

Ask A Genius 20 - The Future of Clothing

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What about the future of fashion?

Future fabrics will be able to do a lot more than they do now. Already, you see fashion shows where people wear clothing that is made of LCDs, primitive versions of video screens so that they can display moving images on the clothing. In the future, that will be more and more doable.

People will take advantage. Clothing will progress. There will be the natural fibre and polyester clothing. Clothing that is made of the same stuff that clothing has always been made out of, but clothing will become made out of a bunch of new engineered materials that can do a lot of new stuff. Athletes wear clothes that are supposed to take sweat out of the body when that's what you want.

But it's still pretty primitive. Eventually, you'll have clothing that is electronic or bio-electronic that will be able to change imagery or characteristics based on whether you're hot or cold, or whether it's raining or not, and then competing with more engineered clothing you'll have people with all sorts of genetically engineered abilities to make their skin do a bunch of new stuff.

It will further change our relationship with clothing. Clothing has always been in addition to being protective for modesty. It has been a social signifier. That should continue to be a thing,

but it will get really weird. There's a show on Netflix now called *The Get Down* about hip hop beginning in the late 70s.

One of the themes is the rivalry or competition between disco, which is super glam, and hip hop, which is a different set of signifiers and not mentioned in *The Get Down* is punk coming out at the same time. You've got three new forms of musical and clothing signifiers that are semi at odds with each other.

Also, you have new and to people not in those worlds really weird set ups. The future is going to offer more of that stuff, crazy new signifiers.