read."

The publisher, Ballantine, has sold more than 2.5 million copies since 1973. Sales have grown sharply since 1988, when 75,000 copies were sold. Ballantine sold 187,000 copies last year and 317,000 copies in the first six months of this year alone. The \$5.99 paperback is No. 2 on the New York Times' paperback best-seller list.

Ballantine has sold 125,000 copies of a \$12 large-size paperback that it issued in February. A new \$20 hardcover edition, the first since the book was published in 1964, has sold 55,000 copies.

Jim Ritter



## BOOKS

### Books by and about Malcolm X:

- The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. As told to Alex Haley.
- Malcolm X The FBI File*. Edited by David Gallen.
- The End of White World Supremacy: Four Speeches by Malcolm X*. Edited by Iman Benjamin Karim.
- Malcolm X The Last Speeches*. Edited by Bruce Perry.
- The Last Year of Malcolm X, the Evolution of a Revolutionary*. By George Breitman.
- Malcolm X As They Knew Him*. By David Gallen, Alex Haley, James Baldwin, Maya Angelou, William Kunstler and others.
- The Black Book: The True Political Philosophy of Malcolm X*. Edited by Y. N. Kly.
- Malcolm X Speeches at Harvard*. Edited by Archie Epps.
- The Death and Life of Malcolm X*. By Peter Goldman.
- Political Legacy of Malcolm X*. By Oba T'Shaka.
- Malcolm X, In Our Own Image*. Edited by Joe Wood.
- Malcolm, The Life of a Man Who Changed Black America*. By Bruce Perry.
- Malcolm X, A Force for Change*. By Nikki Grimes.



# S. Sider Had 1st-Row View Of Real Story

By Lee Bey  
Staff Writer

Former Chicago schoolteacher Christine Johnson won't go see the new Malcolm X movie premiering this month.

She doesn't need to, she says: She was a friend of Malcolm X and had a front row seat to the last five years of his life.

"Yes, I knew him," said Johnson, 83, a South Side resident. "Whenever Malcolm came to town, he would call me. I don't know what Spike Lee has in his [movie] but everybody these days are saying 'I knew Malcolm,' but they didn't."

Johnson, who changed her name to Catherine X during her stint with the Nation of Islam, met Malcolm X in New York in 1960. He let Johnson set up black history exhibits at Nation of Islam events.

And when the organization needed a principal for its University of Islam, then located at 54th and Greenwood, Malcolm X selected Johnson.

They talked often by telephone between 1960 and Malcolm's death in February, 1965, she said.

"He was a rigid person," she said. "But the things he said during his time with Elijah Muhammad, he really felt."

Johnson said she met with Malcolm X shortly after his falling-out with Muhammad in 1964.

"He came to Chicago during that time and was staying at the Essex House," she said. "There were a lot of people [in the organization] who were jealous of Malcolm. [Muhammad's] children were also jealous of Malcolm. But he didn't do anything against [Muhammad]."

Johnson has a collection of photographs and Malcolm X memorabilia in her home, including an oil



SUN-TIMES/Rich Chapman

Christine Johnson, 83, befriended Malcolm X in 1960.

painting of the slain civil rights leader that was completed before Malcolm X died.

But she takes a dim view of current Malcolm X items, including baseball caps, T-shirts and keyrings bearing the name or likeness of her friend.

"They don't even know what the 'X' means," she said. "The [movie] has all this hyped up. All they know about him is what they've heard about him. But I hope they get some of [Malcolm's] sincerity."



SUN-TIMES/Bob Ringham

Abasi Naptali stocks Malcolm X items at the African American Book Center, 7524 S. Cottage Grove.

## Profiting From a Legend

By Lee Bey and Jim Ritter  
Staff Writers

Be warned: Somebody out there has an idea for a Malcolm X toothbrush.

And why not? A slew of items bear his name or face, including caps, jackets, keyrings, T-shirts, posters and baseball jerseys.

"I've got mixed emotions about some of what's out there," said Marvin Worth, the California screenwriter and movie producer who owns the rights to Malcolm X's life story.

"These are the '90s, I guess," he said. "Just no Malcolm X toothbrushes and hamburger places. And don't laugh. We've gotten requests for that, too."

Malcolm X told writer Alex Haley that he expected to be identified with hate after his death. These days, however, Malcolm X is just as likely to be linked with another word: profit.

But while some Chicago area stores and distributors say sales remain strong, there are signs the Malcolm X fashion trend has peaked.

Malcolm X T-shirts were selling slowly at Montgomery Ward in North Riverside in the last week, even though the price was marked down \$4, to \$9.99.

Dejaiz, a trendy menswear store on the North Side and at Water Tower Place, has stopped selling Malcolm X T-shirts.

One reason for the sales dip may be that the merchandise has been widely sold for several years, so most people inclined to own X-wear already have it. Or perhaps people who have worn Malcolm X gear just to be trendy are moving on to other fads.

But there's still a huge market for Malcolm merchandise, and it may get a boost from the opening of Spike Lee's "Malcolm X" movie this month.

Curtis Management Group, the Indianapolis-based company that controls the rights to Malcolm X's image, said sales of Malcolm X clothing, jewelry, mugs, calendars and other gear could reach \$100 million this year.

Malcolm X paraphernalia still is selling briskly at the African American Book Center, 7524 S. Cottage Grove. There are hats, buttons, posters, audio tapes and videos, along with eight different T-shirts and 12 books by and about the man and his message.

Some of the merchandise sparks controversy. One manufacturer sells a T-shirt showing Malcolm X on one side and a gun and the quote, "By any means necessary" on the other.

Oak Park and River Forest High School banned that shirt, although the school allows other Malcolm X shirts.

Merchandise distributor Dean Townsend sells T-shirts that he said have positive messages, such as this Malcolm X quote: "Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today."

Townsend, who owns Conscious Wear of south suburban Crete, says many kids who wear Malcolm X clothes seem to know little about the man, other than what they've heard in rap songs.

"Unfortunately many of them don't understand the significance of Malcolm X," Townsend said. "They're wearing it because it's faddish."

Contributing: *Newsday*

## Controversy Still Remains

By Daniel J. Lehmann  
Staff Writer

Malcolm X remains an unrehabilitated hatemonger to segments of both black and white America.

His verbal attacks on whites and endorsement of violence, when necessary, to rid society of racism poisoned the well of goodwill, critics say. A change of heart following a trip to Mecca was too little, too late, they say.

"Some say if he lived a little longer, he'd have been as influential as Martin Luther King [Jr.]. I just don't buy that," said Bettye D. Wilson, 65, of west suburban Bellwood. "He turned all these people around into being as negative of a person as he was."

A self-described black Christian, Wilson said Malcolm X fueled the fires of racial tension and mistrust in the early 1960s to the detriment of integration. He since has been propped up to fill

"a void of black heroes," she said.

"There's such desperation for someone to look up to, no matter how bad they were," she said.

The Rev. Grandee Duncan of New Zion Grove Baptist Church, 1900 W. 64th, and president of the predominately black Baptist Ministers Conference of Chicago and Vicinity, said: "I don't think he is accepted as a hero. He stood for some good things such as self-respect, but the hate and name-calling, like 'blue-eyed devils,' was unacceptable.

"He has never been accepted as has Martin Luther King, who spoke with love. Christians cannot accept hating folks, regardless of where the hate is directed," he said.

White detractors say much the same, but like many blacks are loathe to do so publicly.

One white Elmwood Park businessman, a teenager when Malcolm X rose to prominence, recalls

the provocative speeches about whites, racism and black superiority. He also knows of Malcolm X's Mecca pilgrimage a year before his assassination during which he said he realized not all whites were racists.

"Still, there are such better role models, such as Martin Luther King, Ralph Abernathy, Medgar Evers. These people promoted change through nonviolent and noninflammatory ways and not through hate," he said.

The words that scared some and put off others ultimately helped the nonviolence movement, according to Philip Nuden, a sociology professor of racial and ethnic diversity at Loyola University.

"The more violence people think is out there, the more powerful the nonviolence message becomes. . . . Malcolm X embodied the unbelievable level of frustration of African Americans, and all Americans began to pay attention to it," Nuden said.

## Nation of Islam Calls For Self-Sufficiency

The Nation of Islam is an American sect loosely based on the doctrines of the Islamic religion founded in the Middle East.

A central message is that whites are creatures of the devil who have denied blacks their rightful place as the world's dominant race. That message also commands African Americans to form a self-sufficient nation.

The Nation's beginnings usually are traced to a silk peddler named Wallace D. Fard, who tapped as his "messenger" a young man from Georgia named Elijah Poole before Fard mysteriously disappeared in 1934.

Poole changed his name to Elijah Muhammad, moved to Chicago and built an empire of thousands of followers, several businesses and dozens of buildings before he died in 1975.

His son, Wallace, took over the organization, moving the Nation away from racial dogma and toward mainstream Islam. In the 1960s, Wallace Muhammad briefly joined Malcolm X, who had been forced out of the Nation, in Malcolm's attempt to create a nonreligious black nationalist group.

The new direction charted by Wallace Muhammad in the late 1970s and early 1980s angered many of his father's followers, and a lengthy battle over the estate depleted the religion's wealth.

By the mid-1980s, Minister Louis Farrakhan had taken over the Nation and re-created it in the image of Elijah Muhammad.

Tom Brune