Best and worst fashion trends of 2006

by Sharon Mosley

When you have to decide if you're going to wear skinny jeans or if you're going to support the fight against AIDS in Africa, why not do both? It's a great way for fashion companies to put their money where there customers are - in their clothes, shoes and Ipods.

So, for one of the best trends of the year, I'm voting for the "Red" campaign; visit www.joinred.com for more information.

GIVING SOMETHING BACK - Some fashion retailers gave back this holiday season with campaigns like the â€œREDâ€• fundraiser led by The Gap Inc. CNS Photo courtesy of the Gap.If you didn't do red this year, then maybe you did black. Another best fashion trend that returned in a big way. And I wonder why: Most of us - especially the ever-"expanding" group of baby boomers - have never left the ultrachic look of dressing from head to toe in black. Yes, we may splurge on a colorful jacket or handbag, but those of us who have grown up in fashion circles, are all in agreement: You can't go wrong with black. After all, there is a reason that "the little black dress" is a holiday favorite year after year.

And speaking of baby boomers, 2006 was the year publishers finally went public with fashion guides written specifically for those of us who have reached a certain age and no longer want to put up with wearing the trendy stuff just for the sake of fashion, but we still want to look good and not out of touch or out of date. Just search "fashion" on www.amazon.com and you'll pick up some great ideas.

And since Oprah Winfrey seems to have the pulse of much of the fashion crowd's beating on her show, it's only fitting that she have some of the worst fashion faux pas turning up as well, like a whole show designated to fitting bras - on camera - my husband was mesmerized. I say go to your local specialty store and get measured in private - not on daytime TV.

I do like Oprah's decision to host British fashionistas Suzanne and Trinny on many of her makeover shows. They tell it like it is. As they told me in an interview at the St. Regis hotel in New York to promote their latest book, "American women will take it from us since we're British." Go for it; we need it. Thanks to these two, one of the worst trends of our past, the mom jean, that high-top "muffin" jean that many women still insist on wearing, is hopefully on its way out.

But as some of our favorite fashions may seem to be trending out, others are coming on strong, and in much more flattering silhouettes. The new jeans that are taking over the racks at our favorite retailers have stretch and stretch and stretch; that's a good thing.

New high-tech fabrics - we love them. One of the very best trends of 2006!

The celebrity stuff is waning. Britney's belly, Nicole's shoulder blades and what TomKat's baby is wearing

are not really what we all want to hear or read about. We've all got our own problems, and the Hiltons usually don't have anything to do with it, or what we wear.

But there is color at the end of the fashion rainbow. Yes, black may be the ultimate fashionista's fascinations, but every year there are lots of ways to add a trendy touch to your wardrobe through color. Red may be a quintessential hue, but the blues and greens are also an updated way to give your wardrobe punch.

So one of the best trends of the new year? Find your favorite color and stick to it!

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