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Webdevv2
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Research Interview

Interview #1 **Maya Cooks**

Maya is 23 years old and graduated from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2022, she is one of my closest friends and I've known her since high school. She is an aspiring content creator and fashion doll maker. She considers herself an introverted extrovert and enjoys spending her weekends doing something fun and exciting. Maya decided to get locs about a month ago as well. We talked about any biases she had about locs and discussed how she takes care of her hair and her personal decisions for getting locs. Overall, this interview was extremely insightful, and below are just some of the key takeaways from each question from the interview.

Are you aware of the negative/positive connotations of locs?

"Yes I am aware of the negative part of people considering locks to be dirty or unprofessional and I definitely had that like ideology growing up" I thought it was interesting that she mentioned the negative connotation of loc being considered dirty or unkempt because I think white people systemically conditioned everyone even black people to believe that black hair is dirty, unmanageable, and unprofessional when in reality our hair is just different and requires a certain amount of attention and care. Therefore, some if not most black children grow up believing what society is telling us is true. I had that ideology growing up as well, so it was comforting to know that someone else thought the same. When talking about the positive connotation surrounding locs she stated "On Social media, TikTok to be specific there's a lot of people our age, Gen Z, that like to show off their locs and it looks so good. You can put your locks in different styles. I think it's becoming more stylish compared to how our generation perceived it before."

Is there a specific reason you decided to get Locs?

She decided to get locs because she knew she wanted to do something with her hair that was somewhat permanent, and she went on to say, "It was either this or shaving my head or at least getting a very short cut." Her statement brought a lot of clarity in terms of understanding that many people decide to get locs for different reasons.

Interview #2

Kim

I decided to reach out to Kim because she did Maya's (First interview) starter locs. I reached out to about 5 locticians/hairstylists, and she is the only one who responded as well. I conducted the interview with her on Instagram via message because she was busy. Overall, I enjoyed the interview, and it helped me gain a new perspective on locs especially from a professional who does this for a living.

How many years of experience do you have being a loctician or hairstylist?

She has 6 years of experience being a Natural hairstylist and 2 years of experience being a Cosmetologist.

Do you have locs if so, what kind and when did you get them?

Is there a specific reason you decided to get locs? How do they make you feel?

She had her locs for about 2 years and she started with comb coils. During the interview, she stated that this is her second set of locs meaning she had locs before but took them out and decided to get them again. The reason why she chose to get them again was the highlight of the interview. She states "I love having my hair in its most natural state. It feels very freeing and refreshing having locs. I feel like my hair is always done with locs."

How do you maintain locs?

"To maintain locs I have to be sure to shampoo, condition, retwist, hydrate, and moisturize regularly" It made me realize how much care and attention goes into caring for and maintaining locs.

What kind of techniques are used to achieve locs?

"Comb coils, braids, crochet, twists, and freeform are all techniques to achieve locs." I was extremely shocked to hear how many different techniques are used to achieve locs. When I was researching locs I only read about comb coils and twist. I'm curious to see the crochet techniques and how it is done.

How do you think other races or even black people view locs?

"I think nowadays locs are appreciated more because society is more educated about them." I thought her perspective on this was interesting because I think it is true the lack of education on a topic leads to ignorance and negative biases. I love that nowadays locs are more appreciated and society is educated on it.

Are you aware of the negative/positive connotations of locs? (For example, black hair being unkempt or dirty)

"Yes, I am aware of the negative/positive connotations of locs. I feel like it all goes back to my previous statement about people being uneducated and/or miseducated. That's why I try to spread more positivity and information about locs." As a hairstylist, I love that she tried to spread more positivity and information about locs because her clients need to

know how to properly take care of their hair. In general, I think a small amount of black people don't know how to properly care for their hair because there is so much misinformation about it.

Do you have any tips or advice for people who want to get locs or just started their loc journey?

I genuinely loved hearing her advice for people who were interested in locs. My face lit up when she stated, "My advice for people who are interested in starting or just started their loc journey would be to have patience." Because I can tell how passionate she is about her work. The maintenance of locs does require a lot of patience and care. Her last piece of advice was super insightful and one of my best takeaways. She said "Locs have many different stages and I recommend them to appreciate every stage because you don't necessarily get it back unless you start over. Stick to your loctician and/or someone you trust who is educated and can learn your hair."