A display cover for a graduation cap includes: a central portion formed of a stretchable material, the central portion supporting one or more indicia-forming materials; and an edge surrounding the central portion and defining an opening with a surface area smaller than a surface area of the central portion, at least one of the central portion having an at least partial curve such that an interior recess is formed therein, the interior recess reconfigurable to receive a mortar board of the graduation cap, wherein the central portion provides a barrier between the indicia-forming materials and the graduation cap.
PERSONALIZABLE DISPLAY COVER FOR HEADWEAR

FIELD

[0001] The present invention generally relates to a display cover for headwear. In embodiments, the present invention is directed to a cover for a mortar board of a graduation cap upon which text and/or indicia can be displayed.

SUMMARY

[0002] Graduation and other ceremonies or gatherings featuring similarly-clad individuals en masse are often celebratory occasions for the participants and those close to them. Accordingly, many participants may wish to personalize the experience by displaying personal effects, symbols, or messages on their person and/or clothing.

[0003] In instances in which a large number of participants are gathered together, it may be particularly desirable to personalize a head-worn piece of attire, for example, the mortar board of a graduation cap. Since this represents the highest visible point for a participant, it provides a space for displaying indicia such as text or graphics in a location that can be seen even by persons separated from the participant by a distance. However, on many such occasions, graduation caps are rented or borrowed such that markings or alterations that could leave lasting effects on the cap are not permitted. Thus, Applicant has discovered, and, as described in exemplary embodiments herein, solved the problem of the need to personalize head-mounted garments without leaving permanent markings or alterations.

[0004] According to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention, a display cover for a graduation cap is disclosed, and comprises: a central portion formed of a stretchable material, the central portion supporting one or more indicia-forming materials; and an edge surrounding the central portion and defining an opening with a surface area smaller than a surface area of the central portion, at least one of the central portion having an at least partial curve such that an interior recess is formed therein, the interior recess reconfigurable to receive a mortar board of the graduation cap, wherein the central portion provides a barrier between the indicia-forming materials and the graduation cap.

[0005] In embodiments, the central portion is comprised of a fluid-permeable material.

[0006] In embodiments, the central portion is comprised of a fluid-resistant material.

[0007] In embodiments, the edge comprises an elastomeric material.

[0008] In embodiments, the edge is a seam.

[0009] In embodiments, the indicia-forming material is one of the group consisting of: pen, marker, paint, glitter, stickers, screen print, and an accessory coupled with the display cover.

[0010] In embodiments, the central portion is comprised of an opaque material.

[0011] In embodiments, the central portion is comprised of a single layer of material.

[0012] In embodiments, the central portion is comprised of a plurality of layers of material.

[0013] In embodiments, the display cover further comprises one of the group consisting of: tabs, hooks, and loops.

[0014] In embodiments, the display cover is comprised of a washable material.

[0015] In embodiments, the edge is comprised of a material similar to the central portion.

[0016] In embodiments, the edge exerts tension across the central portion.

[0017] In embodiments, the central portion is comprised of a reflective material.

[0018] According to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention, a display cover for a graduation cap comprises: a central portion formed of a stretchable material, the central portion supporting one or more indicia-forming materials; an edge surrounding the central portion and having an at least partial curve such that an interior recess is formed therein, the interior recess reconfigurable to receive a mortar board of the graduation cap. In some embodiments, one or more of a clip, a strap, and a band may couple the central portion to the mortar board. The central portion provides a barrier between the indicia-forming materials and the graduation cap.

[0019] According to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention, a method of personalizing headwear comprises: providing a display cover comprising: a central portion surrounded by an edge, the central portion at least partially curved so that an interior recess is formed within the display cover; applying one or more indicia-forming materials to the display cover; stretching at least one of the central portion and the edge; and inserting a mortar board of a graduation cap at least partially into the interior recess.

[0020] In embodiments, the method further comprises the step of removing the display cover from the mortar board of the graduation cap.

[0021] In embodiments, the display cover provides a barrier between the one or more indicia-forming materials and the mortar board of the graduation cap.

[0022] In embodiments, the central portion is comprised of a stretchable material.

[0023] In embodiments, the central portion is comprised of an opaque material.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0024] Various exemplary embodiments of this invention will be described in detail, with reference to the following figures, wherein:

[0025] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a display cover according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention shown with a conventional graduation cap;

[0026] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the display cover of FIG. 1 shown coupled with the graduation cap; and

[0027] FIG. 3 is a bottom view of the display cover of FIG. 1 shown coupled with the graduation cap.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0028] The present invention generally relates to a covering for a piece of headwear. In embodiments, the present invention is directed to a covering for displaying text and/or indicia on a mortar board.

[0029] The headings used herein are for organizational purposes only and are not meant to be used to limit the scope of the description or the claims. As used throughout this application, the words "may" and "can" are used in a permissive sense (i.e., meaning having the potential to), rather than the mandatory sense (i.e., meaning must). Similarly, the words "include," "including," and "includes" mean including but not limited to. To facilitate understanding, like
reference numerals have been used, where possible, to designate like elements common to the figures.

[0030] With reference to FIG. 1, a display cover 10 for headwear according to an exemplary embodiment of the present invention is generally designated 10. As shown, display cover 10 may be adapted for use with headwear such as a graduation cap C having a mortar board H. In embodiments, display cover 10 may be used with a different type of headwear.

[0031] Display cover 10 includes a central portion 12 surrounded by an edge 14. Edge 14 may be configured to exert tension across central portion 12 such that central portion 12 may curl, e.g., have a curve or contour, as it approaches edge 14. In this regard, central portion 12 and edge 14 may bound an interior recess 16 of display cover 10 (hidden from view). As described further herein, interior recess 16 of display cover 10 may be configured to at least partially receive graduation cap C or a different type of headwear.

[0032] Central portion 12 may be formed of a fabric material, for example, a woven or non-woven fiber material, or may be formed of a non-fibrous material. The material from which central portion 12 is formed may have or be treated with desirable properties such as fluid-permeability, e.g., for ventilation or to facilitate washing. In embodiments, central portion 12 may be formed of a single layer of material or two or more joined layers of material.

[0033] In the exemplary embodiment shown, central portion 12 may be formed of a synthetic fiber material such as spandex or LYCRA (available from INVISTA B.V. of Wichita, Kans.). In this regard, at least central portion 12 of display cover 10 may be formed of a stretchable, e.g., expandable under tension, material, so that display cover 10 may be configured to at least partially engage another item in a form-fitting manner, as described further herein.

[0034] Edge 14 may be disposed about a periphery of central portion 12, and may be formed of a similar material to central portion 12. Edge 14 may be secured to itself, e.g., doubled over and stitched as in a seam, such that one or more additional materials may be disposed within or along edge 14. For example, an elastomeric material may be disposed within or along edge 14 such that a tensile force maintains an opening 15 (FIG. 4) defined by the edge 14 in a configuration having a surface area smaller than a surface area of the central portion 12. Such a tensile force may be translated at least partially across central portion 12. In embodiments, edge 14 may be indistinguishable from central portion 12 other than forming the outer periphery thereof. In embodiments, an edge 14 having characteristics distinguishable from central portion 12 may be formed along the entire periphery of central portion 12, or may have one or more discontinuities therealong.

[0035] Still referring to FIG. 1, and referring additionally to FIGS. 2 and 3, display cover 10 is configured to at least partially engage graduation cap C. Specifically, display cover 10 may receive a portion of mortar board H so that mortar board H is at least partially encapsulated by display cover 10. As described above, central portion 12 and/or edge 14 of display cover 10 may be formed of a stretchable material such that display cover 10 and interior recess 16 therein may be reconfigurable to receive mortar board H. For example, in a resting state, the surface area of the opening 15 presented by edge 14 may be smaller than the area of mortar board H. Accordingly, a user may stretch, e.g., dilate, edge 14 and/or central portion 12 to reconfigure the interior recess 16 such that mortar board H is insertable through opening 15 and into interior recess 16. Following engagement of the display cover 10 with mortar board H, the display cover 10 may tend toward its resting, e.g., pretensioned configuration with the extent allowed by the dimensions of mortar board H. In this regard, display cover 10 may be configured to engage mortar board H in an at least partially form-fitting manner.

[0036] In embodiments, display cover 10 may be engaged with graduation cap C in a different manner, for example, with a drawstring disposed within or along edge 14. In another embodiment, display cover 10 may have the form of a flat, e.g., planar, sheet that fits over mortar board H, and is secured to the underside thereof with a plurality of straps, bands, or clips. In still another embodiment, display cover 10 may have the form of a flat sheet that engages mortar board H via electrostatic attraction, e.g., static cling. In yet another embodiment, display cover 10 may have a rigid, e.g., pre-formed, configuration that approximates the shape of mortar board H such that display cover 10 can snap-fit onto mortar board H. For example, central portion 12 of display cover 10 may have a rigid, pre-formed recess to receive the button knob K typically featured on most graduation caps.

[0037] Still referring to FIGS. 1, 2, and 3, central portion 12 of display cover 10 may have one or more indicia 18, e.g., numbers, letters, symbols, or graphics, such that indicia 18 are displayed across the prominent upper surface of mortar board H. Because display cover 10 is fully removable from graduation cap C, display cover 10 may be personalized in any desired manner without leaving permanent markings or damage on graduation cap C. In this regard, display cover 10 supports one or more indicia-forming materials, such as pen or marker, paint, glitter, stickers, and/or one or more accessories coupled with display cover 10. Alternatively, display cover 10 may be pre-printed with an appropriate display or image. Accordingly, display cover 10 provides a barrier between the indicia-forming materials that form indicia 18 and the graduation cap C disposed below. In this regard, display cover 10 affords a user with a degree of personalization not possible in many graduation caps. Additionally, display cover 10 presents a personalized item to a user that can be kept even if graduation cap C cannot be retained, e.g., as a souvenir. Display cover 10 also presents an article that is quickly removable, for example, if indicia 18 or other visible portions thereof violate a rule or regulation associated with a graduation ceremony.

[0038] In embodiments, display cover 10 is formed of a washable material so that indicia 18 may be removed to provide repeated usage and/or personalization of display cover 10. In embodiments, display cover 10 may be at least partially formed of a fluid-resistant material, e.g., to prevent paint or other decorations from leaving a lasting marking on cap C.

[0039] Additionally, display cover 10 may provide an identification function by featuring indicia 18 that is associated with the wearer, for example, so that persons located a distance away from the wearer can quickly identify him or her. For example, indicia 18 may be pre-arranged or identifying text, symbols or graphics, or may have a visual characteristic such as a color or pattern that allows for ease of identification of the wearer amongst a crowd. In an exemplary embodiment, indicia 18 may provide different
images to a viewer depending on the viewer's line of sight, for example, a lenticular display. In embodiments, indicia 18 may form a portion of a larger text, symbol, or graphic visible when multiple graduation caps C are adjacent one another, e.g., as in a group performance or "flash mob."

[0040] In this regard, display cover 10 provides a removable, e.g., sacrificial, layer upon headwear that can be personalized in a desired manner while providing a barrier to said headwear against permanent markings or deformities. Accordingly, display cover 10 may have a variety of base appearances upon which indicia 18 can be placed. For example, display cover 10 may have one or more desired colors and/or patterns (e.g., transparent, opaque, or ribbed), and may be formed or treated with desired surface properties such as reflectivity.

[0041] In embodiments, additional features may be provided to facilitate personalization of display cover 10, for example, tabs, hooks, or loops that can accommodate accessories such as buttons, pins, medals, or tassels, to name a few.

[0042] While particular embodiments of the invention have been illustrated and described, it would be obvious to those skilled in the art that various other changes and modifications may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. It is therefore intended to cover in the appended claims all such changes and modifications that are within the scope of this invention.

1. A display cover for a graduation cap, comprising:
   a central portion formed of a stretchable material, the central portion supporting one or more indicia-forming materials; and
   an edge surrounding the central portion and defining an opening with a surface area smaller than a surface area of the central portion, at least one of the central portion having an at least partial curve such that an interior recess is formed therein, the interior recess reconfigurable to receive a mortar board of the graduation cap, wherein the central portion provides a barrier between the indicia-forming materials and the graduation cap.

2. The display cover of claim 1, wherein the central portion is comprised of a fluid-permeable material.

3. The display cover of claim 1, wherein the central portion is comprised of a fluid-resistant material.

4. The display cover of claim 1, wherein the edge comprises an elastomeric material.

5. The display cover of claim 1, wherein the edge is a seam.

6. The display cover of claim 1, wherein the indicia-forming material is one of the group consisting of: pen, marker, paint, glitter, stickers, screen print, and an accessory coupled with the display cover.

7. The display cover of claim 1, wherein the central portion is comprised of an opaque material.

8. The display cover of claim 1, wherein the central portion is comprised of a single layer of material.

9. The display cover of claim 1, wherein the central portion is comprised of a plurality of layers of material.

10. The display cover of claim 1, further comprising one of the group consisting of: tabs, hooks, and loops.

11. The display cover of claim 1, wherein the display cover is comprised of a washable material.

12. The display cover of claim 1, wherein the edge is comprised of a material similar to the central portion.

13. The display cover of claim 1, wherein the edge exerts tension across the central portion.

14. The display cover of claim 1, wherein the central portion is comprised of a reflective material.

15. A display cover for a graduation cap, comprising:
   a central portion formed of a stretchable material, the central portion supporting one or more indicia-forming materials;
   an edge surrounding the central portion and having an at least partial curve such that an interior recess is formed therein, the interior recess reconfigurable to receive a mortar board of the graduation cap; and
   one or more of a clip, a strap, and a band coupling the central portion to the mortar board,
   wherein the central portion provides a barrier between the indicia-forming materials and the graduation cap.

16. A method of personalizing headwear, comprising:
   providing a display cover comprising:
   a central portion surrounded by an edge, the central portion at least partially curved so that an interior recess is formed within the display cover;
   applying one or more indicia-forming materials to the display cover;
   stretching at least one of the central portion and the edge;
   and
   inserting a mortar board of a graduation cap at least partially into the interior recess.

17. The method of claim 16, further comprising the step of removing the display cover from the mortar board of the graduation cap.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein the display cover provides a barrier between the one or more indicia-forming materials and the mortar board of the graduation cap.

19. The method of claim 16, wherein the central portion is comprised of a stretchable material.

20. The method of claim 16, wherein the central portion is comprised of an opaque material.