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*Fresh-Dressed*

As a black man who grew up with the fashions of the 80's to the 90's, it was so interesting seeing so many familiar faces on the screen. However, it was definitely more interesting learning about so many new things I didn't know about in regards to fashion. You see, as a young boy, I was just trying to be cool, wearing what was popular back then, with oversized bombers or shell-toe shoes and impressing everyone around me. Little did I know that these fashion styles and trends started from other young black men who wanted a say in their fashion expression and trying to compete with the larger companies that kept dominating the fashion scene.

Living in the 80's to the 90's definitely was a game changer for fashion in my community. While fashion was seen as a language where you can express your style, it was also seen as a status symbol, that you were "dripping." Wearing what was popular then such as Puma, Kangol, etc. meant that you had flair/style and you knew how to show-off. It was a great metaphor, comparing a peacock to fashion, because it is true to this day. You want to impress everyone around you and your crush, so you try to change up your fashion sense, look good, make yourself be known. So, fashion was and is still definitely a symbol not only for expression/personality but also as a status symbol that you knew your stuff and you had your life together.

I do think it's interesting to compare the fashion of the rap scene then and now. Back then, these rappers were wearing fitted suits, mink fur coats, loud bright designs, cowboy boots, etc. Now these new rappers are simply wearing shirts with chains and a luxury-branded piece. Fashion was serious in the 80's to 90's rap scene. It would be interesting to see how different people's

reactions would be if the new rap scene wore the same garments and clothing that the rap scene of the 80-90's wore.

Overall, I'm glad this film was shared to the public, because not many people look and appreciate black designers or know that black culture has influenced things. Black individuals are so creative, and the fact that what they saw around them influenced streetwear, made it more of a community. The use of graffiti on walls influenced the bright colors and busy designs done on jackets, jeans, etc. The use of music promoted designers and sort of pushed what trends were being made popular. It seemed very community-like the fact that one influenced another which influenced another, etc. And the determination of these black individuals to break out of the norms and create what they want made it even better.

## **References**

Jenkins, S. (Director). (2015). *Fresh Dressed* [Film]. Mass Appeal