The genius of Black people is that you ain’t seen rap coming. We keep reinventing ourselves through our expressions. The reality is the different styles that young people invent are an attempt to mark their own particular environments with the style they are accustomed to. And style is an attempt to put your stamp on your existence. . . . Black people keep inventing and reinventing, asserting and re-asserting so that we can mark our own existence through the prism of style and give some sense to the weightiness of our existence.

—Michael Eric Dyson, June 25, 2000, in Mount Olive Baptist Church, Fort Lauderdale, Florida