



The Practice of Freedom

Educate, Empower, Encourage: Wash Day

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Black women are often discriminated against in the workforce due to their hair. This present-day discrimination and disdain against Black natural hair is rooted in slavery practices (Dawson et al, 2019; Donahoo, 2021; Donahoo & Smith, 2019; Jones 2020; Powell, 2019).

The stigma, scrutiny, and irreverence towards afros, braids, twists, locs, Bantu knots, and cornrows has made it difficult for Black women who choose to keep and display their natural hair to obtain a job, keep a job, or excel professionally (Chaves, & Bacharach, 2021; Dawson et al, 2019; Donahoo, 2021; Donahoo & Smith, 2019; Jones, 2020; Powell, 2019; Rowe, 2021). This leaves one to grapple with the decision to stifle themselves, enduring mental/emotional oppression to keep their jobs or embrace themselves and lose their job (Jones, 2020; Powell, 2019).

For those who are gainfully employed, professionalism has been typically determined and maintained by white male elites and Eurocentric likeness, causing Black women to feel othered and/or compelled to adhere to anti-Black norms (Dawson et al, 2019; Donahoo, 2021; Donahoo, 2021; Jones, 2020; Powell, 2019; Rowe, 2021).

To combat inequity and champion for social justice *Educate, Empower, Encourage: Wash Day* is a flat lay photograph that affirms and acknowledges Black women with natural hair. The image is intended to draw parallels between “wash day” and the eradication of natural hair discrimination. Both will require various tools and resources, unique in their makeup and services to achieve the desired goal.

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