

The Natural Hair Movement By Faima Kelleh



Table of Contents

Acknowledgments.....

What is the Natural Hair Movement?.....

 The Past.....

 The Present.....

Curl

Politics.....

Meme Culture.....

Celebrities.....

 My Natural Hair Journey

Acknowledgements

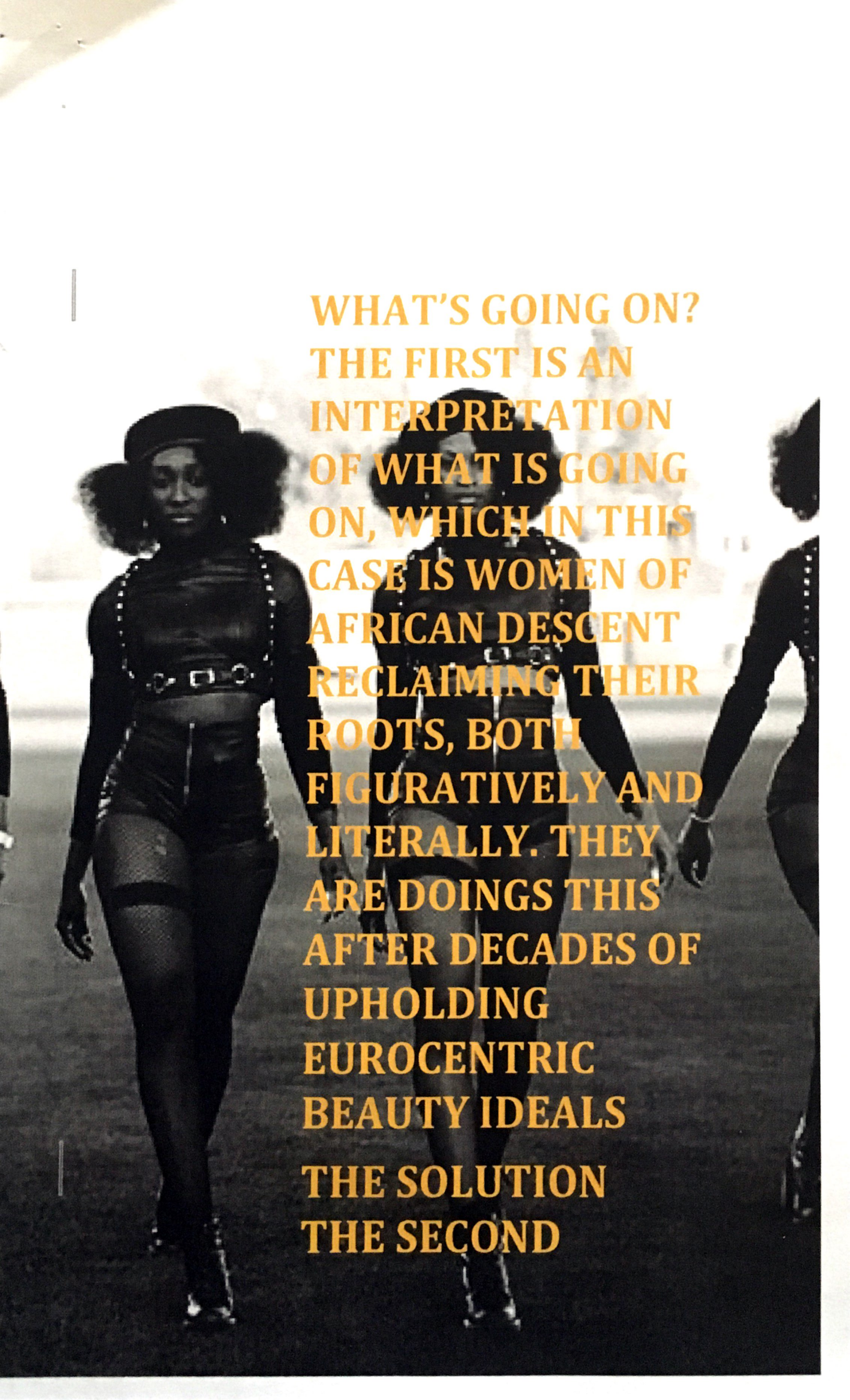
A major thanks to my best friend Tunmise for not only taking time out of her busy schedule to be interviewed by me, but encouraging me to go natural for years. I also have to thank you for stopping me from relaxing my hair when I've had enough. All of your help has been greatly appreciated.

To my astoundingly supportive boyfriend Nicholas for motivating me to choose this topic, by making one comment that challenged me to dig a little deeper. For loving my kinks, coils and all. Essentially encouraging me to feel more comfortable in my most natural state. My heartfelt thanks.

What is the Natural Hair Movement?

THE NATURAL HAIR MOVEMENT ENCOURAGES WOMEN OF AFRICAN DESCENT TO WEAR THE HAIR THAT GROWS OUT OF THEIR HEAD, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS NATURAL HAIR. THIS SOCIAL MOVEMENT NOT ONLY ENCOURAGES NATURAL HAIR BECAUSE OF THE DAMAGING ALTERATIONS THAT WOMEN OF AFRICAN DESCENT TEND TO DO TO THEIR HAIR TO CONFORM, BUT IS SYMBOLIC OF NO LONGER ACCEPTING EUROPEAN BEAUTY IDEALS AS THE ONLY STANDARD OF BEAUTY. THESE ARE AMONG MANY OTHER REASONS.

A black and white photograph of three women walking on a runway. They are wearing dark, form-fitting outfits. The woman on the right is wearing a high-heeled shoe. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.



**WHAT'S GOING ON?
THE FIRST IS AN
INTERPRETATION
OF WHAT IS GOING
ON, WHICH IN THIS
CASE IS WOMEN OF
AFRICAN DESCENT
RECLAIMING THEIR
ROOTS, BOTH
FIGURATIVELY AND
LITERALLY. THEY
ARE DOINGS THIS
AFTER DECADES OF
UPHOLDING
EUROCENTRIC
BEAUTY IDEALS
THE SOLUTION
THE SECOND**

The Past

The 60's marked the genesis of the natural hair movement. Between the civil rights movement and the black power movement, black people were emerging themselves into society. Changing their aesthetic was a part of this reintroduction. This chosen aesthetic was a contrast to the beauty standards and ideals of straight long hair.

“The pressing comb and chemical relaxers became oppressive because they were tools that symbolized the shame associated with black hair in its natural state.” – Ingrid Banks

Suppression

During the 1970s, the afro became a sign of refusal to conformity and arguably civil disobedience. Law enforcement targeted individuals who had afros which forced some activist into hiding. Suppression tactics such as arrest and interrogation were used. Some women began to wear wigs as a form of disguise to evade these forms of suppression.

Prominent Figures



ANGELA DAVIS



KATHLEEN CLEAVER



MELBA TOLLIVER

The Present

Now that more black women are going natural, there is less of a demand for relaxers resulting in there being less of supply. This decline in sales creates a new avenue for the production of natural hair products.

There is a difference between the natural hair movement of the past and what we currently see. One of the reasons mentioned in the article for women going natural is women wanting to embrace their naturalness but also remove their previously damaged hair. Not only are women recognizing that they don't need to submit to certain standards, hair care brands are also catering to the new wave.



Taran916

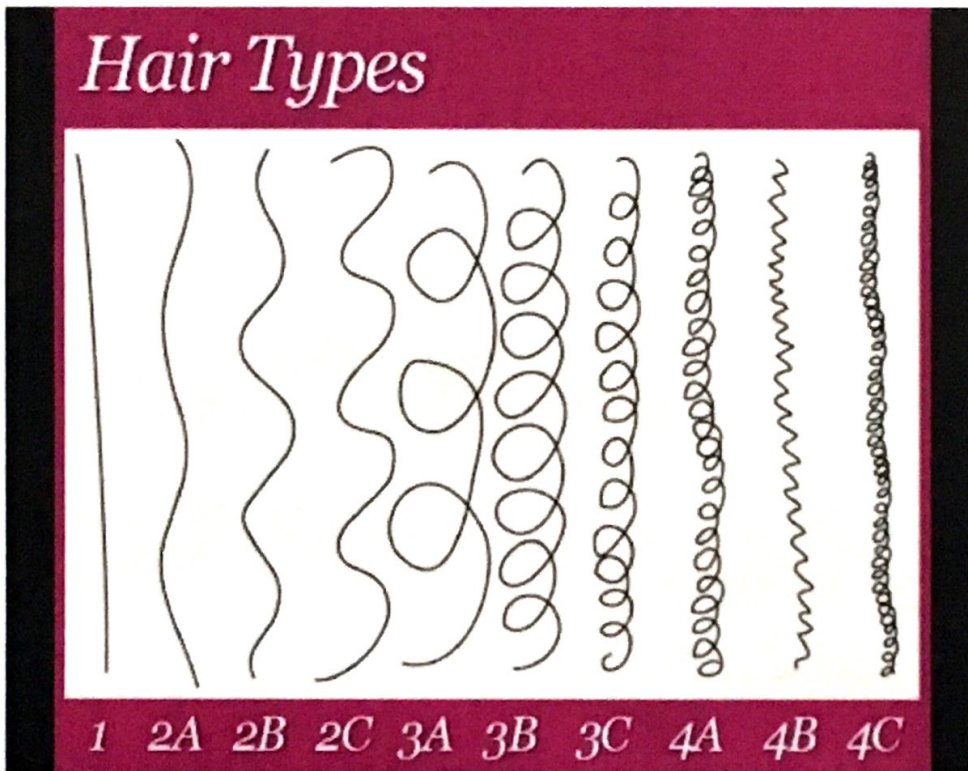


Cheesclocs

There are numerous pages on multiple social media platforms that help the sales of many products. Youtube being one of the most popular platforms for sharing product information, giving tutorials

Curl Politics

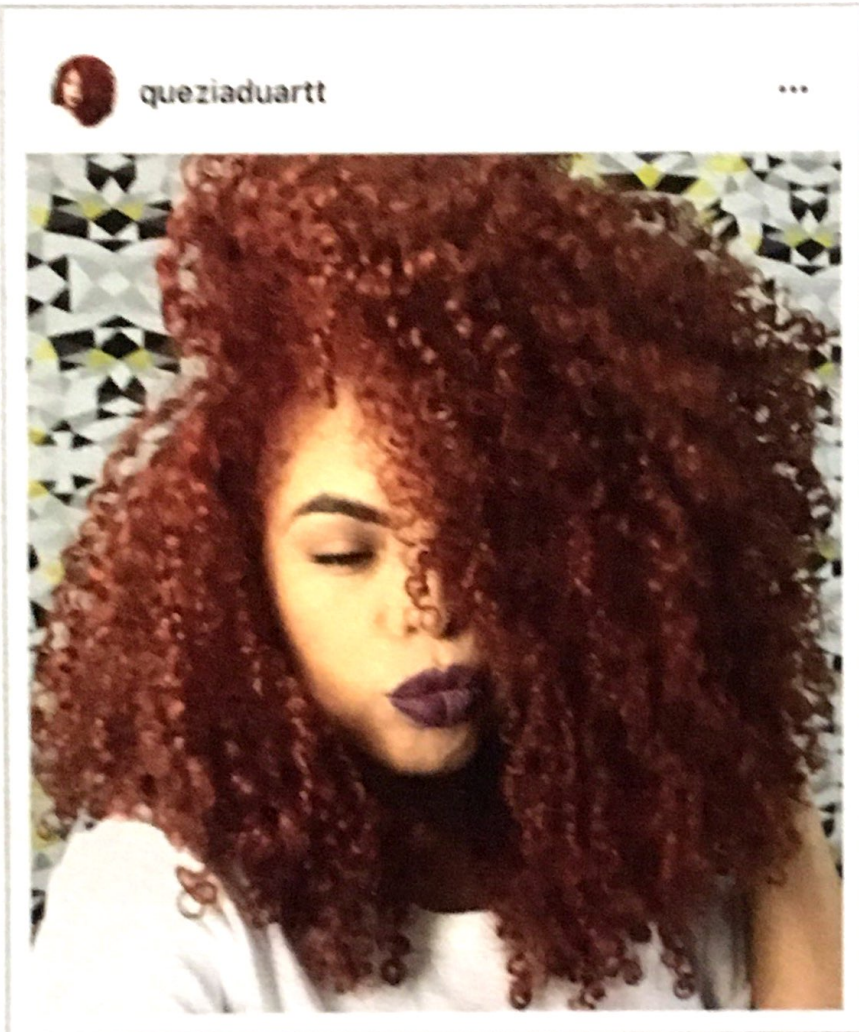
There is currently a trend of integration in the natural hair movement. The integration of the natural hair movement is inclusive of women of all races with non-straight hair. The problem is that the integration of may contribute to marginalizing already marginalized textures such as the kinks and coils



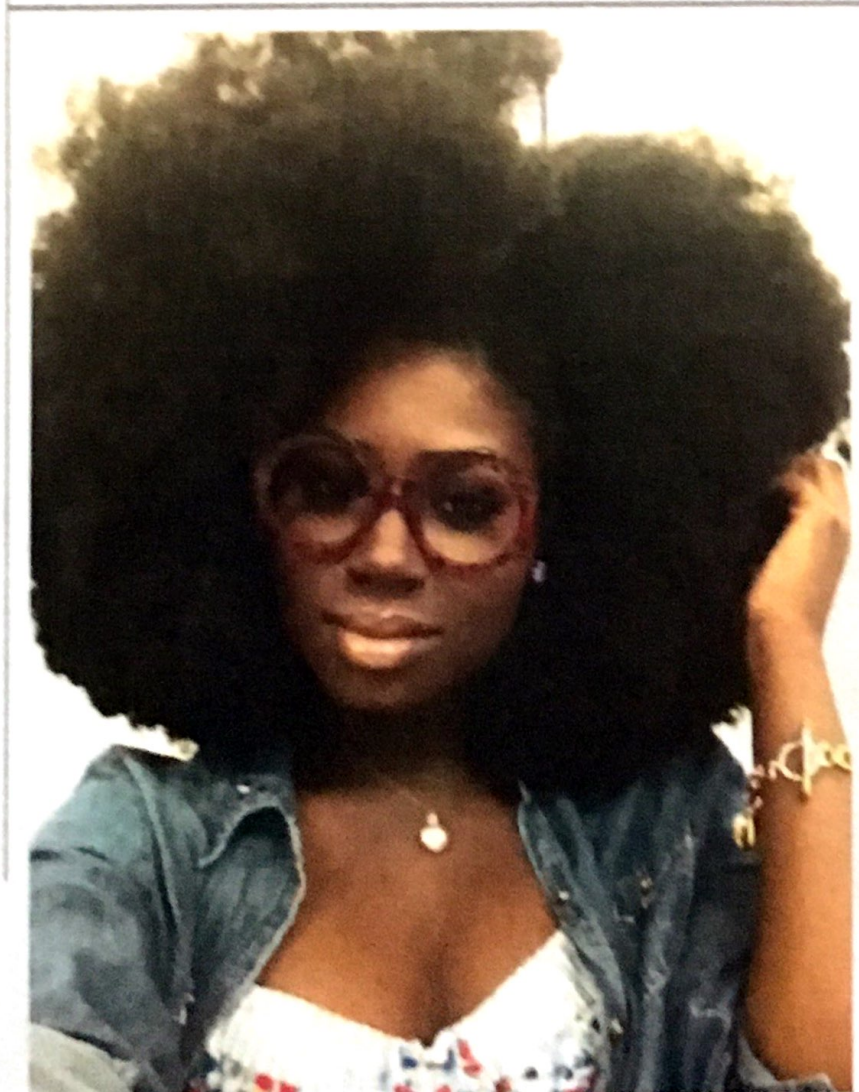
Textures

There is a lot of variance with curl patterns. Curl pattern range from 2a to 4c. 2a isn't really a curl pattern, it more of a lite wave. Type 3b is where most would see a defined curl pattern, but the problem is curl discrimination. Girls with looser curl patterns are many times fairer skinned and are given more opportunities to collaborate with major brands. Women with type 4 hair aren't given the same opportunity.

Hair Types/Textures



3c



4c

Meme Culture and the Natural Hair Movement

Seeing WoC reject Eurocentric beauty standards & love themselves unapologetically



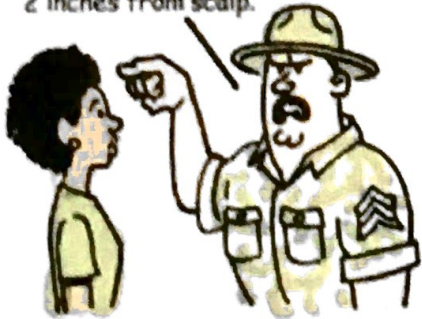
Mememes have been used as a way to promote black beauty

the floor is european beauty standards



Somebody get me a jet pack!
blackisbeautiful
brownisbeautiful Via
@brownbitterbitch

you have violated AR 670-1
because bulk of hair exceeds
2 inches from scalp.



you have violated AR 670-1
because corn row exceeds
 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter.



You have violated AR 670-1
twists are not allowed.



Approved!

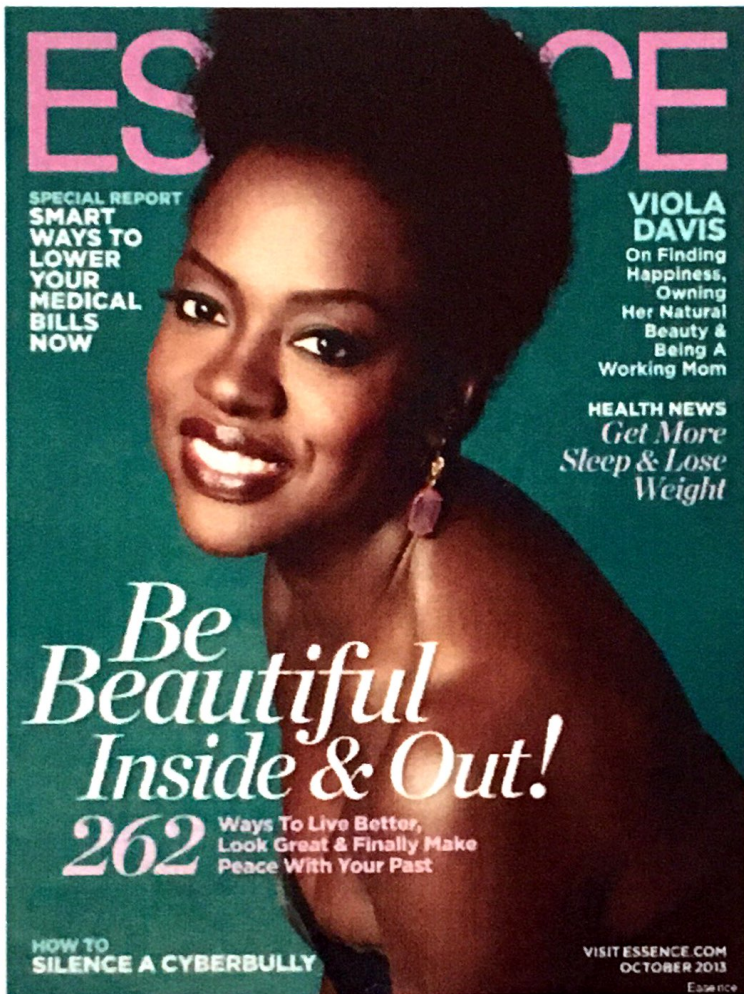


Commander in Chief
We have achieved uniformity.



Celebrities

The visibility of actresses like Lupita Nyong'o and Viola Davis is particularly exciting for black women with kinky hair textures, for two reasons. The first is that it's rare for black actresses to have several mainstream roles



"I feel more powerful every day, more secure in who I am, and I've waited so long for that... It feels so

divine." — Viola Davis (about her natural hair) "Don't touch my hair / When it's the feelings I wear," she sings in the song. She continues: "Don't touch my soul / When it's the rhythm I know. Don't touch my crown."

Focus on What You Do Best

Celebrities such as Lupita Nyong'o, Viola Davis Janelle Monáe, and, Solange Knowles. Solange Knowles writing what is considered a movement anthem in many circles with the song "Don't Touch My Hair", contributes to the movement.



"Don't touch my hair / When it's the feelings I wear," she sings in the song. She continues: "Don't touch my soul / When it's the rhythm I know. Don't touch my crown." - lyrics

from Don't Touch My Hair

I was pressured into relaxing my hair because it didn't meet the regulations. Upon returning home from training I decided to try again.

My natural hair journey has been a long one. I'm still coming to terms with loving my natural hair and feeling confident in it but I think that society is more accepting of it now than when I was growing up. Although I don't wear my natural hair out often, when I do I either feel confident or awkward. This is a step forward for me because I use to only associate my natural hair with negative emotions.

Why this topic?

When I was deciding on what to write about I ran the idea of the natural hair movement pass my boyfriend. He "jokingly" said "Why would you want to do a project about the NHM if you don't even wear your hair natural? The answer is, I was hoping that doing this zine would instill more confidence in me about my roots. I think it did. I wore my natural hair in uniform for the second time in my military career (since training).

I shared bits and pieces of my journey to show that there's not one journey. I for example am slowly rising in to my identity as it pertains to my hair and that's ok.

My Natural Hair Journey

My first relaxer

Getting my first relaxer seemed like a rite of passage. I'd suffered through traumatic Saturday evenings getting my hair straightened with a hot comb. Getting my first relaxer at thirteen meant that the struggle was over!

"Natural hair isn't for me". – Me

I constantly straightened my hair even when it was relaxed to ensure that my hair was straight and blended with my extensions. Once my best friend went natural she would take every opportunity to convince me to do so as well. I remember telling her numerous of times that natural hair wasn't for me. I think that I've finally realized how ridiculous that sounds.

I originally started my journey December of 2014. I thought that it would be the perfect time to start for several reasons. I was leaving for basic training, which meant that I wouldn't have any outside noise convincing me to relax my hair. The second reason was that I wouldn't have the option of relaxing my hair.

How to be an ally to the movement

Q: How can sympathizers be allies to the Natural Hair Movement?

A: Allies shouldn't police hair textures.

She broke this down by explaining how some individuals think that one hair pattern is pretty or acceptable. The second was casting people of different hair textures.



“People should expand their perception of curl patterns... uplift all textures. – Tunmise Fawole

Sources

Chinwe. "The Natural Hair Movement in the '60s and '70s; How It Began and Why It Ended." *Black Girl with Long Hair*, 12 Jan. 2015, blackgirllonghair.com/2015/01/the-natural-hair-movement-in-the-60s-and-70s-how-it-began-and-why-it-ended/.

Johnson, Maisha Z. "10 Ways the Beauty Industry Tells You Being Beautiful Means Being White." *Everyday Feminism*, 25 Oct. 2017, everydayfeminism.com/2016/01/when-beauty-equals-white/.

Kenneth, et al. "The Natural Hair Movement: A Historical Perspective." *Curl Centric® | Rewrite the Rules of Natural Hair Care*, 25 Apr. 2017, www.curlcentric.com/natural-hair-movement/.

Louis, Catherine Saint. "Black Hair, Still Tangled in Politics." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 26 Aug. 2009, www.nytimes.com/2009/08/27/fashion/27SKIN.html.

Luter, Cherise. "The History Of Natural Black Hair, Plus How 2014's Afro Has A Whole New Meaning." *Bustle*, Bustle, 14 Sept. 2017, www.bustle.com/articles/27404-the-history-of-natural-black-hair-plus-how-2014s-afro-has-a-whole-new-meaning.

"Mixed Women Have Completely Hijacked The Natural Hair Movement!" Women Accuses Natural Hair Movement of Texture Discrimination." *Lisa a La Mode*, 19 June 2017, lisaalamode.com/2017/06/19/mixed-women-have-completely-hijacked-the-natural-hair-movement-women-accuses-natural-hair-movement-of-texture-discrimination.

Sources

Yawson, Ama. "How to Get Rid of Black Women With Kinky Hair." *The Huffington Post*, TheHuffingtonPost.com, 16 July 2014, www.huffingtonpost.com/ama-yawson/how-to-get-rid-of-black-kinky-hair_b_5585380.html.

"Your Ultimate Guide to Understanding the Natural Hair Movement." *Bulletin*, blavity.com/understanding-natural-hair-movement/.

Image Sources

<http://www.hergivenhair.com/blog/tag/natural-hair-magazine/>

<https://me.me/i/19163292>

<http://www.naturalhairrules.com/viola-davis-gorgeous-essences-october-issue/>

images retrieved from Pinterest images