

Kinky



THE SUMMER ISSUE

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Letter from the Editor
What is your hair type
Featured Author:
Elizabeth Acevedo

Spoken Word
Hair in Literature:
Ideologies

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hi I'm Trinity Sazo and welcome to *Kinky*. This is the first issue of *Kinky*, a brand new literary magazine on the topic of hair.

You might be wondering why hair? I will take you on my own personal journey on how hair has shaped my life, from how I carried myself as a growing girl to how I viewed the world around me. In brief, I used to despise my hair. *Kinky*, on the other hand, will bring the essence of self love and help readers achieve the same mindset I find myself in now.

Kinky is available to all in order to view the world in a familiar yet unusual lens. Our mission is to spread body positivity through articles and opinion pieces that reflect how intolerance for oneself and others can lead to why most controversies exist. If we can help readers accept not only themselves but the variety and uniqueness of others, then we are able to start piecing away

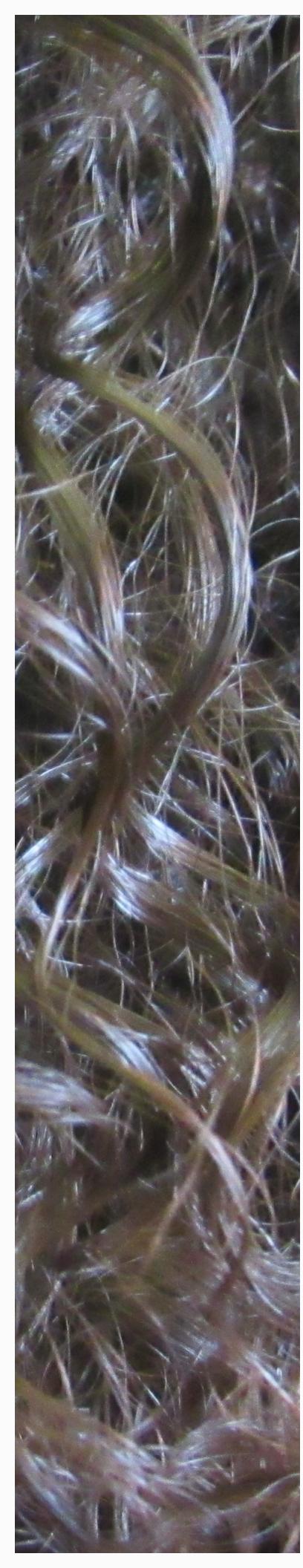
at the toxic mindset that there is a singular way to live life. Serving as a liberal magazine, we strive to embrace all persons and “untangle” the knots present in the world starting with the hair on our heads.



As a literary magazine, *Kinky* will allow readers to broaden their views to the lives of individuals and groups by keeping the focal point on hair: if readers can understand that the type of hair we are born with is

out of our control, then we can start to conceptualize the issues generated by race and general appearances are therefore also out of our control. Through such measures, we can establish not simply tolerance, but acceptance of each other as humans.

We hope that readers will not only find themselves wanting to spark a change in their lives, but also spread the positivity outward to their family, friends, and acquaintances.

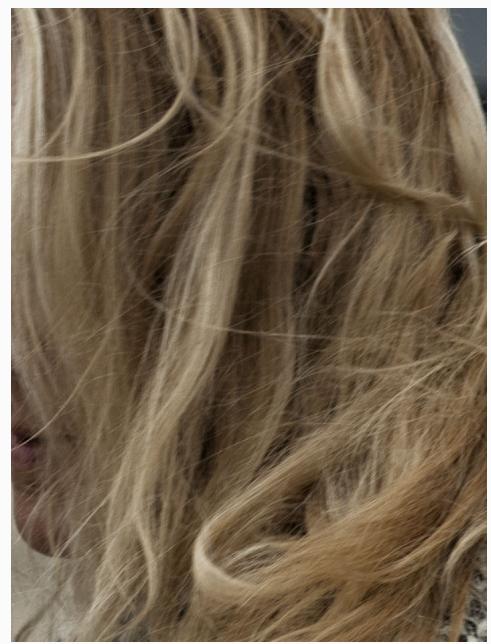


You get to choose how to explore the magazine. Whether you want to understand how hair is related to more than simply fashion or simply come to view a different perspective, you can learn how to embrace yourself and those around you. We leave your journey in your own hands.

This issue includes discussion on symbolism of hair in literature and how that connects to the real world. Elizabeth Acevedo is introduced in this issue as our featured author, presenting her stellar piece "Hair." Prose from all kinds of writers, college students and professional journalists, all touch on the representations of hair in various types of literature, specifically magazines and children's books and the professional world around us.

In the future, we hope to have an issue about hair and the Bible, Koran, and other religious writings. Another issue will focus primarily on hair in Hollywood: movies, models, dancers, and singers.





Best,

TRINITY SAZO
KINKY CO.



MY HAIR JOURNEY

I am Trinity Sazo, the founder and Editor in Chief of *Kinky*. I was born in Boston, Massachusetts and moved to New York City by the age of 5. Currently I am a high school student who attends Phillip Academy, located in Andover, Massachusetts as a boarder. Having this independence from such an early age made me mature rapidly, as my parents were no longer there to keep track of my growth emotionally or socially. They both had to let go and allow their 14 year-old daughter form new habits and carry herself without their guidance. I had to learn how to take care of myself as my parents (my personal critics) were no longer around.

My hygiene was not bad, but I had a habit of ignoring my hair until my mom pointed out to me that it was time to detangle it. Not dissing her or my dad in any way, neither of them truly knew how to take care of my hair. I mean, they knew I had to wash and detangle it, but they did not know how often to detangle, what products to use, or how to keep my curls lively, tamed, and not frizzy. Thus I grew to hate the curls on top of my head.

I straightened my hair for months at a time starting back in primarily 3rd grade. I had straightened my hair at a salon prior to 3rd grade multiple times but not as often as I would once I started swimming





regularly. On top of the chlorine and heat damage, my curls at the ripe age of 8 were dying. My mom and I viewed the process as “easy” and “a time saver” since neither of us would have to focus on washing and detangling the mess called my hair. From then on, I hated on my hair every chance I got: jokes in class, frequent defense against my dad on why my hair looked better straight, and any conversation in which my hair was mentioned.



The only time I liked my hair curly was when it was wet. The moment my hair dried, I shifted back into the same mindset, trying to straighten the frizzy mesh between curly and wavy strands. On the other hand, some of my friends told me that they actually liked my curly hair and wished that I would take better care of it. I always ignored them.

It was not until the end of my sophomore year in high school that I fully conceptualized the hatred I had for my own hair. I let the years of despise settle and breed a subtle self-hatred for myself. My confidence was always tainted with the intolerance I held for that one aspect of my body. This constant criticizing

nature of myself started to actually normalize self-deprecating comments in my life. The things I said strayed from the subject of my hair and onto more superficial aspects of myself like my facial structure, skin, and overall body.

I could never be fully content with myself.

It was not until I was surrounded by people who embraced their curls was I influenced to do the same.

"She told me my hair could look like hers one day..."

look like hers one day: bouncy and full of life. I did not believe her, but wanted to entertain the idea that my hair — flat, split, frizzed, untamed — could ever look like hers.

Thus began my hair journey in June of 2017.

I researched my hair type and found what products would work best to both moisturize and reboot the life on top of my head. Two months pass and my hair already started changing, or at least my attitude towards it did. I was excited to detangle my hair and see the fresh results. The “routine” felt more like a “pastime” rather than this necessary obligation.

I made a goal from then on to not straighten my hair for as long as possible, not even for formal events.

"I could never be fully content with myself"

My stepsister in particular opened my eyes to how to properly take care of curly hair. She videoed herself going through the steps of her washday from scrunching in leave-in conditioner to air-drying, instructing her “viewers” that using a regular towel will cause frizz. She told me how my hair could

Now, almost a year into my hair transformation and no-heat-applied goal, I feel my confidence be at a point it has never been before.

Now, like healthy curls, I find myself bouncy and happy all the time. The stress of having to impress my peers no longer follow me like a cloud over my head.

When I look back at myself from a year ago, I wondered if it was possible to have learned that my curls are beautiful from an earlier age. It is then that I realize that the media around

Majority of the princesses only have straight to wavy hair. Even Disney's Princess and the Frog's black protagonist Tiana had very loose curly hair, and did not represent kinky hair as it probably should have.

This is where the idea of Kinky arose from.

If others were not going to focus on the beauty of all hair types, then I had to take it into my own hands. I'm tired of seeing people hating on their hair and having that limit the way they perceive themselves.

Hair, while it seems so irrelevant, is one of the first things that people notice. I love seeing the fancy braids that straight-haired people can accomplish, and I am consistently astonished by how much type 4 hair shrinks. Every body is truly beautiful, and upon taking care of my own, I can finally believe that statement wholeheartedly.

Maybe one day you will too.

me did not focus on representing people who looked like me. People with my physical characteristics were ignored or even presented as ugly or the bad guy. Take any princess movie.



TYPE 1 A-C:
STRAIGHT



TYPE 2 A-C:
WAVY

HAIR TYPES

Find yours.



TYPE 3 A-C:
CURLY



TYPE 4 A-C:
COILY

FEATURED AUTHOR

Elizabeth Acevedo



WRITER & POET

ELIZABETH ACEVEDO was born and raised in New York City and her poetry is infused with Dominican bolero and her beloved city's tough grit.

She holds a BA in Performing Arts from The George Washington University and an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Maryland. With over fifteen years of performance experience, Acevedo has been a featured performer on B.E.T, TV One's Verses and Flow and

has also delivered several TED Talks. She has graced stages nationally and internationally including renowned venues such as The Lincoln Center, Madison Square Garden, the Kennedy Center of the Performing Arts, South Africa's State Theatre, The Bozar in Brussels, and the National Library of Kosovo.

Acevedo is a National Slam Champion, Beltway Grand Slam Champion, and the 2016 Women of the World Poetry Slam representative for Washington, D.C, where she placed 8th in the world.

Her poems have been published or are forthcoming in Poetry, Puerto Del Sol, Callaloo, The Notre Dame Review, and others. Acevedo is a Cave Canem Fellow, Cantomundo Fellow, and participant of the Callaloo Writer's Workshop. She is the author of the chapbook, Beastgirl & Other Origin Myths (YesYes Books, 2016) and the New York Times bestselling novel, The Poet X (HarperCollins, 2018).

Originally published on acevedowrites.com

Her featured poem "Hair" tackles popular belief that straight hair means neat hair, while bringing in personal anecdotes and history to push her argument forward.



"HAIR"

By Elizabeth Acevedo

My mother tells me to fix my hair. And by “fix,” she means straighten. She means whiten. But how do you fix this ship-wrecked history of hair? The true meaning of stranded, when trusses held tight like African cousins in ship bellies, did they imagine that their great grand-children would look like us, and would hate them how we do? Trying to find ways to erase them out of our skin, iron them out of our hair, this wild tangle of hair that strangles air. You call them wild curls. I call them breathing. Ancestors spiraling. Can’t you see them in this wet hair that waves like hello? They say Dominicans can do the best hair. I mean they wash, set, flatten the spring in any loc – but what they mean is we’re the best at swallowing amnesia, in a cup of morisoñando, die dreaming because we’d rather do that than live in this reality, caught between orange juice and milk, between reflections of the sun and whiteness. What they mean is, “Why would you date a black man?” What they mean is, “a prieto cocolo” What they mean is, “Why would two oppressed people come together? It’s two times the trouble.” What they really mean is, “Have you thought of your daughter’s hair?” And I don’t tell them that we love like sugar cane, brown skin, pale flesh, meshed in pure sweetness. The children of children of fields. Our bodies curve into one another like an echo, and I let my curtain of curls blanket us from the world, how our children will be beautiful. Of dust skin, and diamond eyes. Hair, a reclamation. How I will break pride down their back so from the moment they leave the womb they will be born in love with themselves. Momma that tells me to fix my hair, and so many words remain unspoken. Because all I can reply is, “You can’t fix what was never broken.”



'HAIR' THEY ARE: THE IDEOLOGIES OF BLACK HAIR

By Tiffany Thomas



Tiffany Thomas is a college student at CUNY York College and had "Hair They Are: The Ideologies of Black Hair" published in the York Review, a collection of the best scholarly essays written during the school year. She discusses the cultural pressures shaping views about natural black hair. Examining historical ideas about black hair and current media portrayals, she reflects on how black women today are attempting to redefine their hair and by extension, themselves.

A woman's hair is said to be her crowning glory and manifestation of her femininity. Hair is considered a key indicator of a woman's health and beauty. The Western standard of beauty defines beautiful hair as that which is long and preferably straight. Having such a standard creates a hair hierarchy, with long straight hair on the top of the hair pyramid and African American hair on the bottom. A black woman's hair is traditionally dry, tightly coiled or curled. In order to attain the Western standard of beauty, the majority of African American women chemically straighten or "relax" their hair. This notion is embedded in media such as Sophisticate's Black Hair Styles

and Care Guide and other magazines featuring black women with straightened hair.

However, more recently, there has been an increase in the number of black women returning to their natural hair texture; that is, they are no longer chemically straightening their hair (Healy, 2011). The decision to return to the natural texture of one's hair is termed "going natural." The media has noticed black women's sudden movement toward natural hair and has begun to include more natural-haired African Americans in advertisements. Some reasons that black women decide to go natural are: to follow a healthier

lifestyle, to explore curiosity about their natural texture, to support their daughters' hair, and to save the time and energy they spend using relaxers. Although the reasons for going natural may vary, it is an exciting journey nonetheless. Black women's return to the natural state of their hair is often an act of self-awareness. On their journey to natural hair, many black women not only discover their natural texture but also the masked ideology (Hebdige, 1979) that natural black hair is unattractive and unacceptable in society, which stems from years of oppression and racism.

Since the beginning of slavery, black women have been conditioned to believe that their natural hair is unattractive. Today, this notion is still present for many black women. The images in popular black media subliminally suggest and conceal the ideology that natural black hair is unattractive. Storey (1993) states that "ideology operates mainly at the level of connotations...[and] often unconscious meanings, texts and practices carry, or can be made to carry" (p. 6). The ideology that straight

hair is the most attractive exists beneath the consciousness of black women. Therefore, many black women are unaware of this ideology. The use of the term "sophisticates" in the magazine Sophisticate's Black Hair Styles and Care Guide works on this level of connotations, whether intended or not. According to Webster's online dictionary, one definition of sophisticate is "to alter deceptively" (Sophisticate, 2011). To use the term "sophisticate" and have images depicting what is considered a sophisticated hairstyle implies that hairstyles that are not pictured in the magazine are not sophisticated. In turn, black women subconsciously reject hair styles that are not in the magazines they read. Cheryl Thompson (2009) is correct in her assertion that "the image of black beauty in popular black magazines gives the impression that black hair is only beautiful when it is altered" (p. 847). By "altered," Thompson is referring to the changing of the natural hair texture either chemically or thermally.

The constant coverage of black

women in the media with straightened hair suggests that black women need to change their hair in order to be perceived as beautiful. The images in black magazines sell the idea to women and young girls that straight hair is beautiful. Magazines such as Sophisticate's Black Hair Styles and Care Guide, Essence, and Ebony contain images of black women with hairstyles such as buns and ponytails. Most of the women in these magazines have their hair chemically straightened and/or use hair extensions to achieve such hairstyles. These images continue to reinforce the notion that straight hair is the most attractive for all women. In a 2009 interview with Essence magazine, Tonya Lewis Lee, the wife of Spike Lee, recollects her childhood experience of having her hair thermally straightened by her mother. She states, "My mother would press my hair, and I would just cry, I would be so red afterward, and she'd say, 'But go in there and look at how pretty your hair looks.' And then I would feel better" (Taylor, 2009, p.138). Lee's statement exemplifies many black girls' experiences of having their hair thermally straightened; that is, it is often unpleasant and painful.

The comment made by her mother after the ordeal supports Thompson's claim that many people believe that black hair is only attractive after it has been altered. Lee, unaware of the ideology at work, internalizes the notion that straightened black hair is beautiful, which is seen in the pleasure she felt after having her hair straightened. It is as if the pain she felt during the process is insignificant compared to the results of having her hair straightened. The practice of straightening black hair is meant to carry this meaning, namely, that it is okay for one to experience pain while striving to be beautiful. However, the connotations presented in popular black magazines are only the more recent reinforcers of the traditional beauty standards. Negative stigmas have been associated with natural black hair throughout history.

The Black Power Movement influenced many blacks to wear their natural hair in afros and other natural hairstyles. During this time blacks' natural tightly coiled hair gained political meaning. The afro in the 1960s "became a reflection of political and cultural progressiveness as well as self-esteem, among black people"

(Jere-Malanda, 2008, p. 14). Yet, the dominant white majority stigmatized the afro as militant, unkempt and the symbol of the Black Panthers, and many people still hold these meanings as true today (Jere-Malanda, 2008). Because many people still hold the notion that natural black hair is political, Dick Hebdige (1979) would say that this belief supports the idea of hegemony. Hebdige in his book Subculture: The Meaning of Style states that “hegemony can only be maintained so long as the dominant classes ‘succeed in framing all the competing definitions within their range’” (p.16). Hebdige here is saying that hegemony exists when the dominant majority is successful in shaping how something is perceived or understood.

Today, although we are more accepting of different races and cultures, black women’s natural hair and styles are still considered political or unprofessional by many people. According to Jere-Malanda (2008), the negative stigmas about black people’s afros from the 1960s discourage many black women from wearing their hair in a natural hair style. In her analysis of the implications of black women’s

natural hairstyles, Jere-Malanda (2008) states:

Black women’s hair goes far beyond mere sprucing up and aesthetics, with its history of deep roots in slavery and its politics that change many people’s viewpoints [;] it’s a marker of femininity that can influence how the global society embraces the black woman in both political and social circles. How else can society explain this outrageous scenario at a New York law firm which invited Ashley Baker, then associate editor of the prominent magazine Glamour, to speak to them on the “Dos and Don’ts of Corporate Fashion.” In a slide show, she says about a black woman in an Afro hairdo: “A real no-no! As for dreadlocks, how truly dreadful! Shocking that some people still think it’s appropriate to wear those hairstyles at the office. No offence, but those political hairstyles really have to go.” (p.18)

Baker’s statement is a clear example of the thoughts shared by many women about black women’s natural hair. The Western standard of beauty not only

suggests that straight hair is the most attractive, but also the most professional. With this in mind, many black women do not see natural black hairstyles such as braids, afros, and dreads as professional. In fact, many black women believe that in order to have a decent job or be taken seriously, their hair needs to be straightened. The dominant force was and still is the white majority. They framed the definitions of beautiful and professional hair, which they portray as straight. Although slavery has been abolished, many black women are still contained in the ideological space of the dominant Western beauty ideal which says that natural black hair is unprofessional and unattractive. Men are also a dominant force in society and as such they also help shape what is or is not acceptable for a woman.

The images of black women in the media with long straight hair leads many black men to believe that black women should wear their hair in a straightened style. In an effort to be seen as attractive to the opposite sex, many black women comply with the Western beauty ideals and chemically relax and/or weave their hair (Banks, 2000). Fiske (1995) writes that “there is

a space where compliance or contestation is negotiated” (p.322). Fiske is suggesting that one has a choice in deciding whether to comply with or reject ideals. In a 2009 interview conducted by Mikki Taylor of Essence magazine, she asks her guests if they have ever altered their hair for the opposite sex (p. 139). Solange Knowles, in response, says, “After I had my son, and I was married, I wanted to be the typical pretty, long-haired trophy wife. That’s when I started wearing weaves long and blond” (p.139). Knowles’ statement exemplifies the effects of the traditional standard of beauty on black men. She uses the term “trophy” to describe herself as a wife. In this sense she is objectifying herself, namely as a prize, and her husband as the owner of the “trophy.” In her description of the physical characteristics of a trophy wife, she states that they are pretty with long blond hair. The mention of the length and color of the hairstyle is significant in that not only does Knowles recognize what is considered the ideal hairstyle for women, but also believes it to be true. In response to the question of changing one’s hair to suit a man, Tonya Lewis Lee says, “I

danced with Diddy, and Diddy did not like curly hair. You had to have straight hair to dance behind Diddy” (p.140). It could be argued that P. Diddy’s preference for straight hair is just his personal preference. Perhaps his preference for straight hair derives from what he is constantly exposed to in the media and in his videos, namely, women with straight hair.

History has shown that blacks, especially black women, had less power in shaping ideas about themselves. Women were, and are, in most places, seen as inferior to men. Hebdige notes that “some groups have more say, more opportunity to make the rules, to organize meaning, while others are less favorably placed” (p. 14). After being conditioned to believe that natural black hair is unattractive, blacks still struggle to define the texture of their hair with new terms that are not derogatory. In the black community there is a notion of and debate over “good” and “bad” hair (Banks, 2000). With these terms, blacks are trying to separate their hair from ideal straight hair. The black community is also attempting to reshape the traditional meaning of “good” and “bad” hair. In the

traditional sense, the distinction of “good” hair and “bad” depends on the texture of the hair such as wavy, curly, or tightly coiled. Many black women have tightly coiled or curled hair. Wavy or curly hair is considered “good” hair, while tightly coiled or kinky hair is regarded as “bad” hair. However, today many black women believe that the distinction between “good” and “bad” hair is not solely based on texture but the perceived ease of maintenance of the hair. If a person’s hair is wavy or less kinky, it is perceived that the hair is easier to comb, so that person will be said to have “good” hair. Although many black women are trying to redefine the terms “good” hair and “bad” hair, the terms are still derogatory. Through the continuous distinction of “good” and “bad” hair in the black community, hegemony is maintained.

Black males are also subjected to the Western standard of beauty of how they should style their hair. Some black men might chemically alter their hair with products such as S-curl or a Jherri curl. However, it is common for black males to wear their natural hair in a caesar or low cut. Children are also influenced by what they see in the

media as beautiful or acceptable. A young black boy named Jacob Philadelphia asked President Obama if his hair was the same as his (Calmes, 2012). In response, President Obama bowed so the young boy could feel for himself (Calmes, 2012). After feeling the hair of the President, Jacob knew that the President's hair not only looked but felt like his. Jacob now knows that his natural hair is not inferior to any other hair, is socially acceptable, and that one can have hair that is not straight and be successful in life, or even a leader of the world. The touching of the President's hair sheds light on the hidden idea that natural black hair is unacceptable and unprofessional. It also illustrates that African Americans' natural hair is still an issue in today's society.

Young girls are not the only ones that are influenced by the images of beauty they see in magazines; many young boys are also affected by the images they see and how their mothers style their hair. Black women who wear curly or kinkier hair weaves sometimes receive backlash from other black women or their children (Taylor, 2009). Tonya Lewis Lee describes her experience when she

had a curly weave, saying, "My son hated my weave. Hated, hated, hated it. He was like, 'Why are you wearing that? Please take it out'" (Taylor, 2009, p. 140). Although Lee had a weave, a common hairstyle for black women, her son was perhaps not pleased with the texture of the weave. Because the weave was curly, her son did not approve of it. Lee did not state any objections from her son when she wore a straight weave. Lee emphasizes that her son "hated" her weave by repeating the word four times. This is a clear example of how the traditional beauty ideals shape young black males' perceptions of beauty.

However, recently many black males have begun embracing the natural hair texture of black women. On February 23, 2012, Viola Davis wore her natural hair at Essence's Black Women in Hollywood red carpet event (Melton, 2012). Mrs. Davis starred in the 2011 movie *The Help*. Essence inquired if she styles her natural hair for special occasions. In response, Davis said that "there hasn't been any occasion that I felt brave enough to do it" (Melton, 2012). Wearing her natural hair on the red carpet is significant in

that the red carpet is where celebrities are expected to look their best; the celebrities are surrounded with paparazzi and are constantly photographed. According to Davis, her husband encouraged her to wear her natural hair, telling her to “step into who” she is (Melton, 2012). Davis also mentioned that she feels “more powerful every day, more secure in who I am, and I waited so long for that...it feels so divine” (Melton, 2012). Davis’s statement of feeling secure with who she is as a person is significant because she felt more secure and empowered when she embraced her natural hair. The feeling of security is a common feeling amongst black women who decide to wear their natural hair. Davis also notes that she has waited a long time to wear her natural hair, which is important because many black women want to show their natural hair, but are hesitant because of the negative response they might receive. The support and encouragement of her husband is a clear example of a black male accepting and also loving a black woman’s natural hair texture. Seeing more black women in the media with natural hair has also encouraged many black women to

transition or wear their natural hair.

For years black women were coerced into straightening their hair. America has become more racially and culturally accepting and today black women have a choice in how they wear their hair. Moreover, today natural black hair is taking on a more positive meaning and is slowly becoming mainstream. Celebrities such as Erykah Badu and Tracee Ellis Ross always embraced their natural hair. Many Black women have been transitioning to natural hair by wearing curly weaves. By wearing a curly hairstyle, black women are silently objecting to the ideal standard of beauty, which is straight hair. Hebdige (1979) states that “the challenge to hegemony which subcultures represent is not issued directly by them. Rather it is expressed obliquely, in style” (p.17). Hebdige suggests that subordinates do not explicitly express their rejection of the norms by the use of words; instead, they implicitly express themselves through their appearance and style. The non-traditional hair styles many black women are now wearing such as braids, twists and curly serve as the medium in which their objection to

the ideal standard of beauty is displayed. In fact there has been a recent shift from straight weave to curly weave in the last couple of years (Wellington, 2012). Black women still hold on to the notion that beautiful hair has to be long, so many of them will buy a long curly weave or wig (Wellington, 2012). Long hair is perceived to be more attractive on women. In some cultures it is also an indicator of a woman's health. Nonetheless, they are slowly moving towards their natural hair texture and eventual length, be it short or long.

Many may argue that the movement towards natural hair is a trend and that many black women are only following what they see in the media. Today women do have a choice in how they wear their hair, which may be influenced by the images they see in the media. However, the natural hair movement is not a trend because it operates within oneself and eventually manifests into confidence and self acceptance. Trends, on the other hand, are temporary in nature, and the majority if not all trends do not encourage one to look deeper within oneself. Many black women on their natural journey begin to realize the

hidden ideologies of using a relaxer. The majority of black women who decide to go natural do not see it as political act, but more of a personal choice for a healthier lifestyle. Hair in itself cannot be political, but many people still consider natural black hair to be political.

Political hair is hair that challenges the traditional perception of beauty and hair that is acceptable in society. Natural black hair, whether intended to or not, opposes the western beauty ideals while altering the woman's perception of beauty and self worth. In her documentary *Black Women's Transition to Natural Hair*, Zina Saro-Wiwa says, "God, I could just see myself getting uglier," after having one of her dreadlocks cut off. After all her hair has been cut off she asks if she "finally looks gorgeous" (Saro-Wiwa, 2012). The respondent assures her that she is gorgeous, but Saro-Wiwa did not feel beautiful so she whispered "Yeah right" (Saro-Wiwa, 2012). Yet Saro-Wiwa's perception of herself shortly began to change and she saw herself as beautiful with her natural hair. Her perception of beauty changed internally as she began to see her natural self and hair as beautiful.

As black women's hair changes, many of them find that their perceptions of beauty and their selves are also changing. It is here that many black women realize the political implications of their hair. By wearing their hair natural, black women are accepting their unaltered hair in its entirety and displaying to the world their true beauty. Through transitioning, many black women begin to learn about themselves and their hair. Although many black natural-haired women do not see their personal choices to go natural as political acts, it is indeed political because of the self acceptance that comes with going natural. Black women who decide to go natural are subliminally freeing themselves from the Western beauty ideal that society has used to unconsciously oppress them.

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