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First Person: Hip-H

## First Person: Hip-Hop Outsiders

by Troika Hawkins

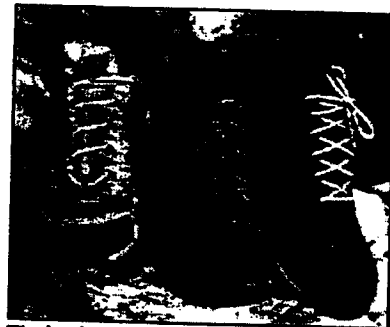
As members of Black and Latino-based communities, we are known for creating our own style and being imitated by people all over the world.

As very stylish people, we set the standards for style and fashion. We start the styles, but famous fashion designers that do not know what it is

like to struggle, get paid off from what we wear, put a name on it and sell it for absurd



Some of us, well most of us, have become poorer since September 11. With the struggle are struggling and becoming slaves to material items. Why? Although times are hard, stopped buying high-priced items? In a way, this is beneficial to our economy and on t makes those who struggle even poorer. To keep up with our famous style, we find it n the "hottest" fashions with the most expensive names on them.



Timberland shoes are beginning to cost an arm and a leg.

So where do we get the money to pay for these? Some of us sacrifice more important things like t telephone bill, or other important bills. We tend t live from paycheck to paycheck just to survive. ) keep these "outsiders" rich. No matter how man people struggle to make it in the fashion industr outsiders first. Yet, we forget about those who a people from our communities who are sometime chance to come up in the fashion industry. Rap t successful at selling their clothing lines, but othe community continue to struggle for our dollars.

Take the Timberland Company, for instance. Tim made for hikers and mountain climbers, and at s were less than \$100 dollars. Now the only way y that is if you have small feet! The average adult wears a size 8 and up. Therefore, the pay \$110 dollars and up...plus tax. Although the company caters to our style of dress that we like to wear, the Timberland Company is very rich, yet we still struggle.

Why are other more famous designers doing better than the famous designers from o? In 2001, Tommy Hilfiger posted \$1,880.9 million in sales. Sean John's line made \$200 sales for 2001. These designers from the "outside" world do the same thing as the des communities: make clothing that cater to the liking of the people. The designers from include: Russell Simmons, CEO of Def Jam Records and designer of Phat Farm for mer for women. Nas represents Willie Esco, and Busta Rhymes designs for Bushi, with a w selection. (See "[Hip Hop Fully Dressed](#)" for more information about the clothing lines c Jennifer Lopez from J-Lo has a women's label which caters to the Latino communities- being very cute, are not cut to honor Hispanic women who are known for being very h having very slim waists. P.Diddy's label Sean John has very cool, sophisticated, clothir wear", clothes you wear on the weekends. P. Diddy's line is exclusive and doing very v Clan, a Staten Island based clothing company, caters the "thug look". Jay-Z's clothing has very cool clothes, an urban city look which originated in Brooklyn. Outkast, the "fu from Atlanta, also has a clothing line that caters to urban people from the south. Nelly

very styilsh urban, active wear. Snoop Doggy Dogg nas a very diverse label for styilsh  
Snoop has everything from suits to swimwear: he loves to design for women especiall

All of these labels designed by people from our communities cater to our style. So, wh  
outsiders come in and make more money than we do? Some say it is all about how on  
publicized, or how many people in our communities still demand the products made by

In order for us to get where we want to be in any type of industry, we must first learn  
other. Give each other our business, and in the end, we will make each other rich rath  
outsiders continually the richest ones.

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