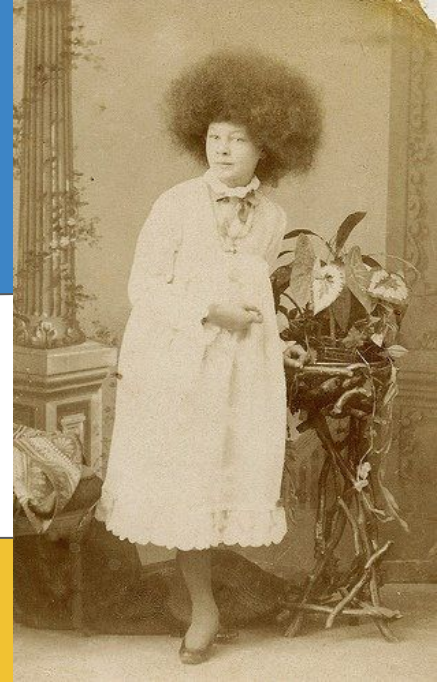
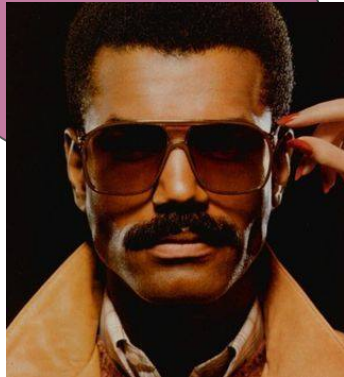


Black Beauty



Mothersun Books



European Sense of Beauty

Black women are particularly vulnerable to the effects of European standards of beauty because these standards emphasize skin colors and hair types that exclude many black women, especially those with darker skin tones or who possess a more tightly curled hair pattern. Using a social work lens black women's internalization of European beauty standards through family, peers, the media, and society, and the related outcomes of this internalization on self-perception, academic achievement, sexual behavior, employment, marital status, and mental health has been damaging. European standards of beauty can have damaging effects on the life trajectories of black women, especially those with dark skin, primarily in the form of internalized self-hatred. Many Black women live their lives making negative comparisons between themselves and their lighter toned or straighter haired sisters.



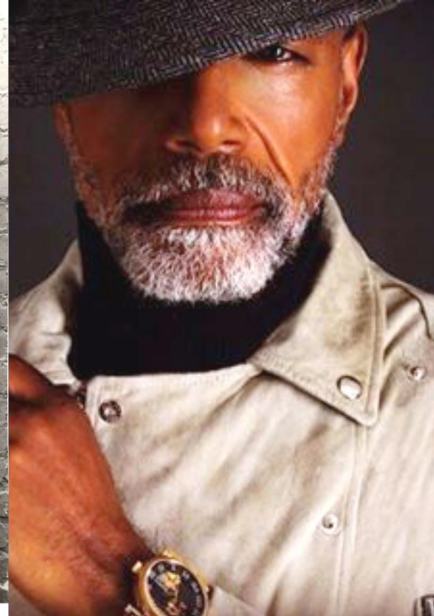
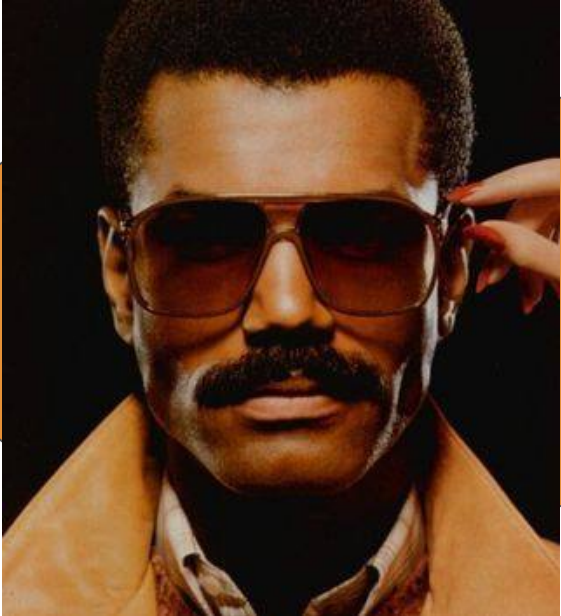
“Black is Beautiful” Movement

On 28 January 1962, a large crowd formed outside Purple Manor, a nightclub in the Harlem neighborhood of New York City. A fashion show was taking place. The show, titled Naturally '62, was organized by the African Jazz-Art Society & Studios (AJASS), a group of creatives, including photographer Kwame Brathwaite. It featured black women who had chosen to move away from Western beauty standards. The models who walked down the catwalk that night wore their afro hair with pride. Their clothes were inspired by designs from Lagos, Accra and Nairobi, and their skin was darker and their bodies fuller-figured than the women pictured in fashion magazines, including black publications. Some of the controversy ensued because women were protesting how, in Ebony magazine, you couldn't find an ebony girl. The fashion show was about more than just appearances ;however, it kick-started the Black is Beautiful movement that spanned the 1960s and '70s. Those involved in the Black is Beautiful movement wanted black women and men to feel empowered both inside and out.



RENAULT WHITE

Renault White was a trailblazer. He was a staple in GQ Magazine, and was a true trailblazer in the fashion industry for Black models who didn't have that pretty boy look. His face was quite rugged, complete with a scar across his nose. If there had been no Renault White, there would be no Tyson Beckford.



Circassian Beauty

Circassian Beauty. In the 1860s, P.T. Barnum exhibited women whom he claimed were Circassian beauties. They wore a distinctive Afro hair style and were known as “moss haired girls.” Circassian beauties were caucasian women who typically presented as victims of sexual enslavement among the Turks, and who had escaped from the harem to achieve freedom in America.

FIRST FRO



The Inventor of the Pick Comb (sort of) - Willie Lee Morrow

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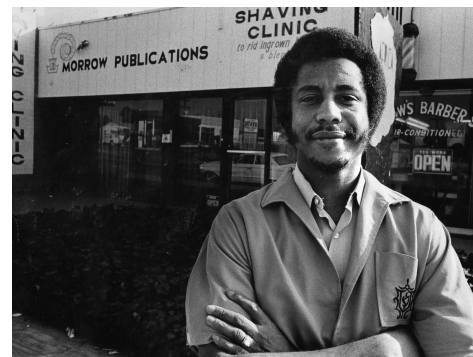
He built an empire around hair care products aimed at African American consumers, including a softener that inspired the Jheri curl. Willie Lee Morrow, a son of Alabama sharecroppers, invented a comb designed to work with the natural styles that exploded in popularity in the 1960s — a tool he called the Afro Tease, but which came to be known as the Afro pick. “The Afro caught everybody off guard,” he told Ebony magazine in 1970. “Even Black barbers and beauticians in America were caught lacking the knowledge as well as the desire to style a decent Afro.”

An inveterate innovator, Mr. Morrow spent years working on his pick design, at first making wooden picks in the back of his shop before he landed on a plastic version that could be mass produced.

Eventually he had seven models, one of them a blow-dryer attachment, and he was selling about 12,000 picks a week.

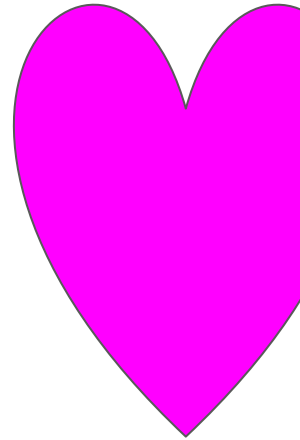
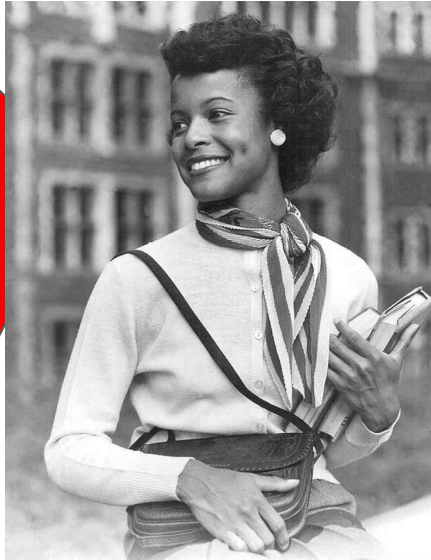
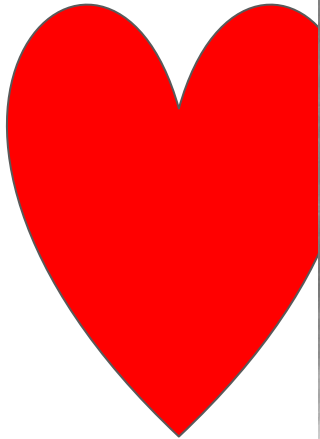
Based on his growing reputation, the Department of Defense contracted with him in 1969 to train its thousands of barbers and beauticians to work with Black hair.

Blow Out Comb



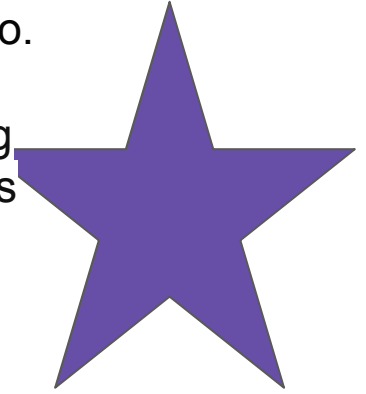
THELMA PORTER

Thelma Porter was the first woman to integrate a beauty contest in America, and became the first African-American Miss Subways of New York City in April 1948. "Miss Subways" was a title accorded to individual New York City women between 1941 and 1976. The woman who was Miss Subways at any one time appeared on posters placed on New York City Subway trains, along with a brief description of her.



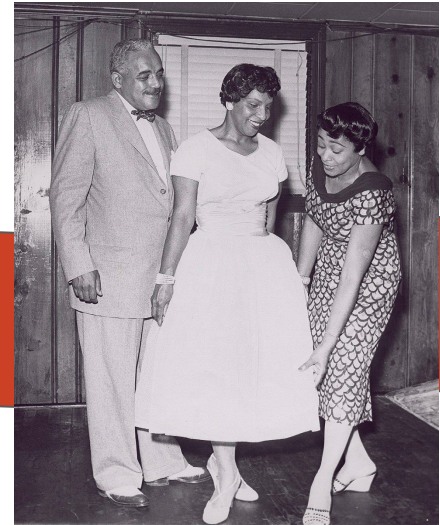
ROSE META MORGAN

Born in Edward, Mississippi in 1912, Rose Meta Morgan grew up in Chicago. By 1942, she owned and operated the largest African American beauty parlor in the world. Morgan rejected the idea that kinky hair is bad, believing there is beauty in everyone. She began marketing her own line of cosmetics and staging fashion shows. In 1955, Rose Morgan's House of Beauty opened in a more stylish setting with a dressmaking department and a charm school in addition to the existing salon facilities. In the early 1960s, she added a wig salon. Over time, she employed and trained over 3,000 people.



HELEN "CURL" HARRIS

Helen "Curl" Harris was an entrepreneur at a time when women were a rarity in business. A self-made graduate of the Skidmore Vocational School and the Philadelphia Charm and Model School, she ran and operated numerous beauty businesses in Philadelphia (Curl's Beautyrama, Curl's Beauty Salon and Charm Service, and Curl's Moderne Beautyrama) as well as created her own line of makeup and hair products. Ella Fitzgerald and Josephine Baker were among her clients.



Mo's Corner



I find it so sad that four hundred years after the first Africans came to these shores the campaign to make African people and their descendants judge each other has been so successful. Skin tone, nose and lip sizes, hair texture, and any other feature that renders us more African and less Caucasian has been a cause for derision, put downs and division. In 2023, we as a people are still finding ways to destroy our racial unity based on looks.

Why was this destructive lesson learned so well and other lessons that would unite us not learned at all? Do Black Lives Matter? Is Black Beautiful? Have we collectively given *power* to our people, or have we given more *power* by our actions to people who already have enough POWER? When I hear sisters and brothers criticize each other because they cut their hair too short, or they wear too much weave, or their natural hair looks “nappy,” or those locks need to be cut off, or they put too much gel on their hair, I actually want to scream, “We have OPTIONS, Sisters and Brothers and none of that matters, as long as we can wear our hair the way we most love to wear it! Who is more beautiful than a confident sister or brother however they wear their hair. If I choose to wear a dashiki and sandals and you choose to wear Vera Wang, so what. My attitude toward you and yours toward me should be, as Aretha told us a long time ago, RESPECT!”