



Stop Snitchin' T-Shirts, Pushing Fashion with a Bold Statement



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From Boston to Baltimore, the "Stop Snitchin'" or "Stop Snitching" t-shirts have been hitting the streets hard and can be seen on inner city to suburban youth who purchase urban apparel. The [Stop Snitchin' t-shirt](#) has been manufactured by Antonio Ansaldi for five years now, with a following in Boston and throughout the country with retail, internet and catalog orders. The company usually has back-orders for the once exclusive design which features the Stop Snitchin' text on a city stop sign but now has seen a sharp increase in sales since the controversy involving the statement of the shirt.

Antonio Ansaldi has always faced criticism for this t-shirt from Boston Police but continues to sell them because the sales and demand for the shirt speaks for itself. Since the creation of the Stop Snitchin' t-shirt in 2000, Antonio Ansaldi has continued to release new styles of the Stop Snitchin' t-shirt throughout the years for their loyal customers. The popularity of the "Stop Snitching DVD" (unaffiliated with Antonio Ansaldi) and music video by rapper/entrepreneur Jim Jones, of the multi-platinum selling rap group Diplomats, has led to the popularity of the knockoff design with "Stop Snitching" that retails in urban apparel stores throughout the country. The new unofficial t-shirts are hot sellers in these stores because customers want to wear a t-shirt like their favorite rappers are wearing in music videos.

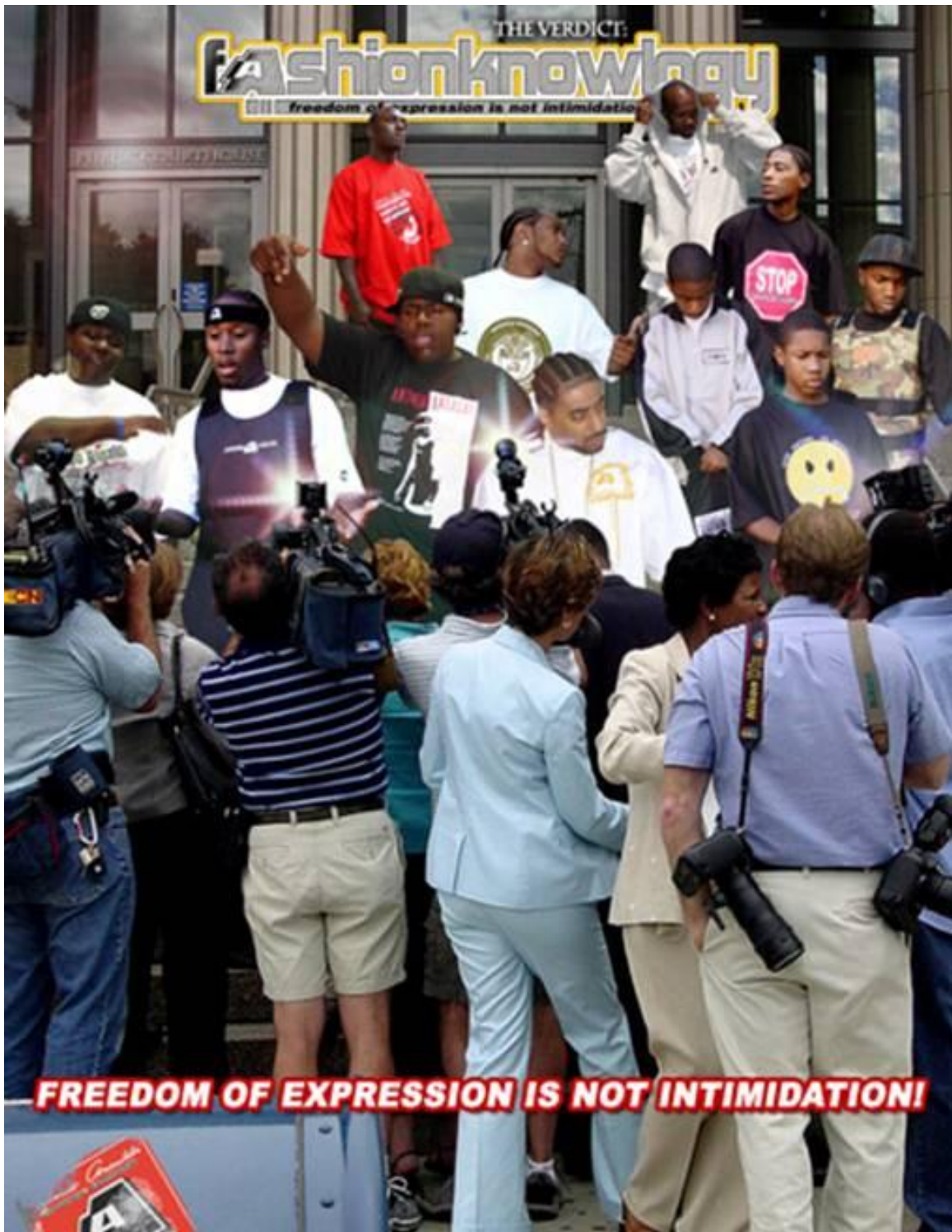
Police, city officials, and community groups from Boston to Philadelphia claim that the shirt deters witnesses and victims from cooperating with the law. They say that the Stop Snitchin' t-shirt encourages a code of silence that intimidates one not to "snitch" on the murderers, drug dealers, and criminals who may reside in their communities. Many retailers would say that it is "just a shirt" and it is a fashion fad that will surely pass. Fashion fad or not, "Freedom of Expression is NOT intimidation!" The t-shirt does not give anyone an ultimatum nor does it threaten anyone who may

want to "Start Snitchin'." However, it does say in the Miranda rights recited by police officers, "You have the right to remain silent!" whenever someone is placed under arrest, but when "we" tell each other that "You have the right to remain silent!" then all of a sudden it becomes intimidation or promoting violence. The Stop Snitchin' t-shirt has been one of the most successfully selling items for Antonio Ansaldi for the past 5 years and even when the controversy dies down, the company will have no problem selling this now nostalgic item. The fact that this shirt is a hot seller does point to an underlying problem that plagues most urban communities today.

"What does Stop Snitchin' mean?"

"Snitching" or "Snitchin'" is negative because it often has a detrimental impact on the person that reports to the authorities that promise to protect them. The harsh reality is that a "snitch" is usually not respected or protected by the authorities they report to. Authorities promise to protect a witness when in fact they are used for testimony, threatened to be exposed if they don't comply with demands and then thrown back into the same community where they and their family are now susceptible to violence as retaliation for testimony. Many of the people (many with criminal records) that disclose information to the police have credibility issues. There are countless innocent men and women currently incarcerated because of the snitch factor. Others use the system to plea bargain for a lesser charge by concocting stories and events that never occurred in order to garner reduced or no jail time themselves. In the "hood" where this phrase is used, anyone that "snitches" usually is not embraced with love and affection so no one wants to embody that image.

Today's urban consumer is highly expressive and often uses fashion to push the envelope for a reaction. Social issues and violent images have always found their way into pop culture whether it be the Che Guevara activist t-shirts, the shirts that pay homage to Scarface "Tony Montana" or the violent video games that are ever so popular with our younger generation. Furthermore, if a statement on a t-shirt could ever compel one to follow orders no one would have free will. The claims made against this shirt being sold also violate freedom of speech which has been an exceedingly debated issue in our culture. Antonio Ansaldi continues to produce fashion that expresses itself from the Stop Snitchin' t-shirts to the controversial Raid Vest that has also been claimed to promote violence. The clothing company firmly believes that people should be free to wear what they like and "if you don't like it, don't wear it." There has never been an occurrence of violence on behalf of the Antonio Ansaldi Stop Snitchin' t-shirts. These items are just a few of the many designs and collections from the Antonio Ansaldi brand that is offered to core customers. At the end of the day, Antonio Ansaldi will continue to carry styles that define their markets tastes and produce the critically acclaimed Stop Snitchin' t-shirt until the next contentious design flies off store shelves.



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