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Judge Upbraids State Board of Barbering and Cosmetology:

IJ Locks in Victory in First Round

By Donna G. Matias

In May, the Institute won the opening round in its challenge to California's cosmetology licensing regime. In *Cornwell v. California Board of Barbering and Cosmetology*, U.S. district court judge Rudi Brewster in San Diego denied the state's motion to dismiss, letting stand our claims that the licensing regulations violate the due process, equal protection, and the privileges or

(Upbraids continued on Page 5)



(Upbraids continued from Page 1)
immunities guarantees of the federal and state constitutions.

Earlier this year, IJ filed a lawsuit asking the Court to declare unconstitutional the state's enforcement of its cosmetology laws against individuals who practice hair braiding and other African hair styling.

Although California requires anyone who touches the hair of another for compensation to obtain a cosmetology license, the onerous licensing requirements (e.g., completing a 1,600 hour curriculum at a cost of between \$5,000 to \$7,000, and passing a licensing examination) have little if anything to do with producing competent and skilled braiders. That's because cosmetology students do not learn any skills relating to braiding or natural haircare. Instead, 935 hours are spent on such practices as eyebrow arching, makeup, face and neck massage, acrylic nails, and pedicures, as well as on the application of harsh treatments for the hair like bleaching, perming, and relaxing. None of these relates to African hairstyling.

Moreover, although the state claimed that its main concern in licensing is protecting consumers from unsafe practitioners, a mere 65 of the 1,600 hours are devoted to disinfection and sanitation, as well as the safe use of hazardous substances. (With African hairstyling, the latter is irrelevant since the process is all natural.)

Judge Brewster acknowledged the irrationality of the licensing laws as they apply to JoAnne Cornwell and others who seek to pursue a profession in African hairstyling. As he astutely observed, "Almost one thousand hours of training are

required in the techniques of 'mainstream' hair styling and cosmetology. The object of this training is to produce better 'mainstream' cosmetologists, not to promote hygiene and sanitation." Thus, he found that forcing plaintiffs to take a curriculum devoted to mainstream cosmetology when four percent of the curriculum, at most, relates to their profession, was irrational.

To further make his point, Judge Brewster analogized the plaintiffs' situation to that of food preparers, whom the state could rationally believe need instruction in hygiene, sanitation and disinfection in order to safely prepare food in public schools. However, it would be irrational for the state to require food preparers to go to cosmetology school because they might benefit from the 65 hours related to health, hygiene and sanitation, since 96 percent of the curriculum would be irrelevant to the occupation for which they would be seeking licensure.

The court's ruling in this early decision is encouraging. Generally, courts defer to legislative and agency decisionmaking, particularly where economic regulations are concerned. These government entities need only show that there is a "rational basis" for the challenged laws. (What the courts consider "rational", however, often defies ordinary common sense.) In this case, however, the court signaled that if IJ and its clients succeed in proving the allegations in the complaint, the licensing regime could be struck down, and the artificial barriers to entry created by them removed. This would clear the way for Dr. Cornwell and the Braiderie to operate in their chosen professions, and provide support for other economic liberty challenges. It would be a significant step toward restoring meaningful protections for the right to earn an honest living. ♦

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Donna G. Matias is an Institute for Justice staff attorney.

Los Angeles Times

January 29, 1997

Bias Suit Targets State Rules on Hair Care

■ **Cosmetology:** Group says state licensing of stylists discriminates against African Americans who specialize in braiding. Officials defend the law.

By TONY PERRY
TIMES STAFF WRITER

SAN DIEGO—A group of African American hair care specialists filed a federal civil rights lawsuit Tuesday to overturn state cosmetology licensing laws that they say discriminate against stylists providing traditional African hairstyles and keep them from earning a living.

"When you stifle the entrepreneurial urge in any community, you're doing violence to that community," said JoAnne Cornwell, a professor of Africana studies at San Diego State University and one of the plaintiffs in the suit.

At issue is a state requirement that hair-stylists specializing in braiding techniques, which are increasingly popular among African American women, must meet the same standards as other stylists: 1,600 hours of cosmetology training and passage of a licensing exam.

The rub is that braiding is neither included in the state-approved curriculum for cosmetology schools nor tested in the licensing exam, according to court documents. Braiding includes a number of methods of twisting, weaving and interlocking the hair without the use of chemicals such as shampoos, rinses and gels.

Braiding is the stylistic and cultural antithesis of "processing" or straightening African American hair, and plaintiffs see the state regulations as suppressing an expression of their African heritage.

But a spokeswoman for the Department of Consumer Affairs, which oversees the Board of Barbering and Cosmetology, noted that state regulators are guided by a sweeping state law that requires a license for anyone "dressing, curling, waving ... shampooing ... relaxing, singeing ... beautifying or otherwise treating by any means the hair of any person."

A bill to amend state law and create a license especially for hair braiding was submitted last session by then-Assemblywoman Marguerite Archie-Hudson (D-Los Angeles). The bill was later withdrawn.

The lawsuit asserts that requiring aspiring hairstylists who want to do braiding to go to beauty school is both nonsensical because the skills they need are not being taught in such schools and too expensive



Plaintiff JoAnne Cornwell and Clint Bolick of the Institute for Justice discuss suit against the state.

because many women cannot afford beauty school tuition, which can be as much as \$7,000.

The result, the plaintiffs said, is that many self-taught braiding hairstylists—some African Americans, some recent immigrants—work in clandestine shops, always fearful of being fined or arrested.

Plaintiffs assert that the regulations and the state-approved cosmetology curriculum are relics of "Jim Crow" laws and presume that the only thing to be done with African American hair is to use chemicals to straighten it to be like Caucasian hair.

"I'm here in the name of every woman who ever walked into a beauty salon and was turned away or laughed at or told her hair has to be 'fixed,'" said Cornwell, who has devised a braiding style called "sisterlocks" but is blocked from opening a shop because she lacks a cosmetology license.

"The cosmetology regulations perpetuate a negative self-image

for women with naturally textured hair," said Cornwell, adding that African American hair is considered "bad" because it is not naturally straight.

The lawsuit does not appear to be popular among braiding stylists with state licenses.

Zena, who holds a state cosmetology license and does braiding at the One of a Kind salon in South-Central Los Angeles, said that allowing unlicensed stylists to do braiding would be unfair to licensed practitioners. She said that most stylists who do braiding also do permanents and curling, skills that are included on the licensing exam.

Another licensed cosmetologist who does braiding in Los Angeles, and asked not to be identified, said that even though beauty schools do not teach braiding, they include instruction in skin and health matters, such as detecting body lice, that are important to all hairstylists. She said that allowing unli-

(continued on next page)

censed braiding specialists could undercut the wages of license holders.

"It [the lawsuit] is a threat to those of us who are licensed and went through the normal channels," she said.

The lawsuit, asking that the state be blocked from enforcing licensing requirements on braiding specialists, was filed by a Washington-based Libertarian law firm, the Institute for Justice, with free assistance from lawyers in the San Diego office of Pillsbury, Madison & Sutro, one of the nation's most prestigious law firms.

The Institute for Justice, founded in 1991, specializes in fighting laws that it believes place undue restrictions on businesses, particularly start-up enterprises. It has successfully challenged taxicab rules in Denver and cosmetology licensing in Washington and soon will file suit in New York against restrictions on jitney commuting vans.

The institute decided to target cosmetology laws after a study funded by the family of Irwin Jacobs, founder of QualComm, a San Diego telecommunications firm, cited those laws as a hindrance to low-income women trying to start their own businesses.

One of the plaintiffs is Ali Rasheed, who owns the Braiderie salons in San Diego and Oceanside, which specialize in hair braiding. The state Board of Barbering and Cosmetology has fined Rasheed for employing a hair weaver, an African immigrant, who does not have a state cosmetology license.

"To be penalized by someone who has no idea what we do and who is only trying to protect their industry is un-American," Rasheed said. "It's un-American, and we're going to fight it."

Rasheed said his customers get more than a hairstyling; they get a lesson in displaying pride in their heritage.

"We don't fix hair, we change personalities," Rasheed said. "They walk out like African queens."

Also among the plaintiffs is Taalib-Din Uqdah, executive director of the Washington-based American Hairdressers and Natural Hair Assn., a veteran of a similar fight in the nation's capital. In that case, the city decided to exempt hair braiders from regulation.

THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

San Diego, CA January 28, 1997

Braiders challenge state hair care laws

By Michael Kinsman
STAFF WRITER

State cosmetology licensing was challenged yesterday in federal court here by individuals who do African hair-braiding and insist they are not practicing cosmetology.

The suit contends those who practice chemical-free hair-braiding and hair-locking techniques, which are popular among African-Americans, are subjected to archaic state laws.

California law requires extensive and costly cosmetology training that has no relevance to hair-braiding, driving many African hair-braiding businesses underground, the suit contends.

"We're not talking brain surgery," said Ali Rasheed, operator of hair-braiding salons in San Diego and Oceanside. "This is braiding, locking and twisting hair, which is natural African hair care."

One of Rasheed's salons, The Braiderie on El Cajon Boulevard, and an employee, Marguerite Sylva, were each fined \$100 in October for illegal hair-braiding. Sylva, a native of Senegal whose state license

had lapsed, was cited for supervising five unlicensed West Africans who were doing hair-braiding at the time. The Braiderie was cited for aiding and abetting an unlicensed activity.

Both fines have been appealed.

Rasheed said state law allows for criminal charges to be brought against him for what he described as a safe practice that is widely done in African-American homes and clandestinely in retail businesses throughout the state.

"This is the largest open-secret in the African-American community," said JoAnne Cornwell, principal plaintiff in the case.

Cornwell, chairman of the Africana Studies department at San Diego State University and owner of Sisterlocks, a company that offers training courses in hair-locking techniques, said she is being denied the right to do business because she does not have a cosmetology license.

"The laws amount not only to economic suppression, but to cultural suppression as

well," said Clint Bolick of the Institute for Justice, a nonprofit public-interest law firm in Washington that filed the suit on behalf of Cornwell and the American Hairbraiders and Natural Hair Care Association, a Washington-based group that represents about 350 members throughout the country.

Taalib-Din Ugdah, founder of the national organization, said African hair-braiding is practiced illegally by thousands of individuals in the United States because state laws do not adequately address the hair technique.

A spokeswoman for the state Board of Barbering and Cosmetology said the board had not yet seen the suit and would have no comment.

According to the suit, many African-Americans practice braiding techniques developed thousands of years ago in Africa. Typically, individuals learn the techniques in their homes from acquaintances, which the suit contends is evidence of the safety of the practice.

California currently has more than a quarter-million licensed cosmetologists, according to Nancy Hardaker, spokeswoman for the state Board of Barbering and Cosmetology.

The state requires cosmetologists to complete 1,600 hours of training, pass a written test and demonstrate their skills before they are allowed to practice. A 10-month cosmetology course can run up to \$7,000.

Since an attorney general's ruling in 1982, the Board of Barbering and Cosmetology has treated hair-braiding as cosmetology. An Assembly bill that would have separated braiding from traditional cosmetology died last May before it could reach the Assembly floor.

The suit asks that California's cosmetology regulations be declared unconstitutional as they apply to hairbraiders and asks protection of the plaintiffs from fines, criminal penalties or harassment.

SAN FRANCISCO

Daily Journal

January 29, 1997

Hair Braiders Call Rules Unfair Restraint of Trade

■ A group of stylists says the state cosmetology regulations keep them from earning a living.

By Marty Graham

Daily Journal Staff Writer

SAN DIEGO — Braiders who practice African American hairstyling techniques claim the state Board of Barbering and Cosmetology's regulation of their trade violates the 14th Amendment and keeps braiders from earning "an honest living."

The suit, JoAnne Cornwell and the American Hairbraiders and Natural Hair Care Association v. California Board of Barbering and Cosmetology, 97-138, asks for preliminary and permanent injunctions to block enforcement of the regulations. Plaintiffs also want the regulations to be declared unconstitutional under the 14th Amendment and the state Constitution.

The U.S. District Court suit is sponsored by the Institute for Justice, a libertarian Washington D.C.-based nonprofit law firm that studies regulatory barriers to job creation and economic growth.

Pillsbury Madison & Sutro partner David E. Kleinfeld and associate Richard M. Segal helped draft the complaint and file the suit on a pro bono basis. They may recover legal fees if their clients prevail.

Kleinfeld called the regulations his clients are fighting "a paradigm case of irrational regulation."

"This is one of the most compelling and important cases we could be involved in," he said. "There is a great deal here that goes to the heart of what the American dream is about."

Calls for comment to named defendants, the state attorney general and the cosmetology board were not returned Tuesday. The Department of Consumer Affairs, also a named defendant, may take over the licensing duties if the board is eliminated at the end of the year, as a legislative committee has recommended.

Nancy Hardacre, the public information officer for the state Department of Consumer Affairs, said the department

said, the department must enforce the laws, which were enacted for the safety of the public, until the laws are changed by the Legislature or overturned by the courts.

The 32-page complaint pits Cornwell, the chair of the Africana Studies Program at San Diego State University and owner of Sisterlocks, against the California Department of Consumer Affairs, the cosmetology board and Attorney General Daniel E. Lungren.

After a May 1982 attorney general opinion, 62 OP Atty Gen. 284, African hairbraiding was declared subject to cosmetology licensing laws, which require 1,600 hours of technical instruction and supervised practice. The instruction, by law, covers everything from styling wet hair to pedicures and eyebrow arching. Schooling costs between \$5,000 to \$7,000 and takes at least nine months, the complaint states.

Absent from the curriculum is any mention of styling and braiding hair of the texture many blacks possess, Cornwell said.

"The schools teach based on what the law requires them to learn, so they have no motivation to include [braiding] in their curriculum," she said. "I've visited cosmetology schools where half the people were wearing braids but braiding isn't part of the curriculum."

Cornwell's company, Sisterlocks, holds a federal trademark for its name, and sells training programs and videotaped instruction on the method Cornwell developed and practices on about 30 paying clients. Cornwell earns about \$375 for the initial four to eight hour sitting and \$80 for tightening up the weaves, which must be done every two to three months.

The nature of Cornwell's business, which has grown in her neighborhood and among her friends and acquaintances, reflects much of how braiding is

"This is a subject people in our community don't talk about — but if you ask anyone, they will tell you they got their hair done by the woman down the street or a friend of a friend," she said. "I call it an open secret in our community."

Cosmetology rules are being enforced, the plaintiffs say, citing an October raid on a braiding shop that left the shop with a \$100 fine.

Since Cornwell's technique involves no chemical treatments beyond shampoo, no cutting or electrical work on the client, the cosmetology board requirements for training and shop equipment are not only burdensome, they are irrelevant, the suit alleges.

"The regulation ... has the perverse effect of limiting the lawful provision of African hairstyling services to practitioners who are not required to know anything about African hairstyling, while precluding those who are specifically trained in these specialized techniques from lawfully offering their services to the public," the complaint states.

While the plaintiffs have no objections to health and safety requirements, they allege the cosmetology laws stifle entrepreneurs, arbitrarily restrict entry into the profession and deprive people of the right to earn an honest living, the complaint states.

Barber caught in state's cross hairs

Regulators demand veteran haircutter get proper license

By Jeff Woods
BANNER CHIEF POLITICAL WRITER

Garland Allen, a humble barber and shoeshine man just off Lebanon's public square, is becoming a cause celebre in his hometown now that the state of Tennessee is threatening to put him in jail.

The Tennessee Board of Barber Examiners is after Allen for cutting hair without a state license.

The regulatory board prosecuted Allen a year ago for the felony of impersonating a professional. He faced a six-year prison sentence if he had been convicted, but even though it's true Allen has no barber's license, a grand jury wouldn't indict him.

The state Legislature then suspended the barber licensing law especially for Allen so he could cut hair without one. But in a new opinion, the state attorney general says the legislative action was unconstitutional.

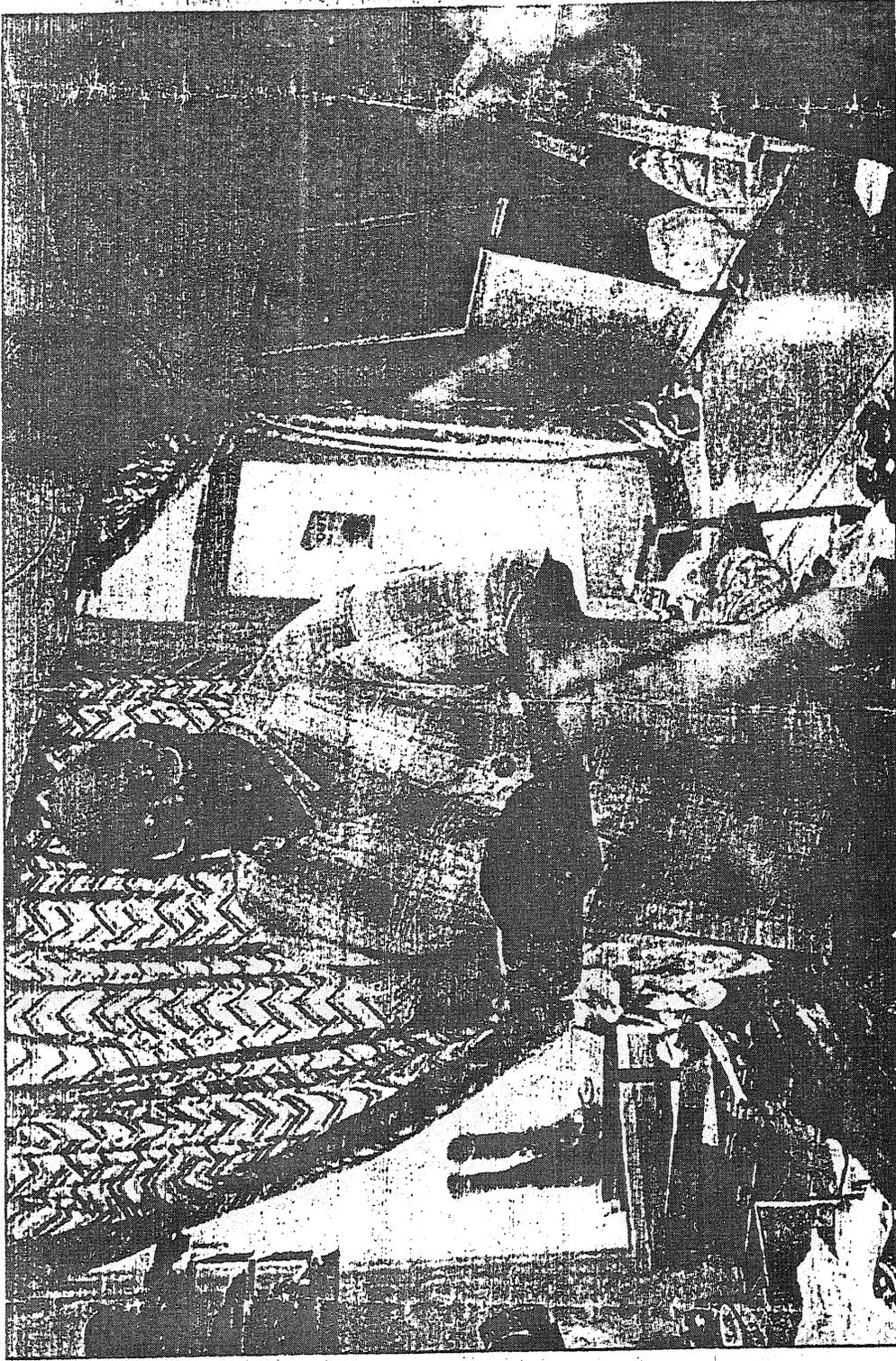
So now, egged on by angry rival barbers, the board is considering prosecuting Allen again.

"I have no idea what to do at the moment," says Allen, 52, who has temporarily stopped cutting hair because of the renewed threat of jail. "I'm not hurting anybody, but I guess they just don't want a poor boy like me to operate."

Allen says he doesn't have the \$5,000 it would cost him to go to school and get a license.

The barber board, still smarting over the local grand jury's refusal to indict Allen, is unsympathetic to his plight.

"That grand jury made me mad," says Evelyn Griffin, the board's chief administrator.



BANNER PHOTO: LISA NIPP

Garland Allen works at the shoe-shine table in his barber shop. He has stopped cutting hair under threat of being jailed.

Barbers across this state are furious. "We'll probably have him arrested. Why should this one man be allowed to operate without a license? Every other barber is paying for a license to operate. But he's not paying anything. It's not fair."

Allen, one of the city's few black business owners, is drawing a growing number of defenders in Lebanon. He has worked

his father as a boy and then taking over the business himself as a young man.

Since World War II, it has been known as the People's Barbershop, although the sign has long since fallen down. Men idle away the hours at the shop, which features a pool table, a Coca-Cola machine, a shoeshine stand and a single barber's chair.

"The state says Garland is impersonating a barber," says Jim Kinnard, an attorney

representing Allen. "He's not impersonating a barber. He is a barber. He didn't learn it in school. He learned it at his father's feet."

"This is a free man earning a living with his hands. He's trusted and he's honest and he's honorable. The state should have more important things to do than to prosecute a

Barber

Continued from page A1

case like this, given the drugs and crime running rampant."

State Sen. Bob Rochelle, D-Lebanon, agrees. During the last legislative session, he introduced a bill to exempt Allen from the licensing laws. The barbers' board fought the bill and killed it in committee.

But Rochelle, a crafty parliamentarian, didn't give up then. On the session's final day, when weary lawmakers were bleary-eyed, he tacked a special amendment onto a bill the barbers themselves wanted, then maneuvered it through the House and Senate.

Rochelle's amendment said the barber licensing law did not apply "if a person is over 50 years of age, and if such person has contin-

ually engaged in the practice of barbering at the same location for 25 or more years immediately preceding Jan. 1, 1995; and if such person's parent continuously engaged in the practice of barbering at such location for 25 or more years immediately preceding Jan. 1, 1980; and if such location is the site of not more than one barber's chair."

Of course, there appears to be only one person on Earth who's known to fit that description — Garland Allen, a fact that did not escape the notice of state Attorney General Charles Burson.

In an opinion requested last week by the barbers' board, Burson said Rochelle's amendment is unconstitutional because it "appears arbitrary in its designation of who is entitled to be grandfathered into the barber licensing act."

Rochelle makes no bones about what he was trying to do.

“

When I was young, there was no barber school for blacks around here, even in Nashville. . . . Now, I'm 100 old to go to school.

Garland Allen

Veteran barber and streetwise man

"Sometimes, the bureaucracy has unjust results," Rochelle says. "I was just trying to help this one fellow in this particular situation without causing barbers problems statewide. Garland Allen is a respected member of the community. He's not politically connected, but he's a constituent, and I'm here to help constituents."

Why won't the state just let Allen slide?

"Number one, it's a violation of state law," says J.B. Loring, the retired Nashville Electric Service executive who chairs the barbers' board. "And to keep their licenses, barbers have to submit to annual inspections, so there are a lot of health factors to consider."

Allen says he can't afford to take off for the nine months of full-time schooling it takes to get a license — much less pay the \$5,000 in tuition.

"When I was young, there was no barber school for blacks around here, even in Nashville," Allen says. "There was one in Memphis, but I couldn't go to Memphis. Now, I'm too old to go to school. I don't guess they'd pay me to go to school, would they?"

"It looks like I may have to find some other way to make a living. I'm just going to wait and see how things pan out. But it looks like they're after me pretty tough."

MEMPHIS, THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 1996

APPEAL

THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL

Legal Tangle

By Thomas Busler

Irene Alexander, owner of Hair Handlers, works on a customer's braids. In Tennessee, it is illegal to braid hair without a cosmetology license. Efforts are under way to regulate what Alexander calls "bootlegger" braiders.

Unlicensed braiding grows

By Vanessa E. Jones
The Commercial Appeal

Like many professionals in the field, Debra Nutall taught herself how to braid.

First she worked on the heads of family members. By 1985, neighbors were paying to get Nutall's hands in their hair. Soon her distinctive style, tiny braids that look like regular haircuts, could be seen on the heads of business women at Federal Express Corp., Promus Companies and Baptist Memorial Hospital.

The money Nutall earned helped her get off welfare, move out of the

Lamar Terrace projects and settle into a modest, one-story brick home on Castleman, near Hickory Ridge Mall.

"It was a blessing," said Nutall, 34, a single mother of three.

Last year, Nutall's blessing turned into a problem when Gilbert Alverio accidentally stumbled upon Dee-Nu-Tall, Nutall's braiding salon on Lamar. Alverio, the Shelby County state inspector for the cosmetology board, told Nutall she needed a shop and cosmetology license to operate the business.

"If you're braiding hair it falls under the realm of cosmetology, therefore you have to be licensed,"

said Alverio.

But Nutall said braiding, which has origins in Africa, is part of her cultural heritage. She uses "no chemicals, no dyes, no perms, no straightening combs, and no kind of heat," said Nutall, so it shouldn't be regulated under cosmetology law.

In fact, state law doesn't mention the word braiding in its definition of cosmetology.

"How can it be legal or illegal if they don't have a law for it?" said Nutall.

Once considered a fad, hair braid-

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Braids

ing has become one of the fastest growing areas of hair care. In Memphis, it's created a mini-industry of braiding entrepreneurs. Some work out of their homes. Others develop a large enough clientele to open their own salons.

And many operate illegally. The offense is a felony punishable by a fine and up to six years in jail. No Tennessee braider has been charged under the law, but some unlicensed braiders refused to be quoted for this story because of it.

Memphis braiders aren't the only ones discovering that braiding hair is a crime. Several states have responded to the problem by enacting bills that give braiders specific licenses.



Blenna Williams-Gladney

The legislative wheels are turning in Tennessee, as well. State Sen. Roscoe Dixon (D-Memphis) met with cosmetologists Monday to talk about the issue, and the Cosmetology Board will discuss braiding at its meeting on April 1.

For braiders, the cosmetology license issue raises as many questions as it answers.

To get a license, braiders must invest as much as \$6,000 and 1,500 hours to learn processes such as chemical relaxing, finger waving, wet sets, which they won't use



Debra Nutall

after graduation. And most beauty schools don't offer braiding as a part of their curriculum.

"The schools are not really designed for that," said Blenna Williams-Gladney, 36, a braider who teaches at Pazazz Hair School on Getwell as she studies there for her instructor's license. "It's a fairly new twist to the cosmetology field. I had to look for a place that even offered (braiding)."

As a little girl, Ann Houston learned how to braid on her doll. She got her cosmetology license several years ago, but she doesn't think it helps braiders.

"As long as you're not using chemicals or professional products like curling irons," said Houston, 30, "I don't see why you should have to have a license for it. It cuts out a lot of people's ability to start businesses."

Home braiders are regulated by a simple set of local laws that govern home-based small businesses. If a braider is making more than \$3,000 a year, she needs a county business license, said Genevieve Green, a deputy clerk in the County Clerk's office.

The work is allowed in residential zoning as long as a braider doesn't hire additional employees, generate traffic or change the appearance of her property, such as adding a sign outside, said Mary Baker, principal planner for the County Office of Planning and Development.

But unlicensed hair braiding is serious business to the Cosmetology Board. State law defines cosmetology as "arranging, dressing, curling, waving, cleansing, cutting, singeing, bleaching, coloring, or similar work upon the hair of any person by any means." The way the board interprets the law, "if you are braiding, you are arranging (hair)," said Sandra James, staff attorney for the Department of Commerce and Insurance Division of Regulatory Boards, in Nashville.

Braiders who receive money for work done in the home must

have a cosmetology and shop license, said James. Those who don't can be charged with impersonating a professional.

The Class E Felony means one to six years in jail and a fine that's at the discretion of the jury, said James. "But you try getting the district attorney or the Police Department to do that. They'll look at you and say, 'Somebody's (braiding) hair and they don't have a license? What do we care? We've got dope dealers on the street.'"

The board never closed Nutall's shop. She actually moved Dee-Nu-Tall to a new location on Winchester, in Whitehaven, before closing it a month ago. The board also hasn't cracked down on other unlicensed braiders, said James. Because no one knows how many unlicensed braiders there are or where they work, it makes such raids difficult, said James.

The board is most concerned about sanitation. HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, head lice. "Nowadays all sorts of diseases can be transmitted," said James. Shop licenses give the board an annual opportunity to inspect salons for cleanliness.

Local cosmetologists are also worried about home braiders, but for different reasons. Irene Alexander, owner of Hair Handlers, a full-service hair and braiding salon on American Way, calls them "bootleggers."

"By virtue of the fact that we're black, most of us know how to braid or plait," said Alexander. "That doesn't give you a right to start a business in your kitchen. I went to school."

Alexander sees a lot of her customers turn to "bootleggers," who charge less than she does because they don't have any overhead. It costs \$45 (goddess braids) to \$350 (micro braids) at Hair Handlers. Nutall charges a more affordable \$155 and up for her tiny braided styles.

Unlicensed hair braiders are also more flexible. It takes as much as nine or 10 grueling hours to create some styles, which translates into stiff fingers and sore feet for the braiders. Some full-service salons set aside a few days a week to braid hair or refer customers to home braiders who often work day and night.

Alexander sees a lot of unlicensed braiders' customers return to Hair Handlers with damaged hair.

"(Bootleggers) are braiding hair with cheap hair" for extensions, said Alexander. "They're braiding it tight and knotting it in because they haven't learned how to properly put the hair in. Then they're braiding on chemical hair ... and you don't braid freshly permed hair."

Not all unlicensed home braiders do sloppy work. Nutall sterilized combs and used gloves when examining her customers' hair. When Alverio visited the shop last year, he said it looked clean.

Nutall, who dreams of writing a book about braiding and has taught several people her technique, also stresses quality braiding.

The same month the Cosmetology Board meets to discuss hair braiding, Nutall will start attending beauty school to get her cosmetology and instructor's licenses.

Last year, the issue of licensed vs. unlicensed hair braiders created a flurry of activity in the state legislature. At the request of the Cosmetology Board, Senate Bill No. 150 proposed to add "braiding and weaving" to the definition of cosmetology.

The request was immediately voted down.

"Someone made the remark, 'If I braid my little girl's hair and I'm not a cosmetologist, am I breaking the law?'" said Evelyn Griffin, the Cosmetology Board administrator.

In 1993, before opening her shop, Nutall sent a letter to the board proposing a license that would allow natural hair-care practitioners to work under cosmetologists. The natural hair-care worker would deal with braiding and the cos-

metologist would shampoo, condition, perm and cut hair.

The board discussed the proposal and voted to reject it. "Any of your requests would have to be (made) by legislation as there is nothing in the present statute to give the authority to just issue a license without first attending school and taking an examination," Griffin explained in a letter sent to Nutall in December 1993.

Taking their advice, Nutall turned to the city mayor's office, who referred her to Dixon. He told Nutall she needed only a business license to open a braiding salon.

"I was trying to solve the problem of a young lady who was trying to earn a living," said Dixon, from his Nashville office. "This is opening up a bigger question now. And that is a question of a level playing field for small independent operators who are in business."

Dixon met with some cosmetologists about the issue Monday.

"The cosmetologists made a great point: They have to pay fees and they have expenses that people who do this out of their homes don't have," said Dixon. "People like Nutall should share with them their concerns and see if (the board is) amiable to a less restrictive license for braiders, just like they have for shampooing and manicuring."

The Cosmetology Board no longer offers the shampooing and manicuring license although some cosmetologists still have them, said James. Shampooers and manicurists must now have a full cosmetology license.

Legislative bills for braiding licenses are already pending or being discussed in Illinois, Michigan, Ohio and Texas. Recently, New York, Florida and the District of Columbia passed bills for braiders' licenses. The District of Columbia's requires 750 hours of study stressing sanitation, hair care and braiding techniques.

"Our position is if we must go to school and be licensed, it should be related and relevant to what we do in the practice of hair braiding," said Pamela Ferrell, co-owner of Cornrows & Co. hair salon, who fought to get Washington's hair braiding license passed in 1993.

Ferrell started the American Hairbraiders & Natural Hair-care Association this year to keep track of the legislative developments and other trends that are affecting the industry.

At Pazazz Hair School, on C-st., well, one of the few beauty schools offering hair braiding as part of the cosmetology course, only 48 hours of the 1,500 hours required to get a license are relegated to hair braiding, said Martha Stevens, the school's director. Students pay \$6,000 for the entire course, said Stevens.

Williams-Gladney, who was known as "the braid girl" in her neighborhood from the time she was in second or third grade, believes the classes are beneficial. Courses like bacteriology, sterilization and sanitation, properties of the hair and scalp, the skin and its disorders, physiology and anatomy "widen your knowledge of caring for the hair," she said.

To learn about the cultural, commercial and technical aspects of braiding, Williams-Gladney looks to the New York-based International Braiders Network. Her goal is to start regular meetings where local braiders can discuss different aspects of the profession.

"We have to come out that background (of) not talking," said Williams-Gladney. "I think this competition of whether you're going to have my customer is biased."

A tangle over braids

A REAL tangle has developed over the unlicensed braiding of hair in Tennessee, but there is a relatively simple way to get untangled.

The problem is that people who do braiding and no other hair styling or cutting at all are being told they still must have a state cosmetology license, which can involve up to \$6,000 and 1,500 hours in schooling to learn skills and techniques they'll never use. Most beauty schools don't even teach braiding.

The solution seems to be a specific, limited license for braiders to assure state regulators that safe, proper methods are used and that strict hygiene is maintained. Such a license could require much less investment in time and money and allow neighborhood entrepreneurs to ply their trade without worrying about having to do jail time for it.

An attorney for the Department of Commerce and Insurance Division of Regulatory Boards told reporter Vanessa E. Jones of The Commercial Appeal that a home braider who gets paid and doesn't have a cosmetology and shop license could be charged with a Class E Felony and face one to six years and a jury-determined fine. That prospect alone could curl your hair.

State Sen. Roscoe Dixon (D-Memphis) is among those trying to get to the root of the problem. He's been sounding out licensed

cosmetologists about the idea of a specific braiding license. Such measures also are being discussed by lawmakers in Illinois, Michigan, Ohio and Texas. New York, Florida and the District of Columbia already have created such licenses.

To remove any doubt about state requirements, the Cosmetology Board tried last year to get braiding included among procedures requiring a regular cosmetology license. That bill failed, to the relief of many local braiders. But the threat is still there.

The need for flexibility on the braiding issue has grown in recent years along with the technique's popularity. Licensed cosmetologists argue that braiding is just another way of arranging hair, a procedure that the law says requires a cosmetology license. They also insist that "bootlegging" by braiders is unfair competition for professionals with a higher overhead.

Sanitation is a legitimate concern, although braiders might not use chemicals, dyes, perms and curling irons like regular cosmetologists. The state has a right to demand that people braiding hair for money adhere to sensible health regulations.

But surely such precautions could be regulated just as well under a special, limited license for braiders that wouldn't require extensive knowledge and training that will never be applied.

COSMETOLOGY

PROGRESSIONS

O F M I C H I G A N



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No. 26 • Winter 1995

S T A T E N E W S

Legislative Up-Date

A large assembly of concerned people, from the Cosmetology Association, Tom Cleary, Mike Busch, Michigan Schools Association, Wolverine and others met with Representative Susan Munsell on August 24th.

We met to discuss the issues, surrounding the Cosmetology laws. There was much discussion, about the present law, and the lack of needed licenses, for Nail Salons and Skin Care.

We also pointed out to her, that because of the lack of inspections many students are working in salons without personal licenses, or even completing school. We also pointed out that our current fee would more than cover expenses of inspections. The department is aware of our feelings. They had no answers for the problem, other than to respond with "yes... that is how it is, there are very few inspections going on." They suggested that we should look for another form of inspections for the Cosmetology industry.

Representative Munsell seemed to respond well to our concerns about the Nails, Skin and Inspections.

Our major dispute during the meeting, revolved around a proposal from a Franchise Group of Salon/Schools, that teach only ethnic hair braiding. The representatives from the Braiding Salon/School were a powerful and persuasive group. The issue created a much heated discussion around the table. Each person who spoke, whether for or against the braiding schools, did not resolve the matter. The issue being, whether there should be schools with a full course of studies, or a limited study of ethnic hair braiding.

Representative Munsell concluded the meeting, by saying she would present us with a draft of a bill that would solve our problems.

As of the writing of this report, we have not received the draft. We were told that it would probably be ready about September 1. I think she now realizes that writing a draft to please everyone is not as easy a task as she had originally thought.

So again we are waiting for proposed legislation that we will oppose or support, depending on the content. We anticipate, that the braiding issue will need to be addressed by the entire industry.

Respectfully submitted, Rose Kelly - Chairman

Cultural coiffure clash

BY DARCI MCCONNELL *CP*

Free Press Staff Writer

4-22-97

For the last four years, braider Sheila Everette-Hale has been trying to get the state out of her hair.

The Detroit woman has been trying to help lawmakers see that people who practice a coiffure style rooted in African culture shouldn't be licensed or trained by those who don't understand it as a cultural art.

On Wednesday, Everette-Hale may get her wish.

The Senate economic development committee, which oversees regulatory affairs, is expected to send to the full Senate a bill that would exempt braiders from requirements that they attend a trade school and obtain a license to practice.

The bill passed the House on Feb. 19. Backers said the Senate could take it up in early May.

"It's a stupid thing for the state to regulate," Sen. Bill Schuette, R-Midland, who serves on the economic development committee, said last week. "I'm just not supportive of trying to regulate a practice that has historical roots and that families and grandmothers and mothers and young girls have been doing for years."

Representatives of the Michigan Cosmetology Association, which did not support previous attempts to change the licensing law, could not be reached for comment Monday.

Julie Croll, director of licensing for the Office of Commercial Services, a state office that oversees cosmetology licensing, said a concern is that the state would be unable to regulate unqualified practitioners.

"We're looking at it strictly from the consumer-protection side, to make sure qualified individuals are practicing," Croll said Monday.

If the bill passes, it would mark the end of a struggle lasting more than a decade by braiders to bypass cosmetology schools. State law requires that people who style hair professionally attend a trade school and be licensed.

But braiders, many of whom learned how to do the African-style cornrows and plaits as a child from a relative or friend,

argued that such requirements didn't make sense, especially since most cosmetology schools didn't offer such instruction.

Scores of braiders operated quietly out of their homes.

"What the bill will do is allow people to expose themselves," said Taalib-Din Uqdah, president of the American Hair-braiders and Natural Hair Care Association, a nonprofit trade group based in Washington, D.C.

Several previous attempts at changing the law have failed.

Dezzie Knight, 53, owner of Wig Village in Detroit, approached the state 15 years ago and requested a separate license for braiders, but didn't succeed in getting the law changed.

"So I had to go on and get the license," Knight said.

Everette-Hale was among a group who tried in 1994 to get legislation passed again that would require a separate braiding license, but that was rejected because it would force the creation of another oversight board.

Uqdah said his organization has some 10,000 members nationwide and that some 30,000 people practice professionally in what he estimates is a \$150-million-a-year industry.

Everette-Hale, who teaches braiding and left a job at a law firm to pursue her craft, said eliminating state licensing would encourage many others to practice braiding as a profession. It also would acknowledge its roots.

"It really is a cultural art form," Everette-Hale said.

The Fight To Braid Hair Takes Center Stage With Protest Demonstration

By Alvin Peabody

The National Interstate Council (NIC), a group that represents the interests of each state board of cosmetology in the United States, has been challenged on allegations of "continual prosecution" of professional hairbraiders across the country for not having cosmetology licenses.

"We are here to encourage hair braiders in every state to defy present state cosmetology laws which have no applicability to what they do," said local Washington, D.C. businessman Taalib Uqdah.

Last Friday (August 9), Uqdah, who also serves as president of the American Hairbraiders and National Haircare Association (AHNHA), led a protest demonstration outside the JW Marriott Hotel in downtown Washington, where more than 150 NIC members were holding their annual convention. Under laws governing NIC members, hairbraiders, like barbers or beauty salon owners, are required to have a cosmetology license to operate.

But Uqdah and other

AHNHA members disagree. "We have read every state law and nowhere in those definitions do we find any mention of hairbraiding," Uqdah argued. "This new requirement is being forced upon us because we've become a threat. Look, there's the popularity of cornrows, braids and locks, which continues to rise as they have over the past 10 years, creating a huge cottage industry amongst hairbraiders."

"Cosmetology laws throughout the U.S. are outdated and they do not define nor include the practice of hairbraiding," added Pamela Ferrell, a member of the Washington, D.C. Barber & Cosmetology Board. "Therefore, they have no basis to regulate this trade. I also would like to encourage hair braiders to continue to open businesses and provide this much demanded service until laws are changed in their states."

In 1993, AHNHA members sought to have some new policies in place. With the approval of the D.C.

Continued on page 22

"In cosmetology school, you're never taught hair braiding, so why should a hair braider have a cosmetology license..."

Council, a new law was created that would allow hair braiders to have a separate operating license instead of the required cosmetology license. "We're not against having a license, especially if it would ensure a healthy and safe environment. In cosmetology school, you're never taught hair braiding, so why should a hair braider have a cosmetology license," Uqdah explained.

Uqdah further charged that professional hairbraiders from at least 25 states have been "harassed, threatened, fined, coerced, prosecuted and had their shops closed by or at the urgency of NIC members or their inspectors."

Founded in 1956, the National Interstate Council of State Boards of Cosmetology has very few Blacks or minorities on its board of directors, according to AHNHA members. NIC officials could not be reached for comment, but it has been reported that both NIC and another governing body, the National Cosmetology Association, are in objection to having separate licenses.

"Occupational licensing laws are often enforced by regulatory boards comprised of members of the regulated community whose interests are more often in limiting competition than in protecting the public," said Chip Miller of the Washington, D.C.-based Institute for Justice. "The laws typically are enforced by appointed boards comprised of those members with the coercive power of government at their disposal."

Hairbraiding

Continued from page 10

NEWS DIMENSIONS

Volume IV, Number 47 Serving The Washington Metro Area Friday, Dec. 20, 1996

AMERICA'S MOST PROGRESSIVE BLACK NEWSPAPER

BLACK HAIRBRAIDERS FIGHT GOV'T REGULATIONS

A national organization of hairbraiders, the American Hairbraiders & Natural Haircare Association (AHNHA), has joined in support of two prospective African-style hair braiders who filed a civil rights action lawsuit last week, alleging that the state of New York's requirement that they complete a 900-hour curriculum before receiving a state license to braid hair infringes on their right to pursue the occupation of their choice.

AHNA has long predicted that this type of lawsuit would act as a precursor to hair braiders around the country exercising their constitutional

rights in striking down state cosmetology laws which require them, in some cases, to get over 2,000 hours of non-related training in order to practice their art form.

"Under the U.S. Constitution, the government may use reasonable regulations to protect the public's health and safety," explained Manhattan attorney, Mark Smith, who represents plaintiffs Andrean Russell and Bonnie Best (pro bono) in the action entitled, *Russell v. New York*. "However, the Constitution protects our right to pursue the livelihood of our choice free from irrational government interference. I believe that the New

York law requiring prospective hair braiders to undergo training in subjects such as resume writing, advertising, interviewing and letter writing infringes upon my client's constitutional rights."

AHNHA President and Executive Director, Taalib-Din Uqdah said, "As New York goes, so goes the nation. The filing of such an action gives us hope, that similar action will take place in Texas, Florida, Michigan, Maryland and Virginia, California, Tennessee, North Carolina, Ohio or any state attempting to practice modern day chattel slavery. At the very least, it serves notice to all states and their

cosmetology cartels, that their unconstitutional actions will no longer be tolerated."

Institute for Justice Attorneys Chip Mellor and Clint Bolick, pioneers in economic liberty issues, noted that "these type of local regulations are squelching free enterprise. More than ever, these obstructionist regulations stand in the way of what the American people want. Job creation that produces a dynamic array of entry-level opportunities, particularly in America's urban areas, must be a national priority. But before politicians seek to create new government employment programs, they would well to adopt an economic Hippocratic oath: First, do no harm."

Uqdah went on to state that AHNHA will use this lawsuit as a springboard to launch similar actions around the country linking these issues to welfare reform, environmental safety and economic civil rights.

Hair braiders seek relief from state regulations

By MARLA SHEPARD
Capital News Service

Scriptos Howard News Service
ANNAPOLIS - Renee Fitzgerald has been going to Madame Walker's Braiderly in Suitland for the past year to have her hair braided. It takes seven hours to complete the cornrows that Fitzgerald favors.

"I wear braids so that I don't have to keep getting relaxers," Fitzgerald says. The shoulder-length style usually lasts for two months. Her experience is not unique. African American women have been braiding each other's hair for years. But as the popularity of this ancient style has increased in recent years, entrepreneurs have moved from their living rooms into salons.

Shops have cropped up throughout Maryland, leading to con-

frontations between braiders and the State Board of Cosmetology, the agency that regulates beauticians. Braiding is not currently included in the definition of what it means to practice cosmetology, yet braiders are required to be licensed by the state.

Recently, braiders faced with prosecution for operating without licenses appealed to the House Economic Matters Committee for relief. What started out as a hearing on a bill granting limited licenses to braiders quickly turned into an appeal for the deregulation of the industry.

Board requirements include 1,500 hours of training in an approved beauty school or two years as an apprentice in a licensed beauty salon.

These requirements present several problems for braiders. With tuition ranging anywhere from \$4,000 to \$8,000, they find beauty school both expensive and irrelevant.

"You can spend 1,500 hours in a course which costs thousands of dollars and come out without having learned one thing about braiding," said Taalib-Din Ugdah, founder and executive director of the American Hairbraiding and Natural Hair Care Association.

Ugdah owns a braiding salon in the District of Columbia and said his employees earn an average \$15,000 annually for just four days of work per week.

The association has been in the forefront of a nationwide movement to fight the application of traditional

beauty license requirements to the hair braiding industry.

In conjunction with the Institute for Justice, a public interest law firm, the association has sued several states to keep them from prosecuting unlicensed braiders. They have been victorious in New York, California and Florida.

In Maryland, members of Ugdah's association have been cited for operating without licenses, a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$100 and/or 30 days in jail.

"I want to make sure the committee knows that these individuals have been threatened with prosecution," Ugdah told lawmakers.

"When the wolf is at the door, you'll take whatever relief you can get."

Ugdah then read testimony deliv-

ered last year by Harry Loleas, deputy director of the Department of Occupation and Licensing.

Testifying during a hearing on a similar bill before the Senate Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee, Loleas conceded that the actual scope of health and sanitation involved in hair braiding is not significant enough to require state regulation. Last year's bill died in committee.

During the hearing, Del. Nathaniel Exum, D-Prince Georges, asked what it would take to allow braiders simply to practice their craft.

Loleas replied that deregulation would require changing the lan-

(Continued on next page)

Hair braiders

(Continued from previous page)

guage of the law.

This year's bill would establish a specialty license allowing braiders to operate salons and take on apprentices, which unlicensed braiders are not able to do legally.

The bill's sponsor called it a "natural link" to welfare reform, saying that this burgeoning industry could provide jobs to get citizens off the dole.

"We are asking people to find

employment after two years on welfare," said Del. Adrienne A. Mandel, D-Montgomery. "We should really look at this bill as a way to help people get opportunities for training and employment."

Ugdah echoed Mandel's sentiments. "If the state removes the entry level barriers, I can get a certain segment of the population back to work," he said.

Loleas, in an interview, said the state will hold off on prosecution of unlicensed braiders until the Legislature has acted on this bill.

BILLS TO BE SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR ON MAY 8, 1997

SB 501

Hair Braiding Services - Exemption from Licensure

Excluding specified hair braiding services from the scope of licensure; clarifying the scope of the practice of cosmetology; providing for the effective date of the Act; and generally relating to hair braiding and cosmetology in the State.

BOP, § 5-101(k)-amended

Effective July 1, 1997

Senator Trotter, et al

HB 515

Hair Braiding Services - Exemption from Licensure

Excluding specified hair braiding services from the scope of licensure; clarifying the scope of the practice of cosmetology; providing for the effective date of the Act; and generally relating to hair braiding and cosmetology in the State.

BOP, § 5-101(k)-amended

Delegate Mandel, et al

Hairstyling Admit to Segregation

HAIR, From B1

always exceptions—stylists and salons that have made a conscious decision to specialize in different types of hair.

Alain Vital, salon manager at Piaf in the District, said he has had to train stylists to do different types of hair. "We choose to cater to that variety of clientele," he said. "Most hairdressers don't have the tools. They're scared to do it or don't have the knowledge."

At the East Pines Barber Shop in Riverdale, a white barbershop in a black neighborhood, blacks get referred to Bill Eury, a white barber who has several regular black clients. "If it's hair, I cut it," Eury said. Even though the shop won't turn anyone away, very few black customers come in, he said.

Still, many who say they have tried to break through the color barrier say they have been turned away, usually politely with apologetic explanations that the stylists simply are not trained.

Stacy Harris, a word processor from Upper Marlboro who is African American, said she tried calling two salons after seeing hairstyles she liked on white co-workers. Both salons said they didn't do black hair.

Georgia Gaines, a telecommunications specialist from Mitchellville, remembers her daughter being turned away by a white salon when they were on vacation. "They were very helpful," Gaines said. "They told us where to go. They referred us to a black salon."

Norman Rich, an advertising agency ad director who lives in Rosslyn, was surprised to hear that Bloomingdale's could not provide black haircuts. "Any store that is located in this area, which has a huge black population, needs to be able to service their clientele," Rich said. "If I went into Bloomingdale's, I wouldn't expect them to say they don't sell black men's suits."

Bloomingdale's did not respond to requests for comment on the incident. The company contracts with Premier Salons International Inc. to provide hairstyling services. A Premier spokesman said the firm has a strong anti-discrimination policy.

Rennison Blackman, a barber at Wall's Barber Shop in the District, said the problem starts in barber school, when instructors urge white students not to waste their time

When It Comes to Their Hair Blacks, Whites Often Part Ways

By Anna Borgman
Washington Post Staff Writer

There's an old saying that the most segregated place in America is church on Sunday mornings. If that's true, second place probably goes to hair salons and barbershops on Saturday mornings.

"I've never gone into a white salon," says Dorothy Johnson, a retired mental health officer who is African American and lives in Landover. "It just never crossed my mind to go into one."

She is getting her hair squirted and wrapped with Extra Love wrapping solution at Delta Hair Design in Landover Mall. Manager Torrence Wimbish has the curling iron heating and the hair oil ready. No round brushes here.

An African American Prince George's County woman filed suit this week against Bloomingdale's and the company that operates its beauty salons, alleging that two hairstylists at White Flint Mall refused to give her a wash and dry because she has "black hair." Washington area blacks and whites interviewed yesterday agreed that one of the stylist's alleged comments lacked diplomacy but said they were reflective of a highly personalized form of segregation.

Textured vs. straight. Black vs. white. Much of this is self-segregation with blacks and whites going to separate facilities without ever thinking about the alternative. And there are

See HAIR, B2, Col. 1

learning black hair and black students not to waste their time learning white hair. "Very wrong," he said. "Hair is hair."

Abby Lewis, a barber at a black barbershop in Landover Mall, said many of his black clients have had bad experiences going to white barbers. "I've had customers who said they went into a white barbershop, and they tore their head up," Lewis said.

Pamela Ferrel, owner of Cornrows and Co. in the District and a member of the D.C. Barber and Cosmetology Board, said licensing rules in all 50 states and the District require students to learn on straight or straightened hair. Even African American cosmetology schools teach students how to "straighten black hair and make it look like Caucasian hair," she said.

In 1982, she failed her licensing exam on a black model with textured hair, then passed by doing the identical style on a white model with straight hair. "We're working now to change the exam," she said. "There needs to be more cross-training."

In the September issue of Essence magazine, the model Iman said black models "are rarely photographed at our most beautiful" because they are working with white hairstylists and makeup artists who do not know how to handle their features.

Fari, a stylist at Ruffle's of London, in Kensington, said that she and other white stylists should not be blamed because they are "not really trained to do black hair."

"If it's just a regular haircut and a set, it's hard, but you can do it," she said. "If a black woman comes in and wants her hair braided, I can't do it. It's not fair for me to be sued over that because I really can't do it."

Julie Schneider, a Bethesda legal secretary who is white and was getting a comb-out in Fari's chair, said she had never even thought about the issue. "The unfortunate thing is that people look for any reason to sue," she said.

Barbara Tenn, a retired secretary from Silver Spring who is white, said she was uncomfortable with the entire issue. "It's a ticklish thing," Tenn said, as she sat under the dryer. "There's different kinds of hair, and hairdressers are not always trained. In this day and age, maybe they should be."

Maryland hair care segregated; salons cite lack of cross-training

By T.A. Steptoe
CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

America may be more integrated than ever before, but when it comes to hair care, black and white don't often mix.

Many salons across Maryland do not provide services for prospective black clients. In an informal telephone survey of 111 salons in all 23 counties, 65 percent said they do not style black hair.

Most often cited as the reason was a lack of experience and training with styling black hair. Joan Schneider, spokeswoman for the National Cosmetology Association, said training should not be a problem.

"Anybody who's professional and educated should be able to do any kind of hair," she said.

But Markus Bluestein, a hair and makeup expert and owner of Facade Ltd. in Missouri, said, "Being taught from a book is not the same as being taught a craft." He said the problem stems from beauty schools, which usually emphasize either white or black hair care.

"White folks are never taught to work on black hair because those teaching them have little or no experience with it," he said.

Working on black hair requires different skills and sometimes takes longer. Black hair is fragile, and some of the chemicals used are dan-

gerous to hair and skin. Working with hazardous chemicals on such fragile hair intimidates some white hairstylists.

"Doing black hair takes a lot of white stylists out of their comfort zone. I think it's more fear than racism," said Marianne Dougherty, executive editor of American Salon and Independent Stylist magazines.

Mr. Bluestein said discrimination is a factor. He said there is a "quiet desire" among some white salon owners to keep blacks out.

Patrick Hagen, owner of Patrick's Hair Design, an integrated salon in Columbia, said often it is the clients who create segregated salons. Many black clients prefer to be with black operators and vice versa, he said.

Refusing to style black hair violates no Maryland laws, according to Kathleen Harryman, assistant administrator of the Maryland State Board of Barbers and Cosmetologists, the agency that oversees the licensing of hairstylists and salons.

"They can refuse service to anyone," she said.

But William Johnson of the State Human Relations Commission and Dennis Hayes, a lawyer with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said such practices contradict Maryland's civil rights laws.

Mr. Johnson pointed to the public accommodations section of Maryland's civil rights laws, which pro-

hibits retail establishments from discriminating on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, marital status or physical or mental handicap.

He said two complaints have been filed with the Human Relations Commission alleging racial discrimination by hair salons in recent years.

In March 1990, a black woman took her son to a hair salon in Gaithersburg to get a haircut. The white owner allegedly told the woman, "We don't do black hair." Mr. Johnson said. That case was settled before a commission hearing, he said.

In July 1990, a black man reported that he was refused service by a white barber in Baltimore, but that case was dropped when the complainant could not be located, Mr. Johnson said.

Ms. Dougherty, the magazine editor, said the industry is moving toward better educated, more well-rounded stylists who are able to work with all hair types. "We're trying to get consumers to the point of walking into a salon and not thinking, 'Is this a black or white salon?'"

One of the region's biggest chains, Hair Cuttery, has a policy to service all clients in each of its 400 salons from Philadelphia to Miami.

"All [our employees] are trained to provide services to any client," said Hair Cuttery spokeswoman Liz Bassler.

5/13/93

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Chicago Tribune
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Tuesday, March 11, 1997

NEWS

UNIQUE PIECE OF EGYPTIAN ART UNEARTHED
Associated Press.

A villager working his land has unearthed an ancient sculpture that archeologists hailed Monday as a remarkable but baffling object from the age of Egypt's pharaohs.

The 3-foot-high limestone statue, discovered March 2 near the Nile Delta town of Zagazig, portrays a seated woman with three small children standing against her chest and a girl on her lap.

The statue is in surprisingly good shape, and archeologists said the workmanship and detail are unprecedented. The woman's fingernails, bracelets and braided hair are visible, and her eyes and eyebrows are inlaid with ivory and black quartz. Experts were very surprised to find semiprecious stones still in place in the figures of the three children.

"This is something in the field of archeology and sculpture that is unique," said Ali Hassan, chairman of the government's Egyptian Antiquities Organization, who unveiled the mud-stained statue at a news conference Monday.

"It sounds like a masterpiece of Egyptian art. I haven't heard of anything similar," said Kent Weeks, an American archeologist who has discovered what is believed to be the tomb of more than 100 sons of Pharaoh Ramses II.

The statue bears no inscriptions. The female figure sits in a high-backed chair. Against her chest stands a small boy, believed to be a prince. Two headless girls stand on either side of him. Seated on the woman's lap is a girl, though only her lower half has survived the centuries.

Hassan speculated that the woman served in the royal palace. She was probably not royalty herself, however, because the Egyptians never portrayed royalty carrying children. Instead, he said, she may have been a nanny, a priestess or a dancer.

Experts believe the statue was carved in the late New Kingdom



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era, which lasted from 1567 B.C. to 1085 B.C. But it probably did not originate in the region where it was found.

Hassan speculated that someone--ancient grave robber or modern thief--may have stolen the statue from another ancient site and then tried to hide it.

----- INDEX REFERENCES -----

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Sunday, February 23, 1997

LIFE/STYLE

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Whether they choose straightening, intricate braids, locks or natural curls, women are getting in touch with their black.... Hairitage
RUTH MULLEN

As a child, Sujai Davis always went to the beauty parlor with a mixture of dread and anticipation.

From the time she was in first grade, she sat for hours while her thick, coarse hair was washed, straightened and styled with a piping-hot pressing comb. Inevitably, she would get burned.

"A lot of it was painful - I always left with burns on my forehead," Davis recalled.

Nonetheless, it was a ritual she never questioned. And it was one she followed religiously as an adult and later with her own two daughters.

The message was implicit, passed down by Davis' mother and her mother's mother: Kinky, curly hair was "bad," while "good" hair was straight and smooth, hair that moved.

Years later, Sujai Davis recalls the shame she felt whenever her hair would revert to its natural state. She simply couldn't wait until she could get her hair done again.

Her struggle to achieve "good" hair lies at the heart of a debate that has divided the black community since the first slaves were brought here more than 400 years

It's a debate with roots in Indianapolis, where Madame C.J. Walker established her beauty supply company in 1910 and created a black hair-care revolution.

When slaves first arrived in North America, it wasn't just their ebony skin that set them apart. They were made to feel that their coarse, kinky hair was also ugly and inferior.



2/23/97 INDSTR J01

(Publication page references are not available for this document.)

As a result, many women slaves took to covering their hair, creating the pervasive "mammy rag." That stereotype was perpetuated by such images as Aunt Jemima and Hattie McDaniel's character Mammy in *Gone With the Wind*. Over time, African-American women developed homespun methods of straightening their hair in an effort to emulate the prevailing standard of beauty in a white world.

The practice became widespread in the early 1900s with the popularization of Madame Walker's "hot comb," a technique that involved heating a metal comb and running it through the hair to temporarily straighten it.

A paradoxical prosperity

Born on a cotton plantation in Louisiana, Madame Walker rose from a poor, orphaned washerwoman to become the nation's first black woman millionaire.

Her business on Indiana Avenue resulted in jobs and economic independence for many blacks, but it also perpetuated a white standard of beauty.

"In America, if you wanted to move forward, you had to approximate that standard of beauty," said Gloria Gibson, professor of African-American studies at Indiana University. "It really did boil down to fitting in. African-Americans were forced to take on a dual identity in order to succeed, and Madame Walker helped them do that."

Historically, blacks bought into Eurocentric standards of beauty, said Gibson. "It's the standard of beauty that society puts forth, and we constantly need to question that."

Sujai Davis was almost 40 before she began to question her own exhaustive beauty regimen.

One day, she decided to cut off her chemically straightened hair. In its place, she grew locks, an African-inspired style in which her hair naturally grows into long, loose coils down her back.

The transformation was as much spiritual as physical, she said.

The thick, rounded locks that now bounce and move against her shoulders are worn with pride and a touch of defiance.

"You develop a new confidence once you learn to love yourself as God made you," said Davis, an Afrocentric beauty consultant who runs a natural-hair-care salon out of her Northeastside home. There is a beauty we naturally possess that we're trying now to express, and one of the ways we're trying to do that is through our

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hair."

To this day, hair remains a sensitive and often political issue for many African-American women.

Some have made a conscious decision to "go natural," choosing to wear Afrocentric styles such as braids, locks, twists or afros that signal pride in their heritage.

"You must start off by loving the kink," said Resa Chapman, a stylist at Nubians Beauty Salon at 5750 Michigan Road. "Our hair is our glory - it grows up to God. The black woman didn't come over here with mammy rags - she came with braids and locks."

But many black women say the decision to straighten or chemically relax their hair often is more an issue of style and management than anything else.

Trendy tresses

"Even if they straighten their hair, they have very ethnic styles that identify them as African-American women," explained Cindy Neff, a law student at IUPUI. "The styles are unique to African-American women, and it has nothing to do with wanting to look white."

Others say they have simply followed the dictates of fashion, sporting the afro worn by black power advocate Angela Davis in the '70s, the Jheri curl in the '80s and a sleek shag like actress Theresa Randle's today.

"Nobody messes with their hair as much as black women. We can do everything white people can do - and about 15 things more," said Debra Clements, a case manager for U.S. Bankruptcy Court. "But no matter what we do, it always reverts back."

Whatever the reason, hair continues to be a powerful and important symbol for African-American women.

"When black women come to terms with their hair, they can rule the world," said Clements, citing a favorite quote.

Coming to terms

Today, women of all colors face near-impossible standards of beauty. But for black women especially, learning to accept and even love their hair in all its kinky, curly, natural glory is often a long and thoughtful process.

"It's taken me a while to get there, but now I'm at the point



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where I'm pleased with what I look like," said Shana Saddler, 23, a Panama-born professional model who sports 120 natural braids in her hair.

"I used to look at lighter-skinned blacks and think it would be better to be lighter-skinned. But now, if someone calls me chocolate, I'm like, 'Thank you.' I even lie in the sun."

For Monique Threatt, 36, the decision to stop straightening her hair was as much financial as political.

A graduate student at IU in Bloomington, Threatt decided she could no longer afford the time or money it took to style her hair on a regular basis.

"Black women like to look good, and it can get outrageous," she said. "They get their nails done, their hair done. I wonder sometimes how they afford it."

African-Americans spend three times more than any other consumer group on cosmetics, toiletries and other personal grooming products, according to author Noliwe Rooks in her book, *Hair Raising: Beauty, Culture and African American Women*.

Furthermore, market figures show that black Americans help fuel America's multibillion-dollar hair-care industry by spending the bulk of their beauty dollars on hair-straightening products.

A hair-raising threat?

Yet for many, the "hair issue" still goes way beyond questions of money or style. Many black professionals battling racism and "old boy" networks in the corporate world feel that they must assimilate physically in order to succeed.

"Economic freedom has a lot to do with people wearing their hair naturally," Clements said. "As black people have moved up, they feel more at ease with themselves and they can wear their hair any way they want."

Even so, choice often remains a relative issue. Many black men and women say that Afrocentric styles popularized by the hip-hop movement probably would be considered "threatening" or "unprofessional" in the business world.

"I waited until I got a full-time job before I got locks," said Leon Jett, a festival park programmer at The Children's Museum. "Hair is our most obvious expression of that struggle to be who we are and still be part of the dominant culture. Very few (black) people who are successful in the workplace have natural hair."



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No one understands that better than Edrice Simmons, 25, a liaison for a local home-care agency. Her sales territory covers predominantly white communities such as Greenwood, Martinsville and Greenfield.

Her carefully styled, straightened hair is central to the image she feels she must project in the workplace. As a black woman, Simmons says, she always starts out with two strikes against her.

"As soon as I walk in, I'm getting the once-over," she said. "Because I'm black, I have to be flawless."

Ultimately, a black American's choice of hairstyle is not nearly so important as the soul-searching that inevitably comes with it.

Hair is only one of many ways to reflect pride in your ethnic heritage, said IU's Gibson. The key is to know who you are and where you come from. For any black American, male or female, that is not always an easy task.

"I'm not trying condemn black women for what they choose to do with their hair," she said. "Just know why you're doing it, and if it's buying into these (white) values, then you really need to examine it."

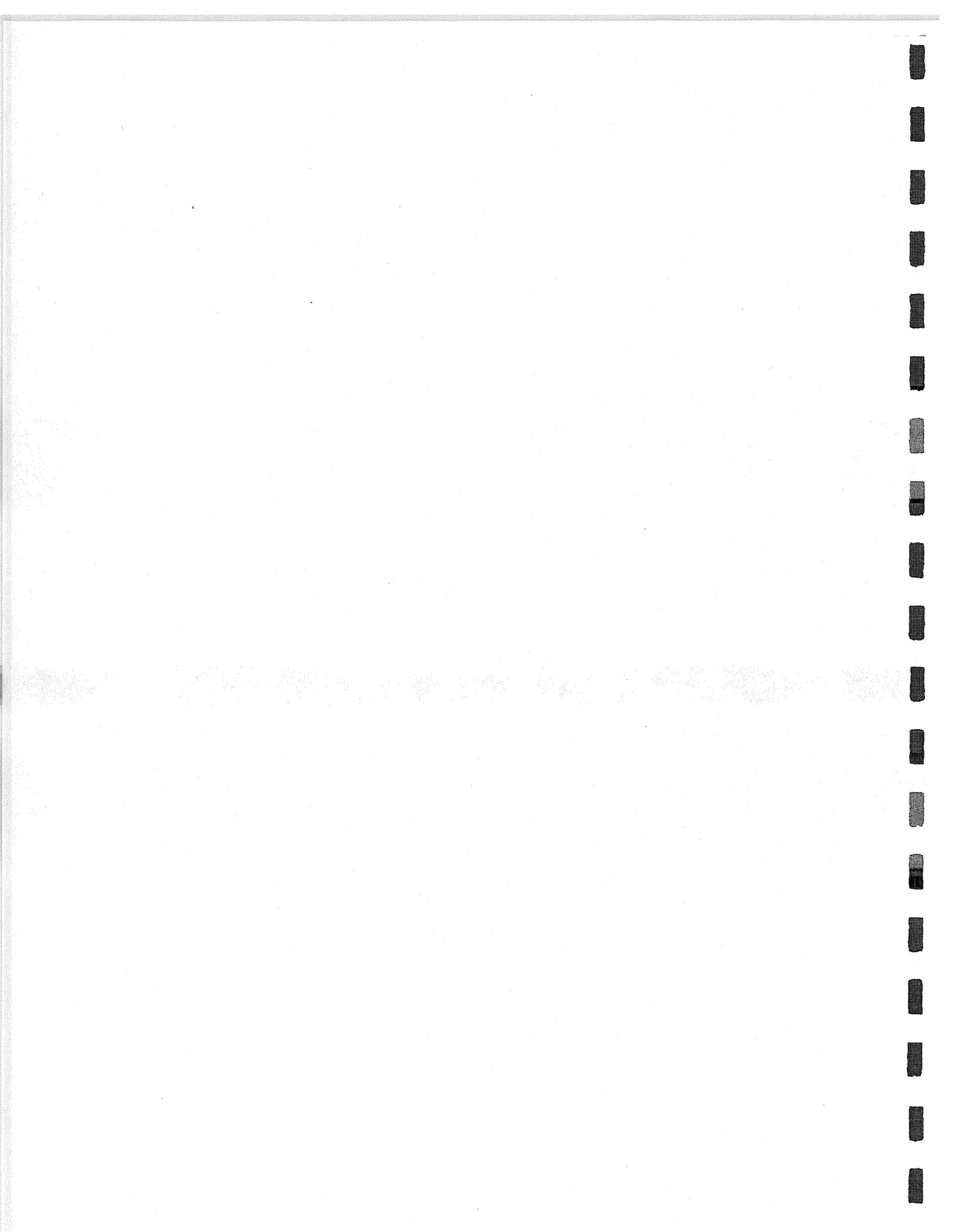
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CREDIT:KAT WADE; CAPTION:HAIRY ISSUE: Helen Wells Agency model Jill Alexander (left) favors relaxed waves, while colleague Vanessa Conner likes tighter curls.; CREDIT:KAT WADE; MODELS COURTESY HELEN WELLS AGENCY; CAPTION:AFROCENTRIC: Shana Saddler (foreground) sports 120 natural braids in her hair. In the background is Staci Lipscomb. Hair is a powerful symbol for black women, many of whom find that braids and locks convey pride in their black heritage.; CREDIT:KIM TRAVIS; CAPTION:A REVELATION: Sujai Davis (center) was almost 40 before she came to terms with her natural hair. She's now a beauty consultant who runs a salon. Her daughters are Kristen (left) and Tiffany.; COLOR PHOTOS; PHOTO

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Wednesday, February 26, 1997

More black people wear natural hair locks to evoke pride, battle prejudice

RUBY L. BAILEY

The Detroit News

GNS Fashion

In some African cultures, hair tells a story. Whether you are married or single, celebrating or in mourning, the hair is braided, twisted or otherwise styled to show your state of being.

The multitude of thick coils -- called dreadlocks -- dangling from the shoulders of 10-year-old Zuri offer a story of freedom.

"My hair means I don't have to follow the rules of a society that don't look like me," says the Detroit youngster, who decided at age 4 that he wanted dreadlocks. "My hair means I like me, I like my hair, whether anyone else does or not."

Locks -- strands of hair twisted together that naturally "lock" -- are as old as Africa and as new as Eddie Murphy's "Metro" in which the actor sports short twists. If left undisturbed, his thin twists will lock and grow in length. And he'll join Whoopi Goldberg, singer Tracy Chapman, members of the group Arrested Development, author Toni Morrison and actor T.C. Carson, all of whom have locks. For some, locks are as controversial as the Rastafarians who are said to have dubbed them "dreaded" as a sign of defiance to European oppressors. Rastafarians also shun meat, alcohol and tobacco products and celebrate marijuana as a sacrament.

Some black people have dropped the word "dread," saying slave owners described them as such. They instead refer to them as Nubian or African locks or, simply, locks.

Zuri, whose parents don't use a last name, is probably one of the youngest warriors in the battle to proclaim as cherished the natural curl and even kink in African-American hair texture.

Those in the hair industry say locks are today what the afro was in the 1960s -- a symbol of power, liberation and racial pride. Although the afro gave way to the Jheri curl, they don't believe locks will fade in popularity.

"We worked for 400 years trying to get this stuff (hair)

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straight," says Rosario Schuler, founder of My Nappy Hair salons in Los Angeles and Oakland, Calif. Schuler styled a wig for one of Eddie Murphy's stunt doubles in "Metro." Her first salon opened in 1989 and has an equal clientele of men and women. "After awhile, you just get tired. The next step is natural hair." But it is a broad stride to take in Detroit, like many cities, where perm kits, texturizers and pressing combs reign on store shelves and in beauty salons.

Natural hair salons are few outside large metro areas, unlike in cities such as New York and Los Angeles. Many lockticians operate from their homes. And Michigan, like much of the country, has yet to pass regulations recognizing natural hair styling.

BEGIN OPTIONAL TRIM

The stares and questions are many, say lock wearers, including Juri, who says he was once called names and handed a hair comb at a suburban mall.

But those are minor aggravations and worth bearing. And when asked, "What is that in your hair?" many answer from a perspective that goes beyond fashion or politics. "It's a spiritual thing," says Detroitter Kenneth Bishop, 32, an administrative assistant for community and economic development with the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments. When Bishop recently had his hair twisted, "I just felt that connection with my ancestry," he says.

END OPTIONAL TRIM

Locks are deeply rooted in African cultures. As children, Masai warriors nurture the naturally matted locks and grow them until their passage into manhood, when the hair is cut.

"It's a style (worn by) all major cultures in Africa -- worn byaraohs, the Masai tribe, in Senegal," says Orin Saunders, one of the owners of Locks and Chops in mid-town Manhattan. The 10-year-old establishment has grown in popularity in the past five years.

Historians say locks formed on the heads of slaves during the Middle Passage, scaring owners who thought the slaves were undergoing the sort of beastlike transformation. Colonists called them painful, cut the slaves' hair and forbade them to grow it back.

Most people of African ancestry have stayed away from locks and their natural hair texture ever since, says Saunders.

To have natural, kinky hair has come across as a negative since slavery, says Saunders. "We were not trained to wear our hair naturally. But it comes out of the roots like that. And if God made

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it, it's got to be good."

That is part of the philosophy of the Rastafarians. Started in the 1930s by followers of the Ethiopian king, Haile Selassie I (whose given name was Ras Tafari Makonnen), the movement crossed the Atlantic to the West Indies and was adopted by the Maroons, a group of Jamaicans descended from slaves.

The group let their hair grow into locks in part as an expression of faith in adherence to a biblical Scripture which commanded never to comb or cut the hair.

For today's lock wearers, "Every lock is a step towards self-affirmation, towards self-love," says Schuler. "We've finally come into our sense of being in terms of loving ourselves."

That has been a battle for many black people. Having their hair ruled unattractive since slavery, some now judge their own hair as "good" or "bad" by how straight -- or close to European -- it is in texture and length. Short hair is often perceived as bad hair that cannot grow. And any sign of natural curl -- or kinkiness -- is translated as nappy.

After that comes a long life of trying to "fix" the hair -- with pressing combs, hot curlers, perm kits or texturizers.

That striving toward someone else's concept of "good hair" is in part the reason Madame C.J. Walker, founder of the oldest African-American hair care and cosmetics company, became a millionaire by selling the pressing comb. Black women wanted freedom from the natural curl and kinkiness of their hair. And they also wanted the economic benefits that came with a more mainstream look.

"It was not, 'I want to be white,'" says Noliwe Rooks, author of "Hair Raising: Beauty, Culture and African American Women" (Rutgers University Press, \$16.95) Her book details the history of the politics of beauty in the black community, from Madame Walker to today's looks. Rooks is also director of African-American studies and an assistant professor of English at the University of Missouri, Kansas City. "It was about economic opportunity. Jobs were easier to get with straight hair."

And they probably still are. That's why some lock wearers say they waited until they were employed before locking their hair.

And they asked the boss's opinion first. All reported acceptance from supervisors, albeit a few stares and questions from co-workers.

Beyond that, a black person's basic qualifications can be questioned because of hair style. And there may be the concern among



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employers, "Will I fit into the company?" says Ronald Shelton of Detroit.

"If I was a young man looking for a job, I would not be wearing dreadlocks," says Shelton, who locked his hair a few years ago. The 41-year-old pipe fitter-welder sports shoulder-length locks with suits and ties.

"Your aim is to move up to the next level," he says. "You'll never do that wearing dreadlocks, and that's reality." Shelton, who has worked for a company for several years, says he sees no room for promotions in his current position.

BEGIN OPTIONAL TRIM

An episode of the Fox television series "Living Single" dealt with the issue, when T.C. Carson's character, Kyle, nearly missed a promotion because he refused to cut his locks.

But in real life as well, some employers are placing restrictions on hair styles. American Airlines, for example, prohibits flight attendants from wearing their hair in styles that are totally braided.

"There are all kinds of cases and all kinds of stories," says Rooks, 30. "A security guard in Sacramento was fired because his locks scared customers even though he wore a hat."

END OPTIONAL TRIM

Zuri isn't worried about employment prospects. And not because he's only 10. Freedom, he knows, has its costs.

"To go to someone and ask them to accept me and give me what they have is not what I want to be about," says Zuri. "I will make my own way. My locks set me apart and make me free. And I will always live like that."

----- INDEX REFERENCES -----

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Friday, February 21, 1997

BUSINESS

Fashion trend nets hair stylists steady business.
Marc S. Franklin STAFF WRITER

This article appeared in both The Atlanta Journal and The Atlanta Constitution.

Rosilyn George's travel tote doesn't contain a businesswoman's typical blue suit and dossiers. Once a month, the Bronx, N.Y., hairdresser packs some human hair and a pair of shears into a bag and heads to Atlanta, where she adds weaves and braid extensions to clients' hair.

Sound unusual? Maybe, but the 36-year-old's hair-weaving and braiding skills are in such high demand in Atlanta that she rakes in an average of \$1,400 a week, she says.

"I stay here for two weeks and do hair, then I go back home in New York and stay for two weeks," explains George, who works at Braids, Weaves & Things in College Park. "As long as they (clients) keep coming, I'll be braiding and weaving."

Hair stylists in Atlanta and around the country are cashing in on the current hair extensions craze. Once the domain of the rich and famous, one in four African-American women now sports some form of hair weave. That figure is expected to rise to one in three by the end of this year, said Gerri Jones, executive director of the American Health & Beauty Aids Institute, a Chicago-based nonprofit trade group. And women are willing to pay dearly for weaves, shelling out anywhere from \$50 to well over \$1,000 for the process.

"Many women like to change their look pretty regularly, and hair weaving provides that option," Jones said. "Hair weaving is also used very often to enhance thin hair, so it provides a very all-bodied look."

Indeed, hair is a growing industry.

Each year, African-Americans spend \$225 million on hair-weaving services and products. This includes salon services and the purchase of human and synthetic hair and products used to maintain the weaves, which are the most popular form of hair extensions.



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Import value of human hair more than doubled from \$41.8 million in 1991 to \$87.15 million last year, according to U.S. Department of Commerce reports.

Imported hair, which comes from China, Indonesia and the Koreas, is used also for false beards, eyebrows and eyelashes as well as wigs and hairpieces.

For many African-American women such as Mignon Lawson, acquiring perfectly coiffed hair is a ritual taken as seriously as assembling a wardrobe or meticulously applying makeup. The 26-year-old Lawson has been wearing a weave since she was 15.

"It's like my security blanket," she explains. "I feel better when my hair looks thicker. Some people smoke, I like hair weave."

Latasha Brown shelled out \$375 last month at the NuBiance Hair Salon in Stone Mountain for her first weave. The 22-year-old, who normally wears her own hair in a short bob, said she added the hair because she wanted a new, longer look.

"I like it and I'll probably keep it for two months or so," she said.

When Braids, Weaves & Things co-owner Taliah Waajid moved her business to Atlanta from New York in 1991, she had doubts about whether the business would thrive. Since then, her clientele has more than quadrupled, she says.

"Business is really good, but we miss a lot of money because of the size (of the shop); we're limited in the number of customers we can service," explains Waajid, who plans to open a new 10,000-square-foot facility on Old National Highway by June.

Costs for hair extensions can run as high as the hair itself. For instance, Waajid says braids in her shop range from \$35 for a fishtail braid to \$1,000 for micro-braids. Hair weaves can be just as pricey, costing anywhere from \$25 for a partial weave to \$1,050 for a full head of hair.

Jaimee Harbin recently sat through a grueling five-hour session as her 7-year-old daughter, Jamila, had braided extensions added to her hair. The College Park mother of two daughters said it was worth it.

"It saves beaucoup time in the morning," she reasoned. "Doing hair is one less thing we have to worry about."

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LET'S TALK HAIR

LET'S TALK HAIR

Every Black Woman's Personal Consultation for Healthy Growing Hair



P a m e l a F e r r e l l

The cosmetology industry has become so obsessed with chemical hair care and European hair texture, that black women are experiencing burn out, burnt off hair, broken edges and a need to express their innate loveliness. Hair braiders are the alternative to "fix your hair like a white woman" beauticians. Also, black women discovered that braids encouraged hair growth. The braid style was the much needed prescription for giving processed hair a rest and growing healthy hair.

Hair braiders became healers who would doctor black women's damaged hair and bruised spirit. Black women would seek us out because they knew the hair braider would nurture their damaged hair back to health, even though some women would go and perm their hair time and time again. Braiders were sometimes frustrated, but continued to educate and teach black women to love their natural hair and African-inspired hair styles. In the process, the true American hair braider was born to set the standard for healthy hair care and alternative hair styling.

Part of the growing pains in the hair care industry was that braiders were looked down on by "Euro-educated" hair dressers and even the "uppity Negroes" who felt that braids were for the under-class. Many women changed their tune, once they started going bald and needed a braider to restore their hair. The American braider, looking for validation and recognition, found her own specialized place in the hair industry. Natural hair care via the black esthetic was her forte.

I can remember my first trip to West Africa in 1982, embracing Africa as the place to get some historical facts on the art of hair braiding. I thought I could easily find documentation, books and photo libraries full of information about the history of braids. I found, instead, that as in America, the history and nuances of the art of hair braiding are contained in a closed network of family braiders. Most of the African hair braiders I met were through personal introductions. They were pleasantly surprised and excited about the "American hair braider," and could not believe I learned how to braid in an American neighborhood in Providence, Rhode Island; not in Africa.

I realized, then, that my style of American braiding and hair care was quite advanced and unlike the African braiders. In studying the many styles of hair braiders throughout the United States, I found a distinct difference between the African hair braider's styles and methods and that of the American hair braider. For example, American hair braiders stand behind the head to invert braid, while the African hair braider stands in front of the head to produce the same braid. The American hair braider's beginning points for extension cornrows is flat, away from the hairline, to create a soft undetectable effect; while the African hair braiders' extension braid covers and in some cases creates a hairline, giving the effect of a sculpted cap.

American hair braiders generally braid to encourage hair growth; African braiders braid for style and culture. In some regions of Africa, the braids are often entirely too tight and cause bald receding hairlines. Hair care is not their main objective. (This is not to say that American braiders don't braid the hair too tight as well.) But the advent of natural hair was a direct result of the work of American hair braiders. However, despite the differences, we braiders were on equal footing and both had something to offer during my visits to Africa. We exchanged ideas, styles, methods, and techniques.

In America, African hair braiders have benefited from the popularity of African-American women who want their hair braided. They are able to earn a living, far greater than what they could make in Africa. Our African sisters have come to America and used their skills to capitalize on the growing hair braiding industry. The most successful African hair braiders are those who adapt to American standards and styles that African-American consumers desire.

How to find a professional hair braider

The biggest challenge to having your hair braided is finding a professional hair braider and hair braiding salon. Unfortunately, because there are few, if any, schools that teach the science of hair braiding, resources are limited. The traditional way of finding a qualified and experienced person in any practice is to start at the schools. But until a hair braider's license is available throughout the United States, finding hair braiders via schools is not an option. Word of mouth and seeing a beautiful style on someone else are two safe places to start.

If you see someone wearing a braid style you like, ask for the braider's telephone number. The most creative and skilled hair braider's work will speak for itself. Let the person who is wearing the braid style know that you are interested in finding a good braider to care for your hair. Some customers are selfish and do not share their braider's name, for some childish fear that you may get the same style. Don't let this discourage you; just keep your eyes open for beautifully braided hair styles and continue to ask until you get the name of the best hair braider in your area.

In your quest for finding a good hair braider, don't get so desperate that you go to a girlfriend's cousin's sister's house "to get your hair did" for twenty dollars. Too often, cheap, braided hair styles look like you were used as a practice head. They have big knots, frizzy braids, no style and just plain tacky looking. Expect to invest in your hair care.

The other problem you may encounter is the home braiders house or even some shoddy braid salons that may be in the worst of conditions and circumstances. It all depends on your tolerance level. I have had clients tell me about their experience with some of the most talented braiders who live in unsafe neighborhoods, their houses

may not be in the most sanitary condition, babies may be running around the house and who knows what else. You make the choice of going through this to have your hair braided. Women have complained that some braiding salons are expensive, but the difference may be in service, atmosphere and hygiene.

In major cities across the United States, braid salons are opening at a fast rate. All braiding salons, however, are not created equal. Beware of the braid salons that have become sweat shops that offer bargain prices from unskilled workers. The old saying, "you get what you pay for," holds true for cheap braid styles done by untrained braiders who know little about sanitation or hair and scalp care. Some braiders can braid nicely but know little about how to take care of your hair. You will have to be the judge from your first impression and overall comfort with a new salon and braider.

Some things you may look for are whether the salon is clean, organized, and stocked with the products and supplies for braiding your hair. Ask for a consultation, so that you may look at photos of their work and get answers to questions that concern your hair needs. If the salon has novice or apprentice hair braiders, ask if they will be supervised by an experienced hair braider. This may help you avoid a bad braid experience.

During the consultation, give any details about past braid experiences, whether you will be swimming, exercising and need style versatility or low maintenance. Explain your style likes and dislikes; (for example, you may not like hair off your face). The more a stylist knows about you the easier it is to create a style to suit your needs.

Questions to ask a braider during a pre-braid consultation.

1. **May I see photos of styles that you have done here? (Some braider photo albums will include pictures from magazines, books and work not done at the salon.)**
2. **Based on my texture and hair condition, is my hair strong enough to braid?**
3. **Can you tell me the pros and cons of the braid styles I like.**
4. **How much will the style cost and how long will it take to braid?**
5. **How long will the style last before I should have it rebraided?**
6. **What types of extensions will be used; human hair or synthetic fiber and is this included in the total price?**
7. **Do you shampoo and condition my hair before braiding?**
8. **How should I take care of my braided style?**
9. **How should I remove the braids before re-braiding?**
10. **How much will it cost to have it re-braided?**

Choosing the Right Hair Extensions

Hair extensions have their place in styling and grooming. The naturalist may use them occasionally to achieve a certain style, give the natural hair a rest, for longevity or to add length to a braid style. If you have long, healthy hair, however, I recommend using extensions sparingly. Hair extensions can become just as addictive as chemical processing. Their use should be limited so that the hair can be managed and maintained naturally.

In the case where you may need to use extensions for in-between stages of growing out short, damaged or processed hair; to cover balding, thin areas, hair extensions are useful. Not only will they cover problem hair, but will protect your hair as it is growing.

Many American women are, for the first time, experimenting with hair extensions. Although relatively new in modern hair styling, extensions have been around for centuries. Egyptian women, like Cleopatra, are remembered for their elaborately braided wigs and military headdress made out of natural and artificial materials. The women of antiquity used hair extensions to protect their shaved heads from the hot sun. And even today, throughout Africa, you will still find women who wear hair extensions for traditional and ceremonial styles.

As with any hair care regimen, wearing hair extensions has its good and bad points. If you are wearing hair attachments for the first time or want to know how your hair additions can look as natural as possible, here are some tips that will help you make the right choice.

1. Always have hair extensions applied by a skilled, expert hair braider.
2. Select the right color, length and extension type, in consult with your braider, so that your new extension hair does not look artificial and obviously longer.
3. When the braids get frizzy and ratty looking, it is time to take out and re-do your hair extension style.
4. If hair extensions are applied correctly they will not pull the hair or hurt.
5. *The two types of hair extensions used for styling are weft and bulk.*
 - a) **Weft** hair extension is loose hair sewn and bound together at one end, creating a band. The weft type extension is used for weaving and hair pieces.
 - b) **Bulk** hair extension is a bundle of loose hair that is not permanently bound together. This type of extension is used to braid small pieces onto the hair.

PAMELA FERRELL

Let's Talk Hair

Foreword by A'Lelia Bundles, great-great
granddaughter of Madam C.J. Walker

Every Black Woman's Personal Consultation for Healthy Growing Hair

Pamela Ferrell's natural hair care system has helped thousands of women grow healthy hair. You will feel like you have had her one-on-one personal consultation to talk about your hair... it's unique qualities and how you can care for it without chemicals. Learn beauty industry secrets and answers to all the questions you wanted to ask but didn't know who to ask.

You Will Learn

- New braid, twist, weave styles
- If you are a "hair abuser"
- Hair textures & conditions
- How to grow out the relaxer/perm
- Hair problems, thinning, balding
- Do it yourself natural styles
- Questions to ask in consultation
- Start, style & care for locks
- How to find a natural stylist
- Choosing safe hair products

"Pam has given me a new freedom -- my hair is under control and in keeping with my fast pace life. Thank you for this wonderful discovery."

U.S. Senator, Carol Moseley Braun

"Pam is like family and I make sure I take her with me on all my exotic locations. There is no one that knows about the care of black hair better than Pam. We all have childhood memories of our moms trying to comb our hair. If Pam was there, we wouldn't have hated our hair so much!"

Diana Ross



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Pamela Ferrell, a natural hair care specialist for over fifteen years, Co-owner of Cornrows & Co Salon, Wash., DC. is a licensed cosmetologist, a member of the DC Barber & Cosmetology Board, and the American Hairbraiders & Natural Haircare Association. She is the author of *Where Beauty Touches Me*, *Gallery of Artstyles* and the first textbook for *Professional Hairbraiding*. Hair designer for the acclaimed film "Daughter's of the Dust", she has established herself as the world's leading natural hair care expert.

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