

Rebuttal of Bell Hooks' Article, Straightening My Hair

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The article Straightening My Hair by Bell Hooks makes her argument of finding the reason of why African American women straighten their hair. She first states that Black Americans straighten their hair because it is the stage of transformation; it closes the door of innocence and opens the door to adulthood. Slowly, she starts changing her views. She comes up with the statement that African Americans do not straighten their [hair](#) for reasonable reasons, but to imitate the characteristics of white women. She informs that black people repeat this process because they have low self-acceptance of their roots and background, and that they have lost beauty in themselves. My argument against this statement is that it is erroneous to claim that the straightening of African American hair is misinterpreted as their acceptance into the white community; straightening of hair is the symbolism of impending womanhood, closing the door of innocence, and sharing a time to meditate by relaxing your soul.

“Hair pressing was a ritual of black women’s culture” ([Hooks](#) 534). She stated this earlier in the article and changed her views moving into the depths of the article. With her claiming this quote, it has already set the tone that black women express their maturity and

symbolism of growing into adulthood by straightening their hair. Then all of a sudden she changes her views. This change does not show the credibility of the author. The audience view that her facts are not accurate and people begins to doubt in her claim.

She set the theme of the article of expressing that straightening of black people hair is the denial of self acceptance in having the confidence of their individual features. She states “Heterosexual black women talked about the extent to which black men respond more favorably to women with straight or straighten hair” (Hooks 538). She explains how they try to please other people in trying to make themselves more beautiful to others they want to attract. This is a personal opinion. She makes a broad generalization that all black men are attracted to women that have straight hair. This statistic is not efficient because there are different men that are attracted to different styles. The majority of people do not change themselves because they want to appeal to others, but to make themselves feel better about their personal beauty.

She states, “Individual preferences (whether rooted in self hate or not) cannot negate the reality that our collective obsession with straightening black hair reflects the psychology of oppression and the impact of racist colonization” (Hooks 540).

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