



Hip-Hop Fashion

A Growth in Mass Appeal That Led to a Cultural Movement

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Table of Contents

Abstract and keywords

[Preface]

1. Chapter 1: Introduction.....	5
<i>1.1. Research Questions</i>	6
<i>1.2. Key Concepts</i>	7
<i>1.3. Literature Review</i>	12
<i>1.3.1 Theory</i>	13
<i>1.3.2 Historiography</i>	16
<i>1.4. Sources and Methods</i>	21
<i>1.5. Thesis Structure</i>	24
2. Chapter 2: Hip-Hop Fashion Origins and Social Discourse in the U.S. in the 1980-90s..	26
<i>2.1. Defining fashion and relevant theories</i>	26
<i>2.2. Hip-hop culture and its origins</i>	30
<i>2.3. Hip-hop fashion origins and the popularity of streetwear sneakers</i>	35
<i>2.4. Conclusion</i>	39
3. Chapter 3: Hip-Hop Fashion’s Rise in Mainstream Consumer Culture from the 1990s...	41
<i>3.1. Consumer and designer interaction around hip-hop fashion</i>	41
<i>3.2. Hip-hop fashion’s adoption into haute couture through marketing</i>	45
<i>3.3. Hip-hop fashion as mainstream fashion</i>	50
<i>3.4. Conclusion</i>	53
4. Chapter 4: Nike and Adidas Case Study.....	55
<i>4.1. Sneakers and Nike and Adidas background</i>	55
<i>4.2. Nike and Adidas’ marketing strategies</i>	61
<i>4.3. Why are Nike and Adidas brand items appealing to consumers?</i>	66
<i>4.4. Conclusion</i>	68
5. Conclusion.....	70
Bibliography.....	76
Appendix A.....	85

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ABSTRACT

This thesis centers around hip-hop fashion and its emergence into being mainstream. Hip-hop fashion is entrenched with hip-hop culture, which originated through hip-hop music and rap. The popularity of these music styles propelled fashion styles from this culture to diffuse to American society, and around the world. This research focusses on how the appeal and diffusion of hip-hop fashion has evolved over time in the United States from the 1980s to the present day. Fashion is entrenched with consumerism and follows developments and changes in society. It also has the power to change society through its link to culture. Hip-hop fashion's appeal is around the sense of identity that it gave to its founders, minority youth in urban neighborhoods in New York City, as well the link to success and wealth that it enabled for them to portray and/or achieve. Advertising and marketing played a big role in the diffusion of hip-hop fashion. As consumers, hip-hop artists created their own fashion lines and advertised their clothing through various forms of media. Mainstream and luxury designers picked up on the consumer appeal of these styles and included them into their collections, which propelled them into the mainstream. These developments induced the evolution of hip-hop fashion to lose some of its connection to hip-hop culture and instead be synonymous with streetwear, as depicted by the mass appeal and consumption of sneakers.

KEYWORDS: *fashion, haute couture, hip-hop, diffusion, culture, society, consumption, haute couture, marketing, advertising, media*

Preface

Thank you to all of the friends I've met this year while doing my master's in Rotterdam. I probably wouldn't have gotten through this year without you! Thank you to my supervisor, professor Ben Wubs for always being so helpful and giving me good advice.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Fashion is ingrained in society, whatever it reflects comes directly from society. It also has the power to produce social change as it produces culture and culture influences society. It “is the result of a great deal of influence which collectively determines the social structure of society.”¹ Prior to the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries, fashion was a distinguisher of social classes as the upper classes could more readily afford to purchase items of fashion. Thus, fashion became oriented towards elites as they were the primary consumers. As we move into the mid twentieth century, fashion became democratized and more accessible to all social classes; it entered into a consumer society.² New forms and styles of fashion were being created, as consumers had more freedom to buy items of fashion and designers more freedom to innovate and create. Media culture grew towards the end of the twentieth century and continues to do so until today.³ It influences consumer decisions when it comes to fashion and has the power to elevate a fashion style or brand, or to end it. The media reports on different trends and fads in society, which emerge from culture.

As hip-hop emerged as a culture in the United States in the 1980s and 1990s, a fashion movement was born. Designers such as Isaac Mizrahi and Karl Lagerfeld displayed fashion designs on the runway that were inspired by hip-hop.⁴ Elena Romero describes hip-hop fashion as “an eclectic style originally comprised of borrowed looks from designer and popular brands of the early 1980s”⁵ which would later on evolve into a “worldwide fashion phenomenon with brand identifiers of its very own.”⁶ Rap music gained popularity as a genre in the 1980s, which influenced designers “from the streets”⁷ to produce “loose fit”⁸ clothing, specifically sneakers that gained popularity among inner-city neighborhoods and hip-hop artists and celebrities.⁹ Hip-

¹ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Fashion-Ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies* (London u.a.:Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 13.

² Diana Crane, *Fashion and Its Social Agendas: Class, Gender and Identity in Clothing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 134..

³ Diana Crane, *Fashion and Its Social Agendas*, 135.

⁴ Elena Romero, *Free Stylin’: How Hip-hop Changed the Fashion Industry* (Santa Barbara: Praeger , 2012), 15.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid, ivx.

⁷ Valerie L. Giddings and Geraldine Ray, "Trendsetting African American Designers," in *Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion: The United States and Canada*, edited by Phyllis G. Tortora. (Oxford: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010), <http://dx.doi.org.access.authkb.kb.nl/10.2752/BEWDF/EDch3512>.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

hop fashion became widespread among African American and Hispanic/Latino youth in urban neighborhoods of New York City. They used this style of dress to express their identity, to control their self-definition, or to revolt against convention and authority.¹⁰ Each borough in the city was known for its own unique type of dress style to reflect various identities among black youth.¹¹ This clothing was a way for individuals to stand out and differentiate themselves as “those who have and those who have not.”¹² As hip-hop artists became integrated into popular culture through various forms of media, such television, films, magazines, newspapers, and music they wore various styles of hip-hop dress and popularized the style into the mainstream fashion industry.¹³ Hip-hop fashion entrepreneurs and artists, such Sean “Diddy” Combs, began launching their own brands. This also led to established designers, such as Ralph Lauren and Tommy Hilfger, to integrate hip-hop styles into their fashion branding and collaborate with hip-hop artists to market their fashion to consumers.¹⁴ What started as a movement for marginalized youth to express themselves in a way that was accessible to them, and to create a culture in which they could identify with and belong to, became a style made mainstream by culture and media. This evolution facilitated the imitation of hip-hop styles by the mainstream and produced new forms of fashion to suit the changing tastes of the public and consumers. As hip-hop fashion emerged from neighborhoods occupied by minorities, it is important to note that people of color have had a large impact on mainstream streetwear style.¹⁵

1.1 Research Questions

This thesis examines how hip-hop styles have been diffused into society since their emergence in the 1980s and 1990s. It will look into the hip-hop fashion movement through the hip-hop culture that it stemmed from in the 1980s-1990s and investigate the rise in popularity of hip-hop styles in the United States from then until present time. It will seek to discover the appeal of hip-hop

¹⁰ Gwendolyn S. O’Neal, "African American," in *Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion: The United States and Canada*, edited by Phyllis G. Tortora. (Oxford: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010), <http://dx.doi.org.access.authkb.kb.nl/10.2752/BEWDF/EDch3075>.

¹¹ Elena Romero, *Free Stylin’: How Hip-hop Changed the Fashion Industry* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2012), ix.

¹² Ibid, 9.

¹³ Ibid, 19.

¹⁴ Ibid, 19.

¹⁵ Arit, John, “Big fashion brands rushed to claim solidarity with Black Lives Matter. Streetwear designers are skeptical,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 30, 2020. <https://www.latimes.com/lifestyle/story/2020-07-30/big-fashion-says-fighting-racism-black-streetwear-designers-say-not-hard-enough>

fashion to consumers from its onset until present time, with regard to social and cultural conditions and climate within the United States during this period of time. Through this, it will explore the symbolic and cultural value of hip-hop fashion and how it changes as it became integrated into mainstream fashion. This will develop into an argument around how consumers and society have great impact on fashion, and, in addition, it will examine the rise of hip-hop artists in the fashion industry and hip-hop styles in haute couture. This thesis explores a case around the study of sneakers, which became widely used for casual wear at the emergence of hip-hop culture and contributed to the marketing and advertisement of hip-hop fashion.

To guide this research, the following research question has been formulated: How have the consumer appeal and diffusion of hip-hop fashion styles evolved within the United States from the 1980s to present day?

To answer this research question, the following sub-questions will be answered: What is hip-hop fashion and what is the meaning behind it? What was the role of consumption and marketing in hip-hop fashion's rise to the mainstream? How has hip-hop fashion and its meaning and value transformed over the years (from 1980s to present)?

1.2 Key Concepts

During my research, I came across some key concepts to illustrate my findings and provide the context behind the response to my research question. The key concepts I explore are fashion, haute couture, hip-hop, culture and society, diffusion, consumption, marketing and advertising, and media.

As this thesis' focus is on the field of fashion, it is imperative to define fashion and a brief history behind it. The English word, "fashion," comes from the old twelfth century French word "façon," which describes a way of doing things.¹⁶ It is also important to note that the French word for fashion is "mode," which other Latin-origin languages follow suit such as German, and Italian and Spanish with "mode" and "moda." In the sixteenth century, the concept of fashion changed its meaning to mean "conforming to prevailing tastes and to imply an idea of change."¹⁷ During the European Renaissance in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, fashion

¹⁶ Patrik Aspers and Frédéric Godart, "Sociology of Fashion: Order and Change," *Annual Review of Sociology* 39, no. 1 (2013): 173

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 173.

became a part of society, but it did not become an integral part of it and staple in it until the seventeenth century, with the emergence of the bourgeoisie and capitalism in Europe.¹⁸ The term “fashion” does not only refer to clothing and dress but can also refer to anything that has a “clear aesthetic dimension,” such as literature, medicine, architecture, etc.¹⁹ Patrik Aspers and Frédéric Godart define fashion as “an unplanned process of recurrent change against a backdrop of order in the public realm.”²⁰ Fashion is a social process and a process of adaptation. It can be influenced but it cannot be planned or imposed. With fashion, there is usually a process that is already existing in extended time, but something new is introduced to replace or complement something that is already in existence. Fashion can also be both inclusive and exclusive as it reflects and appeals to both individuality and collectivity when used as a form of expression. It exists in the public domain, meaning that it needs to be observable by all and financially accessible by key actors.²¹

After defining fashion, haute couture, a form of fashion that is linked to hip-hop fashion, should be defined as well. From the nineteenth century, all fashion was deemed as “haute couture” as it was produced and marketed to the rich and privileged.²² During this period of time and prior, fashion was created and produced in Paris, France. It was the creative capital and hegemony for fashion for 200 years but declined in the 1960s and 1980s as the world became more globalized and fashion became democratized and increasingly mobile.²³ Haute couture fosters designers and work that meets special requirements. Contrary to ready-to-wear fashion, haute couture has a very small clientele and caters to private clients. It provides made-to-order garments and showcases collections at seasonal fashion shows.²⁴

Following fashion, the next important concept that makes up the content of this thesis is hip-hop. Hip-hop is a cultural and artistic phenomenon and reflects the “social, economic, political, and cultural realities and conditions” of life, in particular youths’ lives.²⁵ Youths relate

¹⁸ Ibid, 174.

¹⁹ Ibid, 175.

²⁰ Ibid, 185.

²¹ Ibid, 186.

²² McDowell, Colin, McDowell, "What Is Style," *RSA Journal* 148, no. 5494 (2000): 77.

²³ McDowell, Colin, McDowell, "What Is Style," 77-79.

²⁴ Divya, Bala, “What Is Haute Couture? Inside Today's World of High Fashion,” *Vogue Australia*, July 2, 2019, <https://www.vogue.com.au/fashion/news/what-is-haute-couture-inside-todays-world-ofhigh-fashion/news-story/666a26e23df9c8db779e7b7e7b6696c3>

²⁵ Derrick P. Alridge and James B. Stewart, “Hip Hop in History: Past, Present, and Future,” *The Journal of African American History* 90, No. 3 (Summer, 2005):190, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20063997>

to hip-hop as it allows them to express themselves in a manner in which they can understand. Hip-hop consists of four elements, “disc jockeying (DJing), break dancing, graffiti art, and rapping (emceeing).”²⁶ It emerged in the early and mid-1970s in the South Bronx of New York City and spread throughout the northeast during that time. It is a musical genre, but also a style of dress, dialect and language. It is a way of looking at the world and reflects the viewpoints of youth that were born in between 1965 and 1984.²⁷ Hip-hop history is linked to black history and black working-class culture.²⁸ It is an outlet of artistic expression for those coping with “urban frustrations and conditions.”²⁹ Hip-hop is the cultural expressions of today’s black youth.³⁰

When discussing both fashion and hip-hop, culture is an important concept that links the two. Culture is created and recreated by individuals and institutions. It encompasses the past as well as “what we are today and will become in the future.”³¹ It is shaped and preserved by museums in order to educate future generations on past cultures and how they evolved into the cultures of the present time. Culture represents the “shared experiences, shared perceptions and values, and shared consciousness” that a group of people have in common.³² Forms of media and technology, such as television, internet, video, film, communication a representation of culture in everyday life to general public in society. Culture is a “lens through which the individual views phenomena” and determines how the world will be seen. It provides an explanation for certain behaviors and social activity and supplies the world with meaning.³³ Culture describes the customs of a social group and provides explanations for daily-life situations and patterns from the past that affect the present time.³⁴ As culture influences behaviors and social interactions, which play a part in the makeup of society, it is important to also define the concept of society. Society is composed of societal life, which is “a collective struggle against limitation, and the

²⁶ Derrick P. Alridge and James B. Stewart, “Hip Hop in History: Past, Present, and Future,” 190.

²⁷ Ibid, 190.

²⁸ Ibid, 191.

²⁹ Marvin J. Gladney, “The Black Arts Movement and Hip-Hop,” *African American Review* 29, no. 2 (1995): 292, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3042308>.

³⁰ Marvin J. Gladney, “The Black Arts Movement and Hip-Hop,” 299.

³¹ George F. MacDonald, “What Is Culture?” *Journal of Museum Education* 16, no. 1 (1991): 9, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10598650.1991.11510161>.

³² George F. MacDonald, “What Is Culture?” 10.

³³ Grant McCracken, “Culture and Consumption: A Theoretical Account of the Structure and Movement of the Cultural Meaning of Consumer Goods,” *Journal of Consumer Research* 13, no. 1 (1986): 72, <https://doi.org/10.1086/209048>.

³⁴ John Dollard, “Culture, Society, Impulse, and Socialization,” *American Journal of Sociology* 45, no. 1 (1939): 52, <https://doi.org/10.1086/218208>.

group itself is seen as an expedient in the survival of the individual.”³⁵ Within a society, groups of people strive for self-expression and survival. They develop habits in order to function and adapt within their society. Culture defines the routines that should be learned while society prescribes rewards and punishments for certain behaviors according to prescribed fixed habits and in order to eliminate undesired traits.³⁶ The interaction of different groups makes up society as culture is “composed of tools, methods, codes, and forms that the interacting groups produce and through which they function.”³⁷ Friedrich Baerwald defines society as “the process of widening and deepening the range of individual existences into systems of extended frameworks of time and space.”³⁸ Society is a dynamic system and is always in a state of processing. It incorporates concrete processes and institutions and creates a framework that exists in both time and space.³⁹

A key concept to define in support of both and of the point of my research around hip-hop fashion is diffusion. Diffusion is the “spread of fashion within and across social systems.” It centers around the adoption of an innovation by a large group of people and is influenced by “formal communication from mass media, personal communications among current adopters and potential adopters, the persuasive influence of consumer leaders and other agents, and the degree to which the innovation is communicated and transferred from one social system to another.”⁴⁰ The process of diffusion in fashion is attributed to top-down approaches of fashion being created by upper classes and imitated by lower classes, fashion designers, fashion editors, department store buyers, and owners of boutiques producing and selling fashion to the public or bottom-up approaches of new styles created by lower-status groups being adopted by higher-status groups.⁴¹

After defining the previous terms, consumption is important to define as it links culture and society with fashion. Consumption refers to the purchase of services and goods, but it also

³⁵ John Dollard, “Culture, Society, Impulse, and Socialization,” 54.

³⁶ Ibid, 61.

³⁷ Paul H Landis, “Social Change and Social Interaction as Factors in Culture Change,” *American Journal of Sociology* 41, no. 1 (1935): 52, <https://doi.org/10.1086/217005>.

³⁸ Friedrich Baerwald, “Society as a Process,” *The American Catholic Sociological Review* 5, no. 4 (1944): 240,

³⁹ Friedrich Baerwald, “Society as a Process,” 240.

⁴⁰ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Fashion-Ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies* (London u.a.: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 74.

⁴¹ Diana Crane, “Diffusion Models and Fashion: A Reassessment,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 566, no. 1 (1999): 15-17.

refers to the use of such services and goods and to a way of life in general.⁴² Consumption is closely tied to production, as enables products and goods to be purchased and consumed. Economic transformation and technological advances have an effect on consumption as these enable the cost of consumer goods to decrease and become available and accessible to all social classes. The consumer revolution of the late twentieth century enabled mass production and democratized fashion, which changed consumer behavior and provoked them to develop new tastes and preferences.⁴³ The choices made in the consumption of goods reflects an individual's identity. Consumer goods have the ability to "carry and create cultural meaning."⁴⁴ The system of fashion reinvents new styles and attributes existing cultural meanings to them or invents new ones, which then transfers them to the world of consumer goods.⁴⁵

Next, marketing and advertising are integral to the diffusion of hip-hop fashion into the mainstream. Marketing involves assessing customer satisfaction of a good, product or service in order to maintain the sufficient branding and differentiation for existing customer satisfaction, while also attracting new customers. Organizations need to understand their customer's emotions in order to satisfy them.⁴⁶ They work to market an enjoyable experience for consumers to enjoy their products and services. Branding is also an important aspect of marketing as it is used by companies to differentiate themselves from their competition.⁴⁷ Organizations need to make analyses of their markets as well as define who their target customers are in order to market to them. Following the process of marketing closely is advertising. Advertising strategies are created to attract consumers. These strategies seek to obtain consumers' attention, interest, desire, and then action through the process of purchase of a service or product. Advertising affects consumer behavior.⁴⁸ Following the consumer revolution, marketers took advantage of the new social and commercial dimensions of fashion by creating new techniques and

⁴² Patrik Aspers and Frédéric Godart, "Sociology of Fashion: Order and Change, 183.

⁴³ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Fashion-Ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies*, 91-93.

⁴⁴ Grant McCracken, "Culture and Consumption: A Theoretical Account of the Structure and Movement of the Cultural Meaning of Consumer Goods," *Journal of Consumer Research* 13, no. 1 (1986): 71, <https://doi.org/10.1086/209048>.

⁴⁵ Grant McCracken, "Culture and Consumption: A Theoretical Account of the Structure and Movement of the Cultural Meaning of Consumer Goods," 76.

⁴⁶ Susan K. Foreman, "Marketing," *Henley Manager Update* 15, no. 2 (2003): 14, <https://doi.org/10.1177/174578660301500202>.

⁴⁷ Susan K. Foreman, "Marketing," 18.

⁴⁸ Demetrios Vakratsas and Tim Ambler, "How Advertising Works: What Do We Really Know?" *Journal of Marketing* 63, no. 1 (1999): 26, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1251999>.

incorporating new technological innovation.⁴⁹ Ideas around fashion are spread through advertising, which is a form of mass propaganda. A function around fashion advertising is to “stimulate a desire for the same thing at the same time in a large number of people to build collective belief among consumers.”⁵⁰ Consumers are influenced through what they read in the news and magazines, as well as what they see in advertisements and films. Branding through marketing and advertisement provides a way for companies to persuade consumers to purchase numerous products they find satisfactory under that same label. The label and brand will then be passed to other groups through social interaction and become well-known within society.⁵¹

The final concept that is an important part of my research around the appeal and diffusion of hip-hop fashion is media. Media refers to systems of mass communication, as newspapers, television, and radio broadcasts. Social life is built upon content of mass media, whether it be around means of entertainment, news, educational programming, and advertising.⁵² Media has increased its social impact with globalization and technological advance. It enables groups with similar interests to be linked together. While it introduces mass systems of communication, it also enables increased access to information.⁵³ Through media advertisement, fashion is able to achieve increased impact on consumers’ decisions around what fashion trends to follow and style to adopt.

1.3 Literature Review

This literature review begins with a base of exploring the sociology of fashion through theories examined by key sociologists. This provides a theoretical background for the analysis around the appeal of hip-hop fashion and its diffusion into mainstream society. Furthermore, next will come literature around hip-hop fashion’s creation and origins and how it developed throughout the years. This literature explains the social and cultural meaning behind hip-hop fashion, as well how individuals and groups identify with it. It also goes into the diffusion of hip-hop styles by

⁴⁹ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Fashion-Ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies*, 92.

⁵⁰ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Fashion-Ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies*, 86.

⁵¹ Ibid, 87.

⁵² S. Ambirajan, "Globalisation, Media and Culture," *Economic and Political Weekly* 35, no. 25 (2000): 2141, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4409414>.

⁵³ Schroeder, Ralph. "Media Systems, Digital Media and Politics," in *Social Theory after the Internet: Media, Technology, and Globalization*, 28-29. London: UCL Press, 2018. doi:10.2307/j.ctt20krxdr.5.

consumers and by processes of marketing and advertising. This leads to research around the imitation and adoption of fashion by institutions.

1.3.1 Theory

Georg Simmel's seminal article takes on the nature of fashion and how it impacts both individuals, groups, and society. He discusses the psychological tendency towards imitation and the demand for social adaptation, which fashion satisfies.⁵⁴ Fashion combines the "tendency towards social equalization with the desire for individual differentiation and change."⁵⁵ Simmel also analyzes the different fashions of the upper and lower classes, with the latter looking to appropriate the former.⁵⁶ Fashion symbolizes the union of some groups while also emphasizing the exclusion of others. Simmel categorizes it as a product of class distinction.⁵⁷ He further explains that uncivilized peoples prefer to maintain the same standards of fashion while civilized people enjoy change and novelty fashion. Civilized peoples practice segregation among differences of clothing and tastes, while non civilized peoples have no development of fashion and present more uniformity. Until the levelling effect of democracy occurs and general culture advances, upper classes will exert their power to exclude other social classes.⁵⁸ Fashion is formed by "the need of union on the one hand and the need of isolation on the other."⁵⁹ For this reason, Simmel believes that fashion is more easily established by primitive peoples as they have fewer differentiated styles, are more specific in their clothing, and have more of an impulse towards socialization than differentiation. With differences in clothing, manners, and taste comes segregation and the "danger of absorption and obliteration," which is present in highly civilized nations.⁶⁰ Those that dress similarly produce similar actions. Fashion changes as people are nervous in energy and have a desire for differentiation, which is prevalent in upper classes.⁶¹

Pierre Bourdieu, similar to Simmel, says that fashion is matter of class distinction as it is marketed to upper classes and elites. He discusses the designer and their struggle to have to appeal to the tastes of the elites, as they are their main customers, while also wanted to appeal to

⁵⁴ Georg, Simmel, "Fashion," *The American Journal of Sociology* 62, no. 6 (May 1957): 543.

⁵⁵ Georg, Simmel, "Fashion," 543.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 543.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 544.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 546.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 546.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 546.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, 547.

different types of customers and segments in society.⁶² Designers are constantly in search of clientele, but do not have much freedom in their choices as elites hold dominant positions in their field of work. They are in constant conflict as they strive to find new ways to convert their symbolic capital into economic capital.⁶³ The field of haute couture play a great role in dividing society by classes. Haute couture designers seek to differentiate themselves from other designers as they in constant search of new styles. Each generation is marked by a designer and brand that dominates the fashion market. Bourdieu uses the example of Dior in the beginning and middle of the twentieth century.⁶⁴ The world of luxury is high in symbolic material, which translates to their economic gains. The production of a luxury good seeks to translate the symbolic meaning to the consumer and attribute value to it so it will be sought after.⁶⁵ Haute couture and luxury creator are innovators in finding strategic ways to sell their products.

Herbert Blumer states that some of Simmel's views on fashion are outdated as they do not reflect modernity, but reflect how class structures from the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries interact with fashion. Blumer tackles fashion from a mid-twentieth century perspective and characterizes it as a "social happening."⁶⁶ Designers and buyers of the dress market have the ability to sense the direction of taste in the public.⁶⁷ They emulate modern developments in their clothing and styles to keep up with the times and the desires of society. It is not the elites or upper classes that determine the direction of fashion, as Simmel says, but it is the appeal of the designs to the public who consumes them which makes them agreeable to the elites and enables a link to prestige.⁶⁸ The direction of fashion is controlled by the taste of the public, which is influenced by modern developments in the world and society. Fashion is a product of collective selection, and not class differentiation, as Simmel and Bourdieu believe it to be. New models are constantly being discarded and created, not because they are no longer being adopted by the elite, but because they follow developing tastes. Collective taste is created and transformed based on experiences of social interaction.⁶⁹

⁶² Pierre Bourdieu and Yvette Delsaut, "Le Couturier Et Sa Griffes : Contribution à Une Théorie De La Magie," *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 1, no. 1 (1975): 7–8.

⁶³ Bourdieu and Delsaut, "Le Couturier Et Sa Griffes," 8.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁶⁶ Herbert Blumer, "Fashion: From Class Differentiation to Collective Selection," *The Sociological Quarterly* 10, no. 3 (1969): 278, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1533-8525.1969.tb01292.x>.

⁶⁷ Blumer, "Fashion: From Class Differentiation to Collective Selection," 279.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 282.

Diana Crane investigates the system of fashion and its prescription of social identities. Dressing in certain way can induce particular behaviors and influence the way people express themselves and interact with others.⁷⁰ As technology advanced throughout the twentieth century, the diffusion of fashion and its democratization changed and increased. Paris and London were no longer dominating the fashion market as room was made for it to expand and more organizations participate in the business. Fashion and consumer goods reflect social and economic change.⁷¹ Crane distinguishes an evolution from “class” to “consumer” fashion, with class fashion being very consistent, strict, and precise, and consumer fashion being more stylistically diverse. Class fashion, similar to Simmel’s argument, was dominated by the taste of elites, while consumer fashion, similar to Blumer’s argument, incorporates the tastes of social groups at all social class levels.⁷² Crane discusses the fashion genre of haute couture and differentiates it by three categories: luxury designer fashion, industrial fashion, and street styles. The first is characterized by creations from designers in several countries, the second by creations from manufacturers which sell similar products that are pushed by media culture to similar social groups in both different countries or in a particular country, and the third by creations from urban subcultures which are responsible for fad and trend ideas.⁷³ Crane believes that styles are adopted by individuals through their identification with social groups and consumer goods, meaning consumer influence affects fashion rather than styles being adopted based on the fear of nonconformity and influenced by the upper classes and elites, as explained by Simmel.⁷⁴ Her theory is similar to Blumer’s of fashion styles incorporating the desires of groups within society, but goes a step further to note that consumerism is the driving force behind fashion styles.

Kawamura examines that the institutionalized system of fashion determines and makes what is fashionable. As the world modernizes and globalizes, and there is increased social mobility and class boundaries become blurry as people have the means and accessibility to differentiate themselves from others through fashion. There are increased opportunities and competition is more democratic.⁷⁵ Fashion incorporates the social-structural processes of cultural

⁷⁰ Diana Crane, *Fashion and Its Social Agendas: Class, Gender and Identity in Clothing* (), 1-2.

⁷¹ Ibid, 132-133.

⁷² Ibid, 134-135.

⁷³ Ibid, 135.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 135.

⁷⁵ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Fashion-Ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies*, 25.

production and consumption and provides the interpretation of structural features of cultural life. Through culture, fashion products are given meaning.⁷⁶ Kawamura says that fashion can be expressed as a “form of social regulation or control, a hierarchy, a social custom, a social process and mores.” It is a “potentially unending cycle of imitation and innovation.”⁷⁷ She introduces fashion as an institutionalized system that sustains the ideology of fashion and fashion culture through the continuous production of fashion. As an institution, it shapes individuals and society as a whole.⁷⁸ Going against Simmel and siding with Blumer, Kawamura sees fashion as a bottom-up process and not a top-down process. Upper classes do not dictate what fashion is, but it is the institutions that determine what clothing becomes fashion.⁷⁹ Fashion is determined and diffused not only by designers, but also by advertisers and marketers to produce change and the illusion of novelty. As Kawamura sides with Crane around her idea of trends and fads coming from street styles, innovations coming from urban areas are discovered and promoted to then be appropriated, produced and marketed in variations by larger organizations.⁸⁰

1.3.2. Historiography

Throughout this research around the appeal and diffusion of hip-hop fashion, The fashion theories developed by Crane and Kawamura will be utilized the most. The second chapter will center around fashion prescribing social identities, it being affected by social and consumer influence, as well as fashion being an institution that shapes individuals and society. Most of the basis of the research and knowledge around hip-hop fashion stems from Journalist and Assistant Professor in the Advertising and Marketing Communications department at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), Elena Romero and her book *Free Stylin’: How Hip-hop Changed the Fashion Industry*. She delves into the history and origins of hip-hop style and culture in New York City. The differing styles and elements of clothing of hip-hop fashion served for African American and Hispanic/Latino youth to express their identity.⁸¹ Romero discusses urban teens and how they styled their clothing and obtained their fashion knowledge from the streets.⁸² The

⁷⁶ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Fashion-Ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies*, 32.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 37.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 39-40.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 58.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 78-79.

⁸¹ Elena Romero, *Free Stylin’: How Hip-hop Changed the Fashion Industry* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2012), 11.

⁸² Elena Romero, *Free Stylin’: How Hip-hop Changed the Fashion Industry*, xiv.

styling of hip-hop fashion is free and unrestrictive and styling choices reflect a person's reputation and identity. She recounts the commercialization of hip-hop fashion in the 1990s and 2000s and its influence on streetwear and sportswear, as well as its revolutionization of the luxury fashion industry and U.S. retail. She discusses the change of value in meaning over the course of its commercialization and the need for individuals to reinvent fashion in order to differentiate themselves. Emphasis is also made on the role of consumers and of hip-hop artists in popularizing hip-hop styles and trends.

As discussed by Romero, hip-hop fashion and culture was created as a way for Black Americans and Hispanic/Latino Americans to reflect and prescribe an identity for themselves within society. In the *Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion: The United States and Canada*, "African American" by Gwendolyn S. O'Neal discusses the roots of African American dress practices and how their existence as the "other" throughout history in American society has influenced this. O'Neal expresses the "double consciousness," termed by W.E.B DuBois that African Americans feel.⁸³ They don't fully identify as Americans or as Africans, but a mix of both. This is reflected in their clothing and culture, which they have had to reinvent and develop for themselves, along with their identity.⁸⁴ Throughout the years, African Americans worked to assimilate themselves into American society by adapting to mainstream styles of dress. However, they were still not accepted into society and developed their own styles in an effort to establish their own culture in a society that tried to erase it. This chapter discusses the hip-hop movement of the 1980's and the fashion that originated with it, by African American youth who resisted against mainstream culture and ways of dress.⁸⁵ This way of dressing emerged as a way to express a sense of identity, and to revolt against authority.⁸⁶ O'Neal explores the different types of identities that exist within the African American community and how dress influences these by giving cultural and social meaning. Romero and O'Neal discuss the meaning and symbolism behind hip-hop styles of dress. They contextualize its origins and attribute it to a narrative for African Americans to identify and legitimize themselves in society. They also discuss the controversy behind the fashion and its initial rejection by society.

⁸³ Gwendolyn S. O'Neal, "African American," in *Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion: The United States and Canada*, edited by Phyllis G. Tortora. (Oxford: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010), <http://dx.doi.org.access.authkb.kb.nl/10.2752/BEWDF/EDch3075>.

⁸⁴ Gwendolyn S. O'Neal, "African American."

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

Fashion is determined and diffused not only by designers, but also by advertisers and marketers. Media and celebrity influence play a big role in the marketing of hip-hop fashion and in growing the popularity of these styles by suiting consumers' demand. Elena Romero discusses the popularization of hip-hop style by celebrities, especially by rap artists and their featured clothing in MTV music videos.⁸⁷ Romero also recounts how fashion designers like Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger took inspiration from urban sportswear and integrated it into their collections. Tommy Hilfiger collaborated with artists, like Snoop Dog, around his designs.⁸⁸ Fashion apparel companies like Cross Colours and Fubu are also mentioned in the book as playing a great role in the commercialization of hip-hop fashion. Throughout her book, she makes the argument around urban fashion revolutionizing the fashion industry and U.S. retail. She explains how hip-hop fashion has been integrated into mainstream fashion and into both U.S. retail stores and luxury fashion brands.⁸⁹ She also discusses the reinvention of the fashion style over the years, with its most prominent focus today revolving around streetwear. Elena emphasizes the influence of celebrities in the promotion of hip-hop styles and fashion and their contribution to elevating it to become a part of the luxury market.⁹⁰ In "Hip-Hop x Streetwear: From Underground to High-End Fashion" from *Voir fashion*, Charlie Malcolm-Mckay discusses hip-hop fashion's relationship and integration into high-end fashion. He accredits designer Dapper Dan's 1980s Louis Vuitton and Gucci monogrammed tracksuits, as well as LL Cool J's sporting brands with initiating hip-hop's captivation with high-end fashion.⁹¹ The success of fashion collaborators hip-hop has exemplified a cultural shift in which hip-hop style is viewed by society.⁹² Before rap and hip-hop music became a worldwide phenomenon, the high-end fashion industry did not want to collaborate with hip-hop fashion designers. This shifted as rap became the most popular music genre in the U.S.⁹³ This opened the door to fashion collaborations with rap artists and for these artists, such as Lil Wayne, Pharrell Williams, and Kanye West to also create their own apparel and fashion lines.⁹⁴ Malcolm-Mckay believes that

⁸⁷ Elena Romero, *Free Stylin': How Hip-hop Changed the Fashion Industry*, 99.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 165.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, xviii.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁹¹ Charlie Malcolm-Mckay, "Hip-Hop x Streetwear: From Underground to High-End Fashion," *Voir Fashion*. Accessed January 4, 2021. <https://www.voirfashion.co.uk/post/hip-hop-x-streetwear-from-underground-to-high-end-fashion/>

⁹² Charlie Malcolm-Mckay, "Hip-Hop x Streetwear: From Underground to High-End Fashion."

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

hip-hop fashion and streetwear's appeal originated by the fact that the style was first rooted as the "outsider,"⁹⁵ which gave it a sense of freedom in its styling and design.⁹⁶ This remains today in the exploration and mixture of femininity within menswear.⁹⁷ Malcolm-Mckay poses the question of whether the over-commercialization of the street style and appeal can be the end of its popularity within mainstream culture, or whether it has been cemented into it.⁹⁸

The institution of fashion is run by consumer demand. As trends and fads coming from urban areas are discovered and promoted, they are appropriated by larger organizations and institutionalized through production and marketing. In *Sneakers: Fashion, Gender, and Subculture*, Yuniya Kawamura delves into the subculture created by the footwear of sneakers, which play a big role in fashion. Sneakers have created a new industry and revolutionized footwear. As explained in the book, sneakers play a big role in defining identity and culture and symbolize the creation of a new industry separate from what was available in and dominated by mainstream society.⁹⁹ Kawamura analyzes the sociology and symbolism of the sneaker subculture as well discusses its emergence in New York City as part of hip-hop culture.¹⁰⁰ The book traces the origins of the industry and how it came to be connected to fashion. It discusses prominent sneaker brands like Adidas and Nike, which utilized the consumer demand for streetwear sneakers in their favor and created a commercial market for them. Kawamura discusses the history of footwear and the distinction of footwear as an accessory or material protection, to an essential part of the wardrobe and a symbolism of culture and identity.¹⁰¹ Sneakers emerged as an underground movement among African American youths and as a way for them to create a movement separate from a society that repressed them.¹⁰² With their lack of inclusion in mainstream society and the economy, hip-hop culture, and sneakers, gave African Americans a way to express themselves in a way that was accessible to them. The book also makes the link with the integration of sneakers into the mainstream fashion industry in the 1990's.¹⁰³ Kawamura delves into the fluidity of sneakers and their presence among all types of

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Sneakers: Fashion, Gender, and Subculture*, 37.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 44.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 13.

¹⁰² Ibid, 44.

¹⁰³ Ibid, 77.

social classes and races.¹⁰⁴ They rose from the ground up and emerged into a more recognizable social surface. The commodification of the sneaker subculture, with the help of the media, has made them a fashion item and raised their popularity.¹⁰⁵ The commercialization of sneakers satisfied a need for social cohesion, but diminished individuality. However, some sneaker enthusiasts still work to keep their uniqueness in sneaker style alive, preserving some symbolic value over economic value.¹⁰⁶ “The Maturation of Hip-Hop's Menswear Brands: Outfitting the Urban Consumer” by Tasha Lewis and Natalie Gray in *Fashion Practice* discusses the change in meaning of hip-hop fashion and how its styles have been commercialized and reinterpreted for mass retailers.¹⁰⁷ Hip-hop culture evolved into mainstream style and has been majorly capitalized on. Many of the groups of people that originated this style, including youth African American and Hispanics, do not identify with the maturation or change of the hip-hop style that mainstream culture has attributed to it.¹⁰⁸ Hip-hop fashion, which was once geared towards African Americans, became oriented towards non-African Americans and underwent a cultural rebranding. American designers like Ralph Lauren and Tommy Hilfiger contributed to this by marketing hip-hop style as all-American in order to appeal to the wider society.¹⁰⁹ This re-brand of hip-hop style turned it into a lifestyle, specifically associated with America. A style of dress that once symbolized a community’s resistance against an oppressive American society, became a marker of that society.

In disproving the theories of Simmel and Bourdieu and aligning with those of Blumer, Kawamura, and Crane, with emphasis on the two latter as they produce an updated version of Blumer’s theories, the literature I have identified maintains that, while hip-hop fashion initially proves fashion theories of class differentiation as it emerged from lower classes into upper class, it was not the elites and upper classes that progressed this movement but a consumer society. Fashion reflects social change. It is through social interactions that fashion and culture is diffused, as this is what makes up society. American society is run by capitalism, which is fueled

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 105.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 105.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 111-113.

¹⁰⁷ Tasha Lewis and Natalie Gray, “The Maturation of Hip-Hop's Menswear Brands: Outfitting the Urban Consumer,” *Fashion Practice* 5, no. 2 (2013): 232.
<https://doi.org/10.2752/175693813x13705243201531>.

¹⁰⁸ Tasha Lewis and Natalie Gray, “The Maturation of Hip-Hop's Menswear Brands: Outfitting the Urban Consumer,” 233.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 232.

by consumers and producers. Consumers determine fashion trends while producers, such as designers and organizations, propagate them into the mainstream. My research shows that hip-hop fashion emerged in society as a social identity for African American and Hispanic/Latino communities in the United States and diffused across the country as hip-hop culture became represented in marketing and medias, as well as produced by designers and large organizations, such as Adidas and Nike.

1.4 Sources and Methods

This research aims to make a qualitative analysis of how the consumer appeal and diffusion of hip-hop fashion have evolved since the 1980s. Primary sources consist of newspaper articles from the New York Times, images of hip-hop fashion artifacts, photographs of hip-hop fashion and key players in hip-hop culture, interviews, and a case study comparison of Nike and Adidas. Furthermore, this research, will be based on secondary literature, interviews with fashion sociologists, and videos and film. This will supplement the primary sources. Newspaper articles, fashion artifacts, and photographs will be analyzed to delaminate periods in the studied time frame. This thesis looks into three different periods: the 1980s and 1990s, then the 2000s, and then the 2010s. After comparing these periods, a conclusion will be deduced around how they their subject matters have evolved in due course.

The use of artifacts is useful in researching how people lived in a certain period of time. In this case, it is useful in researching the types of clothing and dress that people wore from the 1980s to present day in the United States. The context behind these artefacts is important as they uncover the contexts and conditions behind groups and individuals' social interaction and lives during the hip-hop movement and throughout hip-hop culture's inception and progression within American society. Some difficulty lies around the amount of information that is provided for an artifact, which could be limited.

With photographs, visual records are produced around historical events and important historical figures. These photographs allow the ability to view items of clothing from hip-hop fashion as they are worn at the point in time the photograph was taken. It also provides information around the person who is wearing the clothes and produces a deeper context behind the styles of the clothing as they can be depicted to be worn in specific ways for different styles. These photographs enable a visual representation of the fashion, rather than just relying on a

written description, which helps to better understand the types of styles that were created by hip-hop culture. Some weaknesses with analyzing photographs are around the lack of information that can be provided if the names, places and dates are not provided. Photographs can also just reflect what the photographer wants the viewer to see and not incorporate the bigger picture of what it is being showcased. They can also be heavily manipulated and taken for different purposes or be in black and white or faded in color, not providing a fully realistic image of the time, person, or place. Without proper context, it is also important to gather evidence from accompanying literature to provide a better analysis of the photograph.

The use of newspapers is very useful in making analyses around hip-hop fashion and the context behind it as newspapers are trusted and factual sources. They also provide details and context for the period of time it was written in. At times, images can be present and accompany the text that is produced. Newspapers report something at the time it happened, which is helpful and sometimes provide knowledge or information from key actors involved in order to substantiate the report. Newspapers also show how people lived during a certain period of time. Some difficulties and problems with newspapers can be around missing or blurred text as well as missing images or other content that was unable to be produced in the selected database.

Using case studies, similar to newspapers, allows for a deeper understanding of the context behind a field of study and subject. Robert Yin explains that the use of case studies are best when a researcher is interested in knowing why and how something occurs. They are also not generalizable.¹¹⁰ He says there are different approaches to conducting case studies: there are single-case studies which are explanatory and descriptive case studies which can encompass more than one case.¹¹¹ Yin explains that there are five major components of case study research design: the study's questions, propositions, units of analysis, logic linking data to the propositions, and criteria for interpreting the findings.¹¹² Some skills to have when conducting a case study are to ask good questions, to be a good listener, to have a firm grasp of the issues studied, and to be unbiased by preconceived notions.¹¹³ There are six different sources of evidence to be knowledgeable about: documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations,

¹¹⁰ Robert K. Yin, "Case Study Research: Design and Methods," Google Books (SAGE), accessed June 23, 2021, 4.

¹¹¹ Robert K. Yin, "Case Study Research: Design and Methods," 5.

¹¹² Ibid, 22.

¹¹³ Ibid, 59.

participant-observation, and physical artifacts.¹¹⁴ The best ways to analyze case study evidence are to put the information into different arrays, make a matrix of categories and place the evidence in a category, create data displays to examine data, tabulate the frequency of events, examine the complexity of the tabulations and their relationships by calculating second-order numbers, and by putting information in chronological order or using a type of temporal scheme.¹¹⁵ Some other important aspects to keep in mind are that case studies should be significant, they should be complete, they should consider alternative perspectives, and they should be composed in an engaging manner to draw readers in.¹¹⁶

I am looking into. With the case study I will do around Nike and Adidas, I am able to study the facts behind each organization and compare them with each other. The information found is typically from company databases, or other factual sources. The difficulties with case studies are that there can be a lack of information behind the subject I am looking to, or my own prior knowledge can influence my findings.

Conducting interviews for research is useful as it enables to get statements and first-hand account from either individuals that lived during the onset of hip-hop culture in the United States or from experts around fashion who can provide further knowledge around both fashion and hip-hop fashion. Interviews also allow for social interaction, which is a good change and break away from readings, and other types of research. It is important to discern the relationship between the interviewee and interviewer as there may be a power dynamic.¹¹⁷ Listening actively is imperative and as well is treating each with respect. For in-person interviews, determining a good location that is on neutral ground and in a quiet location helps. The difficulty with conducting interviews is that you are trusting the information you are being given based on the relationship you established your interviewee. It is important to be on good terms and establish a mutual respect for one another.¹¹⁸

1.5 Thesis structure

¹¹⁴ Robert K. Yin, "Case Study Research: Design and Methods," 86.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 111.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 162-165.

¹¹⁷ "Issues to Consider for All Interview Types," Issues to Consider for All Interview Types, accessed June 25, 2021, https://saylordotorg.github.io/text_principles-of-sociological-inquiry-qualitative-and-quantitative-methods/s12-04-issues-to-consider-for-all-int.html.

¹¹⁸ "Issues to Consider for All Interview Types," Issues to Consider for All Interview Types.

In developing findings for to answer the research question, the second chapter will be centered around defining both fashion and hip-hop fashion, as well as hip-hop culture. Through this, It will analyze the meaning behind hip-hop culture and value it brings to groups and individuals. It will also provide findings around what society was like in the United States during the time of the creation of hip-hop culture, as fashion is intertwined with society and any changes that are produced within it. This will enable to explore the meaning behind hip-hop fashion and the identities that it prescribes. This chapter will explore staples of hip-hop fashion and influential styles and trends that derived from it, in order to prepared for the next chapter.

Chapter three will utilize the notion of fashion existing within a consumer society and analyze the different processes of diffusion that it went through at different points of time. It will focus on analyzing these diffusion types throughout the 1990s and 2000s, and then the later 2010s. Hip-hop fashion is driven by consumers and social interaction. As its meaning and value evolved, the diffusion methods changed as well. This chapter will look into how hip-hop fashion's meaning has evolved in the 2000s and how it became diffused by means of marketing strategies and through media. The last part of this chapter will focus on the reason for the diffusion and how it happened.

In the fourth chapter, a brief case study comparison of sportswear companies, Nike and Adidas will be developed to put the findings of my previous chapter to the test. This case study will focus on methods of diffusion and marketing tactics for both Nike and Adidas sneakers. It will also allow the ability to uncover new methods of meaning making within hip-hop fashion as both organizations' marketing and consumer strategies are analyzed through the present day.

Then, the fifth and last chapter will conclude the research from the previous chapters by providing a response to the research question. It will maintain that hip-hop fashion's diffusion happened in different waves, with it first being spread by word of mouth in urban neighborhoods who lived the hip-hop culture lifestyle. Then, other areas in society began to notice it as hip-hop music became popular and mainstream and hip-hop artists and celebrities were wearing hip-hop styles in their music videos, in television and in film, and in the media. Advertisers and marketers spread hip-hop culture in the media, which then attracted consumers. Then, it will discuss how mainstream designers collaborated with hip-hop artists, as well as appropriated hip-hop styles, to push hip-hop fashion into the mainstream and evolve its meaning to steer away from hip-hop culture, which was what it originated from, and instead move towards being known

as streetwear. Finally, it will discuss sportswear companies Nike and Adidas and how their marketing and advertising strategies diffused casual wear sneakers into the mainstream, as well as how hip-hop fashions value has changed and evolved over time as it became known as streetwear and less associated with hip-hop culture.

Chapter 2: Hip-Hop Fashion Origins and Social Discourse in the U.S. in the 1980-90s

This chapter will serve to answer the question around what hip-hop fashion is and what the meaning behind it is by defining both fashion and hip-hop culture in more detail. It will also discuss the social and cultural context behind how hip-hop culture, which hip-hop music and fashion stems from, emerged, as well as the social conditions present at the time of their emergence in the United States. Defining fashion and the discourse behind it first is important as many of the themes discussed within this chapter will resurface throughout the other chapters. Defining hip-hop culture enables the development of more context behind how hip-hop fashion emerged. It will also delve into how hip-hop music was the catalyst for the fashion movement to exist and how both the music and fashion are linked in growth. They are both results of the culture and society from which they emerged. In the 1970s, a hip-hop cultural movement began as hip-hop music initiated its rise in popularity among inner city youth. Hip-hop music was started by African American and Hispanic youth in New York City. They sang and rapped about the conditions of living in the United States and how this affected them politically, socially, and culturally. Hip-hop culture became a way for them to develop identities within a repressive society for people of color. As this culture developed, the meaning and value behind it became attractive to individuals and groups outside of their own communities. This was the catalyst to a movement that touched and reached many different types of people throughout the end of the twentieth century and beginning of the twenty-first.

2.1 Defining fashion

For many years, and still to this day, the field and notion of fashion is at times devalued and seen as frivolous. Throughout history, royalty, elites, and upper classes adorned costumes and fashion as markers of wealth and prestige. Prior to the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, fashion was mostly associated with luxury and could not be adopted by the masses. It was regarded as a privilege obtained by the upper classes of society; however, as manufacturing costs became cheaper with new technology, it became available to wider groups of people.¹¹⁹ From the nineteenth century, fashion became feminized and deemed as futile as it was only linked to value around the outward appearance. Women's social roles become

¹¹⁹ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Fashion-Ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies* (London u.a.: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 7.

synonymous with their stereotyped interests in fashion and obsessions with beauty.¹²⁰ Interest in fashion was seen as diminishing one's intellect. Following the Industrial Revolution, fashion became more accessible and democratized to larger groups of people, and across all social classes. As a result, it became integrated into social life and was attributed meaning and value. In an interview with Julia Twigg, Emeritus Professor of Social Policy and Sociology at the University of Kent, she discussed fashion as historically being an elite word as it was connected with the highly fashion fashionable, as opposed to everyday dress and clothing worn for practical reasons. She says that fashion is not about clothing alone, but about a cycle of change of esteemed objects, and as the nature of capitalism is constantly shifting, so are theories of diffusion.¹²¹

Fashion is symbolic and not tangible, but it incorporates tangible objects such as clothing. It is a concept that describes clothing and styles of appearance. It is a socially constructed idea and is manifested through the material object of clothing.¹²² According to Kawamura, clothing is deemed as fashion through the transcription of the collective. Fashion production, thus, is a collective activity—not simply the creation of an individual designer.¹²³ Clothing becomes fashion after it has been widely diffused and accepted. People consume fashion, not clothing. Fashion adds value to clothing through imagination and beliefs. The adoption of fashion showcases certain cultural values and creates a perceived value-added for consumers.¹²⁴ As a creative product, fashion is composed of both a material base, which are materials that give form to the products, and semiotic codes, which highlight the product's symbolism and give meaning to the work and how audiences interpret it.¹²⁵ The combination of both determine the value of the product that is perceived by the consumer and drives their choices.¹²⁶ Change within fashion is driven by a few drivers: demand, technology, public policy, and globalization. Through

¹²⁰ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Fashion-Ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies*, 7-10.

¹²¹ Julia Twigg, interview by Marilyn Santos, Zoom, April 29, 2021.

¹²² Yuniya, Kawamura, *Fashion-Ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies*, 1-2.

¹²³ *Ibid*, 1-2.

¹²⁴ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Fashion-Ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies* (London u.a.: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 4-5.

¹²⁵ Candace Jones, Mark Lorenzen, Jonathan Sapsed, "Creative Industries: A Typology of Change," In *Oxford Handbook of Creative Industries*, edited by Candace Jones, Mark Lorenzen and Jonathan Sapsed, 8. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199603510.013.030>.

¹²⁶ Candace Jones, Mark Lorenzen, Jonathan Sapsed, "Creative Industries: A Typology of Change," 8.

culture, individuals and groups enable the creation of meaning in their lives. Fashion is a cultural practice, as well as a symbolic product. It is a manufactured symbol of culture.¹²⁷ Clothing choices have the power to make an individual an object of attention and create feelings of shame. The unity created by fashion allows less room for these feelings and increases feelings of belonging.¹²⁸ Changes in fashion allow for individuals to obtain greater social and political freedom as they are not constrained to one form of life represented by a style of dress, it also clashes against the upper classes who are more conservative and do not adhere to change. The rapid change of fashion is favourable to social advancement as it brings forth different lifestyles and character traits into society.¹²⁹ It also increases demand for cheaper fashion products as they are being adopted for different classes. For economic means, fashion always returns to old forms, creating a cycle.¹³⁰

According to Georg Simmel, fashion provides a way for individuals to adapt into society and social settings. It also enables them to express their individuality by differentiating themselves from others.¹³¹ Simmel also notes, based on his observations from the 19th century, that fashion differs by social class and ranking. The upper classes wore different clothing than the lower classes, with lower classes copying fashion styles from the upper classes.¹³² Fashion signifies the uniformity of groups, as well as the exclusion of others as it differs by social circle. It is the product of social demands. As lower classes imitate and adopt styles from the upper classes, the latter seeks new styles to follow.¹³³ As the majority adopts fashion from a group that exercises it, it spreads universally and gradually meets its end. Simmel believed that the increase in social consciousness around fashion is what enables its downfall. We call fashion what we believe “will vanish as rapidly as it came.”¹³⁴ As a person displays themselves as being seemingly fashionable, they are automatically included and approved to become part of group and facilitate envy from other individuals who also want to feel the same sentiments of approval and belonging.¹³⁵ With fashion, an unimportant individual can gain importance and significance

¹²⁷ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Fashion-Ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies*, 32.

¹²⁸ Georg, Simmel, “Fashion,” 552-553.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, 555-556.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, 556-557.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, 543.

¹³² *Ibid*, 543.

¹³³ *Ibid*, 544-545.

¹³⁴ *Ibid*, 547-548.

¹³⁵ Georg, Simmel, “Fashion,” 548.

through the embodiment of a joint essence. With imitation of social dress styles, the individual obtains equalization. This leads to the desire for individualization, which further continues the cycle of imitation as individuals are practicing a joint rebellion against the same thing.¹³⁶ As human beings seek both individualization and acceptance into a group, when one of those is denied, the other will be sought. Simmel uses the example of women and states that they are more inclined to crave individualization and showcase their personalities within fashion as they have historically been denied entry and acceptance into social institutions and processes.¹³⁷ Fashion also symbolizes a desire for destruction as new forms are continuously being adopted and old ones are being reinvented. It can be a way to either mask your personality or accentuate it. Some prefer to appear as though they blend in, while others as though they stand out.¹³⁸ Lucy Twigg explained that there is more research around fashion as being an outlet for individualization but not much around them wanting to dress appropriately for the social space in which they are in in order to be accepted into it. Fashion is part of the engine of consumption, which can lead to feelings of empowerment for some people as consumption is mainstream and an integral part of society.¹³⁹

As the fashion process enables diversity and changes of styles, it facilitates social change and progress.¹⁴⁰ Fashion does not exist as much in societies that are run by undemocratic regimes. Citizens have less freedom to dress as they want—individualism is removed and a push for unity in dress is made. Kawamura makes the argument that fashion cannot exist in societies that do not hold ideologies suited for social change and progress.¹⁴¹ Before the age of industrialization in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, fashion was a privilege obtained by the upper classes of society; however, as manufacturing costs became cheaper with new technology, it became available to wider groups of people.¹⁴² Fashion appears in every day mainstream life. It should not be reduced to extravagant dress and costumes, mainly worn by upper classes. Fashion influences all aspects of society, from art, to literature, entertainment, philosophy, business, and science.¹⁴³ Adopting a certain fashion and style is calculated and not

¹³⁶ Ibid, 548-550.

¹³⁷ Ibid, 550-551.

¹³⁸ Ibid, 551-552.

¹³⁹ Julia Twigg, interview by Marilyn Santos, Zoom, April 29, 2021.

¹⁴⁰ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Fashion-Ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies*, 5.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, 5.

¹⁴² Ibid, 7.

¹⁴³ Herbert Blumer, "Fashion: From Class Differentiation to Collective Selection," 275-276.

frivolous, as many would believe it to be. Fashion choices are not irrational “crazes” that people blindly follow. When fashion is worn or made popular by an elite, it is given a stamp of approval and sophistication, which mainstream populations wish to emulate.¹⁴⁴ Fashion continues to change due to differing and evolving developments in taste.

2.2 Hip-hop culture and its origins

As fashion is intrinsically tied to society and culture, it is important to examine the state of American society and the societal status of African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos, who are the initiators of hip-hop culture, in the 1980s and 1990s. Hip-hop culture first began with music. Rap music gained popularity within urban communities in the 1980s and initiated a movement that spread throughout the United States. However, prior to this and throughout the twentieth century, African Americans were restricted in movement in the United States, their own country, with segregation through Jim Crow laws.¹⁴⁵ During the civil rights era, they strove to maintain their culture and contributed to shaping American society and culture through music with blues, jazz, rock and roll and soul.¹⁴⁶ With hip-hop music originating in the later part of the twentieth century, it became the first African American musical form to be created in post-civil rights era America. This enabled them to create a movement in which they could freely express themselves through music, as well as through fashion.

The United States, like other industrialized countries but more so, is distinguished by the size and diversity of its racial and ethnic populations. There is also a long history of racial minority inequality around education, health, income, and employment. Institutions have historically been run by white majorities and built upon the discrimination of minorities. This is also reflected in culture and social relations. Social interaction and collective experiences within a community and between other communities are affected by “shared outlooks, shared modes of behaviour, traditions, belief systems, world views, values, skills, preferences, styles, and linguistic patterns.”¹⁴⁷ Communities differ based on their experiences, which are determined by a set of factors, including:

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 277.

¹⁴⁵ Marcyliena Morgan and Dionne Bennett, “Hip-Hop & the Global Imprint of a Black Cultural Form,” *Daedalus* 140, no. 2 (2011): 182. https://doi.org/10.1162/daed_a_00086.

¹⁴⁶ Marcyliena Morgan and Dionne Bennett, “Hip-Hop & the Global Imprint of a Black Cultural Form,” 182.

¹⁴⁷ National Research Council, *America Becoming: Racial Trends and Their Consequences: Volume I*.

the degree to which the community is socially isolated from the broader society; the material assets or resources controlled by members of the community; the benefits and privileges they derive from these resources; their accumulated cultural experiences from current as well as historical, political, and economic arrangements; and the influence members of the community wield because of these arrangements.¹⁴⁸

Culture and social relations are deeply intertwined as the former provides tools and creates constraints in patterns of social interaction.¹⁴⁹ Racial outcomes and biases are not caused by culture but by social interactions, which then produce effects on culture and contribute to how it is shaped. Social factors, mainly levels of economic well-being, play roles in forming characteristics and traits in groups overtime. This can affect individuals' and groups' skills, motivations, attitudes, and social mobility.¹⁵⁰ Housing data gathered from the mid-1970s to the mid 1990s show that while there has been some improvement in housing quality compared to previous years, non-Hispanic Blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians and Alaskan Natives are seen to live in “substandard housing” in comparison to Whites or Asian and Pacific Islanders.¹⁵¹ This affects the composition of neighborhoods, with Whites having access to better housing, composing neighborhoods with White majorities and in higher income households. The opposite is seen for non-Hispanic Blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians and Alaskan Natives. Statistically, during this period of time, Whites have higher rates of and more access to economic and social well-being, creating disparities by race.

American popular culture pushes emphasis on materialism, consumption, and individualism, which greatly influences youths, but also influences individuals and groups differently based on class and race distinction as the effects of exposure of popular culture on them varies.¹⁵² Through assessment of racial and ethnic relations in United States throughout the 1990s, a conclusion was made that the United States was increasingly racially polarized.¹⁵³

Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 11, <https://doi.org/10.17226/9599>

¹⁴⁸ National Research Council, *America Becoming: Racial Trends and Their Consequences: Volume I*, 11.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 11.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, 12.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 36-37.

¹⁵² Ibid, 236.

¹⁵³ Ibid, 264.

Based on these conditions, Black and Hispanic/Latino Americans were in majority seen as outsiders from White communities, which made up the majority of the United States. Living environments greatly influence social interactions, which then influences culture, meaning the “beliefs, values, norms, traditions, and artifacts shared among the inhabitants of a common society.”¹⁵⁴ White communities thus had different cultures than Black and Hispanic/Latino communities. As mainstream society and culture was predominantly White, it did not include much representation for Black and Hispanic/Latino youth. They created hip-hop as a cultural community to represent themselves within society.

Hip-hop, a term referring to the “music, arts, media, and cultural movement and community,” was developed by Black and Hispanic/Latino youth on the East Coast of the United States in the 1970s, catalysed in New York City.¹⁵⁵ Members of the hip-hop community consider hip-hop as an identity and a lifestyle; it is all encompassing of the beliefs, political identities, behaviors, and values they hold, as well as their social, aesthetic, and intellectual knowledge. Hip-hop is comprised of elements of “deejaying and turntablism, the delivery and lyricism of rapping and emceeing, break dancing and other forms of hip-hop dance, graffiti art and writing.”¹⁵⁶ Originally comprising a community of Black and Hispanic/Latino youth, the hip-hop community evolved into an international, transnational, multiracial, multi-ethnic, and multilingual community. The movement became all-encompassing of everyone: all classes, genders, ages, and sexual identities. All are tied together by a culture that hip-hop represents and by the multimedia art that it inspires. Hip-hop music and rap music are forms of music intrinsically tied to the African American experience in the United States. They are forms of communication and are a cultural narrative for Black Americans. Much of the music reflects the experiences Blacks and Hispanics have been living in urban, inner cities in the United States. Their experiences are reflections of the cultural, institutional, structural, economic, historical, social, and political conditions and discourses of oppression:¹⁵⁷ “Contemporary rap lyrics reflect

¹⁵⁴ Tamara Lizette Brown, “Preface,” in *Soul Thieves: The Appropriation and Misrepresentation of African American Popular Culture*, edited by Tamara Lizette Brown and Baruti N. Kopano, vii, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

¹⁵⁵ Marcyliena Morgan and Dionne Bennett, “Hip-Hop & the Global Imprint of a Black Cultural Form,” *Daedalus* 140, no. 2 (2011): 176. https://doi.org/10.1162/daed_a_00086.

¹⁵⁶ Marcyliena Morgan and Dionne Bennett, “Hip-Hop & the Global Imprint of a Black Cultural Form,” 177.

¹⁵⁷ E. Jerry Persaud, “The Signature of Hip Hop: A Sociological Perspective,” *International Journal of Criminology and Sociological Theory* 4, no. 1 (2011): 627.

the personal, national, and international relations affecting the lived experience of Blackness in America.”¹⁵⁸ In its inception, hip-hop music and culture became a creative outlet for inner-city youth and materialized as an escape from the financial crises in their neighborhoods and lack of social programs.¹⁵⁹ When hip-hop and rap music first appeared the United States, it was seen as “lacking any aesthetic value or moral turpitude” and was not welcomed by suburban Americans.¹⁶⁰ While hip-hop culture did perpetuate some violence, this was used against it in civil discourse and contributed to its criminalization and to a marginalization of the movement in mainstream media. However, as America is preoccupied with material gain and thrives on consumption ethic, hip-hop music did eventually pass into the suburbs as it became mainstream, but at a very slow pace compared to cities.¹⁶¹ In the 1980s, hip-hop artists, such as LL Cool J and Run DMC began to achieve mainstream success. However, many radiostations would not play rap music; MTV refused to play rap music and Billboard did not want to define a category to list rap music and artists.¹⁶² By the 1990s, as disco, funk, and rock declined, hip-hop music began to be sold everywhere and transitioned into America’s mainstream music. The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) reports hip-hop music as being the “second-most-purchased” music after rock for all age groups from 1999 to 2008.¹⁶³ In the 1980s, hip-hop culture was introduced to American society, and globally, with classic films, *Beat Street* and *Wild Style*.¹⁶⁴ In 1985, Run DMC released a song, “My Adidas,” and shortly after produced a line of sneakers and accessories with the sportswear company, Adidas. Figure 1 shows the pair of white Adidas sneakers with three black stripes on the side.

¹⁵⁸ E. Jerry Persaud, “The Signature of Hip Hop: A Sociological Perspective,” 628.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 630.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 629.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, 629.

¹⁶² Ibid, 631.

¹⁶³ Marcyliena Morgan and Dionne Bennett, “Hip-Hop & the Global Imprint of a Black Cultural Form,” *Daedalus* 140, no. 2 (2011): 179. https://doi.org/10.1162/daed_a_00086.

¹⁶⁴ Marcyliena Morgan and Dionne Bennett, “Hip-Hop & the Global Imprint of a Black Cultural Form,” 182.



Figure 1

Pair of white and black Run-D.M.C. Superstar 80s sneakers made by Adidas, National Museum of African American History and Culture

This deal between Adidas and Run-D.M.C. marked the beginning of hip-hop fashion entrepreneurship and other apparel companies began to manufacture and market their clothing to hip-hop fans.¹⁶⁵ In New York Times article from 1997, “A Beat Becomes a Profitable Fashion: Hip-Hop Music, and Its Labels, Extend Influence Into Apparel,” Soren Baker discusses how music labels are finding new ways to bring in revenue, much as a 20% increase to their sale revenues. They are doing this through the sale of hip-hop related clothing. An important part of these “record companies’ clothing lines is their participation in the activewear fashion trade show Magic in Las Vegas, Nev., from Aug. 25 through 28.”¹⁶⁶ Baker also discusses Run-D.M.C.’s endorsement deal with Adidas shoes, facilitated by Russel Simmons, owner of Def Jam Records and Phat Farm clothing label, which is carried out in 600 boutiques.¹⁶⁷ A style of music, which once began on the East coast of the United States, namely in New York City boroughs such as Harlem and the Bronx, transitioned to reaching cities in the West coast and all across America, as well as the rest of the world. Hip-hop music and culture enabled the emergence of a

¹⁶⁵ Elena Romero, *Free Stylin’: How Hip-hop Changed the Fashion Industry*, 8.

¹⁶⁶ Soren Baker, "A Beat Becomes a Profitable Fashion: Hip-Hop Music, and its Labels, Extend Influence into Apparel," *New York Times*, August 18, 1997, <https://www-proquest-com.eur.idm.oclc.org/historical-newspapers/beat-becomes-profitable-fashion/docview/109704369/se-2?accountid=13598>

¹⁶⁷ Soren Baker, "A Beat Becomes a Profitable Fashion: Hip-Hop Music, and its Labels, Extend Influence into Apparel."

style of fashion, which led to corporate and economic success for rappers and corporations tied to hip-hop culture in mainstream American society.

2.3 Hip-hop fashion origins and the popularity of streetwear sneakers

Fashion and music are linked as they are both “forms of feeling and living in the world.”¹⁶⁸ They construct identities with language and appearances and also become forms of “new media” as they present and represent these identities and appearances to the world by means of social practices.¹⁶⁹ Through the emergence and integration of fashion in hip-hop culture, it transformed from an auditory art to a visual one as well. The hip-hop community used fashion to express their emotion and creativity. By the 1990s, hip-hop fashion became a big part of fashion branding, with rappers becoming models, advertisers, designers, and owners. Hip-hop culture and fashion became an “economic boom” for rappers and institutions and corporations with interests in the hip-hop culture.¹⁷⁰

In the early 1980s, a “preppie movement” was prevalent in American society. People wore comfortable clothing consisting of “loafers, khakis, polo, and rugby shirts in colors like pink and green.”¹⁷¹ Influential designers such as L.L. Bean and Ralph Lauren were leaders in the production of this type of fashion. Society sought to follow the style and lifestyle that was being promoted by this fashion movement—which was one of wanting to be “popular, smart, and wealthy.”¹⁷² The style of fashion and lifestyle was depicted in various American television shows and movies, pushing for a “preppy” culture. This movement became one of the catalysts for hip-hop fashion. Urban youth reinterpreted these styles to create their own looks, consisting of “sweat suits, shell-toed sneakers, and personalized hooded jackets.”¹⁷³ Julia Twigg expresses hip-hop fashion as being a form of counter-fashion. Hip-hop fashion designers adopted signs of esteem, such as fur coats and gold chains to take control of the fashion narrative and brand themselves as valuable. For people from urban centers in large cities, hip-hop fashion became a

¹⁶⁸ Patrizia Calefato, "Mass Fashion: The Role of Fashion in Music," *The Clothed Body*, (Oxford: Berg, 2004): 119. Dress, Body, Culture. *Bloomsbury Collections*. Accessed January 27, 2021. <<http://dx.doi.org/10.2752/9780857854049/CLOTHBOD0014>>

¹⁶⁹ Patrizia Calefato, "Mass Fashion: The Role of Fashion in Music," 119.

¹⁷⁰ E. Jerry Persaud, “The Signature of Hip Hop: A Sociological Perspective,” *International Journal of Criminology and Sociological Theory* 4, no. 1 (2011): 635.

¹⁷¹ Elena Romero, *Free Stylin’: How Hip-hop Changed the Fashion Industry*, 8.

¹⁷² *Ibid*, 7.

¹⁷³ *Ibid*, 8.

way for them to showcase their style as well as appearances of wealth and value to fit in with the status quo of society.¹⁷⁴ The culture is entrenched with wanting to appear as being “clean” and “neat” in order to break stereotypes of being poor.¹⁷⁵ Fashion became a powerful tool for individuals and groups in urban neighborhoods to express themselves and portray symbols of success and wealth. Within hip-hop fashion, color combination is important and individuals always sought out to be the best dressed.¹⁷⁶ With finding appropriate clothing and sneakers to display appearances of success and wealth, some came with large price tags. Individuals prioritized their earnings around purchasing them and made sure to not display them in areas in which they could easily be robbed.¹⁷⁷ Different neighborhoods in New York City contained different shops, such as Army/Navy stores, that sold select sneakers and clothing. Based on what clothes people were wearing, it was easy to tell which borough they were from, whether it was Brooklyn, Manhattan, or the Bronx due to the aesthetics of the local shops in each.¹⁷⁸ Tailor and designer, Dapper Dan owned a tailor shop in Harlem and is an integral part of the origins of hip-hop fashion in the 1980s and 1990s. Consumers of hip-hop fashion styles consulted him to achieve more sophisticated looks.¹⁷⁹ As seen in a New York Times article in 2017, “The Tailor of 125th Street: After Gucci's 'homage,' Dapper Dan, whose boutique was a major influence in hip-hop, returns to the spotlight,” Barry Michael Cooper discusses Dapper Dan’s use of high-end designer logos, such as Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Fendi, and MCM in his designs.¹⁸⁰ After 10 years of business, Dapper Dan was forced to close his tailor shop in the 1990s due to legal complaints of the use of these logos without permission, which Gucci now apologizes for and pays homage to his boutique, nonetheless after imitating his designs. He is well-known as a pioneer in the merging of hip-hop culture and fashion with luxury brands as they did not “have sizing for black people.”¹⁸¹ Gucci imitated his designs now recognizes early on, he knew that labels set clothing

¹⁷⁴ Elena Romero, *Free Stylin’: How Hip-hop Changed the Fashion Industry* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2012), 9.

¹⁷⁵ Elena Romero, *Free Stylin’: How Hip-hop Changed the Fashion Industry*, 10.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 11-13.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 77.

¹⁸⁰ Barry Michael Cooper, "The Tailor of 125th Street: After Gucci's 'Homage,' Dapper Dan, Whose Boutique was a Major Influence in Hip-Hop, Returns to the Spotlight," *New York Times*, June 04, 2017, <https://www-proquest-com.eur.idm.oclc.org/historical-newspapers/tailor-125th-street/docview/2463331456/se-2?accountid=13598>

¹⁸¹ Barry Michael Cooper, "The Tailor of 125th Street: After Gucci's 'Homage,' Dapper Dan, Whose Boutique was a Major Influence in Hip-Hop, Returns to the Spotlight."

apart from others and made them more valuable are they were recognizable. Figure 2 shows an image of one of his creations, a leather bomber jacket from 1987 with the MCM logo worked into it.



Figure 2

Dapper Dan of Harlem Bomber-style printed jacket 1987, USA, The Museum at FIT

Hip-hop style is a style of dress that “[violates] conventional appearance norms.”¹⁸² Julia Twigg expresses hip-hop fashion as being a form of counter-fashion. The trends made popular by hip-hop fashion, such as oversized and baggy clothing, visible price tags, wearing apparel items backwards, and exposing underwear were seen as wrong and negative and going against the norm of conventional dress.¹⁸³ Hip-hop styles were associated with “gangsta rap,” which featured vulgar lyrics valorizing drugs, violence, and rape.¹⁸⁴ Throughout the 1990s, this style of dress drew much controversy due to its defiance of dress norms and association with an

¹⁸² Marica A. Morgado, “The Semiotics of Extraordinary Dress: A Structural Analysis and Interpretation of Hip-Hop Style,” *Clothing & Textiles Research Journal* 25, no. 2 (April 2007): 131.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 142.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 133.

“aggressive mode of self-presentation.”¹⁸⁵ As hip-hop culture was created by youth Blacks and Hispanics in inner cities, they were associated with the neighborhoods in which they lived, which were ridden with crimes and gangs. The media exploited the criminalization of hip-hop culture and fashion with reference to gangs and racist stereotypes.¹⁸⁶ The unconventionality and rebellion against dress norms made hip-hop fashion attractive to the youth in America during the 1990s. In a New York Times article from 1991, “On the Road From Old Fashion to New, Hip-Hop,” Woody Hochswender discusses the appearance of hip-hop styles in New York fashion shows. The focus is on collections showed by designers Norma Kamali, Charlotte Neuville, and Isani, introducing oversize faux fur coats, Timberland-style shoes, and hooded athletic jackets, popularized by hip-hop culture. Hochswender describes these fashions as “rap street style” and singles out Gucci and Louis Vuitton shirts, caps and belt packs as “a form of self-mockery” and as “a joke on top of a joke” on the runway.¹⁸⁷ In an interview with Elena Romero, she discusses the term “urban fashion,” which is the politically correct way to describe fashion styles originating from hip-hop culture. Insiders who created these brands did not like the characterization of their clothes as “urban.” They wanted legitimacy and acceptance. As designers like Tommy Hilfiger and Calvin Klein showcased these clothes in their designs and collections, they were categorized as mainstream instead of urban fashion.¹⁸⁸

A type of apparel made mainstream and popular by hip-hop fashion is sneakers. Sneakers emerged as an underground subculture in the United States in the 1970s. Following hip-hop fashion, it came out of lower-class neighborhoods inhabited by racial minorities.¹⁸⁹ This subculture was created as a symbolic space for marginalized individuals and groups who felt as though they were unimportant and unrepresented by a society which was racially and socially divided, as it was in cities in the United States, specifically New York City, from the 1970s to the 1990s.¹⁹⁰ The sneaker subculture came about in three different waves, the first one being a trend originating from and propagating within poor neighborhoods in New York City, the second

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, 139.

¹⁸⁶ Morgado, Marica A, “The Semiotics of Extraordinary Dress: A Structural Analysis and Interpretation of Hip-Hop Style,” 134.

¹⁸⁷ Woody Hochswender, "On the Road from Old Fashion to New, Hip-Hop." *New York Times*, April 10, 1991, <https://www-proquest-com.eur.idm.oclc.org/historical-newspapers/on-road-old-fashion-new-hip-hop/docview/108774875/se-2?accountid=13598>

¹⁸⁸ Elena Romero, Interview by Marilyn Santos, February 19, 2021.

¹⁸⁹ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Sneakers: Fashion, Gender, and Subculture*, 43.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, 44-47.

starting with the launch of the Nike Air Jordan sneakers, produced in 1984 and release to market in 1985, depicting in Figure 3. These sneakers, named after basketball player Michael Jordan, were red and white high-tops, adorned with the Nike swoosh logo of a checkmark. After they came out, the commodification of sneakers intensified as the subculture slowly grew out of the underground.¹⁹¹ The third wave was initiated with the introduction of the internet and smartphones and tablets in twenty-first American and western society. This enabled mass communication to take place and sped up competition.¹⁹² Sneakers transcended the hip-hop culture cultural movement in which they originated and became entrenched into streetwear, which encompasses fashion styles originating from street subcultures of skateboarders and punks (as well as of hip-hop).



Figure 3

Nike “Air Jordan” high top sneakers 1985, USA, The Museum at FIT

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter sought to answer the first sub question, “what is hip-hop fashion and what is the meaning behind it?” Hip hop fashion is a fashion movement emerging from hip-hop culture. As culture and fashion are linked and fashion trends are replications of what is seen in society, hip-hop fashion was a trend that emerged from inner-city neighborhoods in New York City as a results of youth minorities feeling as if they are marginalized in American society. Hip-hop

¹⁹¹ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Sneakers: Fashion, Gender, and Subculture*, 43.

¹⁹² *Ibid*, 43.

culture enabled them to achieve a sense of identity and meaning, while hip-hop fashion enabled them to express themselves and seek clothing and accessories that made them feel successful and wealthy. Through hip-hop fashion and styles, minorities excluded from society and from the fashion industry were able to rebel against norms and create a place for themselves within fashion. Hip-hop music and rap were the catalysts for hip-hop culture, and thus initiated hip-hop fashion. Hip-hop artists, being made up of a majority of African Americans, used lyrics and song to express their experiences in American society as people of color. The widespread popularity of hip-hop music throughout the United States propelled it to the mainstream as music genre and opened the doors for hip-hop and rap artists to showcase their styles. As mainstream society initially rejected hip-hop music and the fashion associated with hip-hop culture, fashion designers recognized the appeal that it had with consumers and adapted these styles into their collections, garnering attention towards hip-hop fashion and opening the door to attract a wider range of consumers. As a component of hip-hop fashion, sneakers for casual wear reached popular culture and became integral to many fashion trends, especially streetwear.

Chapter 3: Hip-Hop Fashion's Rise in Mainstream Consumer Culture from the 1990s

This chapter will explore the role of consumption and marketing in hip-hop fashion's rise to the mainstream. It will look into how hip-hop fashion initially diffused after its inception.

Knowledge around hip-hop fashion and culture was diffused through word of mouth in different neighborhoods in New York City. As all urban areas were well versed with this culture and style of fashion and practiced both, the rise of hip-hop music in popularity was responsible for the propagation of hip-hop fashion styles. Hip-hop artists created and purchased their own clothing as the mainstream fashion industry did not cater to them. First being consumers of hip-hop fashion, hip-hop artists found that the fashion industry did not cater to their senses of style and became designers to create their own market for fashion. They spread their styles through appearances in music videos, magazine publications, television productions, and other means of mass media. In the 1990s, society became more technologically advanced with the use of the internet, smartphones, and tablets. These forms of media created the ability for mass communication, through which hip-hop fashion was diffused. Furthermore, mainstream designers noticed that hip-hop fashion trends were not going away anytime soon, as they believed they were, and utilized marketing to imitate these styles for consumption.

3.1 Consumer and designer interaction around hip-hop fashion

Hip-hop fashion, a movement emerging from lower social class rankings, spread through word of mouth and attracted designers and consumers. As discussed in the previous chapter, hip-hop fashion grew synonymously with hip-hop music. Hip-hop artists and celebrities created their own clothes as they were unable to be dressed by mainstream fashion. They created fashion for other people like them that did not feel as if the fashion industry catered to clothing for them.

In an interview with Elena Romero, she says that in 1996, the year she became a fashion reporter, hip-hop was at the point of commercialization. Hip-hop artists such as Biggie and Tupac were at the height of their careers, and mainstream television shows adopting hip-hop fashion brands into their shows, like *In Living Color*, *The Fresh Prince of Bel Air*, and *New York*

Undercover.¹⁹³ Hip-hop artists displayed their fashion through music videos and dressed and styled themselves. They would shop at local stores in their area or get custom wears from tailor shops, like the one of designer Dapper Dan. In the later 1990s and early 2000s, many fashion brands were getting built and getting traction, such as Fubu (For us by us). Their success mainly came from word of mouth. However, product placement and celebrity endorsement and sponsorships played a big role. In 1998, Fubu is a 350-million-dollar business. Another prominent hip-hop fashion brand, Cross Colours, became a 100-million-dollar business in four years.¹⁹⁴ Cross Colours participated in fashion shows early on, being one of the only hip-hop fashion brands to do so. It became a training ground for many of the people that would go into these companies in the future.¹⁹⁵

In a New York Times article from 2002, "Fashion Statement: Hip-Hop on Runway," Guy Trebay discussed Sean Combs', also known as Puff Daddy and P. Diddy, rise in the fashion industry with the creation of his clothing label, Sean John. Sean Combs is a multiplatinum-selling recording artist and producer of hip-hop and rap music. Trebay stated that Combs beats his competitors, such as Fubu, Phat Farm, and Ecko, in the urban fashion market, which "has become both an urban and suburban uniform."¹⁹⁶ Sean John acquired a retail revenue of 200 million dollars the previous year, in 2001, compared to the 500 million acquired by Ecko annually. Trebay recalls Combs' statements at the office of his record company as not having a huge background in fashion but having a large background around being a consumer. He recounts shopping at thrift stores and designer boutiques, as well as stores on fifth avenue after he achieved success in the hip-hop music industry. He believed that men's fashion had a lack of style and risk-taking. Combs was ranked as 33rd on the list of 100 most powerful people in men's fashion. His fashion line featured many over-the-top oversized fur coats, which he credited with bringing entertainment to the fashion industry.¹⁹⁷ In figure 4, Sean Combs is photographed by Vogue with model Kate Moss in 1999, at the height of his couture shows. They are both wearing

¹⁹³ Elena Romero, Interview by Marilyn Santos, February 19, 2021.

¹⁹⁴ Elena Romero Interview

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Guy Trebay, "Fashion Statement: Hip-Hop on Runway: A Fashion Statement: Hip-Hop on the Runway," *New York Times*, February 09, 2002, <https://www-proquest-com.eur.idm.oclc.org/historical-newspapers/fashion-statement-hip-hop-on-runway/docview/92212147/se-2?accountid=13598>

¹⁹⁷ Guy Trebay, "Fashion Statement: Hip-Hop on Runway: A Fashion Statement: Hip-Hop on the Runway."

oversized fur coats from Combs's line. Moss is wearing one with a cheetah print while Combs is wearing an oversized white one, both signatures of his clothing line.¹⁹⁸



Figure 4

Photographed by Annie Leibovitz, *Vogue*, October 1999

As Elena Romero expressed, hip-hop fashion was spread and diffused through word of mouth early on. Consumer publications were utilizing the brands in their fashion pages but not documenting the growth and story of the hip-hop fashion market. In the interview I had with her, she explained her involvement in hip-hop culture and how she pursued studying and writing about hip-hop fashion, in particular. Of Puerto Rican decent and born in Brooklyn in 1973, Romero is part of the hip-hop generation and lived through the origins of hip-hop culture. She became aware of hip-hop due to urban environment in which she lived, it was ingrained into her daily lifestyle, but only really noticed it and its impact through films such as *Beat Street*. Her connection to hip-hop grew through knowledge and stories from her cousin, who was from the

¹⁹⁸ Sean “Diddy” Combs as Told to Jannelle Okwodu, “Diddy at 50: The Hip-Hop Legend on His Groundbreaking Fashion Career,” *Vogue*. *Vogue*, November 4, 2019. Accessed April 16, 2021, <https://www.vogue.com/article/sean-diddy-combs-interview-fashion-legacy-puffy-takes-paris-anniversary>.

Bronx, and identified himself through hip-hop culture. As a young adult, Romero pursued a career in news reporting and ended up working for various radio stations as a reporter. However, her true passion lied within a career in journalism. She ended up working as a freelancer for Urban Latino Magazine and then as a market editor for Daily News Record's (DNR) Minority Associations Program (MAP). In that role, she covered main floor sportswear, young men's, men's slacks, and the party scene. Hip-hop fashion brands noticed her and reached out to her to visit their showrooms and report on their clothes. Romero noticed that the young men's market was underdeveloped, and that her career grew as did the market grew. She covered a wide range of stories, hip-hop artists getting into the fashion business, changes in retail, stylists, etc. After this, she became associate editor of DNR and contributing editor of women's daily, which featured music artists and their fashion and styles.

Romero discussed Sean Combs' clothing brand, , looked at differently than other brands due to him being major mogul. Sean John had to be respected and he was also part of a different social class. He exemplified what life can look like when you succeed. His fashion brand was considered as luxurious urban wear, with the incorporation of velour suits and fur coats. Hip-hop musicians and designers created their own opportunities as existing brands in the fashion industry did not cater to people of color. Brands like Fubu marketed towards people of color with their acronym meaning "for us by us."¹⁹⁹ They oversized their logos in order to be recognized as brand identifiers, as well as signify what they stand for and who they are. Other unknown designers in hip-hop culture decided to enter into the market of the fashion business, seeing it as a quick and easy way to make money. However, many did not necessarily understand the business of fashion. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the market was saturated. Everyone who wanted to have an urban brand did. In order to succeed, the brand stories needed to appeal to consumers. Hip-hop artists and celebrities strove to create their own fashion brands and create their own looks as mainstream designers did not see them as established enough to dress them. Mainstream designers also saw hip-hop fashion as a trend and fad that would soon disappear.²⁰⁰

The social interaction and momentum created by hip-hop artists in the 1990s and 2000s around hip-hop fashion enabled it to create its own market within the fashion industry. As hip-hop artists and celebrities were rejected by fashion houses, they decided to start their own labels

¹⁹⁹ Elena Romero, Interview by Marilyn Santos, February 19, 2021.

²⁰⁰ Elena Romero Interview.

and advertise their own clothes in order to find a place for themselves in the fashion industry. Hip-hop artists and celebrities were also consumers of fashion and fit into the consumer society, which institutionalized hip-hop styles.

3.2 Hip-hop fashion's adoption into haute couture through marketing

Fashion is a system. Designers and institutions produce fashion. Fashion is diffused by well-known designers who make names for themselves through labels.²⁰¹ It is also diffused by fashion journalists, editors, advertisers, marketers and merchandisers, and publicists through media.²⁰²

The media is an integral part of society and has a great role in shaping institutions by influencing their practices and experiences.²⁰³ It acts as a medium to provide meaning to the public. In the field of fashion, the media is intertwined in its “production, consumption, distribution, and diffusion.”²⁰⁴ Fashion is dependent on the media and advertising to get their value across to consumers. As designers and celebrities produce and insert themselves into fashion, their esteem is replicated onto the value of the fashion they are associated with. This is a form of advertising that will ensure consumer demand.

In New York Times article from 1992, “Hip-Hop's Hostile Takeover: Hip-Hop's Takeover It's a faster trip now from Malcolm X Boulevard to Madison Avenue,” Michel Marriot discussed the emergence of a magazine discussing hip-hop culture, *Vibe*, started by Quincy Jones. At the same time that the magazine came out, Calvin Klein and Donna Karan dressed models at their New York City shows in “Timberland boots and baggy, drop-crotched jeans.”²⁰⁵ Marriot describes hip-hop as being “counterculture” and “challenging to the status quo,” as well as transcendent of rap music. He questions the legitimacy of *Vibe* and interviews Russell Simmons, a rap-industry pioneer who used to be part of the *Vibe* team, why he left.²⁰⁶

²⁰¹ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Fashion-Ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies*, 73-74.

²⁰² Ibid, 74.

²⁰³ Rocamora Agnès. “Mediatization and Digital Media in the Field of Fashion.” *Fashion Theory* 21, no.5 (2017): 507, DOI: [10.1080/1362704X.2016.1173349](https://doi.org/10.1080/1362704X.2016.1173349)

²⁰⁴ Rocamora Agnès. “Mediatization and Digital Media in the Field of Fashion,” 509.

²⁰⁵ Michel Marriott, "Hip-Hop's Hostile Takeover: Hip-Hop's Takeover it's a Faster Trip Now from Malcolm X Boulevard to Madison Avenue," *New York Times*, September 20, 1992, <https://www-proquest-com.eur.idm.oclc.org/historical-newspapers/hip-hops-hostile-takeover/docview/108865275/se-2?accountid=13598>

²⁰⁶ Michel Marriott, "Hip-Hop's Hostile Takeover: Hip-Hop's Takeover it's a Faster Trip Now from Malcolm X Boulevard to Madison Avenue."

In New York Times article from 2003, “Taking Hip-Hop Seriously. Seriously,” Guy Trebay described the “history of style in the late 20th century” as:

Substantially the history of hip-hop, an urban music scene whose effects on the aural texture of contemporary life are more than matched by its influence on how, at a certain cultural moment, people around the world decided they wanted to be seen.²⁰⁷

He stated that the “hip-hop revolution in fashion” is not “taken seriously” and was largely ignored by the mainstream press, besides *Vibe* magazine, which reported around hip-hop fashion and celebrated its tenth anniversary. *Vibe* editor, Emil Wilbekin wrote that “aspirational dressing is important since there is historically this idea that you dress for the position in society you aspire to be in.” Trebay discussed that Dolce & Gabbana and Versace now have hip-hop collections. Wilbekin claimed that “Sean John sells way more than Donatella Versace. It just makes sense that designers like her would, at some point, have taken notice of that.”²⁰⁸

Elena Romero recounts that the fashion industry was caught off guard with how quickly hip-hop fashion emerged from a trend into a part of consumer society and culture. Mainstream designers and organizations chose to partner and hire some of the people from hip-hop culture and who were part of the rise of hip-hop fashion in order to better understand them and how they could benefit from them.²⁰⁹ She says that as mainstream fashion designers depicted hip-hop style clothing in their collections, television and magazines looked to diversify its programming and attract different audiences. Magazines are critical players in legitimizing fashion trends as they showcase fashion and celebrities wearing it in their pages. Commercial television showcased hip-hop fashion by showing hip-hop music videos.²¹⁰ Prior to MTV, Ralph McDaniels launched a show, Video Music Box, which documented the evolution of hip-hop through one-on-one interviews with celebrities and displaying music videos. With MTV catching on later, it contributed to hip-hop becoming a more national and global experience.²¹¹

²⁰⁷ Guy Trebay, "Taking Hip-Hop Seriously. Seriously," *New York Times*, May 20, 2003, <https://www-proquest-com.eur.idm.oclc.org/historical-newspapers/taking-hip-hop-seriously/docview/92471441/se-2?accountid=13598>

²⁰⁸ Guy Trebay, "Taking Hip-Hop Seriously. Seriously."

²⁰⁹ Elena Romero, Interview by Marilyn Santos, February 19, 2021.

²¹⁰ Elena Romero Interview.

²¹¹ Ibid.

Writers and reporters of fashion play a big role in relaying its meaning to the public. Their work enables the public to get a better understand of designers' ideas and aesthetics when they produce fashion.²¹² This provides a great deal of advertisement as it appeals to the consumer mentality. Fashion is an important marker to determine what consumers wear and think.²¹³ As reporters decide which stories to follow and what fashion to report on, they are dissecting the culture and social status of society in order to determine what they believe would be in accordance with consumers' tastes. They produce an image of fashion for consumers to replicate. The internet and social media are also important mediums of providing awareness towards fashion. In an interview with Yuniya Kawamura, Professor of Sociology at the Fashion Institute of Technology, she states that prior to the emergence of the internet and social media, designers needed to be located in one of the 4 major fashion cities of Paris, New York City, London, and/or Milan. They needed to have a collection ready, hire a publicist, and have a fashion magazine feature them in order for word to be spread around their designs.²¹⁴ However, since the development of social media, it is no longer necessary for a designer to be located in one of the four major fashion cities to garner awareness for their creations. They also do not need to be professionally trained as a designer. Through social media, a designer has the ability to design and make something and then post it online for others to see. The public does not care as much if someone is professionally trained around making clothing and creating fashion or not—if they have something creative or interesting to showcase, it can become a trend and garner positive attention.²¹⁵ These new forms of technology also enabled the acceleration of the democratization of fashion even further. Both consumers and designers were provided with the ability to better access each other and to better access fashion.²¹⁶

Furthermore, originating from Dapper Dan's luxury knockoff designs, haute couture has been intertwined with hip-hop fashion and styles.²¹⁷ Hip-hop culture has a history of being

²¹² Yuniya, Kawamura, *Fashion-Ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies*, 80.

²¹³ *Ibid*, 80.

²¹⁴ Yuniya Kawamura, Interview by Marilyn Santos, May 22, 2021.

²¹⁵ Yuniya Kawamura Interview

²¹⁶ *Ibid*.

²¹⁷ Jon, Caramanica, "Hooking Up," *The New York Times Style Magazine*, March 8, 2015, accessed April 19, <https://www-nytimes-com.eur.idm.oclc.org/2015/03/08/t-magazine/hip-hop-fashionstyle.html>.

enthralled by designer brands, which emulate symbols of wealth and success. As hip-hop artists created their own fashion labels and clothing lines, they bridged the gap between mainstream brands and hip-hop fashion. This opened the door for mainstream designers to emulate their styles and collaborate with them, such as Tommy Hilfiger.²¹⁸ Figure 5 features a photograph of Tommy Hilfiger with female hip-hop music group, Destiny's Child, wearing tube tops featuring his signature white, blue, and red colors and denim jeans/overalls in the at a promotional event for Tommy Jeans in the 1990s.



Figure 5
Tommy Hilfiger with Destiny's Child at promotional event for Tommy Jeans.

As hip-hop fashion entered into the mainstream, luxury designers became interested in collaborating with hip-hop artists and emulating their styles in their fashion. Since the 2000s, Haute couture Brands such as Gucci, Valentino, Balenciaga, and Louis Vuitton partnered with hip-hop artists and celebrities and utilized them for advertising campaigns for new luxury

²¹⁸ Jon, Caramanica, "Hooking Up."

streetwear collections.²¹⁹ In New York Times article from 2017, “Gucci Resurrects An 'Underground' Man: Dapper Dan borrowed their logos. Gucci copied his look. Now they're working together,” Matthew Schneier discussed Dapper Dan’s past tailor shop, open from 1982 to 1992, which was forcefully closed due to his use of with using high-end designer logos on in his designs without permission.²²⁰ Dan says that designers working at high-end labels such as Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Fendi would not sell their clothes to him and his shop, so he decided to make his own, in styles and sizing that these companies did not offer.²²¹ After Dapper Dan copied Gucci, they copied him by reproducing a mink jacket he had made in 1989, in collaboration with Olympian, Diane Dixon. Outrage ensued by the public in 2017 as Gucci did not give Dapper Dan credit for his design. Following this, Gucci and Dapper Dan decided to partner together in collaborating on capsule collection to be sold in Gucci stores.²²² Gucci would also support him in opening a “second-generation Dapper Dan’s as a by-appointment studio for custom commission” and supply some of the raw materials.²²³

Luxury products are intertwined with an individual’s status in society. They are produced both as means to portray one’s own position in society or to portray the aspiration of one’s desired position in society.²²⁴ As mentioned in chapter 2, individuals and groups that were part of hip-hop culture in its inception, strove to wear fashion and accessories that displayed symbols and images of success and wealth. As they lived in poor inner-city neighborhoods, society did not provide them the necessary access and means to achieve success as others in more privileged neighborhoods had. Haute couture and luxury goods were a way for minorities to appear as if they are higher up in social hierarchies.²²⁵ When luxury designers realized this, they were able to appeal to another market in society. The symbolic capital created by haute couture makes it

²¹⁹ Max Berlinger, “How hip-hop fashion went from the streets to high fashion,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 26, 2018. <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/la-et-ms-ig-hip-hop-fashion-streets-couture-20180125-htlstory.html>

²²⁰ Matthew Schneier, "Gucci Resurrects an 'Underground' Man: Dapper Dan Borrowed their Logos. Gucci Copied His Look. Now they're Working Together," *New York Times*, September 14, 2017, <https://www-proquest-com.eur.idm.oclc.org/historical-newspapers/gucci-resurrects-underground-man/docview/2463357551/se-2?accountid=13598>

²²¹ Matthew Schneier, "Gucci Resurrects an 'Underground' Man: Dapper Dan Borrowed their Logos. Gucci Copied His Look. Now they're Working Together,"

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ David Dubois, “Fulfilling Social Needs through Luxury Consumption,” *Research Handbook on Luxury Branding*, 2020, 76. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781786436351.00015>.

²²⁵ David Dubois, “Fulfilling Social Needs through Luxury Consumption,” 76

desirable by many as it displays their need for status.²²⁶ Great social benefits are obtained by individuals who display themselves with luxury goods.²²⁷ The collaboration of hip-hop designers with haute couture and luxury fashion brought increased attention to hip-hop style and increased its appeal and desirability to mainstream consumers.

3.3 Hip-hop fashion as mainstream fashion

As hip-hop fashion became integrated into haute couture, it delved into the mainstream and gained larger audiences. Mainstream designers and organizations saw this as an opportunity to diversify and increase their consumer base. As they entered into the hip-hop culture market, the meaning behind the fashion changed. It became appropriated for the mainstream and integrated into streetwear. Streetwear encompasses fashion that does not belong to a fashion house. Streetwear designers work through resources of their own.²²⁸ Hip-hop culture, along with surf and skate culture, to name a few, blended together through fashion to create streetwear. As streetwear becomes mainstream, it is marketed to mainstream society, which is composed of a white majority in the U.S. Thus, the targeted consumers of this type of fashion change and evolve as the fashion becomes mainstream.

Elena Romero states that fashion has always been geared to and favored the white population in the US. American society has sought to emulate European society.²²⁹ Hip-hop fashion is a trend that came from America; thus, it is American fashion. American society did not see it in that way in the beginning as they rejected it. The fashion industry has a history of racism and of “pigeon-holing” black brands and keeping them apart from the mainstream.²³⁰ Mainstream fashion had the goal of promoting hip-hop fashion without alienating their consumer base. They marketed it to appeal to mainstream society—mainly White people. Designer Tommy Hilfiger included hip-hop fashion and styles into his collection as the trends were seen to be favorable with consumer. He integrated hip-hop style into his “preppy” clothing aesthetic.²³¹ He produced marketing and advertisement for his clothing that included both black and white

²²⁶ Ibid, 79.

²²⁷ Ibid, 80.

²²⁸ Bobby Hundreds, “‘It’s Not About Clothes’: Bobby Hundreds Explains Why Streetwear Is a Culture, Not Just Product,” *Complex* (Complex, October 29, 2019), <https://www.complex.com/style/2017/02/what-is-streetwear-by-bobby-hundreds>.

²²⁹ Elena Romero, Interview by Marilyn Santos, February 19, 2021.

²³⁰ Elena Romero Interview.

²³¹ Mary, Rizzo, “For Us, By Us”: Hip-Hop Fashion, Commodity Blackness and the Culture of Emulation,” 214.

models, as a way to bridge the gap between the two cultures and create a ‘unified’ and ‘inclusive’ image of American society.²³² Utilizing styles from hip-hop fashion, which stems from a culture created by African American and Hispanic minorities in the U.S., and blending them with White American culture trivializes and whitewashes the African American identity in order for it to fit into a narrative that supports a white identity. The culture and identity created with hip-hop fashion became a commodity for the fashion industry. Figure 6 features a Tommy Hilfiger advertising campaign from the 1990s for his collection, the Faculty, with hip-hop artist Usher, and young White models. The incorporation of a white majority in this advertisement campaign shows that it was mainly catering to white consumers, which made up the majority of American society, and still do. In addition, working with Usher and including him in the advertisement shows a push to attract listeners and fans of hip-hop music, which had become mainstream. This advertisement depicts the merge of hip-hop fashion and culture into the mainstream popular culture, as well as the mainstream’s dominance of white Americans.



²³² Ibid.

Figure 6

Tommy Hilfiger advertising campaign, featuring Usher, for “The Faculty,” a jean line.

Throughout American history, African Americans and their “design influences were rejected, ignored, marginalized, and segregated into colored, Negro, black Afro-American, or African American categories—if acknowledged at all.”²³³ Only until recently have African Americans and their culture become incorporated into American society as a whole. As a wider audience accepts a more diverse justification of African American culture, American systems and practices begin to recognize the contributions that African Americans make to society. Hip-hop integrating into mainstream culture is an example of this.²³⁴ As Black Americans played a great part in creating hip-hop culture, they have influenced many of the styles of hip-hop fashion. African American aesthetics have influenced the fashion industry but gone unrecognized, especially since the industry caters to a White majority.²³⁵ As hip-hop fashion became mainstream and targeted for popular culture, the cultural meaning behind it was adjusted in order to become passed off as American. Mainstream America mirrors “African American culture and cultural identity without recognizing the prevailing notions of inferiority layered within its history.”²³⁶ The styles that emerged out of hip-hop fashion garnered mass appeal. These styles were propagated by minority groups in the U.S., but this was not “publicly or officially acknowledged in the larger white society.”²³⁷ The meaning behind hip-hop culture and the mindset that it is associated with does not translate to the clothing as it becomes mainstream and its creators are not formally recognized. Mainstream fashion designers such as Tommy Hilfiger utilized styles from hip-hop clothing and collaborated with hip-hop artists in an effort to adopt African American and Hispanic fashion aesthetics.

3.4 Conclusion

²³³ Abena Lewis-Mhooon, “Foraging Fashion: African American Influences on Cultural Aesthetics,” in *Soul Thieves: The Appropriation and Misrepresentation of African American Popular Culture*, 61.

²³⁴ Ibid, 61.

²³⁵ Abena Lewis-Mhooon, “Foraging Fashion: African American Influences on Cultural Aesthetics,” in *Soul Thieves: The Appropriation and Misrepresentation of African American Popular Culture*, 71.

²³⁶ Ibid, 72.

²³⁷ Ibid, 62.

This chapter answered the sub question around what the role of consumption and marketing was in hip-hop fashion's rise to the mainstream. During the 1990s and 2000s, consumption of hip-hop fashion styles increased and new consumers of them were born. What once was a culture that was spread within urban neighborhoods in New York City, turned into one that the whole of American society participated in. Hip-hop fashion first diffused to society through word of mouth by individuals and groups who lived the hip-hop lifestyle. Then, word of mouth grew as hip-hop music became popular and integrated into American society and culture. As society was modernizing and technology was getting more sophisticated, different modes of media, such as the internet, smartphones, and tablets emerged and enabled knowledge to be shared in addition to traditional forms as media, such as television, newspapers, magazine, videos, and films. All of these forms of media together created mass communication and increased modes of marketing and advertising. As society and fashion are interconnected, hip-hop fashion grew as a movement and the disenfranchised minorities that started the movement and culture obtained a place for themselves in American society. Hip-hop artists and celebrities integrated hip-hop fashion and styles into their music videos and promotional appearances and content. Some of them also decided to create their own fashion lines and collections as mainstream fashion was not catering to them. However, mainstream fashion became interested in commoditizing these trends as they would bring them more consumers. In the 2000s, mainstream fashion designers and haute couture created collections hip-hop styles and collaborated with hip-hop artists as means of marketing their clothing. The increase in consumption and marketing of hip-hop fashion enabled it to garner a wider audience and accelerate its entrance into the mainstream. As it entered into the mainstream, hip-hop fashion was advertised and marketed for the population making up the majority of American society, which is White people. Due to this, the meaning behind the fashion evolved as it became distinguishable from hip-hop culture and more engrained into streetwear, which encompasses fashion from other styles and subcultures.

Chapter 4: Nike and Adidas Case Study

This chapter serves to answer the question around how hip-hop fashion and its meaning and value have transformed over the years (from 1980s to present). As part of hip-hop culture, sneakers emerged as a form of casual footwear to complement an outfit. Prior to the 1970s and 1980s, sneakers were primarily worn for sport. At the emergence of hip-hop fashion, they became integrated into streetwear as an integral part of hip-hop fashion styles. They were valued by their appearance, their logos, and how clean or rare they were. When wearing them, youth and adults in the 1980s and 1990s felt successful and sophisticated. As sneakers grew into a large industry, with organizations like Nike and Adidas, who are leaders in the market, their modes of diffusion and meanings evolved as they became mainstream. This chapter will showcase the different marketing campaigns employed by both Nike and Adidas in the diffusion of sneakers and appeal to consumers. It will analyze how the meaning and value behind sneakers, and hip-hop fashion has evolved and what drivers are involved. As large institutions appropriate or take advantage of trends they see in society, those trends become mainstream and are not associated

with the same values they originated with as their meanings get changed and evolve with the changing tastes and its consumer base and of society.

4.1 Sneakers and Nike and Adidas background

Sneakers became a subculture in their link to hip-hop fashion. They were an important aspect of hip-hop culture. Hip-hop fashion integrated them into their styles—individuals could not leave their homes unless they had a nice, clean pair of sneakers on their feet. Both sportswear organizations, Nike and Adidas dominate the sneaker market. Nike is the market leader, with Adidas trailing closely behind. Prior to the 1980s, Adidas was the leader in the sneaker industry. By the start of the 1980s, through aggressive marketing, Nike surpassed Adidas and took the top spot.²³⁸ Prior to Nike and Adidas being large players in the sneaker industry, Converse began making athletic shoes in 1915. They released their popular ‘Converse All Star’ sneakers in 1917 and partnered with basketball player Chuck Taylor in 1922 to rebrand the shoes to ‘Chuck Taylor All Star’.²³⁹ This was one of the first collaborations between an athlete and a footwear company, setting the stage for other companies, such as Nike and Adidas to follow suit later. Converse laid the foundation for sneaker manufacturers to produce specialized footwear for athletes and remained a leader in the industry with their All Star sneakers until the mid-1950s. Nike acquired Converse in 2003, which are still considered to be “one of the most iconic items that changed the history of style.”²⁴⁰

As part of streetwear, sneaker styles were initiated by like-minded people from a community, mainly the hip-hop community and culture. Important characteristics of sneakers from this community are that they are rare and/or expensive.²⁴¹ Expensive and rare sneakers are seen as very valuable and fit into the qualifications of conveying wealth and success, a key component of hip-hop style ad aesthetic. Sneakers are identified as a subculture. They provide the ability to bind a community of people together.²⁴² Sneaker enthusiasts, largely consisting of men or those who identify with masculinity, are identified by what shoes they wear. The shoes

²³⁸ “Nike, Inc. - Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on Nike, Inc,” Reference for Business. <https://www.referenceforbusiness.com/history2/99/NIKE-Inc.html>.

²³⁹ Anita Elberse, Bryce Aiken, and Howard Johnson, “Nike: Changing the Sneaker Game,” Harvard Business School, (Harvard Business School, April 2, 2019), 6.

²⁴⁰ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Sneakers: Fashion, Gender, and Subculture*, 13.

²⁴¹ *Ibid*, 5.

²⁴² *Ibid*, 1.

they wear and how they are styled are very deliberate as they are important markers of their identity, even more so than social class.²⁴³ The way they tie their laces, how they wear their shoes, and which shoes they wear for specific occasions are all symbols of their social status within their community.²⁴⁴ They always ensure that their sneakers are clean and do not get dirty, and seek to wear their most valuable pairs to show off to their peers. People from the sneaker community “live for their sneakers.”²⁴⁵ Most of their income, time, and energy is spent towards getting the best and freshest new pair.²⁴⁶ The world of sneakers creates a tight-knit community, which is bound together by shoes. No other types of shoes have been able to do or have as much as an impact on a group of people. Sneaker enthusiasts line up and camp out at stores for hours just to purchase the newest shoes.²⁴⁷ Sneakers have become a phenomenon that have brought people together from all over the world.

In New York Times article from 2009, “One: In 8 Million The Sneaker Connoisseur,” by Alexis Mainland, she interviews Jesse Villanueva, a principal of a sneaker store on the Lower East Side in New York City. He also performs hip-hop music under the name Holy Smokes. Many “sneaker heads” frequent his store, notable among them are rappers Nas, Q-Tip, and singer John Mayer.²⁴⁸ However his most fervent clientele is among 15- to 25-year-olds. Villanueva says that he bought his first pair of sneakers at the age of five, which were Nike All Courts, and began his passion for them in High School.²⁴⁹ He has over 300 pairs of sneakers and stores them all over his house and says that he “[wakes] up thinking about shoes, and leaving the house sometimes takes a little longer due to the problems that a shoe can cause.”²⁵⁰ He explains that he takes a lot of time on his appearance and strategically picks the shoes he will wear. He mostly goes back to wearing “old classics,” such as Jordans, and Stan Smith Adidas. He discusses having “dudes offer hundreds of dollars for shoes off of [his] feet before” and that many of them have thousands of shoes at home and ensure them all.²⁵¹ Buying, selling, and owning sneakers

²⁴³ Ibid, 2.

²⁴⁴ Ibid, 2-3.

²⁴⁵ Ibid, 6.

²⁴⁶ Ibid, 6.

²⁴⁷ Ibid, 11.

²⁴⁸ Alexis Mainland, "One: IN 8 MILLION THE SNEAKER CONNOISSEUR," *New York Times*, Jun 07, 2009. <https://www-proquest-com.eur.idm.oclc.org/historical-newspapers/one/docview/1030644524/se-2?accountid=13598>.

²⁴⁹ Alexis Mainland, "One: IN 8 MILLION THE SNEAKER CONNOISSEUR."

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

are a lifestyle and can be a full-time occupation. Sneaker enthusiasts take it very seriously and always seek to find the best new shoes or seek to find old classics. Villanueva details going to Brooklyn and frequenting small shops to find classic shoes that are rare to the general public; he says it's all about connections you have within the sneaker industry and knowing "a guy who knew a guy who knew a guy."²⁵²

In an interview with Yuniya Kawamura, she states that sneaker collections began in the streets of the Bronx, an urban neighborhood in New York City. Big sneaker companies did not initially know this was going on, but as soon as they did, they saw an opportunity to tap into the streetwear sneaker market.²⁵³ They came out with new sneakers almost every day or every week. As athletes and celebrities were associated with the marketing of sneaker brands, their influence elevated streetwear sneakers from being lower class, to higher class.²⁵⁴ Kawamura explains that celebrity status is equated to power and money, qualifications which determine a person's placement in society. She says that even in a democratic society, there will always be social differences and social ranks. Young people look up to celebrities as they aspire to be what they are; to have power, status, and fame. Throughout history, the working classes have always imitated the styles of the upper classes, today the same goes as lower social classes seek to imitate celebrities.²⁵⁵ When sneakers became worn by celebrities at high profile events, such as by Mick Jagger when he got married and by Woody Allen when he escorted First Lady Betty Ford to the ballet, they were also featured on runways and in Fashion Week and became part of fashion culture; "sneakers that used to play a minor role in the world of fashion are now playing a main character on stage."²⁵⁶ Kawamura states that the diffusion process is different today than it was in the past, it is reversed as streetwear is imitated by those in the upper classes as well. The entrance of social media into the world in the 1990s and 2000s played a big part in this bottom-up process of diffusion and continues to do so today.²⁵⁷ In the 2000s, footwear companies began collaborating with designers and fashion brands, for example, hip-hop artist and designer Kanye West collaborated with both Nike and Adidas to launch sneaker lines.²⁵⁸

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Yuniya Kawamura, Interview by Marilyn Santos, May 22, 2021.

²⁵⁴ Yuniya Kawamura Interview.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Sneakers: Fashion, Gender, and Subculture*, 12.

²⁵⁷ Yuniya Kawamura Interview.

²⁵⁸ Anita Elberse, Bryce Aiken, and Howard Johnson, "Nike: Changing the Sneaker Game," Harvard Business School, (Harvard Business School, April 2, 2019), 9.

Nike, Inc. is a designer, developer, marketer, and seller of athletic footwear, apparel, equipment, services and accessories.²⁵⁹ They have grown to be “the world’s largest marketer of athletic footwear, holding a global market share of approximately 37 percent.”²⁶⁰ Their products are sold in “more than 160 countries”²⁶¹ and include the Nike, Converse, and Jordan brands.²⁶² They rely on product innovation and heavy promotion to fuel their growth in markets worldwide.²⁶³ The organization’s mission is:

to do everything possible to expand human potential. [They] do that by creating groundbreaking sport innovations, by making [their] products more sustainably, by building a creative and diverse global team and by making a positive impact in communities where we live and work.²⁶⁴

Nike was founded in 1964 under the name “Blue Ribbon Sports” in Oregon, U.S. by Philip Knight and Bill Bowerman.²⁶⁵ Knight was a long-distance runner at the University of Oregon, and Bowerman was his coach. They built their business around supporting athletes and their sport by selling shoes to them out of a van, travelling from athlete to athlete.²⁶⁶ In 1971, they named their business “Nike, Inc.” and have since “become the world’s largest manufacturer and seller of athletic shoes, apparel, and other sports equipment.”²⁶⁷ By 1979, they sold almost half the running shoes in the United States and created a line of sports clothing, as well as introduced new shoe design innovations, such as the “Nike Air shoe cushioning device.”²⁶⁸ In the early 1980s, their line of products included more than 200 different kinds of shoes and more than 200

²⁵⁹ United States Securities and Exchange Commission Form 10-K, Washington, D.C., accessed June 23, 2021.

²⁶⁰ “Nike, Inc. - Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on Nike, Inc,” Reference for Business., accessed June 20, 2021,

²⁶¹ ““Nike, Inc. - Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on Nike, Inc,” Reference for Business.

²⁶² “Read Nike's Mission Statement and Find Information about NIKE, Inc. Innovation, Sustainability, Community Impact and More,” Nike News, accessed June 21, 2021, <https://about.nike.com/>.

²⁶³ “Nike, Inc. - Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on Nike, Inc,” Reference for Business.

²⁶⁴ “Read Nike's Mission Statement and Find Information about NIKE, Inc. Innovation, Sustainability, Community Impact and More.”

²⁶⁵ “Nike, Inc.,” Encyclopædia Britannica (Encyclopædia Britannica, inc.), accessed June 19, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Nike-Inc>.

²⁶⁶ Anita Elberse, Bryce Aiken, and Howard Johnson, “Nike: Changing the Sneaker Game,” 10.

²⁶⁷ Ibid, 10.

²⁶⁸ Ibid, 12.

different items of clothing.²⁶⁹ In 1990, they opened chain stores to offer consumers the full range of their products to purchase.²⁷⁰ They diversified their products by introducing more women's shoes and sports apparel. In the early twenty-first century, Nike started investing in new technologies for sports, such as portable heart-rate monitors and high-altitude wrist compasses.²⁷¹ In 2017, Nike controlled more than half the market, dominating with their Jordan and Converse brands. The latter was marketed for a line of casual footwear and apparel.²⁷² Between 2016 and 2017, athletic footwear sales increased by 10%. In 2018, the global market for athletic footwear was close to \$50 billion annually. Social media and the internet played a big role in how sneaker fanatics bought sneakers—they bought them online. Specifically, social media, was the main way companies promoted their products, and still continues to be.²⁷³ Around this time, Nike dealt with various competition with athletic footwear and apparel companies like Puma and Under Armour, as well as luxury brands like Gucci and Balenciaga, which began producing and selling sneakers as well, but their biggest competition in the sneaker market was Adidas.²⁷⁴ Adidas' origins began in 1924, when two German brothers, Adolph and Rudolf Dassler started their own company called Gebrüder Dassler Schuhfabrik and made their first shoe.²⁷⁵ Their mission statement is around “[striving] to be the global leader in the sporting goods industry with brands built on a passion for sports and a sporting lifestyle.”²⁷⁶ Adidas, like Nike, is a global leader in the sporting industry. It is the world's number two sports footwear and apparel company, behind Nike.²⁷⁷ They first began to receive attention as their shoes were worn by athletes in the Olympics in 1928. They continued to be worn in the next Olympics. Then, their Dassler shoes were worn by 1936 Olympics winner, Jesse Owens, which elevated their reputation and created a branding for their name. These shoes “featured two widely spaced stripes that wrapped over the ball of the foot.”²⁷⁸ This design will become a classic symbol of the

²⁶⁹ Ibid, 11..

²⁷⁰ “Nike, Inc.,” Encyclopædia Britannica.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Anita Elberse, Bryce Aiken, and Howard Johnson, “Nike: Changing the Sneaker Game,” 10.

²⁷³ Anita Elberse, Bryce Aiken, and Howard Johnson, “Nike: Changing the Sneaker Game,” 14.

²⁷⁴ Ibid, 15.

²⁷⁵ “History,” adidas, accessed June 21, 2021, <https://www.adidas-group.com/en/group/history/>.

²⁷⁶ “History,” adidas.

²⁷⁷ “Adidas Group AG - Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on Adidas Group AG,” Reference for Business, accessed June 20, 2021, <https://www.referenceforbusiness.com/history2/99/adidas-Group-AG.html>.

²⁷⁸ “Adidas Group AG - Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on Adidas Group AG,” Reference for Business.

Adidas company. In 1946, the brothers split their company, with Adolph setting up his own company, Adidas, and Rudolf, Puma.²⁷⁹ In 1957, Adolph designed a new shoe that was more durable and lightweight. Many other sportswear companies, such as Adidas' rival Puma, wanted to this design and use it for themselves. Another innovative shoe was introduced in 1954 at the World Soccer Championships in Bern, Switzerland and were worn by the victorious German team.²⁸⁰ In the late 1950s, Adidas entered into the American shoe market. Their high-quality shoes became very popular, first with serious athletes and then gradually with casual footwear sneaker wearers. In the 1980s and 1990s, Nike became an influential brand for sneakers and sportswear and surpassed Adidas. U.S. sales for Adidas went down to \$200 million while Nike's sales surpassed \$2.4 billion.²⁸¹ One of Adidas' classic shoes are the Adidas Superstar basketball shoes introduced in 1969. They continue to be a best seller into today.²⁸² In the late 1990s, Adidas turned its focus to the U.S. market under new leadership and suffered some losses. In 2005, Adidas launched the world's first "smart" shoe—a shoe with a microprocessor in its heel. It reacts to surface conditions, measures shock impact, and makes minute adjustments to the heel cushioning.²⁸³ In 2006, Adidas acquired Reebok, creating increased competition for Nike.

4.2 Nike and Adidas' marketing strategies

Nike and Adidas both utilize aggressive marketing strategies to appeal to their already existing consumers and to appeal to and attract new ones. They center the majority of their marketing and advertisement around sports and athletes building brands around succeeding in sporting endeavours and never giving up on goals. They also strive to keep up to date with environmental and social developments in order to benefit society with their products and messaging.

Nike first promoted their products at the Olympic Trials in the 1970s and continued to create marketing campaigns that attached their name to the careers of well-known athletes.²⁸⁴ In 1982, Nike promoted their shoes by providing them to the winning team in the English and

²⁷⁹ Yuniya, Kawamura, *Sneakers: Fashion, Gender, and Subculture*, 14-15.

²⁸⁰ "Adidas Group AG - Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on Adidas Group AG," Reference for Business.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Yuniya, Kawamura, *Sneakers: Fashion, Gender, and Subculture*, 15.

²⁸³ Adidas Group AG - Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on Adidas Group AG."

²⁸⁴ "Nike, Inc. - Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on Nike, Inc.," Reference for Business.

European Cup soccer championships.²⁸⁵ In the early and mid-1980s, Nike's market share began to drop, and they cut back on the amount of products they marketed by reducing their shoe line by 30% and laying off 400 workers in 1984.²⁸⁶ Due to this, they moved away from their traditional marketing strategy of providing support for sporting events and athlete endorsements and instead began investing in television and magazine advertising campaigns. One of their successful campaign was the "Cities Campaign" in 1984 which produced billboards to publicize Nike products in nine American cities before the upcoming Olympics of the same year.²⁸⁷ As Nike pushed to increase their market share in foreign markets and began focusing more on international sales, their overall profits went down in 1984. However, in 1985, they worked with basketball player Michael Jordan to endorse their new Air Jordan shoes, as seen in Figure 3 previously.²⁸⁸ They earned more than \$100 million in revenue in the first ten months of the shoes being released. At the time, the sneakers did not follow NBA regulations, but Michael Jordan wore them regardless, garnering much publicity around them and attaching them to a rebellious reputation, which made them interesting.²⁸⁹ The Jordan sneakers became a catalyst for sneaker collecting. Nike capitalized on their popularity by reissuing them in different versions. In the later 1980s and in the 1990s, casual fashion was prevalent and provided the opportunity for sneakers to be in style, allowing for sneaker enthusiasts to showcase their footwear.²⁹⁰

In 1988, Nike released their classic "Just Do It" campaign. Their brand centered around the message of "doing whatever it takes to win, no questions asked."²⁹¹ This campaign emerged as a way to reverse the downturn they took in profits in the early and mid-1980s. A television commercial followed it, featuring running icon, Walt Stack jogging across the Golden Gate Bridge.²⁹² Figure 7 shows the advertisement campaign, featuring the "Just Do It" slogan and Nike's famous swoosh logo. Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, Nike partnered with well-known athletes from major sports, such as golf player Tiger Woods, and basketball player Charles

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ "Nike, Inc. - Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on Nike, Inc.," Reference for Business.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Anita Elberse, Bryce Aiken, and Howard Johnson, "Nike: Changing the Sneaker Game," 16.

²⁹⁰ Ibid, 16.

²⁹¹ Ivan De Luce, "26 Nike Ads That Shaped the Brand's History," Business Insider (Business Insider, September 1, 2013), <https://www.businessinsider.com/25-nike-ads-that-shaped-the-brands-history-2013-8?international=true&r=US&IR=T>.

²⁹² Ivan De Luce, "26 Nike Ads That Shaped the Brand's History."

Barkley, to create advertisements.²⁹³ They also signed players from the 1994 World Cup and paid \$200 million to sponsor the U.S. men’s national team for the next ten years. Many of their advertisements and products during this time were linked to soccer in order to promote it to a U.S. audience.²⁹⁴ As Nike’s most influential figure, Michael Jordan was the focus of many of their advertisements and marketing campaigns. In 1997, they created the advertisement “Failure” featuring Jordan and positioning his story as an underdog narrative. This narrative portrayed setbacks as being unavoidable and success only being achieved through hard work. The advertisement describes Jordan being cut from his high school basketball team and being picked third in the NFL draft and positions his short comings as being what propelled his dedication to winning.²⁹⁵



Figure 7

Nike’s original “Just Do It” campaign advertisement from 1988

Wikimedia Commons/CC 2.0 Attribution

In New York Times article from 2002, “At Nike, Function Over Fashion,” Leah Beth Ward discusses new footwear designer for Nike, John Hoke and Nike’s focus on athletic shoes. Hoke was influential in marketing Nike stores and concepts such as their Niketown stores and

²⁹³ Ivan De Luce, “26 Nike Ads That Shaped the Brand's History.”

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

Nike Goddess outlets for women, as well the Nike website.²⁹⁶ During this time, the Air Jordans held the number one position in athletic footwear and Nike had to find ways to maintain their strong hold in the athletic shoe market. They created iterations of the Nike Jordan sneakers, with some being successful and others not as much. Hoke prided himself on his footwear designs to being focused on performance-based technology.²⁹⁷ Nike's focus for footwear is on athletics and athletes, they have named all of their buildings on their corporate campus after athletes and work with baseball, soccer, basketball and running designers to elevate their shoe designs and technology for said sports.²⁹⁸

In 1986, hip-hop group Run-D.M.C. released the song "My Adidas," which was all about hard working people who live in troubled neighborhoods and who wear their sneakers with pride and joy. During a concert, the music group held up a three striped Adidas sneaker in front of 40,000 fans. After this, Run-D.M.C. partnered with Adidas, initiating a move to working with non-athletic promotions in the sporting goods industry.²⁹⁹ Under new leadership in 1996, Adidas operated under the slogan "We knew hen, we know now."³⁰⁰ In 1998, Adidas was the official sponsor of the Soccer World Cup and in 1999, of the Women's World Cup. They also sponsored the New York Yankees baseball team and signed athletes such as cyclist Jan Ullrich and basketball player Kobe Bryant.³⁰¹ In the 2000s, Adidas became the first organization in the sportswear industry to introduce a new lifestyle segment that focuses on sports-inspired streetwear.³⁰² Following this, they collaborated with Stella McCartney, a luxury fashion designer, to create a line of high-fashion sportswear.³⁰³ In 2004, Adidas came out with one of their most memorable marketing campaigns, "Impossible is Nothing," see in figure 8. It featured a wide range of famous athletes, including soccer player David Beckham, completing challenges

²⁹⁶ Leah Beth Ward, "At Nike, Function Over Fashion: In the Realm of Air Jordans, a Design Chief Sees a Practical Future," *New York Times*, April 28, 2002. <https://www-proquest-com.eur.idm.oclc.org/historical-newspapers/at-nike-function-over-fashion/docview/92302767/se-2?accountid=13598>.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ "History," adidas, accessed June 22, 2021, <https://www.adidas-group.com/en/group/history/>.

³⁰⁰ "History," adidas.

³⁰¹ "Adidas Group AG - Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on Adidas Group AG," Reference for Business.

³⁰² "History," adidas.

³⁰³ "Adidas History: 1949 to Now," adidas US (adidas, June 2, 2021), <https://www.adidas.com/us/blog/392942-adidas-history-1949-to-now>.

and facing their fears to prove the meaning of the slogan by striving for your goals.³⁰⁴ In the 2010s and into the present day, Adidas is focused on sustainability—they developed a partnership with an ocean conservation organization to develop shoes and clothes that are made with recycled plastic. They also continued to develop new technologies and increase the value of their sneakers. They partnered with hip-hop artists and rapper Kanye West to create YEEZY, a sportswear line for modern women. In 2011, they created another marketing campaign around bringing sport, street, and style together “to tell the world what it means to go all in, heart over head, inclusion over ego. ‘all in’,” featuring David Beckham again, among other athletes. This campaign’s message is to tell its consumers to go all in in any challenge they have and for whatever goal they need to meet in order to achieve success.³⁰⁵ In 2015, they developed a five-year strategic business plan around “working every day to inspire and enable people to harness the power of sport in their lives.” They created a strategy by translating competence in sports into streetwear and fashion in order to display that sport is an attitude and a lifestyle.³⁰⁶ In this same year, they also created the first LGBT+ sneaker for Pride month with the Superstar Pride Pack.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁴ “History,” adidas.

³⁰⁵ “History,” adidas.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ “Adidas History: 1949 to Now,” adidas US

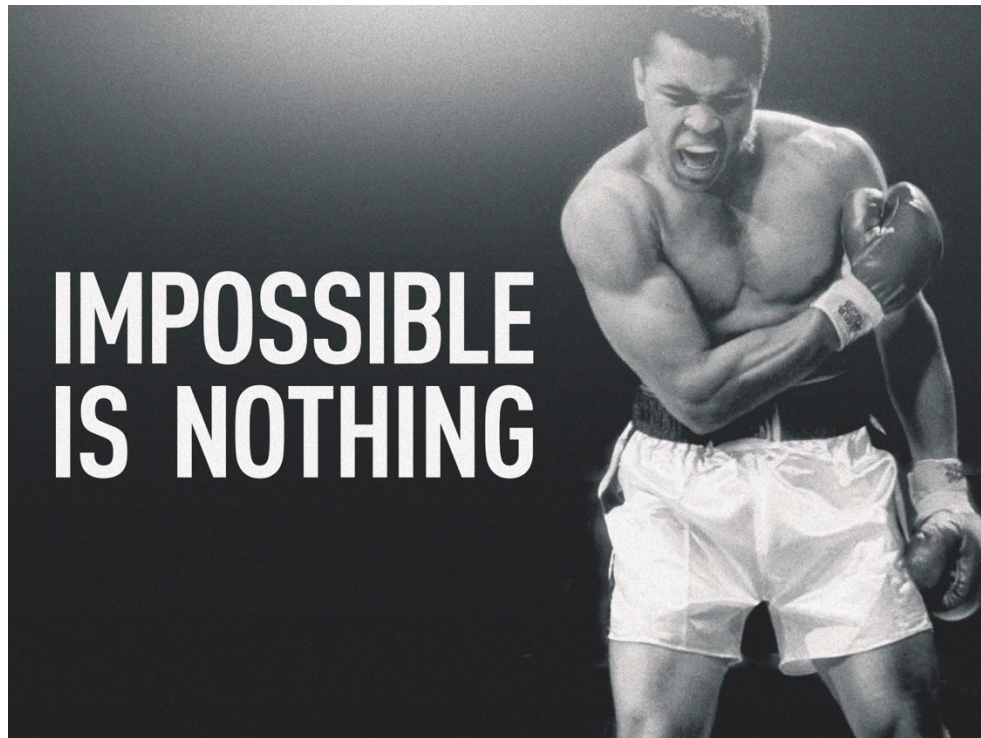


Figure 8

Adidas' "Impossible is Nothing" campaign from 2004

In 2018, Nike came out with an updated version of their "Just Do It" campaign to celebrate its 30th anniversary. They partnered with former San Francisco 49ers quarterback, Colin Kaepernick. This advertisement, see figure 9, as well commercial that went along with it, became controversial as Kaepernick gained fame for taking a knee during the national anthem to protest police brutality and racial injustice. The slogan of the advertisement campaign is "Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything."³⁰⁸ The message meant to convey is one of fans looking up to athletes and to portray that they may have "the power to change the world."³⁰⁹ Even this advertisement may not have been received the best by some, it got a lot of attention for Nike and boosted their sales.³¹⁰ Nike pays attention to their consumers and what social developments are currently happening. Consumers base a lot of their decisions around what they

³⁰⁸ Ivan De Luce, "26 Nike Ads That Shaped the Brand's History."

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ Ivan De Luce, "26 Nike Ads That Shaped the Brand's History."

see in society, as some products reflect new developments and work to become socially conscious.



Figure 9

Colin Kaeperick “Just Do It” 30th anniversary campaign from 2018

4.3 Why are Nike and Adidas brand items appealing to consumers?

As Nike and Adidas are large organizations, they pay attention to their consumers and produce products that will suit their needs and appeal to them. They each have similar marketing strategies, in terms of focusing on sports, namely soccer, and having a wide variety of apparel and accessories.³¹¹

Nike knows that their consumers like to look and feel good in what they are wearing. They capitalize on this with their consumer base and develop products that are stylish as well are

³¹¹ “Branding Strategies of the Big Four: Nike, Adidas, Reebok, Under Armour,” Samford University, accessed June 23, 2021, <https://www.samford.edu/sports-analytics/fans/2015/branding-strategies-of-the-big-four-nike-adidas-reebok-under-armour>.

durable and good quality.³¹² In 2017, Nike developed a direct-to-consumer plan that focused on innovation plans in key cities while “offering a deeper selection of its best-performing styles and enhancing its digital efforts with mobile as the primary channel.”³¹³ They focus solely on their consumers and investing their brand in key markets in order to grow their business. In 2019, the results in numbers show that this plan paid off. Their stock rose more than 73% and their revenues went up to \$10.7 billion in the first quarter.³¹⁴ Nike also builds a strong online presence in order to provide different options for wholesale, which competes with online retailers such as Amazon and Zalando.³¹⁵ Adidas also has a direct-to-consumer business, which is paying and has seen “double digit growth” in 2018, Nike is still growing at a faster pace. Nike produces technology that is able sense demand and have increased their digital advantage by acquiring a digital platform for insights and data.³¹⁶ As seen in the previous section, Nike’s marketing and advertisements seeks to be empowering and to propel their consumers into meeting their goals, whether they be fitness related or otherwise. One of the key meanings and markers of value of hip-hop fashion we delved into earlier are the sense of wealth and success that hip-hop fashion styles make people feel when they wear them. Nike’s products are in accordance with this as they strive to create an aesthetically pleasing design for all of their products and to make their consumers feel good as they are exercising or going on a walk.

Adidas thrives on the development of new technology for their products and aims to create a large digital presence, as well fully digitize as many as their processes as they can in order to provide the best products and experiences for their consumers.³¹⁷ They work to provide high-speed manufacturing and create a seamless production process through the utilization and implementation of advanced technology. They seek to “deliver the most innovative and personalized running shoes for every athlete.”³¹⁸ Adidas’ relationship with their consumers is top of mind to them. They make sure to interact with them and create premium and personalized

³¹² “Branding Strategies of the Big Four: Nike, Adidas, Reebok, Under Armour,” Samford University.

³¹³ Hilary George-Parkin, “How Nike's Direct-to-Consumer Plan Is Crushing the Competition,” Footwear News (Footwear News, September 25, 2019), <https://footwearnews.com/2019/business/opinion-analysis/nike-dtc-competition-adidas-under-armour-digital-sales-1202845517/>.

³¹⁴ Hilary George-Parkin, “How Nike's Direct-to-Consumer Plan Is Crushing the Competition.”

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ Ibid.

³¹⁷ “6 Things You Should Know About Adidas' Digital Marketing Strategy,” Digital Agency Network, January 22, 2021, <https://digitalagencynetwork.com/digital-marketing-strategy-of-adidas/>.

³¹⁸ “6 Things You Should Know About Adidas' Digital Marketing Strategy,” Digital Agency Network.

experiences for them. They invite all athletes, consumers, and any partners to “learn, create, share, and shape future sports and sports culture” with them.³¹⁹ As seen earlier, Adidas, along with Nike, collaborate with athletes and other celebrities to create inspiring messaging through their campaigns for their consumers. As discussed previously, consumers are attracted to marketing and advertisement campaigns that feature celebrities as they seek to emulate their lifestyles and to wear items of clothing or accessories that they wear as well. Adidas also seeks to produce products that are not only sustainable and environmentally friendly, but also ahead in the game around technology. They want to provide their consumers with the highest quality products possible. Both Nike and Adidas are socially conscious and provide products and/or advertising campaigns that follow social developments going on in society. From the last section, the example for Adidas was their development of a sneaker for Pride month and being the only footwear apparel to do so. For Nike, they sought to stand on the same side as those fighting police brutality and racial injustices. Partnering with Colin Kaepernick for their 2018 “Just Do It” advertisement made a big statement and showed their consumers the values they stand for and what they won’t stand for. As Nike and Adidas are both market leaders in the footwear industry, their consumers seem to be happy with the products, services, and experiences they provide.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter had the goal of answering the sub question of around how hip-hop fashion and its meaning and value have transformed over the years (from 1980s to present). As hip-hop fashion became mainstream and integrated into streetwear, it lost its connection to hip-hop culture. When associated with mainstream designers or large organizations, trends become mainstream and cater to the majority of society and popular culture. A component of hip-hop fashion, sneakers, part of athletic wear and streetwear, became widely popular during the emergence of hip-hop culture in the United States. Organizations Nike and Adidas are market leaders in the footwear industry, with Nike leading and Adidas trailing closely behind. They appeal to their consumers through the high quality of the products they produce. Nike seeks to create sneakers with attractive aesthetics, they display symbols of wealth and success. They want their sneakers to look good and for their consumers to feel good when they wear them. Through their advertisement campaigns, they give value and meaning to their sneakers that their consumers

³¹⁹ “6 Things You Should Know About Adidas' Digital Marketing Strategy,” Digital Agency Network.

empathize with. Most of their campaigns center around pushing yourself to meet your goals and embracing failure if it happens because pushing through it will only make you succeed in the end. Their consumers identify with this messaging and equate it to the sneakers when they go purchase them or want to put them on. While some of the original value attached to hip-hop fashion around the creation of value around symbols of success and wealth still holds for Nike sneakers, most of their meaning and value has evolved to center around the meanings behind their marketing campaigns and their connection to social issues. Adidas' sneakers utilize new technologies to provide the best products for their consumers. They also produce sustainable sneakers and strive to be environmentally conscious, which consumers find to be important. They provide progressive products and ideas and seek to follow developments that take place in society and translate them into their products. Hip-hop fashion is no longer widely associated with hip-hop culture or labelled as "hip-hop fashion" it is integrated into streetwear and has become engrained into popular culture and mainstream society. Consumers seek to purchase products that follow progressive developments in society and that have a meaning behind them that speaks to them.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to answer the following research question: How have the consumer appeal and diffusion of hip-hop fashion styles evolved within the United States from the 1980s to present day? In providing the research to determine an answer, many different aspects of the appeal and diffusion of hip-hop fashion were explored. Hip-hop fashion is defined as a style of clothing that emerged from hip-hop culture. Hip-hop culture first merged through hip-hop music and rap in the United States in the 1970s. This form of music quickly grew as a popular genre around the U.S., as well as around the world. It was started by minority youth in urban neighborhoods in New York City. During this time and into the 1980s and 1990s, African

Americans and Hispanics disproportionately lived in lower income neighborhoods, which had increased levels of crime and less availability of quality social services, such as schools and education. They used music to express themselves and their experiences as minorities in America. They felt marginalized as a community and did feel as if they were accepted into mainstream society. The music they created and listened to, hip-hop and rap music, diffused across neighborhoods, then across cities and the country, and finally, the world. As hip-hop culture was expanding as a movement in the United States, fashion styles from this culture emerged. The appeal of hip-hop fashion styles first started with its association and connection to hip-hop music and hip-hop artists, which were gaining popularity and emerging as celebrities in popular culture.

As one of the most widely listened to genres of music in the United States in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s, hip-hop music and rap were well liked by many different facets of society, stemming from lower class to upper class. However, backlash was still received, and mainstream society painted this music as being vulgar and as inciting violence. Its popularity was maintained by its fan base of youth from all different social classes and races. Hip-hop artists and rappers sought different ways to style themselves as they garnered more attention and strove to reach celebrity statuses. They wore oversized clothing, gold chains and watches, and had visible logos showing from their clothing. These styles were not yet seen or created by the mainstream fashion industry, so hip-hop artists shopped for their own clothing in local shops and styled themselves for music videos or appearances. They sought to find clothes and accessories that made them feel wealthy and successful. Different neighborhoods in New York City maintained their own sets of styles, making it easy to tell which neighborhood someone was from based on what they wore. Urban communities sought to dress to impress their peers and look their best, regardless of whether they had money or not. Dressing 'fresh' was very important to them and they saved the money they had to go towards new items of clothing or new shoes, specifically sneakers. The shoes they wore were even sometimes more important than the clothing they wore. They would pay close attention to the different sneakers that were coming out and save most of their money to buy them, regardless of if they could afford it or not. Wearing a new, clean pair of sneakers and a nice outfit gave youths from urban neighborhoods and communities a sense of worthiness and importance. They appeared as though they were successful, which made them feel as if they were as well. During the 1980s and 1990s, Hip-hop culture and clothing appealed to these

communities as American society did not provide many resources for them to succeed in life. They were set aside from the bulk of society and had to find their own ways to success. As more and more people from urban communities in New York City wore hip-hop fashion, word spread to other cities in the United States through word of mouth. As hip-hop artists began to be more well-known and obtain access into popular culture and mainstream society, they spread awareness to hip-hop fashion trends based on appearances they had and music videos, movies, and/or television shows they had to shoot. Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, as the appeal of hip-hop fashion stayed the same, the mode of diffusion evolved.

With the emergence of hip-hop artists and music into mainstream society, the platforms for hip-hop fashion to be diffused increased and diversified. In the 1990s, mainstream society still associated hip-hop music with violence and vulgarity, as well as did not the fashion that stemmed from it seriously. However, hip-hop artists gained media attention through television shows, radio stations, films, and magazine and newspaper publications and articles. Fashion reporters recognized the fashion trends that were emerging out of hip-hop culture and followed stories to report on. Different communities of all social classes and races began to catch up on these fashion trends as they were being advertised. The pool of consumers expanded from only being limited to minority youth in urban neighborhoods, to then encompassing everyone. Consumers spend their money based on trends that are being seen in society. Fashion trends are also reflections of societal conditions. As hip-hop fashion emerged from marginalized communities as a way for them to express themselves and their identities in a society that does not accept them or enable them to succeed, they created their senses of style as a way for them to create their own success. The increase in success in minority communities with the music and fashion business, the more they can influence society and create trends, such as hip-hop fashion. As the media and the internet became more sophisticated and advanced in the 2000s, it became easier to buy and sell clothing online, further democratizing fashion and enabling its availability to a wider range of people. In addition, social media became a way for people to share things with each other online and to spread ideas. As the access to fashion is wider, allowing for a more diverse group of people to partake in the activity, hip-hop fashion gained more awareness and was becoming increasingly popular. Hip-hop artists, such as Sean “P. Diddy” Combs, became well-known celebrities, not only for their music but also for their fashion. Many of them created fashion lines featuring hip-hop fashion styles. As they were unable to find items of clothing that

suited their sense of style, they created their own. Both the media and celebrities took a big part in the diffusion of hip-hop fashion in the United States, as well as to the rest of the world. As hip-hop artists achieved their own wealth and success through music, they maintained the meaning of hip-hop fashion styles to be associated with wealth and success. Celebrities like Combs were not only successful in created their own clothing line, but also in creating a collection for fashion week, the most prestigious fashion showing of the year and/or season. Consumers are attracted to signs of prestige, which hip-hop fashion adds an appeal to. As consumption increases, so does marketing and advertisement in order to increase profit. In the 2000s, the marketing for hip-hop fashion evolved as mainstream designers entered into the market and created their own collections featuring these styles.

These mainstream designers recognized that hip-hop fashion was made appealing by popular culture and being consumed at increasing rates, prompting them to use some of the styles in their own designs. Having mainstream designers and well-known brands names utilize hip-hop fashion styles in their collections increases its diffusion across American society and further increases and diversifies its consumers. As its consumers continued to diversify and expand in size, the original movement of hip-hop fashion, which emerged from hip-hop culture in urban neighborhoods, detached itself from its original meaning and connection to hip-hop fashion. This can also prompt some original consumers to no longer buy some of the clothing they are accustomed to as it does not have the same appeal for them anymore if everyone else likes it too. Furthermore, mainstream designers took a big part in the marketing for hip-hop fashion styles. When they had new items of clothing or collections come out, they would create advertising campaigns, and would many times collaborate with a hip-hop artist to gain further publicity for their clothing. Many of their advertising campaigns would center around television, magazine, newspaper, and social media advertisements. Marketing plays a big part in the increase in consumption of fashion styles as it seeks to appeal to a group of people that are its consumers. However, these marketing campaigns are created by larger organizations in order to obtain increased profit, so the marketing tactics will be ones that seek the attract the majority of society. As society is a majority of white people, marketing campaigns for hip-hop fashion styles by mainstream designers, such as, Tommy Hilfiger, were geared towards a white audience and sought to portray an “all American” vision. Hip-hop culture was not sought out by mainstream society to become part of American culture—it was set apart from the rest and labeled as “urban”

culture, or something along those lines. This diminished the impact and importance of hip-hop culture in reference to hip-hop fashion. As the contributions of the original creators of the hip-hop fashion movement, African American and Hispanic youth in New York City, were not taken into account within the diffusion of the fashion styles, the meaning of the clothing shifts and becomes something that is associated to streetwear as opposed to hip-hop fashion. As a result of this, luxury fashion houses that create haute couture utilized these styles into their collections and designs. This maintained the link that hip-hop fashion styles had to their original meaning and value of wealth and success, as minority groups strove to wear luxury and sophisticated clothing and branding. This also shows a dichotomy between lower classes wanting to emulate the upper classes through symbols of wealth, and also to upper classes, or in this case mainstream designers and fashion organizations and brands, wanting to emulate styles from lower classes and streetwear. Both sides of the spectrum are also responsible for diffusing hip-hop fashion with smaller groups spreading it through word of mouth in their neighborhoods, and larger groups and organizations spending the money for marketing and advertisements to diffuse these styles. As hip-hop styles were worn and portrayed by a vast majority of society in the 2000s, streetwear was a prevalent trend and appeared throughout all facets of American society. Going into the 2010s and today's present world, organizations continue to develop new marketing strategies in order to satisfy existing consumers and attract new ones.

As sneakers are a big part of hip-hop culture, and are a subculture of their own, their importance in relevance to American society is an indicator of evolvement of hip-hop styles and trends. As sneakers have traditionally been marketed for athletes, they had a majority of consumers who were athletes, but as they are increasingly being worn for casual wear, their consumer base increases. Sportswear organizations Adidas and Nike utilized the opportunity that came with hip-hop culture in the 1980s and 1990s and marketed their sneakers with campaigns with well-known athletes and hip-hop artists. The connection to money and success that a celebrity brings to a product increases its appeal. In addition to this, the lifestyles that celebrities live are envied by many in society. Their association with sneaker campaigns or advertisements is advantageous to increasing profit by attracting consumers to want to portray and appear as though they are living a similar lifestyle than a celebrity. Buying a pair of sneakers that they personally wear is a step closer into achieving that. As a current market leader for sneakers, Nike utilizes its advertising campaigns to follow trends in society and to appeal to popular culture. It

aligns its marketing towards sports and providing motivation for individuals and communities to always do their best and to never give up by “just doing it.” Similarly, Adidas aligns itself close to sports and to partnering with athletes and other celebrities for the release of new shoes. Both Adidas and Nike also pay attention to the societal environment and follow social developments when developing their marketing campaigns. They seek to better the quality of their shoes and apparel as new technology advances and to make strives to being environmentally friendly. Specifically, Nike also seeks to create messaging in which they align themselves with social movements. Nike appeals to consumers who are social conscious and aware, while both Nike and Adidas appeal to consumers who are environmentally conscious. Through technology, they are able to elevate the quality of their shoes and attract consumers who are interested in high quality and value. As sneakers as an important component of streetwear and have had a great impact in hip-hop culture and fashion, the evolved meaning behind them reflects the change of hip-hop styles in today’s world. In addition to being attracted to signs of wealth, success, and value, styles from hip-hop fashion, such as sneakers, are attractive to consumers based on their technological advancements, but also their involvement in social issues as a brand. Brand names continue to be very important, especially in today’s society as consumers are concerned with them being just, equitable and environmentally friendly. The majority of American society today prefers to put their money towards an organization that promotes or supports important issues and/or developments in the world and in society.

To sum up and finalize the answer to the research question of this thesis around how the consumer appeal and diffusion of hip-hop fashion styles have evolved within the United States from the 1980s to present day, they both started small and local—within neighborhoods of New York City and by youth minorities. What started as a small movement within a community and with a local level of diffusion, grew to being a large cultural movement throughout the United States with hip-hop fashion styles being diffused into the mainstream through marketing, the media, and celebrity and luxury endorsement. As the meaning and value behind hip-hop styles evolve as well, so does its appeal. Today, styles originating from hip-hop culture are not always recognized as so—they are regarded as streetwear and not hip-hop fashion, removing links to its origins within hip-hop culture and to the minority communities that started it. As its value changes, so does its appeal. Consumers spend money where they believe they will get value in return. The appeal with hip-hop fashion started with its link to luxury and success and the sense

of identity that it gave to those that are a part of the hip-hop lifestyle, and it now still linked to senses of value but also to organizations and brands' environmental and social consciousness.

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Appendix A

Summary of findings

Hip-Hop Fashion	Dates	Appeal	Diffusion
	1980s-1990s	Meaning and values attached to luxury, wealth, and success	Word of mouth Hip-hop music Hip-hop artists and rappers

		Enables a sense of identity for marginalized	
	1990s-2000s	<p>Meaning and value attached to wealth and luxury, and success</p> <p>Moves into mainstream fashion, less association with hip-hop culture</p>	<p>Media, advertisement, and marketing</p> <p>Mainstream designers</p> <p>Hip-hop artists and rappers/celebrities</p>
	2000s-2010s	<p>Meaning and value attached to wealth and luxury, and success</p> <p>Moves into mainstream fashion, less association with hip-hop culture</p> <p>Evolves with technology and modern progress</p> <p>Reflects social and environmental causes</p>	<p>Large organizations and mainstream designers</p> <p>Media, advertisement, and marketing</p>