

GENERATION X

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***You're a 15-year-old mutant expected to join a team of
super-heroes feared and hated by the world they're
sworn to protect.***

***But has anyone stopped to consider that maybe you just
wanna watch MTV?***

Syllabus

People read comics – especially Marvel Comics – because of the characters. More than the costumes, more than the powers, and sometimes even more than the plots, the *characters* are what keep readers coming back every month. Chris Claremont's excellent characterization on *UNCANNY X-MEN* set the standard by which all other X-titles would be measured. Peter David's short run on *X-FACTOR* is still talked about because of his characterizations. And Joe Kelly is getting high praise for his character interactions in *X-MEN*.

In order to get people really excited about *GENERATION X* again, we don't need any earth-shattering events, or a brand new status quo. We just need to get back to the heart of this book – a book about a group of students, learning about themselves, and their place in a world that fears and hates them.

With a renewed focus on the Xavier School for Gifted Youngsters and the introduction of *two new characters*, we can take *GENERATION X* to the next level.

Student Bodies

In order to focus on the school, we must first reestablish that *GENERATION X* is *not* a super-hero team – they're students. Over time, the kids seem to have gotten too complacent, and have been getting along entirely too well. For a super-hero team, this is good. But when have you ever seen an entire class – regardless of its size – get along like one big happy family?

By playing up the fact that these kids are students, and by introducing a couple of antagonistic elements to the school, campus life will prove more fascinating than any mutant threat.

JUBILEE - After her countless adventures with Wolverine and the X-Men, going to school with a bunch of inexperienced kids is about as exciting

and worthwhile to Jubilee as listening to her hair grow. Despite all her bluster, however, when pressed, she'll begrudgingly admit that some of her peers aren't all that bad. While Husk is the center of the kids' wheel, it's Jubilee's rebellious nature that will serve as the catalyst for a lot of their adventures. But for all her daring, Jubilee is hesitant in one specific area: her love life ... or lack thereof. She and Synch have been circling each other almost since they met, and she continually keeps him at arm's length through a careful combination of flirtation and bickering. But when Synch decides to distance himself from the school a bit, and remind himself what it's like to be "normal," Jubilee will realize that sometimes you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone.

HUSK - Whereas most kids her age fear and hate mutants, Husk has spent most of her life dreaming about being in the X-Men. While Jubilee claims she's the student most dedicated to Xavier's dream, Husk actually better fits that bill. It's this dedication and ambition that has shaped her into a young "leader" of the Gen-X kids. She'll deny it if you ask her, but she's really the linchpin that holds the group together. And whereas Husk is a pillar of strength to her classmates in terms of both academia and adventures, when it comes to matters of the heart, she's got feet of clay. She's drawn to Chamber, but his self-esteem problems have been too much to deal with, and she begins to feel shallow when she finds herself attracted to Reach, a handsome new student with none of Chamber's hang-ups.

CHAMBER - The quiet, self-conscious Chamber most exemplifies the need for the Academy, as he truly cannot fit in with society – neither physically nor emotionally. More than any of his classmates, he really yearns to be normal ... or even *pass* for normal. So Synch's decision to spend more time with "normal" kids causes a serious rift between the two boys. Also, Chamber has romantic feelings for Husk, but can't ever get comfortable enough with himself to truly let his guard down. He'll come to regret this hesitation when he gets a rival for her affection in the form of Reach, whose striking appearance and suave manners immediately play on all of Chamber's insecurities. This subplot will serve to galvanize Chamber, and get him to stop moping around about the cards he's been dealt, prompting him to fight for what he wants out of life.

SYNCH - When your only mutant power is to synchronize yourself with *other* mutants' powers, what would happen if you distanced yourself from other mutants? That's the question Synch starts asking himself. He grew up a very normal, well-adjusted kid in St. Louis, and he'll realize he *misses* being *normal*. It's this longing that will motivate him to attend a local public high school, while living on the Academy grounds. This change will cause a rift between Synch and his classmates – especially Jubilee and Chamber – as they feel he's decided he's better than them, or that he's embarrassed to be a mutant. By showing what a young mutant experiences in a "normal" environment, the contrast demonstrates the

usefulness and necessity of the Massachusetts Academy. This new environment will also put Synch in a dangerous position when he joins an environmental group that is *much* more than it seems.

M - Due to Larry Hama's revelations about M's true origins, we've essentially got a clean slate for her now, since M was never really M to begin with! This "new" M is haughtier and more self-centered than ever, and her antagonistic relationship with Jubilee and Husk will be played up. She'll find a new friend, however, in Reach, whose similar aristocratic upbringing appeals to her. While Synch makes a conscious effort to start hanging out more with normal kids, M will find herself entranced by a clique of girls from Salem who are anything *but* normal – in fact, they're *witches*. As M becomes closer and closer to these girls, her classmates will begin to wonder whether this is the *real* Monet St. Croix they're seeing for the first time, or if she's fallen under an unholy influence.

REACH - Our *brand-new* character hails from Keflavik, Iceland. Benidikt Hilmarsson is everything Chamber *isn't*: handsome, charismatic, self-confident ... and a bit shallow. His mutant power allows him to create "warp fields" (small teleportational portals) that allows him to transport himself – or parts of his body – across distances he can either see, or is already familiar with. Hence he can throw a punch into a warp field and have it connect with someone across the room; or he can teleport his entire body from the Academy back to Iceland. So far, Reach can only use his power on himself, but it's theorized that with further training, he'll be able to use his warp fields on other people and things. While he's not a bad person, per se, Reach has no desire to be a super-hero, or fight for mutant equality. He's attending the Academy strictly to get more control over his powers. Reach easily makes friends with M upon his arrival at the Academy, and forms a strange bond with the new co-headmistress, Adrienne Frost, who sees vast potential in him.

Faculty

We'll meet another member of the Frost family when a chunk of Emma's assets are lost in a stock market crash, forcing her to turn to her elder sister, Adrienne, for assistance in funding the academy. Adrienne, a corporate raider with a reputation that rivals her sister's, has been looking for a new challenge, so she agrees to help fund the school ... on one condition: that she be made co-headmistress. Like their younger sister, Cordelia, Adrienne is also a mutant, and her thoughts are shielded from Emma's psi-scans.

By contrasting Emma against an older, even *more* devious counterpart, we force her into a new role, thus taking the character to a new level. She's no longer the romantic sparring partner for Banshee, or just the enigmatic mother figure to the kids. With the addition of Adrienne, we put Emma's morals to the test. Previously, Banshee always held Emma in check, but now Emma is the one holding Adrienne in check.

EMMA FROST - Emma isn't evil, she's just a winner. When she sets her sights on something, she's out to win, at all costs. In the past, those ambitions put her in opposition with the X-Men, but now that her only ambition is to give these kids the best education, training, and protection they can get, the kids should consider themselves lucky that she's on their side. Previously, Emma was able to cut herself off from her emotions, and project an image of the cold headmistress to her students. But with the arrival of Adrienne, Emma is faced with someone who not only knows that she *has* emotions, but knows how to push her buttons, as well.

ADRIENNE FROST - While she has the mutant ability of psychometry (the ability to "read" the history of any object she touches), Adrienne never had any use for the mutant / human conflict, and instead concentrated on three things: money, power, and pleasure. She's lived a long, prosperous, jet-setting life as a corporate raider, and welcomes this new position at the Massachusetts Academy as a chance to establish some roots and get to know her kid sister again. She has no qualms with bringing a cold, real-world approach to her dealings with the students, and sees no reason to sugar-coat anything. In fact, she will see nothing wrong with occasionally implementing "field trips" for the kids that conveniently put the kids into conflict with her business rivals. It will quickly be established that Adrienne's no stranger to the Marvel Universe when the mysterious mercenary Paladin collapses on the Academy's doorstep after failing to complete a "job" for her: he'd had been hired to retrieve the ancient sword that killed her lover (which she wants to use her psychometric talents on, to relive his last moments).

Extracurricular Activities

Unlike their elder counterparts, X-FORCE, the Gen-X kids haven't yet been jaded by the real world; their idealism remains untarnished. And it's this youthful idealism that fuels the kids' adventures. Whether it's Jubilee's rebellious streak or Husk's desire to turn the class into X-MEN JR., the Gen-X kids won't be at a loss for action and adventure any time soon.

It's important to note that the Gen-X kids aren't crime-fighters. They don't monitor worldwide events, looking for wrongs to right. In the tradition of the Claremont / Byrne run on UNCANNY X-MEN, the kids' adventures will be character-driven, and will spring from events in their various lives. Upcoming villains include:

HUNTER BRAUN - Braun is a man with a mission: the elimination of all technology. Determined to bring the world back to the dark ages – where his mastery of alchemy will make him a god – he's set himself up as the head of the international Green Belts, a rapidly-growing organization dedicated to limiting the effect of technology on the fragile environment. Having developed an elixir to retard his aging, Braun has learned the fine art of patience, and he doesn't expect the older generation to ever accept

his radical changes. But the younger generation – who comprise the membership of the Green Belts – are still forming their world views, and are still malleable. They can be shaped to embrace his new world order. Braun will come into contact with the Gen-X kids when they ambush his home in an attempt to retrieve the sword that killed Adrienne's lover. And he'll continue to cross paths with the kids when Synch innocently joins the Green Belts.

THE RISING SONS - This Boston street gang is made up of a team of *brand-new* teenage superhuman outcasts, who've decided that if society is going to fear and hate them, it's damn-well going to be for a *reason*. They're the antithesis of the Gen-X kids -- whereas the Gen-X kids hope to change and improve the way mutants are viewed by society, the Rising Sons have decided to accept their fate as freaks ... and live up to it. These rather directionless kids will later be given a purpose, as well, when Hunter Braun recruits them to be his enforcers.

SALEM'S SEVEN - Mandy, Jordan, Elyssa, Gennifer, Tanya, and Mallory are more than just a regular high school clique – they're *witches*. Inspired by the infamous history of their hometown, these six teenage girls have formed their own little coven of witches, and they will exhibit a bizarre sway over M, who rounds out their septet. As the girls' fascination with the occult grows, so does their lust for power.

THE WENDIGO - When Jubilee convinces her classmates to take an unsupervised, *unauthorized* long weekend in the Canadian North Woods, she never expected they'd run into a group of hikers on the run from a very hungry Wendigo. Seriously out of their element – not to mention overpowered – the kids face an even bigger challenge when neophyte sorceress M attempts to cure the Wendigo, but instead transfers the curse onto Husk. Now the Gen-X kids must stop an invulnerable, bloodthirsty monster without hurting their teammate.

Drop-outs

Three members of the existing cast will leave the book for various reasons, thus paving the way for our new characters to join.

BANSHEE - A call from a noticeably-weak Moira MacTaggart prompts Banshee to take a sabbatical from the school in order to spend some time with her on Muir Island.

PENANCE - The St. Croix twins that are imprisoned within the form of Penance readily elect to accompany Banshee to Muir Island, in the hopes that they might one day be cured, and be free to return to their sister, M.

SKIN - Skin's past finally catches up with him when a dogged Los Angeles detective arrives at the Academy, with a warrant for Skin's arrest. The

detective claims that Skin is wanted for the murder of two teenage gang members in East LA. Emma successfully hides Skin for the time being, and once rid of the detective, forces Skin to finally tell the truth. It seems Skin was part of a drive-by shooting, but he didn't actually do any of the shooting. He can't prove this, however, and doesn't expect his former homies to come forward and clear his name. Rather than let Emma mind-wipe the detective, Banshee opts to take Skin with him to Muir Island. That way, Skin can continue to get training, but will be far enough away so that the LAPD won't find him.

Parents' Day

While the Gen-X kids are independent, when you're in your mid-teens, your parents are a big part of your life ... whether you like it or not. Having established what strong personalities the Gen-X kids have, a stand-alone issue devoted to Parents' Day will go a long way towards showing us what forces *shaped* those personalities. And for orphans like Jubilee (and Husk, if her mother doesn't survive her illness in upcoming issues of X-FORCE), being reminded of what you've lost always makes for good drama.

Summary

In conclusion, I know that with the key ingredient of character-driven adventure, I can help GENERATION X reach its full potential. I see tons of promise in the Gen-X kids, and I'm thrilled to be given the chance to tell their story. Thanks for opportunity!