

Abstract: If you can make hair care inaccessible. If you can dehumanize people based on their hair type. Then what is stopping you from enslaving them? What is stopping you from raping them? What is stopping you from killing them? This chapter will use hair as a medium to understand how America as an institution has made hair care inaccessible to people with Afro-textured hair. In doing so, it will explore the broader implications of how people of African descent have been dehumanized by the American Empire. Ultimately we will understand why the US Empire is backing genocides in Africa to support the comforts of the American Elite.

Key Words: Afro-textured hair, liberation, Black people's joy, Black space-making, genocide

Introduction

For me, it started with my hair. Growing up with a single mother meant that time was the most precious thing we had to offer. But there was never enough of it. So we had to use it wisely.

I spent most of my childhood in braids because it was a low maintenance protective style. When money was good we permed our hair. If money was tight, perms were saved for special occasions— mostly on Eid.

People with Afro-textured hair have some of the most genetically diverse and adaptable hair in the world. It has to be strong because Africa has some of the harshest climates in the world. Black people's hair is abundant, artistic, versatile, the list can go on and on. We shouldn't have to confine our hair to a narrow binary because it is so diverse.

Black people in America are caught between a rock and a hard-place when it comes to their hair. It's either they confine their hair to "Eurocentric standards of beauty" or they spend hours or days trying to maintain their natural hair. In a hyper-capitalistic society, time is something we fundamentally don't have.

But this binary is too narrow when you have some of the strongest, most diverse hair in the world. Binaries are dehumanizing. And once you can dehumanize someone based on the hair they have, it doesn't take much to enslave them, brutalize them, and kill them.

Lit Review

On Afro Textured Hair

Hair, as a medium, has allowed Black people to embrace their identity as a way to find happiness beyond the trauma and dehumanization they have experienced since slavery. Different hairstyles have had personal and political meanings towards Black people. They have crafted their identities during different time periods which has shaped their identities. By looking at the way hair provides Black people with the opportunity to embrace their identity, Black people's choice in hair styles represents their political identities for the time.

The evolution of Black hairstyles from the hot comb and perm, to the afro, to braids and locs demonstrates how each hairstyle was important for the political and personal identities of Black people during the time period.

When analyzing the definitions of culture and its relationship to the social, the argument is that people aim to create groups that separate themselves from others, thereby creating an "us" and "them" category. Moreover, while dominant groups aim to impose their cultural values onto subordinate groups, revolutionary groups aim to create revolutionary culture. Black culture is revolutionary culture. The dominant culture has tried to impose their own ideologies onto Black people through respectability politics and discrimination, as seen through the need for the CROWN Act. Yet, Black people have constantly strived to express their identities through the creative expression of their own hair, which is highlighted through their use of the afro, braids, and locs.

New Growth: The Art and Texture of Black Hair by Jasmine Nichole Cobbs chronicles the evolution of Black hair and its importance to Black people's identity during different time periods. She does this through the lens of haptic blackness, a term she defines as the idea that racial blackness is textured, both in feeling and in touch, through historically informed experiences. Haptic blackness merges the physical, historical, and psychological; analyzing Black hair through this lens creates a space in which Black people can reconcile their personal and historical trauma creating a space for healing.

I use the term ungendering to describe the ways Black people have been othered within American understandings of gender. Therefore, I argue that beauty shops and barber shops operate as spaces where hair transcends physical grooming, becoming a ritual where Black people solidify the bonds they have with their homosocial communities. Through the ungendering of these spaces, Black people feel a humanity that is denied to them by the outside world; thereby allowing for a new construction of femininity and masculinity.

Historical Analysis

The barber shop has evolved from a space where Black, middle-class men could use their artistry to create a business into a communal site for Black men. Unlike the beauty shop, the barber shop as an institution has existed since the 19th century; however, like everything else during this time period, the social conditions of the barber shop were dictated by America's racial hierarchy. While some slave owners would lease their slaves to become barbers, there were a small number of free Black men who owned their own barber shops. The early Black barber shop catered to predominantly white men because Black barbers wanted to maintain their financial stability. Despite the fact that Black barbers groomed white men's aesthetic during this time period, Black barbers were not only classified as service workers, their labor was also characterized as effeminate and unmanly. From a white perspective, grooming was seen as a feminine task because of its conflation with womanhood; therefore, Black barbers experienced further emasculation for their trade and became an invisible middle-class within the construction of American capitalism.

Meanwhile, the beauty shop as an institution was not introduced until the early 20th century. While Madame C. J. Walker is oftentimes conflated with the popularization of the perm press thereby overshadowing the philanthropic work she did in the beauty shop, a gendered and historical analysis provides more nuance to Walker as a figure.

The beauty industry, as a space specifically designed for Black women, allowed for the creation of modern Black women's identities because it provided them with economic autonomy while allowing them to assume leadership positions that would allow them to be politically active.

Just as Black men were characterized as effeminate and therefore unmanly, Black women were hypermasculinized and not seen as true women within American society. Walker's popularization of the perm press, and by extension, the embrace of white beauty norms, was an act that challenged stereotypes surrounding Black women by situating them within womanhood.

For beauticians the politics of respectability solidified their positions within the Black middle class as it highlighted the entrepreneurial skills of African American women while demonstrating that they could continue to uplift the race in international platforms with grace and decorum. Since the American identity and American citizenship was conflated with whiteness, African Americans could not center themselves as true American citizens in the United States. The economic advancements African American beauticians of the 1950s did not bar them from experiencing discrimination in America. While their travels freed beauticians from the harsh realities of segregation in America, it also highlighted the racial caste system entrenched in American society. These Black entrepreneurs were able to find a freedom abroad that they were unable to find in America because of the United States' racial caste system.

While Black barber shops also pushed to consolidate educational opportunities for Black barbers through the creation of the first chain of barber shop colleges in 1934 with the Tyler Barber College, it is because of the philanthropic work of Madame C.J Walker that the beauty shop was founded as a site for femininity, community, and racial uplift.

Sociological Analysis

The dynamic within the barber shop and beauty shop is contingent upon it being a homosocial space. Similar to locker rooms and other homosocial spaces, conversations that men have can get really inappropriate in the barber shop. However, when women come into the space, the conversation shifts and becomes more appropriate for an outsider's ears. In a homosocial environment, Black men do not feel the need to police their conversations because they are not being observed. Therefore, the homosocial environment reduces the censorship Black men feel outside of this space, allowing them to embody an unfiltered masculinity.

While Black women's experiences in the beauty shop parallels the experiences of Black men in the barber shop, the intersection of race, gender, and class impacts the dynamics Black women have in the beauty shop. For many young Black girls, going to the beauty shop is both a rite of passage and a luxury as they are introduced to Black femininity within this homosocial space. Aesthetics and presentation allow Black girls and Black women to embody femininity. Taking their daughters to the beauty shop introduces femininity to Black girls within this homosocial space.

Black women take the time to find hairstylists with whom they can trust with their hair, and they spend so much time with their hairstylist while doing their hair, the foundations of this relationship are built on trust and care. Through this relationship, a Black hairstylist and their client create a communal bond that solidifies their dynamic and the dynamic of the beauty shop. Once Black women are comfortable with their hairstylist, they begin to embody their authentic selves within a homosocial space.

When looking at Black women's experiences in the beauty shop through the lens of haptic blackness, it highlights the ways Black women are able to reconcile their personal and historical trauma in order to achieve a place of healing within this homosocial space.

Black women's hair has been subjected to violence and discrimination throughout American history. While many Black women still experience hair discrimination, personal experiences have also led many Black women to have tumultuous relationships with their hair. Black women have expressed awe at the fact that they are the only group of people that have relaxers, which chemically break down the proteins in their hair to make their coils straight, marketed towards them. Relaxers can cause chemical burns if left on for too long. These experiences are why the beauty shop and the relationship created with hair stylists are so important to Black women. In this homosocial environment, the haptic goes beyond the physical touch of styling hair, as this community touches the emotions of those who inhabit this space and allows them to heal from the trauma that surrounds their hair.

Since it is a business, class dynamics shape the way beauty shops are perceived within the Black community. Black women's hair is significantly more expensive to do than Black men's; for example, a haircut at a barber shop might cost anywhere between \$20-\$55 whereas a haircut at a beauty shop might cost anywhere between \$50-\$70. The perception of the beauty shop as a luxury makes the ritual even significant because of the idea that you are investing not only in your appearance, but your emotional wellbeing. While it can be argued that the commercial aspect of the beauty shop makes the relationships created in this space less authentic, I argue that the investment is evidence of the significance the beauty shop holds for Black women.

Though I have argued that beauty shops and barber shops foster community because of their homosocial atmosphere, the experiences of queer Black people in barber shops and beauty shops complicate the dynamics upheld within rigidly masculine and feminine environments. Queer men, especially those who embrace femininity, have expressed the need to mask or present more masculinely in order to avoid homophobic encounters in the barber shop. Masking can be mentally and emotionally exhausting for queer men because they are not able to fully embody their gender expression.

Furthermore, even while masking, queer men are still forced to be unresponsive when homophobic slurs are used in the barber shop. Queer men who choose not to mask experience both homophobia and discrimination since, at times, they are denied service in a space that is meant to foster community.

Conclusion

Why is it that these institutions that foster community turn their backs on certain members of their community?

Apart from the fact that these experiences are a reflection of the homophobia within the Black community, they highlight the ways that the beauty shop and the barber shop embody a particular type of femininity and masculinity. For the barber shop in particular, masculinity is rooted in heterosexuality, therefore, queer people who occupy this space are not only viewed as intruders, but also as attackers of this masculine environment. As such, they are met with both hostility and

aggression . This is not to discredit the importance of beauty shops and barber shops as spaces, rather, it is to highlight the importance of Black owned, LGBTQ+ beauty shops and barber shops. Everyone deserves a space where they can embody their authentic selves.

Though the rigid construction of masculinity and femininity within the barber shop and beauty shop create a hostile environment for Black queer people, haptic rituals within these spaces allow Black women and men to foster homosocial communities. These spaces are important because Black people deserve to have a space where they can just be people. Where race does not take precedence over everything else and where they can embrace their authentic selves.

Self-Definitions within White Spaces

At times, Black women feel invisible and isolated in predominantly white institutions; when they are seen, they feel undervalued within these settings (Davis, 2018; Fields et al. 2021; Spalter-Roth et al. 2019; Stewart, 2017). Women of color feel that they are not able to take up these spaces because they are meant to feel as though they do not belong (Malik 2021). This can foster feelings of imposter syndrome which, simplistically speaking, is the feeling of fraudulence or the feeling that you don't belong in a particular place (Nadal et al. 2021).

The way imposter syndrome has been studied has largely been focused on individuals rather than looking at systematic issues that cause imposter syndrome amongst minority groups. Institutions are not built for minority groups to succeed (Tulshyan, 2021). Blaming individuals rather than institutions for experiencing imposter syndrome ignores the systematic factors put into place that hinder minority groups' success within these settings and foster these emotions. For example, Black women tend to blame their hair because it is too "high maintenance" as opposed to blaming the products and the institutions— beauty shops and hair care companies— for failing to accommodate the needs of their hair.

Within a feminist context, this looks like ignoring the ways Black voices and experiences have historically been marginalized while white experiences have been centered (Phipps, 2021). Validating Black women's experiences and insights results in higher Black retention within predominantly white institutions (Kelly et al. 2021). Yet, as more Black women experience

imposter syndrome within feminist and feminine settings, there is less of a desire to interact with people who inhabit these spaces.

While being a Black woman in predominantly white spaces can cause feelings of imposter-syndrome as Black women feel pressured to adhere to white standards of excellence, Black women tend to maintain their own self-definitions within these spaces and even redefine some of the negative stereotypes surrounding Black women (Fields et al., 2021; Jones et al., 2021). The passage of the CROWN Act is a perfect example as it highlights the ways Black women have advocated for the right to wear their hair in whatever style they want without experiencing racial discrimination.

Angela Jones argues that belonging is a crucial part of experiencing pleasure for individuals (Jones, 2020). Imposter-syndrome can definitely have negative impacts on Black women's happiness within feminist spaces as it reduces their sense of belonging within these spaces. Nonetheless, acknowledging the ways Black women redefine stereotypes and self-define themselves within these spaces creates a new layer of agency amongst Black women that oftentimes goes overlooked. Black women challenge the power hierarchies that surround the politics of happiness by creating their own parameters for self-definition and self-worth. In doing so, they redefine varying degrees of positionality within feminist spaces that moves beyond an outsider's perspective and towards an outsider within's perspective.

Intersectional identities shape Black women's experiences within predominantly white spaces as it informs their interactions and the ways structures of power impact them (Chapple et al. 2021). Black feminist thought relies on Black women's experiences with race and gender and are informed by Black women's desires to inform themselves outside of a white patriarchal lens (Collins, 1986). In fact, Black people are able to derive joy from identifying outside of the socially constructed image that surrounds them (Tichavakuda, 2021). For example, while some Black women may feel compelled to straighten their hair to conform to a "eurocentric standard of beauty," redefining this stereotype allows them to embrace the versatility of their hair and find artistry within.

For most Black women in predominantly white spaces, their main goal is to have agency in defining how they are perceived by others (Smith-Tran, 2020). Denying Black students the ability to define themselves by highlighting their own perspectives has deleterious effects on them; and in predominantly white spaces where white narratives are the dominant group represented, this erasure results in the isolation of Black people from these institutions (James-Galloway et al. 2021). Self-definition provides an important space of healing and belonging for Black people who have been denied the right to define themselves within America. For Black women, self-definition requires subverting and challenging cultural understandings of Black womanhood. And the freedom to style their hair is a crucial element in self-definition for Black women.

Though at times Black women try to integrate themselves into feminist spaces, other times they recognize the importance of separating themselves from the spaces and creating their own spaces. Black spacemaking— creating black space for Black people in predominantly white institutions— provides Black people with a space of more agency where they are not a monolith (Tichavakunda, 2020). This is why the beauty shop is an important institution for Black women— just as the barber shop as an institution is integral to Black mens spacemaking.

Race

Since Du Bois's theories on race are a fundamental aspect in all his areas of study, it is perhaps one of his most evolving yet well developed theories. Earlier Du Boisian theories of race define it as a category where people of common blood, race identity, history, laws, religion, and thought come together to achieve the ideals of life. However, as his analysis of race evolved, Du Bois characterizes race as a social construct created by white people to position themselves as superior to those of other races. In this way, race shapes the experiences of people of color who are viewed as both inferior and subhuman, forcing them to navigate the world in the category of "other".

According to Du Bois, race is not solely broken down by physical distinctions, rather it can be defined as a group of people that have been united through common blood, but more importantly, people who share a common history, language, and culture. Whether it is voluntary or

involuntary, people of the same race are working together to achieve the ideals of life (Du Bois 1897, 2-3). In other words, while people of the same race may share some ancestry, what is more important is the history and culture that they share.

Through this shared history, people of the same race are able to develop institutions and communities that care for one another thereby building solidarity between each other. As he grew as a scholar, Du Bois developed his theory of race to reflect the way race impacts the social conditions of minoritized groups. Du Bois argues that in order to differentiate between victims and victors, white people created the concept of race to explain their superiority over colored people's inferiority. This explanation ignores the barbarity and cruelty of the white race and instead positions colored people to be inferior beasts, soulless, and in need of subjugation (Du Bois 1910, 236). By dehumanizing Black people, white people failed to realize the inhumanity within themselves. Furthermore, dehumanization makes it easier for white people to justify their barbarity by rewriting history to reflect the ideology that victors are meant to conquer those they have defeated. Why do you think textbooks say the Civil War is about states rights and not the expansion of slavery? It's because Women of the Klu Klux Klan (WKKK) paid for the erasure of history in the 1920s (Blee; 1991).

In that sense, people of color in a white world are not American nor are they human. Though white people were the same as Black people, the white world was determined to racially separate the two groups (Du Bois 1940, 69).

Race not only determines who has power within society, it upholds systems to ensure that white people maintain their superior position above all others. The argument for racial prejudice wasn't whether Black people and other people of color should have rights, because they were not seen as people to begin with. People of color started from a place of de-humanity within society, and from there they constantly had to fight not just to prove that they deserved equal rights, they had to prove their humanity. So long as racial discrimination pervades in this country, so long as people of color have to prove their humanity, Du Bois's theory of race will continue to be relevant within society. And so long as Du Bois's theories on race are relevant, the American Empire will continue to fund genocides abroad to ensure the comforts of the white minority.

On Liberation

Liberation is not scouring the aisle for hair care products that MIGHT work for your hair. It's not the nagging question of what if my skin were just a little fairer, hair a little straighter, money a bit easier to find. It's not the fear that you or your brethren will be gunned down because you have locs. It's not the fear of lynch mobs gathering to quell your freedom of speech. Liberation is freedom.

But what does freedom mean if not the expansion of privileges rather than the expansion of rights. If we don't see humanity in our fellow man how can we seek freedom? How can we free ourselves and others from the institutions that seek to destroy our humanity?

According to James Baldwin, freedom is contingent upon the ability one has to set someone else free. For example, I am free because I can get my hair braided at the salon.

The constriction of that freedom is determined by the institutions that work to oppress other people. I can get my hair braided at the salon; however, because most institutions in America are predominantly white institutions (PWI'), I may not be seen as respectable if I choose to get locs on my hair.

Experiences are shaped by identity just as much as identities shape experience. Kimberle Crenshaw coined the term intersectionality in order to understand the different ways power structures-- race, class, gender, etc-- interact to shape the experiences of an individual. I argue that rather than looking at these power systems as an axis of power, we should look at it as a circular motion to better understand race as a caste system in America.

Liberation means freedom from enslavement. But it also means the freedom to free others from enslavement. We have the power to stop the genocide in the Congo and free the Congolese people from enslavement. So why don't we? The better question is, what will happen to us when the Congolese people decide to free themselves?

Defining Happiness

Sociologists who study pleasure and happiness agree that it is something that everyone aspires to achieve; however, the implications and experiences of achieving this happiness differ depending on the intersectional identity of the individual as different institutional structures affect different groups of people in different ways (Ahmed, 2010; Jones, 2020). Ahmed characterizes happiness as wishful politics where people strive to achieve their wishes; however, she argues that in doing so, people constrain their own freedoms as they strive to achieve socially acceptable forms of happiness.

Ahmed makes a compelling argument about the way society controls the way we experience happiness, but I would push back against her analysis of happiness within feminist spaces. Everywhere life exists, joy exists. It is true that consciousness-raising, especially in regards to stereotypes that surround Black women, can have deleterious effects on Black women's happiness as stereotypes about them inform the way others negatively perceive them. Yet, consciousness-raising has empowering effects that allow Black women to define themselves outside of these white stereotypes (Collins, 1986). I argue that the beauty shop as a feminine space is a natural space for joy for Black women.

Jones takes a similar approach in her analysis of pleasure as she argues that pleasure shapes the interactions and experiences people have. Pleasure is based on the spaces people are in and the interactions people have. However, intersectional identities also experience pleasure differently because of different social contexts and varying degrees of capital (Jones, 2020; Cummings 2020). Jones argues that institutions force people to sacrifice their own pleasure for what they argue is the betterment of society by highlighting the ways that sacrificing pleasure maintains order created by these institutions that uphold power structures that require the limitation of people's freedom and maintaining their subjugation. With this in mind, I would argue that happiness is a political force that on an institutional level can influence how people experience happiness in their social interactions, yet, on an individual level provide people with an axis of resistance in determining their metrics of happiness.

Within the feminist perspective, Black women's experiences of happiness has the potential to challenge racial and patriarchal structures that have historically required Black women to sacrifice their own happiness to ensure the advancement of white society. In order to achieve this, Black women must first feel that there is a space for them. The beauty shop as an institution eliminates the patriarchal gaze allowing Black women to just be women within this space. The barber shop as an institution allows Black men to redefine manhood by allowing them to be men outside of a white supremacist gaze.

Happiness has historically been a racialized and gendered concept (Cummings, 2020; Tichavakunda, 2021). Though it can be based on individual experiences, from a sociological perspective, Black joy is based on the collective experiences of joy amongst members of the Black community in the United States (Tichavakunda, 2021). Black joy can be defined by the acceptance and love of one's identity that lies beyond the white gaze, taking pride in one's accomplishments especially when factoring in the generational barriers that made those accomplishments difficult, and the joys found in the collective Black community (Tichavakunda, 2021).

Community can be defined within a broad sense, as in Black people in the United States; however, it can also be determined by the people who you are in close proximity to who shape the experiences you have. For example, the relationship between Black women and their hairstylist and Black men and their barber create a communal atmosphere within the spaces they inhabit. Since Black women understand each others' struggle, Black women use their friendships with one another to foster joy by affirming each others' humanity and speciality within this predominantly white space (Leath et al., 2022). Race is eliminated in predominantly Black spaces, allowing Black people to experience both humanity and joy in the institutions that surround them.

Ultimately, Black joy is defined by the relationships Black people form in which understanding and empathy can be experienced. Black people just want to be heard, and in focusing on Black joy, instead of Black trauma, it provides more nuanced into the Black experience in predominantly white spaces (Burké, Brown, 2021).

The PanAfrican Movement

As one of the founding members of the PanAfrican movement, Du Bois instilled his theories on the effects of the global color line into his analysis of colonialism in Africa. Through the PanAfrican movement, Du Bois advocated for the end of colonialism and the end of exploitation of people of color globally. In this way, he expressed his belief that Black people had the agency and intelligence to govern themselves by organizing as leaders to rise above the inferior category they were subjected to by Europeans and white Americans, and lead the world into an era of racial tolerance.

Through the PanAfrican movement, Du Bois argued that the liberation of African colonies would be a benefit to both Africans and the rest of the world. Du Bois argued for the wellbeing of Africa, and to prevent future world wars, Africa needed (1) the land returned to the natives, (2) the training of native Africans on modern civilization, and (3) the agreement that all land must be ruled by their home groups, nations, and races (Du Bois 1915, 8).

Du Bois recognized how the Scramble for Africa— where Europeans met to divide African land amongst European powers— and the greed that surrounded the event contributed to the start of World War I. He saw how European powers competed with each other for the resources Africa had to offer and argued that giving ownership back to native Africans would eliminate the competition in Europe and stop world wars from occurring.

Du Bois believed that through education and modernization, African nations would be able to develop their own leaders who would be able to guide their communities into the modern world. This belief was further expanded upon during the first PanAfrican congress, where members unanimously opposed the policy of war, conquest, and racism in Africa. They agreed in racial equality and that the governance of Africa should be for the benefit of Africans themselves, not the colonial powers that exploit them (Du Bois 1921, 4). Unfortunately, through colonial institutions like the World Bank, Africans are still unable to remove themselves from the thumbs of European colonialism.

European colonialism resulted in a destabilization of power dynamics in Africa as a new, racialized hierarchy usurped the hierarchies that existed in Africa for centuries. In colonies, authority was stripped from native Africans and taken by white settlers whose word was law in a land that is not their own. Native Africans had their standards of life destroyed by colonization and replaced by a poverty that is incomparable to anywhere else in the world (Du Bois 1945, 5).

European colonialism of Africa consolidated Black people as the global proletariat as they experienced political and economic disenfranchisement in their own land that was both perpetuated by the white bourgeois, who benefited from the resources that were drawn from Africa, and white settlers who stole African land and controlled Black people in the workforce. In response, socialist like Du Bois argued for the liberation of Africa and the education of their people because they recognized Africans' ability to indiscriminately educate their people.

The PanAfrican movement was Du Bois's last hope for solving the problem of the color line; he saw in Africa the potential for a large group of Black people to lead the colored world and the white world into a space of racial tolerance, where Black people would be able to govern their own land and prove to the world that they are not an inferior race of people. But Du Bois did not account for the corruption of political leaders of Africa who put their own wellbeing over the wellbeing of its people nor did he account for China's economic colonial project.

The dreams of the PanAfrican movement are still alive. Du Bois argues that to advance past the capitalistic industry that cheapens their resources and labor, Africans need capital goods to promote their industry. I argue that beyond that, African governments need to control their resources in a way that is sustainable for their climates and their people. In this way, they will be able to achieve a better revenge against the exploitation they had and continue to be subjected to (Du Bois 1962, 4). While Du Bois believed that African nations needed to break free from capitalism, he also recognized that by consolidating their market powers, Africans would be able to use the tools of the oppressor to liberate themselves from the roots of colonialism. There is still time for African nations to come together and break down the roots of colonialism that continues to disenfranchise and impoverish our people within the global hierarchy of power. There is still time for the children of the diaspora to come back home and live in the majority.

Yet, it will take collaboration and financial support to uproot the economic capitalism that is occurring in their nations.

Du Bois's Theory of Capitalism and the Labor Problem

Through his exposure to Marx, Du Bois was able to develop a racialized theory of capitalism that characterizes race as a caste system where a person's experience is dependent on both their race and class. Slavery and colonialism can be contextualized as historical capitalism as they have contributed to the accumulation of wealth through forced labor and stolen resources. Through his analysis of racialized capitalism, Du Bois determines that white people, regardless of their class status, are complicit in the subordination of Black people globally as racial solidarity supersedes class consciousness among the white proletariat.

Du Bois's theory of capitalism is based on the belief that race and class affect the experiences and circumstances of people living in global capitalism. Du Bois argued that while Black people are part of the global proletariat because they are exploited for cheap labor, they go unrecognized as the proletariat and are not included amongst the white proletariat because they perpetuate the physical violence, economic exclusion, social ostracism, and personal bigotry directed at Black people (Du Bois 1921, 1).

By looking at the way Black people are globally exploited for cheap labor—during slavery this labor was so cheap it was free—Black people can be characterized as part of the global proletariat, meaning that while Black people make up a large part of the global workforce, they do not have the power to control the means of production due to their race and class. This can be seen today in the genocide in the Congo. While the Congolese people are being raped, murdered, and killed to produce that lithium batteries that power the Global North, they do not reap the benefits of the digital world that they produce.

Black people face exploitation from both the bourgeoisie and the white proletariat. The bourgeoisie oppress the proletariat by hoarding wealth and dividing white and Black workers under racial lines thereby stifling the development of class consciousness that recognizes that these workers have more commonalities—more problems they can relate to—than differences.

The white proletariat on the other hand, oppresses Black people by excluding them from unions, inciting race riots, and harboring personal prejudices against Black people.

Today, the white proletariat would buy expensive technology rather than saving the technology they already have which in turn fuels the genocide in the Congo.

Du Bois's analysis of capitalism extends beyond the United States towards a historical and global perspective. By analyzing his works José Itzigsohn and Karida L. Brown concludes that both racial and colonial capitalism are systems that produce physical and structural violence against the colonized while also producing war amongst global powers (Itzigsohn and Brown 2020, 72). Racial and colonial capitalism produces violence against people of color globally as it not only incites the conquest and colonization of their land, it also forces them to work under abysmal conditions for cheap labor thereby forcing them to join this global system of exploitation called capitalism. So long as we continue to live in a hyper-capitalistic society, colonialism still exists.

Additionally, the greed and competition that capitalism fosters encourages global wars as major powers fight with each other for control of the resources on colonized land. The United States government is funding a genocide in the Congo as we speak to keep industries like Apple and Microsoft happy and profitable.

Du Bois's theories on capitalism can still be used today to explain the exportation of cheap labor to countries in the global south that do not have as many regulations to protect their citizens from corporate exploitation. These corporations perpetuate global colonialism while reinforcing racialized capitalism by exploiting their workers— people of color in the Global South— for the benefit of their corporations and the global north. That is the sole function of the American Empire.

Methods of Social Research

Sociology

Sociology is a scientific field of inquiry that aims to understand the actions people take. Within society, Law and Chance work together to determine a person's choices. Sociology allows for the

understanding of human agency which is confined by Chance and Will. Through an analysis of structures and institutions, sociologists are able to uncover the conditions or social problems that determine people's experiences within society.

Sociology provides an understanding of human action through an analysis of human agency within the institutions of society. Du Bois originally defined sociology as the scientific study of human action that presents itself in modern life (Du Bois 1897 in Wortham 2009, 3). In this sense, Du Bois argued that sociology was the scientific study of individuals actions within society.

Du Bois expands upon this definition by arguing that in society, Law and Chance– Chance being defined as the scientific side of Will– work in conjunction with one another thereby making sociology the science that explores the limit of chance in human behavior (Du Bois 1903, 32). Morris offers a clearer analysis of this by arguing that sociology studies and measures the interactions between social structures– what Du Bois calls Law– and agency– or Chance (Morris 2015, 26). In essence, sociology is a science that analyzes the relationships between individuals and structures within society in order to determine human agency.

The choices people make are informed by their social conditions which are shaped by structures and institutions within society. For example, because most hair care products do not cater to afro-textured hair, many African Americans struggle to find products that work for their hair.

Through the use of sociological methods, sociologists are able to determine social problems which allows them to further develop an understanding of how different people are affected by institutions within society. Social problems are the failure of a social group to fulfill its ideals because of an inability to adapt to the conditions of life necessary for the realization of the ideal. Social problems reveal the limits of human agency under the conditions of chance (Du Bois 1903 in Wortham 2009, 34).

Within society, structures and institutions operate for the benefit of certain groups and at the detriment– and at times even the expense– of marginalized groups. Sociology allows for the

understanding of the ways in which systematic inequalities prevent minoritized groups from fulfilling the ideals of society.

Moreover, sociological analysis provides an understanding of the choices people, specifically minoritized people, make under the social conditions they are subjected to by these unequal structures. Systematic inequalities are rampant within our society which heightens the need for sociology as a discipline as it provides an understanding and possible solution to these social problems

Du Boisian Sociology

Du Boisian sociology is a sociological approach that advocates for the rights of marginalized groups. It recognizes the subjects not as victims of circumstance, but as agentic beings who choose methods of survival in spite of the systematic and structural forces that work to ensure their inferiority within society. By doing so, Du Boisian sociology works to ensure that everyone can live in an equitable world.

Du Boisian sociology is a tool for knowledge production that employs empirical research of social practices, structures, and institutions to critique systemic issues. It is an activist project that works against all forms of oppression and works to make the world better for marginalized people (Itzigsohn and Brown 2020, 192). Du Bois, and many other marginalized sociologists, faced barriers in his research as many of his contemporaries viewed him as a biased researcher who took an activist approach to social issues. These critics did not understand the concept of the personal being political, therefore, they used Du Bois's personal connection towards his work to discredit his research.

Having a personal connection to the subject of research allows sociologists to be better researchers as they are able to holistically view their research subjects as agentic individuals who make choices based on their social conditions. Therefore, Du Boisian Sociology views human agency as products of historical contexts that dictated cultural understandings of social order.

It argues that the oppressed have the ability to see beyond this oppressive structure and to act towards the goals of equality (Itzigsohn and Brown 2020, 196). Du Bois recognized the agency of minoritized groups; however, he also believed that in order to fully operate as members of society, these groups must have access to their rights as citizens— economic freedom and political enfranchisement— in order to protect themselves against bigoted people who would obstruct their rights and deny their humanity. For example, when analyzing the parasitic nature of sharecropping— a system introduced in the South after slavery to maintain a system of cheap labor while ensuring the subordination of Black people— Du Bois argued that Black farmers started in debt thereby making it harder for them to rise above their inferior position in society (Du Bois 1903, 113). I argue that the global proletariat all started from a place of debt whether because of chattel slavery or colonization.

Rather than blaming Black farmers for their destitute conditions, Du Bois makes a historical analysis of their condition while contextualizing this condition towards the current systems that are in place. Du Bois recognizes that sharecropping as a parasitic system was put in place to ensure that Black tenant farmers were kept in a perpetual cycle of debt thereby maintaining their subordinate economic condition within society.

Contemporary Du Boisian sociology is essential to the discipline because reading different theorist— those, like Du Bois, that lie outside the mainstream discipline because they are a part of oppressed groups— will decolonize the sociological imagination by bringing in the disciplines of those who are pushed to the outskirts of sociology (Itzigsohn and Brown 2020, 207). While Du Bois's work mainly focused on developing theories and movements based on the intersectionality of race and class, there are many other academics that are doing work that intersect a wide variety of marginalities including gender, sexuality, geography, ability, etc. For the purpose of my research, I will be employing a Du Boisian sociological methodology to understand what the intersectionality is between the genocide in the Congo and the inaccessibility of hair care for African Americans. On a broader scope, I aim to understand why slavery is normalized amongst people of African descent.

Research Questions

1. How has my mothers dream for me beed deferred?

2. Why is hair care so inaccessible for Americans in the diaspora?
3. What is art?
4. Who has the power of definition?
5. What is the intersectionality between genocide and Black people's hair?

Expected Findings, Implications, Broader Impact

By the end of this chapter, I expect to understand what my mothers dream was for me and my hair. Why did she come to this country and how has her expectations not lived up to the reality. Why couldn't she teach me how to braid hair? Further, I expect to understand how Black people's hair is an afterthought when it comes to the beauty industry. Why can't people see the natural beauty of Black hair? Why can't people see the artistry that is Black hair making and Black space making? I aim to show the pure joy that comes with Black people taking care of their hair. Ultimately, I aim to show the intersectionality between the dehumanization of Black people's hair and the relationship it has to the genocides going on in the Congo and Sudan.