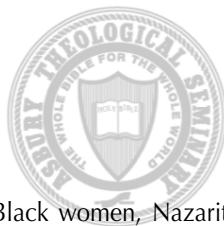


Mercy Langat

Don't Touch My Hair: Examining the Natural Hair Movement Among Black Women

Abstract:

The natural hair movement among Black women has shown that aesthetic practices and rituals related to hair often serve as embodied methods of resistance for many Black women. These practices also reflect a dimension of their spirituality that is often unrecognized. This paper historically examines political, cultural, and religious meanings of hair within the Black community. The Nazarite vow and the *Imago Dei* concepts are utilized to understand the biblical and spiritual significance of hair rituals. Engaging scripture and theology with daily concerns, such as hair, is an important part of the task of public theology, and this article hopes to encourage more attempts to think theologically about how Black women, as well as other Christians, choose to live out their spiritual lives even in rather ordinary events. Our identity is connected to many seemingly ordinary aspects of life, and there is a need to think theologically about everything that connects with our personal and communal identity.



Keywords: Natural hair, Black women, Nazarite vow, *Imago Dei*, public theology

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"Don't touch my hair,
 When it's the feelings I wear,
 Don't touch my soul,
 When it's the rhythm I know,
 Don't touch my crown,
 they say the vision I've found,
 Don't touch what's there,
 When it's the feelings I wear"¹

Solange Knowles

Introduction: My Black Hair

There has been a visible movement among Black women, worldwide, to "go natural." "Natural" is a colloquial expression referencing hair that has not been chemically treated to alter the natural curl pattern. There are various reasons why Black women choose to go natural. Prior to my natural hair journey, I had been chemically treating my hair since the age of eleven. My own journey began after reflecting on my motivation for about two years before I decided to do the "big chop."² My motivation was personal because it spoke of my identity as a Kenyan woman created in the image of God, but it can also be viewed as political. I chose to go natural prior to beginning my doctoral journey. Going natural served as a way of resisting oppressive messages that I had been told and had internalized all my life. Some of those messages were that Black hair is unprofessional, undesirable, and uncultured in its natural form. At the core of the messages is the idea that the Black feminine aesthetic is unappealing.

Black women, including myself, hear these messages explicitly and implicitly through media, work contexts, academic institutions, and in interpersonal relationships. These messages are rooted in colonial and racist principles that continue to pervade the society. I chose to go natural as a symbol of my newfound journey towards decolonizing my mind and living as a Black woman created in the image and likeness of God. This article is written as the backdrop of that journey.

Beyond every Black woman's afro, braids, dread locs, straightened hair, or deep kinky "4C"³ curls is a sacred story. Non-Black people are often fascinated by the enormous diversity of Black hair, the different kinds of hairstyles and the fact that Black women intentionally spend time, money and creativity to care for and style their hair. What many fail to understand is that hair has a deeper symbolism for Black women; it tells a story that is often neglected by those who do not share the same narrative.⁴ This

paper is inspired by the long and rich history of hair among Black women. Historically and in present times “Black girls are socialized into Black womanhood through the hair practices taught to them by their mothers, aunts, sisters, and grandmothers.”⁵

I begin this paper by examining the socio-cultural meanings of hair. The second section considers the biblical interpretation of hair in the Nazarite vow and concludes by considering the natural hair movement in light of the *Imago Dei*.

Socio-cultural Meanings

One of the main contributions made by womanist theologians is revealing the deep-seated preoccupation with white beauty standards that exist in various facets of societies, but more specifically within the Christian tradition.⁶ This preoccupation favors the White/Eurocentric aesthetic as good, beautiful, and ultimately divine.⁷ Kristin Rowe correctly states that “Eurocentric and White supremacist beauty standards have privileged those whose corporeality is closest in proximity to Whiteness—including those with lighter skin, straighter hair, thinner noses and lips, and thin body frames.”⁸ While the scholarship made by some theologians such as African Women theologians, womanist theologians, and African American theologians in general has been beneficial, it has neglected the experiences of younger Black Christian women. Their attempts have not addressed concerns, aesthetic needs, and dimensions of spirituality associated with hair.

Given the significance that hair has on the identity development (both spiritually and socially) of Black women, it is crucial that we explore what role hair plays in public theology. Indeed, the topic of the natural hair movement among Black women is important to the greater public theology discourse because it highlights an issue that is taking place in the public sphere and attempts to theologize it. It is also an examination being done from the margins, and sides with those who often experience invisibility.

Black girls experience unique challenges in their identity development due to complex intersectionality. “The intersection between race and gender adds complexity to the developing identities of Black girls influenced by numerous internal and external factors.”⁹ This is important because religious education, and the church in general, have failed to answer questions related to embodied and aesthetic dimensions of Black women’s lives. In turn, this promotes a sense of invisibility in the church

among Black women and consequently they turn to Black female artists such as India Arie, Ledisi, Solange, and Beyonce for theological and religious resources. These artists use their art and music to reflect on their whole personhood in a manner that churches and religion do not.

In most Black societies in the world, hair played and continues to play an important role in the culture. In Africa, hair was used to symbolize men and women's social hierarchy, marital status, tribe and family background. It was also used to signify a season that one was going through. For example, there are various ethnic tribes that expect a widow to cut her hair to signify mourning, while other tribes believed that long, thick hair symbolized fertility. Most ancient communities in Africa believed that hair could be used for divine communication especially because it is in the most elevated part of the body.¹⁰ In fact, it is still common to hear of strands of hair being used for witchcraft purposes. These examples show that hair was already an important part of the fabric of society even before the slave trade, colonization, and the commencement of modern missions. Therefore, it is no wonder that hair continues to be important to those who trace their heritage to Africa. The natural hair movement has gained momentum not only in the United States, but also in Africa and the Caribbean islands.¹¹ However, for the sake of conciseness, this paper focuses on the experiences of Black women in the United States. The following section discusses the history and themes found in the socio-cultural context, particularly the political and cultural context.



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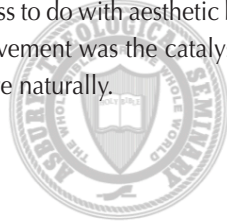
Traditional Swahili Women Doing Their Hair
(Library of Congress, Public Domain Image from Pre-1923)

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Political Context

The examination of hair and the political climate must begin with the acknowledgement that the body and human flesh is the surface and site of struggle, also known as body politics. “Representation, definitions and treatments of the body are inherently political statements because of what they communicate about the constitutive meanings, importance, obsessions, practices and urgencies related to body.”¹² Body politics involves the study of body size, skin, and hair in order to gain a better understanding of its relevance to culture, religion, art, and other aspects in a society. Therefore, the study or research of the body, especially Black bodies, is political in and of itself.¹³

When African Americans were involuntarily brought to the United States during the slave trade of the 15th century, their cultural identity was stripped by forcefully shaving their hair.¹⁴ Over time, it became apparent that those with looser curls and fairer skin tone would be asked to serve in the master's house, while those with darker skin tone and tighter curls would work in the cotton plantations. This preference led women like Annie Turnbo Malone to create thriving hair care businesses that provided hot combs and chemical hair relaxers to Black women in hopes of loosening their curls to resemble White women. Malone initially employed Madam C.J. Walker as her sales agent until she began her own hair business, and they became rivals.¹⁵ The hair products by these two women became popular among Black women who tried to imitate their oppressors during and after slavery. Their hope was that changing their hair would enable them to assimilate into the dominating white culture. This began to change during the Civil Rights era where both men and women in the movement began using their natural Afro hair as a form of embodied resistance.¹⁶ The change in hairstyle had less to do with aesthetic beauty and more to do with being disruptive. This movement was the catalyst for the Black community to embrace who they were naturally.





**Madam C.J. Walker, often Noted as the First Self-Made
Female American Millionaire, who Made her Fortune off African
American Beauty Products.**

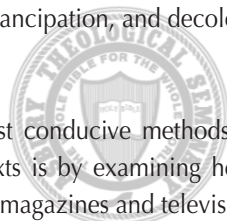
(Image in the Public Domain)

Chime Edwards posits, “the Afro became a powerful political symbol that reflected the pride one had in their African ancestry.”¹⁷ Prominent Civil Rights activists in the Black Panther Party such as Kathleen Cleaver, Angela Davis, Nikki Giovanni, Nina Simone, and many other women (and men) used their hairstyle as a representation of the fight against racism.¹⁸ In an interview by Andre’ Wheeler for the online magazine I-D VICE, Lori Tharps, the coauthor of *Hair Story: Untangling the Roots of Black Hair in America* postulates, “our hair was a physical manifestation of our rebellion...saying to the establishment: ‘Accept us and appreciate us for who we are.’ Stop expecting us to assimilate or subjugate ourselves to make you comfortable.”¹⁹ Unfortunately, the Afro came to be deemed “unprofessional” and even “militant,” especially after Angela Davis’ picture appeared in the FBI’s most wanted fugitive poster in 1971 for a crime that she was not involved in. In the poster, the Afro takes up most of the picture making it hard to see her face. She is quoted as saying “I was portrayed as a conspiratorial and monstrous Communist (that is, anti-American) whose unruly natural hairdo symbolized black militancy (that is, anti-whiteness).”²⁰

Today, natural hair continues to make a political statement of resistance. In fact, the Nigerian author, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, mentioned in an interview in Britain that the former first lady, Michelle Obama, would not have been able to wear natural hair because of the negative stereotypes associated with it.²¹ This is true considering the number of racial harassments related to natural hair that Black women experience in the workplace, educational institutions, and so on.²² The choice to wear natural hair continues to be a political form of dis-identifying with the status quo. Most Black women who choose to do so, seek to construct their own definition of beauty disconnected from the Eurocentric standard. Indeed, it is an act of liberation, emancipation, and decolonization.²³

Cultural Context

One of the most conducive methods of examining hair in the American cultural contexts is by examining how it is portrayed in mass media platforms, such as magazines and television shows. The natural hair movement has largely grown because of the Black is Beautiful movement that began in the 1960s amidst the Civil Rights Movement discussed earlier. The Black is Beautiful movement sought to highlight and embrace the African/African American heritage and culture.²⁴ It was concentrated on



the idea of fostering the freedom of Black expression in art and music, and also in aesthetics.

The artist Kwame Braithwaite, an important figure in the second Harlem Renaissance who has not been widely recognized, popularized the “Black is Beautiful” movement.²⁵ Braithwaite’s photographs of Black women wearing natural hairstyles and Afrocentric fashion “challenged the era’s monolithic white beauty standards and were an alternative to the depictions of beauty idealized in films and magazines, and on television.”²⁶ Corporations and brands such as Shea Moisture, Iman Cosmetics, Vernon Francois, Black Opal, and Miss Jessie’s among others began adopting the “Black is Beautiful” slogan to advertise their products to the Black population. While the marketing and production of chemical relaxers and other hair straightening productions have not ceased, the campaign focused more on healthy hair, “texlax”²⁷ methods, and natural hair.

Representations of Black women with natural hairstyles in the media continue to lag. Fortunately, there is a growing number of Black conscious producers, screen writers, and media company owners whose aim is to have positive representations of Black women in magazines, movies, and television shows. Shows such as *Black-ish* and *Mixed-ish*, are examples of shows in a popular network (ABC) that represents Black families in a positive manner. Issues such as colorism and black hair are also discussed in the shows. Also, movies such as the Marvel’s *Black Panther*, had important cultural significance for the Black community, because of its portrayal of Black women and hair among countless other issues. The women characters in the movie wore natural hairstyles, which communicated the beauty of the Black aesthetic.²⁸ These examples show that the Black community continues to embrace the natural hair movement as well as the wider Black is Beautiful movement.





**Angela Davis. The use of the Afro Hairstyle by the Black Power
Movement**

Brought a Militant Image to the Black is Beautiful Movement
(Image in the Public Domain)

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Religious Landscape

As previously mentioned, the main gap in the theological discourse which this paper seeks to examine and contribute to is the religious aspect of the natural hair movement. Churches rarely discuss embodiment in relation to hair and other aesthetics, and it is certainly not discussed in predominantly white churches either. Most of the church, including the Black church, venerates the White universal to a great degree. Therefore, this section will intentionally discuss the role of Black female artists, even though they are considered secular, because they are the main people theologizing about the movement through their art and music. In fact, the way Black women follow and listen to Black female artists such as Beyoncé and Solange could be viewed as a religious movement.

So far, the main scholar who has articulated the importance of hair among Black women in the religious sphere is Tamera Henry, an Assistant Professor of Religious Education at New York Theological Seminary. In her presentation at the Religious Education Association Annual Meeting in 2018, she specifically asked, “how can religious education within the Black church begin to frame a more adequate aesthetic vision that reflects the needs, interests, and concerns of younger Black women, especially in relation to their hair?”²⁹ In the presentation, Henry posited that the answer begins with the examination of music and art by Black female artists, because they fill a space that has been left open by the church in the religious sphere. Henry’s work is vital in this discussion because she argues for the consideration of new, secular resources in the development of pedagogical, religious, and theological spheres. She specifically states that “religious education needs to frame a more adequate aesthetic vision for young Black women by attending to popular culture and references to Black hair as part of its real, embodied aesthetic.”³⁰ This illustrates that Black female artists are a credible theological resource for this specific topic.

The release of the album *Lemonade* by Beyoncé indicated a shift in her perspective. Before this album, most Black women felt that she represented the mainstream culture. However, this particular album addressed issues related to gender, class, and race in the broader womanist perspective.³¹ In fact, her performance at the Super Bowl halftime show elicited outrage from those who are conservative because it featured dancers dressed similarly to the Black Panther party/movement as they danced to the song “*Formation*.”³² On the other hand, Beyoncé’s sister, Solange, has been addressing issues related to race, and more specifically hair, even before

Beyoncé began doing so. In the song “*Don’t Touch My Hair*” which is also quoted at the beginning of this paper, Solange states Black women exercise personal autonomy in how they choose to style their hair. In her opinion, “hair represents a sacred dimension of one’s being, which she describes as an expression of the soul.”³³ The “soul” refers to a woman’s spiritual identity as well as her overall identity- Blackness. Solange perceives hair as sacred because it’s where one’s material and spiritual realities collide. Therefore, Black women, in many ways, reflect how they perceive God through the way they wear their hair.³⁴ This is evidence that hair does not only serve aesthetic or beauty purposes; it is also a form of identity and resistance.

Biblical Perspective

The topic of hair is discussed in several places in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, and plays important symbolic roles. In Deuteronomy 21:12 the passage discusses a practice of purification for a foreign captive wife. In this passage, the hair shaving combined with clothing change as well as nail-cutting is meant to signify purification of the woman as she adjusts and transitions to her new status as an Israelite wife. In other passages, hair shaving was associated with mourning, for example in Leviticus 19:27, 21:5, Ezra 9:3, Job 1:20 and in the writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, and Micah. In Numbers 6:1-21 hair is part of a holy ritual called the Nazarite vow. Hair in the Nazarite vow serves as a meaningful symbol of the Nazarite’s separation and devotion to God.

Hair Terms in the Nazarite Vow

The hair rituals within the Nazarite vow in Numbers 6:1-21 are certainly some of the most recognized in the Old Testament, especially due to the narrative of Samson and Delilah found in Judges 13-16. In the vow, the Nazarites were to commence the vow ritual by growing their hair and allowing it to take its natural shape as it continued growing longer. The hair was supposed to continue growing until the conclusion of the vow, at which point the hair would be shaved and burnt on the altar. The only time during the vow that the Nazarites were bound to shave their hair and begin the hair growing ritual again was when they were accidentally defiled by the impurity of a corpse. According to Bollinger, there is no other biblical narrative or legislation that presents such a variability of hair treatment. Therefore, “Nazarite law is a key component to understanding hair as a symbol in biblical ritual.”³⁵ Indeed, the Nazarite vow is the only vow in the

Biblical text that not only involves hair, but also encourages people, both men and women, to neither cover nor cut their hair but rather, naturally grow it.

The hair terms in the vow serve as a meaningful embodied symbol of the Nazarite's devotion to God as well as separation from the rest of the community. The hair ritual is the only aspect of the vow that serves as a visual marker of who identified as a Nazarite. While uncut hair has been used as a symbol of impurity in other passages such as Leviticus 13:45, the hair terms in the vow indicate that hair was thought of positively, and could be like a crown of priesthood or high royalty. Bollinger notes that,

“the hair was a living, growing part of a human person and, as such, represented the life-force of the person very well, since hair will keep growing, for a while, even after death. Nothing external was to disturb the hair, representing as it did the power and life of the dedicated human being, until the accomplishment of the vow.”³⁶

The natural (uncut) hair was a sign of a holy life set apart to God by the living person on which it grew. Manipulation of the hair, such as cutting, indicated a severing or altering of one's relationship to God.

The hair rituals in the Nazarite vow connect with the natural hair movement among Black women because it reiterates the importance of hair as an external expression of our internal spiritual state. The passage communicates that hair can have deeper spiritual significance and symbolism. It shows that hair can communicate a person's identity and whose allegiance or beauty standards a person follows. It demonstrates that people do not need to focus on fitting social prescriptions or normative standards of beauty, because our identity is based on how God created us and views our natural hair as beautiful.

The Nazarite vow is important because it shows how natural hair can provide a religious connection. It does so by permitting people to be seen wholly as they were formed by God. The spiritual and physical embodiment of hair is done visibly so that people can identify and see the person's spiritual connection to God through the hair. Furthermore, manipulation of the hair such as shaving it communicates a change in status. The central message in the Nazarite vow connects with the *Imago Dei* as a theology, because it avows that everyone is created in the image of God regardless of ethnicity, gender, or hair type. Altering one's image

to fit societal, political, or religious constructs that oppose one's image as created by God is a rejection of God's creation. The natural hair movement is a public declaration by Black Christian women that God does not make mistakes. In that case, "the big chop" becomes a powerful symbol of accepting and reclaiming ourselves as created in the image of God- an act of changing our spiritual status to become a child of God accepted just as we are.

Imago Dei

As previously stated, the doctrine of the *Imago Dei* is significant in this discussion given that the natural hair movement is rooted in Black women embracing how they were created instead of the White universal being the standard. Scriptures such as Genesis 1:26-27; 5:3; 9:6 and James 3:9 offer key theological foundations for understanding a biblical view of humanity. Womanist theologians, such as Phillis Sheppard, suggest that it is meaningful to examine Black women's embodiment beginning with the theological foundations of *Imago Dei* in the scripture. She further states

It is the brokenness of community that has rendered our bodies and others' bodies as the site for suspicion and ambivalence. As with all that God created, our bodies are good and we must recognize that all aspects of our embodied lives are a matter for theological reflection, and a resource for a practical theology of embodiment.³⁷

The brokenness of community began during the Fall in the book of Genesis and has continued. For Black women, the systemic injustice that began with colonization, slavery, and racism deeply affected their identity, especially as it pertains to hair. Therefore, there needs to be a conscious move towards recovering Black female embodiment in our theology.

The transformation begins with accepting the biblical truth of creation and it must continue with sharing and listening to Black women's narratives. Those from the dominant culture who have had the privilege of benefiting from the rejection of Black embodiment must take a posture of humility when hearing from those whose embodiment has been rejected. The church plays a significant role towards this transformation; they need to create ways in which Black women's bodies are viewed socially and theologically. The reclaiming of Black embodiment as well as transformation must be done in community because the malformation is deeply historical,

psychological, and relational, and it affects all people in the body of Christ.³⁸ It may sound simplistic, but a church or Christian community that reflects on the meanings of hair for Black women can articulate the inconsistency between a view of humanity created in the image of God and embodied experience.

Conclusion

In summary, hair has always had significance for Black people with an African heritage; it was used for various symbolism and meanings. The realities of colonization and slavery saw that most of the world is preoccupied with White standards of beauty. Black women began using relaxers to straighten their hair in order to assimilate and be accepted in the society. However, the Black is Beautiful movement, Black Panther party and the natural hair movements are encouraging Black women to embrace their identity and beauty by wearing their hair naturally. This movement highlights resistance, beauty, and identity, and has largely taken place in the public sphere. Black female artists such as Beyoncé and her sister, Solange are providing theological resources for Black Christian women who experience invisibility and the pressure to assimilate to one specific ideal of beauty in their churches due to a lack of theological discourses relating to Black embodiment. The hair rituals in the Nazarite vow are relevant to the Black hair movement because it shows that natural hair can signify one's devotion to God, especially amidst other societal standards of beauty or rituals. Finally, the concept of the *Imago Dei* and embodiment are important because it encourages theological reflections on the power of embodied experience. Brokenness caused by sin led to the fracture of how we view certain people and ourselves as well. This can be witnessed through systemic racial injustice and colonization. Therefore, the reclamation of our identity as image bearers of God and theological reflections on what that entails ought to be done collectively by the hermeneutical community.

End Notes

¹ Solange Knowles, "Don't Touch My Hair," *A Seat at the Table*, Columbia Records, 2016.

² The big chop is another colloquial expression widely used to reference cutting the chemically treated part of the hair; usually the tips of

the hair depending on how long a person has not chemically treated their hair.

³ There is a hair typing system that some Black women use to determine their hair pattern. The numbers range from type 1 which is straight to type 4C which has a deep curl pattern.

⁴ Kristin Denise Rowe, *Beyond "Good Hair": Negotiating Hair Politics Through African American Language*, (2019):43.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁶ See works by Jacquelyn Grant, Katie Cannon, Delores Williams, Emilie Townes, and Monica Coleman etc.

⁷ Kristin Denise Rowe, *Beyond "Good Hair": Negotiating Hair Politics Through African American Language*, (2019):44.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 45; also see Byrd, A. D., & Tharps, L. L. *Hair Story: Untangling the Roots of Black Hair in America*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2014; and Hunter, M. L. *Race, Gender, and the Politics of Skin Tone*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2005.

⁹ R. J. Phelps-Ward and C.T. Laura, "Talking Back in Cyberspace: Self-Love, Hair Care, and Counter Narratives in Black Adolescent Girls' YouTube Vlogs." *Gender & Education* 28(6) (October 2016):807–20; 808.

¹⁰ Lebo Matshego, "A History of African Women's Hairstyles," *Africa.com*: June 18, 2019 <https://www.africa.com/history-african-womens-hairstyles/>

¹¹ Ayana Byrd, "Born This Way," *Essence* 49(5) (2018):40.

¹² Eltra Gilchrist and Courtney Thompson, *Media Effects and Black Hair Politics*, The University of Alabama in Huntsville, n.d., 2.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Andre'-Nequian Wheeler, "The Radical Politics Behind Afros." *I-D* (blog), July 7, 2017. https://i-d.vice.com/en_us/article/zmn454/the-radical-politics-behind-afros, 1.

¹⁵ Nadra Nittle, "Meet Annie Turnbo Malone, the Hair Care Entrepreneur Trump Shouted out in His Black History Month Proclamation." *Vox*, February 15, 2019. <https://www.vox.com/the-goods/2019/2/15/18226396/annie-turnbo-malone-hair-entrepreneur-trump-black-history>.

¹⁶ Chime Edwards, "The Impact of The 'Fro In The Civil Rights Movement." *Essence* (blog). Accessed December 11, 2019. <https://www.essence.com/holidays/black-history-month/impact-fro-civil-rights-movement/>.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Andre'-Nequian Wheeler, "The Radical Politics behind Afros." *I-D* (blog), July 7, 2017. https://i-d.vice.com/en_us/article/zmn454/the-radical-politics-behind-afros.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Chimamanda Adichie, Interview, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tz8MHG-IiYM&t=2s>.

²² Eltra Gilchrist and Courtney Thompson, *Media Effects and Black Hair Politics*, 5

²³ Shauntae Brown White, "Releasing the Pursuit of Bouncin' and Behavin' Hair: Natural Hair as an Afrocentric Feminist Aesthetic for Beauty." *International Journal of Media & Cultural Politics* 1(3) (September 2005):295-308., 300.

²⁴ "'Black Is Beautiful' · Duke University Library Exhibits." Accessed December 11, 2019. <https://exhibits2.library.duke.edu/exhibits/show/-black-is-beautiful/-black-is-beautiful--afrocentr.>; and Tamera Henry, "Don't Touch My Hair," pg. 6.

²⁵ Kwame Brathwaite, The artist, <https://www.kwamebrathwaite.com/about>.

²⁶ Scarlett Newman, "Powerful Photos of the 'Black Is Beautiful' Movement." *CNN Style*, April 12, 2019.1

²⁷ Texlax refers to the method of applying "relaxers" or chemical but intentionally under processing it so that it retains some texture instead of being completely straight.

²⁸ Tre Johnson, "Black Panther Is a Gorgeous, Groundbreaking Celebration of Black Culture." *Vox*, February 23, 2018. <https://www.vox.com/culture/2018/2/23/17028826/black-panther-wakanda-culture-marvel>.

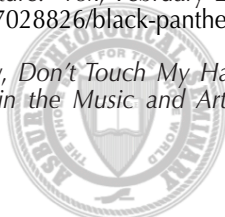
²⁹ Tamera Henry, *Don't Touch My Hair": Exploring a Womanist Pedagogy of Resistance in the Music and Art of Beyonce and Solange Knowles*, REA 2018, 1.

³⁰ Ibid., 2.

³¹ Ibid., 9; Andre'-Nequian Wheeler, *The Radical politics Behind Afros*, 1.

³² Ibid.

³³ Tamera Henry, *Don't Touch My Hair*, 9.



³⁴ Ibid., 9.

³⁵ Sarah Bollinger, *Ritual Manipulation of Women's Hair in the Hebrew Bible*, 277.

³⁶ Ibid., 307.

³⁷ Phillis Sheppard, "A Dark Goodness Created in the Image of God: Womanist Notes Toward a Practical Theology of Black Women's Embodiment." *The Covenant Quarterly* 61(3):5-28, 21.

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