

M0053917NC

T2158 ✓

NC 0017934 5



NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN

FASHION AND TEXTILES

FASHION

REPRESENTATIONS OF BLACK ISSUES

BY

ANDRÉ HACKETT

**SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF HISTORY OF ART AND DESIGN
AND COMPLIMENTARY STUDIES IN CANDIDACY FOR THE
DEGREE OF FASHION DESIGN**

1999

NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN

FASHION AND TEXTILES

FASHION

REPRESENTATIONS OF BLACK ISSUES

BY

ANDRÉ BACCHETTI

DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN FASHION DESIGN
AND COMPLEMENTARY STUDIES IN CANADIAN HISTORY OF ART AND DESIGN

1999

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page:
Introduction	1
Chapter 1	
Hair, as a social, cultural and economic statement!	2
The Straightening Debate	3
The Rise of Afro hairstyles as a unifying factor	8
Chapter 2	
Beauty, inherited ideals of aesthetic beliefs	17
Black Beauty Vs dominant fictional ideals	19
Enforced codes of regulated Beauty	21
Challenging ideals	22
Chapter 3	
Changing Times	28
The Rise in Representation	29
The Power of the Media and a Positive Image	40
Conclusion	44

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pages

1	Introduction
3	Chapter 1 Hair as a social, cultural and economic statement
7	The Straightening Debate
8	The Rise of Afro hairstyles as a unifying force
17	Chapter 2 Beauty, inherited ideals of western beauty
19	Black Beauty Vs dominant Western ideals
21	Faded codes of regulated Beauty
23	Challenging ideals
28	Chapter 3 Changing Times
29	The Rise in Representation
49	The Power of the Media and a Beauty's Image
44	Conclusion

LIST OF PLATES

		PAGE NO.
Fig. 1	Donyale Luna	5
Fig. 2	The Supremes	6
Fig. 3	Little Richard	7
Fig. 4	Ike Turner	7
Fig. 5	'Afro' hairstyle	10
Fig. 6	'Natural' hairstyle	10
Fig. 7	Malcolm X	11
Fig. 8	Members of the 'Black Panthers'	11
Fig. 9 & 10	'Cornrow' hairstyle	13
Fig. 11 & 12	'Braided' hairstyles	14
Fig. 13	Bob Marley	15
Fig. 14	'Dreadlock' hairstyle	16
Fig. 15	Claudia Schiffer	18
Fig. 16	Michael Jackson	24
Fig. 17	Iman	25
Fig. 18	Beverley Johnson	25
Fig. 19	Naomi Campbell	25
Fig. 20	Brandi Quinones	26
Fig. 21	Lorraine Pascale	26

LIST OF PLATES

PAGE NO.

2	Dorothy Linn	Fig. 1
6	The Paperies	Fig. 2
7	Little Richard	Fig. 3
7	The Turner	Fig. 4
10	The Turner	Fig. 5
10	Natural hair style	Fig. 6
10	Molecular X	Fig. 7
11	Members of the Black Panther	Fig. 8
14	Cornrow hairstyle	Fig. 9 & 10
14	Braided hairstyle	Fig. 11 & 12
15	Bob Hair	Fig. 13
16	Braidlock hairstyle	Fig. 14
18	Crown cut	Fig. 15
24	Michael Jackson	Fig. 16
25	Linn	Fig. 17
25	Betty Johnson	Fig. 18
25	Naomi Campbell	Fig. 19
26	Brenda Johnson	Fig. 20
26	Lorraine Pascale	Fig. 21

PAGE NO.

Fig. 22	Alek Wek	27
Fig. 23	Susan Carman	27
Fig. 24	Derogative image of sexuality	30
Fig. 25	Naomi Campbell	31
Fig. 26	Mel B	32
Fig. 27	Naomi Sims	33
Fig. 28	I.D. magazine advertisement	35
Fig. 29	Iman, Georgina, Naomi Campbell	37
Fig. 30	ELLE magazine covers	38
Fig. 31	ELLE magazine cover & VOGUE feature	39
Fig. 32	'Roy'	42
Fig. 33	Tommy Hilfiger advertisement	43

27	After War	Fig. 22
27	Spain's Crisis	Fig. 23
29	Herbert's image of security	Fig. 24
31	Naomi Campbell	Fig. 25
32	Fig. B	Fig. 26
33	Naomi Sims	Fig. 27
35	Elle magazine advertisement	Fig. 28
37	Iman, Gretchen, Naomi Campbell	Fig. 29
38	ELLE magazine covers	Fig. 30
39	ELLE magazine cover & OGLE feature	Fig. 31
42	Boy	Fig. 32
43	Tommy Hilgert advertisement	Fig. 33

INTRODUCTION

“is it a plane? No. is it a bird?
Yes. Its *Donyale Luna*, a way outer-space out-of-sight gal.”

(Magazine caption for *Donyale Luna*, quoted in *Keenan*, 1967, p.178)

It is because of such captions, remarks and attitudes as the one above that has subconsciously sparked off the topic for my thesis: The debate on black issues and black representation. I chose to examine how a community can be categorised because of one aspect of their appearance. Also at issue is the case of a black person being introduced to a wider audience as something untameable, wild, out of this planet – alien! (Ref. Fig.1, p.5)

The problem is that all too often and even in today’s society, such an attitude is almost a natural reaction among certain individuals, against the image of blackness. I would suggest that the attitudes of such people are a purely inherited misconception. They are generated greatly by years of media distortion and neglect. I am going to look at how black people and their culture have been socially repressed for decades, and how their representation is being reflected on a wider scale today.

Such degradation, like slavery, media neglect, and social negligence have all, in turn, affected the self-esteem of a whole community, while also tarnishing the opinion of everyone else towards black people worldwide.

For such a complex issue as black representation, I will unfold to the best of my knowledge, through research, interviews and written sources, the image and representation of black people in society, through such topics as their hairstyles. As such, it is a fashion of their own that black people could connect with. The hairstyles were a silent voice and a unifying factor among them during such times as the Civil Rights Movement.

I will also delve into the subject matter of the representation of black beauty, as another form of beauty, versus the dominant functional ideal of beauty. Thus I will also examine the rise in representation and types of representation today. However my aim is not to give a definition of ‘true’ blackness or representation, but more to recognise the issue, and to try and unravel why the issue became such in the first place.

INTRODUCTION

Yes, his Doublet Law, a way, outer-space out-of-sight gal,
"is it a plane? No, it is a bird?"

(Magazine caption for Doublet Law, quoted in Keweenaw, 1967, p. 178)

It is because of such captions, remarks and attitudes as the one above that has
subconsciously sparked off the topic for my thesis. The debate on black issues and
black representation. I chose to examine how a community can be categorised
because of one aspect of their appearance. Also at issue is the case of a black
person being introduced to a white audience as something untamable, wild, out of
this planet - alien (Ref. fig. 1, p. 2).

The problem is that all too often and even in today's society, such an attitude is
almost a natural reaction among certain individuals, against the image of
blackness. I would suggest that the attitudes of such people are a purely informed
misconception. They are generated greatly by years of media distortion and
neglect. I am going to look at how black people and their culture have been
socially repressed for decades, and how their representation is being reflected on a
wider scale today.

Such degradation, like slavery, media neglect, and social negligence have all in
turn affected the self-esteem of a whole community, while also tampering the
opinion of every one else towards black people worldwide.

For such a complex issue as black representation, I will unfold to the best of my
knowledge, through research, interviews and with a sensitive, the image and
representation of black people in society, through such topics as their hairstyles.
As such, it is a nation of their own that black people could connect with. The
hairstyles were a silent voice and a unifying factor among them during such times
as the Civil Rights Movement.

I will also delve into the subject matter of the representation of black beauty, as
another form of beauty, versus the dominant functional ideal of beauty. This
will also examine the rise in representation and types of representation today.
However, my aim is not to give a definition of 'true' blackness or representation,
but more to recognise the issue, and to try and unravel why the issue became such
in the first place.

CHAPTER 1

Hair, as a social, cultural and economic statement!

Hair is described in the Oxford dictionary as, “any or all of fine filaments growing from the skin”. It is an organic matter produced by psychological process and a natural aspect of the body. It is this organic matter that has held a tremendous importance to the individual. It is a valuable natural fibre that throughout time has been connected with such symbols as youth, virility, beauty and power.

For example, in the mythological story of Samson and Delilah, Samson is a man of brilliant strength, which lies in his hair. When his hair is cut by his wife (Delilah), it ultimately leads to his death. Or again, the jealousy of the wicked stepmother who cuts the long blond lavish hair of the beautiful Rapunzel, whom she has locked in a tower.

Whether you agree with it or not, every move we make, every step we take, has an effect on how we are viewed by others. Hair is an extension of oneself and the style in which we choose to wear it is one way to express ourselves. The very regenerative and pliability of this valuable natural fibre allows us to cut, shave, dye, curl, crimp, plait, matt, etc. These options enable us to enhance, shock or distract. Thus in many ways one’s hair is effectively one’s badge and, from the view of an onlooker, can slot you into a social, cultural, economic or sexual class.

But when all is said and done ultimately we have the choice in how we want to wear it and the choice, if desired, of what image we want to create for ourselves.

From this point, I am interested in hairstyles, which have developed or are a rebellion against subservience and which give rise to the notion that, “your hair is your badge”. Thus I will focus on that of Afro hairstyles as a statement of protest. Hairstyles are often created by youth subcultures, often in a backlash against conformism. To take an example: Skinheads are borne out of poverty and oppression in white, middle (working) class suburbs of Britain, or punk hairstyles are a way to shock established points of view.

My thesis will also focus on the representation of the black community through the media, and the debate on black “beauty”. It is my belief that the hairstyles of the black community came about and developed as an interest, and extended more globally during a time when black people were fighting continuing repression and rejected a westernised fictional concept of ideal beauty. It is not open to debate that Afro hair was in opposition to Caucasian hair. It eventually became more prominent as a different type from the stated norm. It may be seen as a symbol of

CHAPTER 1

Hair as a social, cultural and economic statement

Hair is described in the Oxford dictionary as "any of all of the filaments growing from the skin". It is an organic matter produced by psychological process and a natural aspect of the body. It is the organic matter that has held a tremendous importance to the individual. It is a valuable natural fibre that throughout time has been connected with such symbols as youth, virility, beauty and power.

For example, in the mythological story of Samson and Delilah, Samson is a man of brilliant strength, which lies in his hair. When his hair is cut by his wife (Delilah) it ultimately leads to his death. Or again, the jealousy of the wicked stepmother who cuts the long blond tress hair of the beautiful Rapunzel, whom she has looked in a tower.

Whether you agree with it or not, every move we make, every step we take, has an effect on how we are viewed by others. Hair is an extension of oneself and the style in which we choose to wear it is one way to express ourselves. The very decorative and pliability of this valuable natural fibre allows us to cut, shave, dye and curl, plait, braid, etc. These options enable us to enhance, shock or flaunt. Thus in many ways one's hair is effectively one's badge and, from the view of an onlooker, can slot you into a social, cultural, economic or sexual class.

But when all is said and done ultimately we have the choice in how we want to wear it and the choice, if desired, of what image we want to create for ourselves.

From this point, I am interested in hairstyles, which have developed or are a rebellion against subversion and which give rise to the notion that "your hair is your badge". Thus I will focus on that of Afro hairstyles as a statement of protest against racism often created by youth subcultures often in a backlash against conformism. I take an example; skinheads are borne out of poverty and oppression in white, middle (working) class suburbs of Britain, or punk hairstyles are a way to shock established points of view.

My thesis will also focus on the representation of the black community through the media and the debate on black "beauty". It is my belief that the hairstyles of the black community came about and developed as an interest and extended more globally during a time when black people were fighting continuing repression and rejected a westernised fictional concept of ideal beauty. It is not only a debate that Afro hair was in opposition to Caucasian hair. It eventually became more prominent as a different type from the stated norm. It may be seen as a symbol of

the modern and post-modern conflicts between black and white people, of white people's fictional ideals of beauty and therefore of superiority.

The Straightening Debate

It is against this sociological and historical background that we must evaluate the personal and political economics of black hairstyles. There are two issues that contrast with each other personally and politically among the black community: 1. The natural hairstyle, letting Afro hair grow out freely although it was still styled into position. This hairstyle grew from the Civil Rights Movement and against the process of the second issue of: hair straightening, thought by many black people to be an assimilation to look 'white'.

These two issues are evident in *Spike Lee's* film 'School Dazes' 1992, about an all-black American high school.

The school is split in two groups called the 'Wannabees' and the 'Willbees'. The Willbees are the sector of the black community, which believes in the 'natural' look, and of course the Wannabees are the students who opt for the western notion of beauty. The film was somewhat controversial and caused a stir, because the black community is fully aware of the issue and of the two divides, but the black community chose to ignore the debate. However, the film and the issue is now in the realm of the broader, mass audience (who may not have known of the issue) to assess.

For many black women living in a western country and culture, growing up can be isolating as they cannot fully identify with the images of ideal beauty which surround them (but painstakingly try to conform to it) i.e., white, blond hair, blue eyes. Beautiful hair is an important item of a woman's sexual appeal: long, straight, shiny = white = beautiful. Curly, short, problematic = black = not beautiful. This, in my view, may cause a disillusionment and a vulnerability to white beauty advertisements. Thus many black women would endure hours of preparation and scalp burning situations in order to attain straight hair. (Shirley Bassey is known to have sued a company when hot lye (lotion) burned her hair and scalp). In so doing they were conforming to, almost struggling towards, the standards of white society in order not to feel somewhat alienated.

In America the Supremes labelled "B.L.A.P.S." (Black American princesses) embodied blackness built around white ideals of beauty, and not black ethnic ideals of beauty (Ref. Fig. 2, p.6). Straight hair, which were often wigs, took hours to put on, heavy make-up and false eyelashes were laboriously applied. This was also the case for many black men during the Rock n' Roll period of the 1950's, in the hey-day of *Tony Curtis*, and *Elvis Presley*, with their massive do's,

the problem and post-modern conflicts between black and white people, or white people's fictional ideals of beauty and therefore of superiority.

The Straightening Debate

It is against this sociological and historical background that we must evaluate the personal and political economics of black hair. There are two issues that confront with each other personally and politically among the black community. The current hairstyle, forcing Afro hair grow out freely, although it was still styled into position. This hairstyle grew from the Civil Rights Movement and against the process of the second wave of hair straightening, thought by many black people to be an aspiration to look "white".

These two issues are evident in Spike Lee's film "School Daze" (1988), about an all-black American high school.

The school is split in two groups call the "Whippers" and the "Whitties". The Whitties are the sector of the black community which believes in the natural look, and of course the Whippers are the students who opt for the western notion of beauty. The film was somewhat controversial and caused a stir because the black community is fully aware of the issue and of the two divides, but the black community chose to ignore the debate. However, the film and the issue is now in the realm of the broader mass audience (who may not have known of the issue) of

For many black women living in a western country and culture, growing up can be isolated as they cannot fully identify with the images of ideal beauty which surround them (but paradoxically try to conform to it). White blond hair, blue eyes, beautiful face is an important item of a woman's sexual appeal, long straight shiny = white = beautiful. Curly, short, kinky = black = not beautiful. This in my view may cause a disillusionment and a vulnerability to white beauty advertisements. Thus many black women would undergo hair treatments and scalp burning situations in order to attain straight hair. (Sibley, Beauty is known to have such a company when hot (iron) burned her hair and sought in so doing they were conforming to, almost straightening towards, the standards of white society in order not to feel somewhat alienated.

In America the summer labelled "Black A.P.S." (Black African Princess) embodied blackness but around white ideals of beauty, and not black natural styles of beauty (see Fig. 2, p. 10). Straight hair, which were often worn, took hours to put on heavy make-up and false eyelashes were laboriously applied. This was also the case for many black men during the Black A.P.S. period of the 1970's in the hey-day of Jay-Z, Cuba and Ed a West, with their massive do's.

big flamboyant quiffs, which were named "Conks". For black youths who listened to this music and enjoyed the scene and style along with it, their aspirations towards this look was via, *Ike Turner*, *Little Richard* (Ref. Fig. 3 & 4, p.7) and *James Brown*. This gave the young, impressionable black men a false hope of the possibility of achieving this brilliant new style; oblivious to the strain and pain it involved.

However difficult it was to achieve this look, hair had to be straight. This is fine for Caucasian hair, but for Afro hair, which is tight and curly (African hair is actually the thinnest of all hair types) to achieve a conk would be painstaking, in straightening hair, using hot irons, relaxation solutions, coagulated gunk and styling grease. In his autobiography '*Malcolm X*' tells how he achieved his first conk by himself. The ingredients included: "red devil lye, two eggs, two medium sized white potatoes, a jar of Vaseline, a large bar of soap, a large toothed comb, and a fine-toothed comb, a rubber hose, a rubber apron and a pair of rubber gloves". (*Malcolm X* quoted in Jones, 1990, p.37)

Remembering the first time he looked in the mirror, *Malcolm X* said: "On top of my head was this thick smooth sheen of shining red hair (his actual hair colour) straight as any white man's" (Jones, 1990, p.37). This tortuous process in fact was a black man's subconscious assimilation, to conform to a white man's ideal. The conk was a badge representing a false image of hope and a derogative aspiration.

In retrospect and a sentiment, which I would be inclined to agree with, *Malcolm X* remonstrates on his past act by saying:

How ridiculous I was! This was my first really big step toward self-degradation, when I endured all of that pain, literally burning my flesh with lye in order to cook my natural hair until it was limp, to have it look like a white man's hair. I had joined the multitude of Negro men and women in America who are brainwashed into believing, that the black people are 'inferior' and the white people 'superior'. They will even violate their god given bodies, to try to look 'pretty' by white people's standards.

(*Malcolm X* quoted in Jones, 1990, p.37)

The straightening of black people's hair can be traced back to one hundred years ago. A woman by the name of *Madam CJ Walker*, from Pittsburgh invented the first straightening comb where as before a heated fork would have been used. Today, a black person who desires to have straight hair and continue with it, requires regular visits to the beauty salons. In a report by British VOGUE, it was stated that black American women spend 70% of their beauty budget on hair products. To maintain straight Afro hair means, regular visits every two months to a salon, costing approximately \$60-\$70, a hair wash costing \$30, and other

big flippers and quilts, which we named "Cottons". For black people who listened to the music and enjoyed the scene and style along with their aspirations toward the look was like James, Little Richard, and the other soulful performers. This gave the young impressionable black men a false hope of the possibility of achieving the brilliant new style of cottons to the main and part involved.

However, the truth was to achieve the look, hair had to be straight. The reason for this was that for African hair, which is tight and curly (African hair is actually the thickest of all hair types), to achieve a cone - could be painstaking and straightening hair using hot irons, relaxation solutions, congealed quack and styling gels. In the ethnography, Johnson Y. tells how he achieved his first cone by himself. The ingredients included: hard-boiled eggs, two medium sized white potatoes, a jar of Vaseline, a large barrel soap, a large toothed comb, and a fine-toothed comb, a rubber hose, a rubber apron and a pair of rubber gloves. Johnson Y. noted in Jones, 1990, p.37.

Remembering the first time he looked in the mirror, Johnson Y. said, "On top of my head was this thick smooth sheen of shining red hair (his actual hair color) straight as a white man's" (Jones, 1990, p.37). This conformation in fact was a black man's subconscious assimilation to conform to a white man's ideal. The conk was a false representation of hope and a derogative aspiration.

In retrospect and a sentiment, which I would be inclined to agree with, Johnson Y. comments on his past act by saying:

When I did it, I was... This was my first really big step toward self-degradation, when I endured all of that pain, literally burning my flesh with the iron in order to conk my natural hair and to have it look like a white man's hair. I had joined the multitude of Negro men and women in America who are brainwashed and believing that the black people are inferior and the white people superior. They will even violate their god-given bodies to try to look "pretty" by white people's standards.

(Johnson Y. quoted in Jones, 1990, p.37)

The straightening of black people's hair can be traced back to one hundred years ago. A woman by the name of Madam C.J. Walker, from Pittsburgh invented the first straightening comb which was used before a heated fork would have been used. Today, a black person who desires to have straight hair and continue with it requires regular visits to the beauty salons. In a report by British Vogue it was stated that black American women spend 70% of their beauty budget on hair products. To maintain straight Afro hair requires regular visits every two months to a salon costing approximately \$60-\$70, a hair wash costing \$20, and other



Fig. 1

Donyale Luna as she appears in Harpers Bazaar in 1964

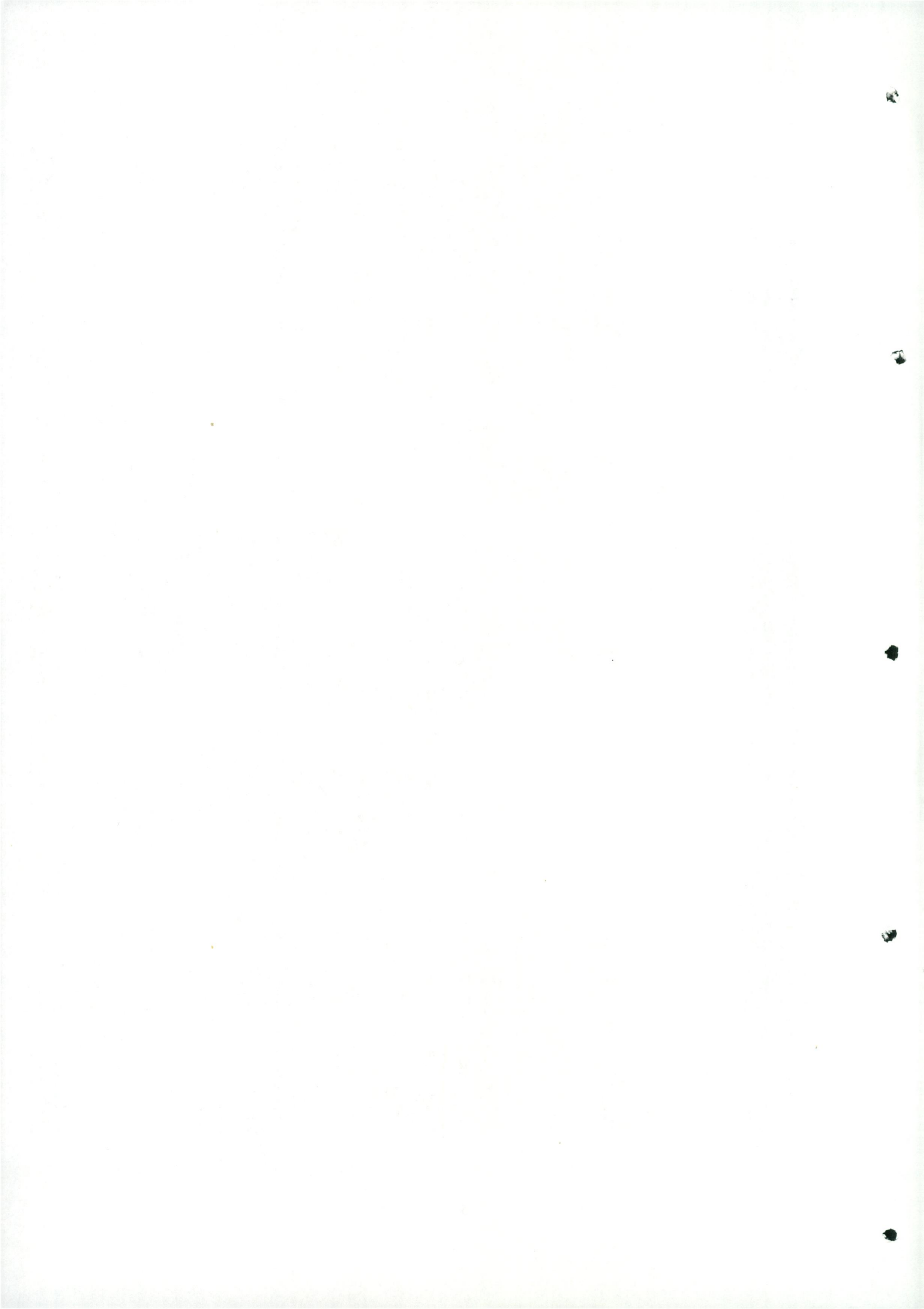




Fig. 2

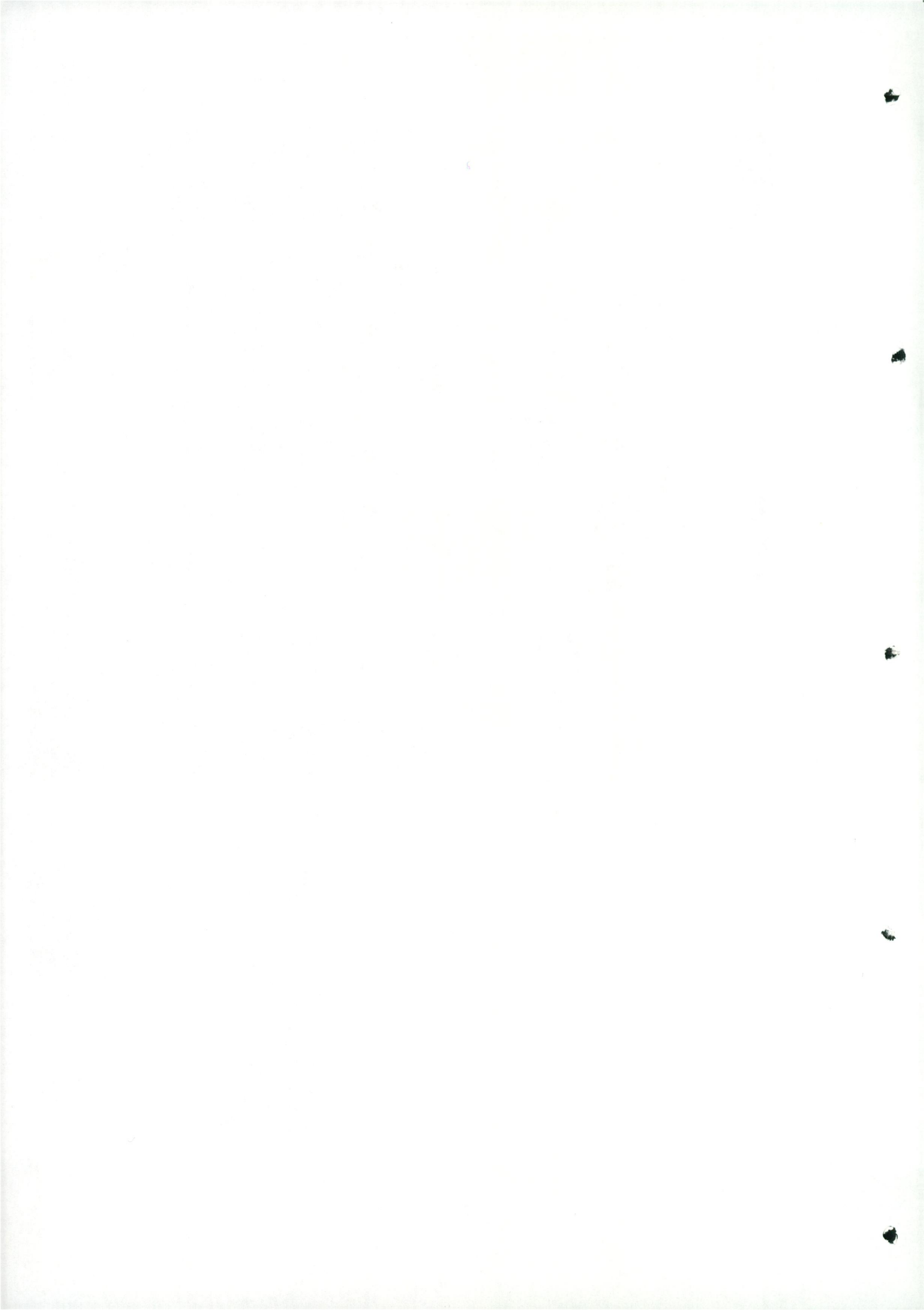
The Supremes who embodied blackness built around ideals of beauty



Fig. 3 *Little Richard*



Fig. 4 *Ike Turner* sporting the 'Conk' hairstyle



treatments start at approximately \$20, (VOGUE September, 1997). Black American women are proud and overtly flaunt their straight hair, claiming it takes money to keep it that way.

It can be argued now in today's society, that if a black woman decides to straighten her hair she can do so freely, due to the accessibility of more developed hair products, that may not have been available previously. It should be and now is the woman's choice, without the backlog of historical or cultural restriction. Thus, there should not be an issue between natural or straightening, although it is arguable that in the past hair straightening was done to resemble white person's hair. During the 1920s, black American men and women began to straighten their hair to look more like that of Caucasian. This I believe to be partly due to the immense effects derived from emancipation.

The rise of Afro hairstyles as a unifying factor

If we were to think of black people and their hair, one of the first images that would come to mind would be that of the 'natural' and the 'Afro' (a more stylised and refined version of the natural).

Can you begin to get the guts to develop criteria of beauty for black people? Your nose is boss, your lips are thick, you are black and you are beautiful. Can you begin to do it so you are not ashamed of your hair?

(*Stokely Carmichael*, quoted in Jones, 1990, p.58)

The 1960s began a new era, a new dawn, and a new way of looking for black people. The Civil Rights Movement was in effect black America's resurgence, and the birth of the 'Black is Beautiful' campaign. From this revolution, or in connection to it, arose a new hairstyle for black people. It began with oppressed youths, not as an act of rebellion, but in exercising a freedom of choice, coinciding with the developments of the Civil Rights Movement. The hairstyle was then adopted and worn by many adults and students who were aware of the political situation at that time. The hairstyle epitomised racial idealism and political hope. The hairstyle was known as the 'Afro' or the 'natural' (Ref. Fig. 5&6 p. 10). At the time of its development many white people felt threatened by black people leaving their hair more natural. In some cases it was considered aggressive: traditional beliefs have stated that loose unkempt hair is a symbol of promiscuity.

However, for African-Americans, the 'Afro' or the 'natural' signified yet another bond of strength in their culture. It provided the black community with an expressive link to their historical past/roots, and again another blanket being shed

treatments start at approximately \$20 (VOGUE September 1977). Black
American women are proud and overly boast their treatment and choosing it takes
away to keep a that way.

It can be argued now in today's society, that if a black woman decides to straighten
her hair, she can do so freely, due to the accessibility of more developed hair
products that may not have been available previously. It should be and now is the
woman's choice without the backing of historical or cultural resistance.
Thus, there should not be an issue between natural or straightening, although it is
argued that in the past hair straightening was done to resemble white person's
hair. During the 1950s, black American men and women began to straighten their
hair to look more like that of Caucasians. This I believe to be partly due to the
negative effects derived from integration.

The rise of Afro hairstyles as a unifying factor

It was not to look of black people and their hair, one of the first images that
we should be raised would be that of the natural, and the Afro (a more stylized
and a fact of the natural).

Can you begin to get the cuts to develop criteria of beauty
for black people? Your nose is best, your lips are thick, you
are black and you are beautiful. Can you begin to do it so
you are not ashamed of your hair?

(Wolke, Carverback quoted in Jones, 1990, p. 27)

The 1960s began a new era, a new dawn, and a new way of looking for black
people. The Civil Rights Movement was in effect, black America's re-orientation
and the birth of the "Black is Beautiful" campaign. From this revolution of
consciousness to a new hairstyle for black people. It began with oppressed
youth, not as an act of rebellion, but in exercising a freedom of choice, coinciding
with the developments of the Civil Rights Movement. The hairstyle was then
adopted and worn by many adults and students who were aware of the political
situation at that time. The hairstyle epitomized racial idealism and political hope.
The hairstyle was known as the "Afro" or the "natural" (Reel, 1986, p. 10). At
the time of its development many white people felt threatened by black people
having their hair more natural. In some cases it was considered aggressive.
Additional beliefs have stated that those who wore it were a symbol of non-violence.

However, for African-Americans, the "Afro" or the natural, signified yet another
point of struggle in their lives. It provided the black community with an
expressive link to their African roots, and again another element being used

from the bed of emancipation. The Afro sought to liberate black African hair from the burdens bequeathed by racist ideologies. The Afro gave the black community a fashion/style of their own that they could collectively identify with.

The Afro hairstyle was a stylised, bouffant mass of hair. It was let grow out naturally, and then styled in a fashion similar to that of a microphone head, (think *Michael Jackson* and the *Jackson Five*). The racial abuse towards black people over the years, second to their skin colour, is their hair. Beforehand their hair had been considered unsightly and uncontrollable. The hair would have been predominantly covered to combat working conditions and the white man's idealistic dictates of beauty.

The Afro however was born out of freedom of choice. It was to be proud of one's hair, and in many ways it was a silent political statement against racism. Thus it was to promote equality for the black community.

1968 was the year that the Afro came into prominence. '*Sly Stone*' toured America and Britain with a huge wild (natural) cut (a less stylised Afro). *Diana Ross* appeared at the London Royal Variety Show in 1968 wearing an Afro (wig). She proceeded to quote '*Martin Luther King*' onstage and backstage, '*Stokeley Carmichael*'. *James Brown* changed from his elaborate conk to an Afro and was quoted, "say it loud, I'm black and I'm proud", and '*Nancy Wilson*' quoted "Black is Beautiful". When meeting a black person with a shiny, processed hairstyle, *Malcolm X* (Ref. Fig. 7, p. 11) is reported to have said something like:

"Ahhh Brother I see the white devil has taught you to hate yourself so much that you put hot lye in your hair to make it look more like his hair".

(*Malcolm X*' quoted in Jones, 1990, p.37)

1968 was also the year the '*Black Panthers*' were at their most visible and influential. Their black leather clad, urban gorilla image was one of the most effective manifestations of black power. The *Black Panthers* advocated the Afro unequivocally (Ref. Fig 8, p. 11). Thus there became an equation as to how black you were and how long your Afro was. The Afro was now the most distinctive image of black pride and 'natural' black beauty, part of the counter cultural iconography of the late 1960s. It provided the community with a common bond, a cultural link in a foreign country where the black community endured, isolation, prejudice and displacement.

Following the surge of the Afro/natural among black people during this period, another hairstyle developed. It too grew in conjunction (as did the Afro) with the political happenings of the times. This was a new, personally developed hairstyle among the mass of African-Americans. The hairstyle was considered new in terms of its rejuvenation among the mass of black men and women. Braids and cornrows

from the fact of consciousness. The Afro sought to liberate black people from
the burdens perpetuated by racist ideologies. The Afro gave the black community
a sense of pride and self-respect that they could collectively identify with.

The Afro hairstyle was a dignified, beautiful mass of hair. It was let grow out
naturally and then styled in a fashion similar to that of a microphone head. (Think
Mickey Jackson and the Jackson Five). The racial phrase now ends black people
from the racist regard to their skin color as their hair. The Afro had been
been considered unattractive and unprofessional. The hair would have been
predominantly covered to conceal working conditions and the white man's
ideological tactics of beauty.

The Afro however was not out of freedom of choice. It was to be proud of one's
hair and in many ways it was a silent political statement against racism. This
was to promote equality for the black community.

1968 was the year that the Afro came into prominence. (Z) Shaw, noted American
and African writer (maintain) out to less stylized Afro. (C) Ross
reported at the London Royal Variety Show in 1968 wearing an Afro (wig). (S) he
proceeded to quote Kwame Nkrumah's message and backstage, (S) he
(S) he said, "I was changed from a European look to an Afro and was
quoted, "I'm black and I'm proud," and "I was quoted, "Black
is beautiful." (S) he was wearing a black person with a shiny, processed hair.
(S) he was (S) he is reported to have said something like:

"Afro Brother, I see the white devil but I might you to love
yourself so much that you put hair in your hair to make it
look more like his hair."

(M) (S) quoted in Jones 1990, p. 37.

This was also the year the 'Black Panther' was at night from 1966 and
incentive. Their black leather clad urban ghetto image was one of the most
effective statements of black power. The Black Panther movement
emerged only (S) he (S) he. This then became an equation as to how black
people should now look. The Afro was now the most distinctive
image of black pride and 'natural' black beauty part of the counter cultural
movement of the late 1960s. It provided the community with a common bond,
natural link in a foreign country where the black community sought a solution,
pride and displacement.

Following the surge of the Afro among black people during this period,
an era of black development. It too grew in conjunction (as did the Afro) with the
political upheavals of the times. This was a new, personally developed hair to
bring the mass of African-American. The hairstyle was considered now to be
of its reputation among the mass of black men and women. (S) he and women's



Fig. 5 **Example of 'Afro' hairstyle**



Fig. 6 **Example of 'natural' hairstyle**

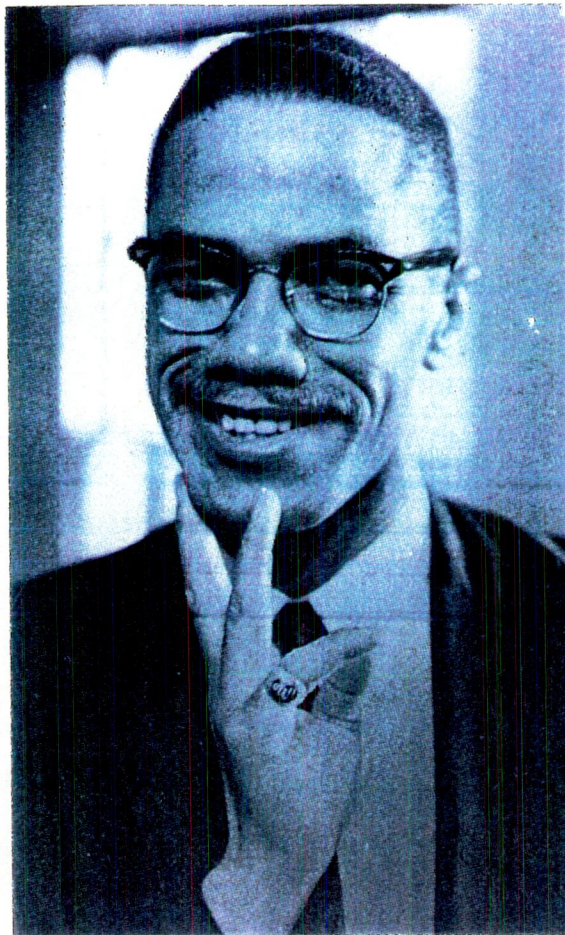


Fig. 7

Malcolm X

Fig. 8



Members of the '*Black Panthers*' who advocated the Afro hairstyle

(Ref. Fig 9 & 10, p. 13) (tightly plaited rows of hair around the scalp in various lengths and thickness) which carry such names and variations of styles as, *Rokal Ralpenzul, Twisted Bob, Tvavni, Yolele, Mounach* and *Be-yarn* etc., have travelled with the black community throughout their history. Since early events when the burdens of the shackles of slavery were first bestowed upon the many black men and women, the black community are recorded to have always worn such hairstyles. It was in hand with slave labour and hard working conditions that the hair would have been controlled in such a style. The hairstyle was more of a utility style than a fashion trend.

“my hair is an extension of my personality and at best, a tribute to my African heritage, not a representation”.

(*Wilson, 1995, p.64*)

With the decline of the Afro, braids succeeded and were sported by such icons as Stevie Wonder (Ref. Fig. 11, p.14). The style was considered as of increasing cultural significance, and was thought of as the ultimate hairstyle of emancipation.

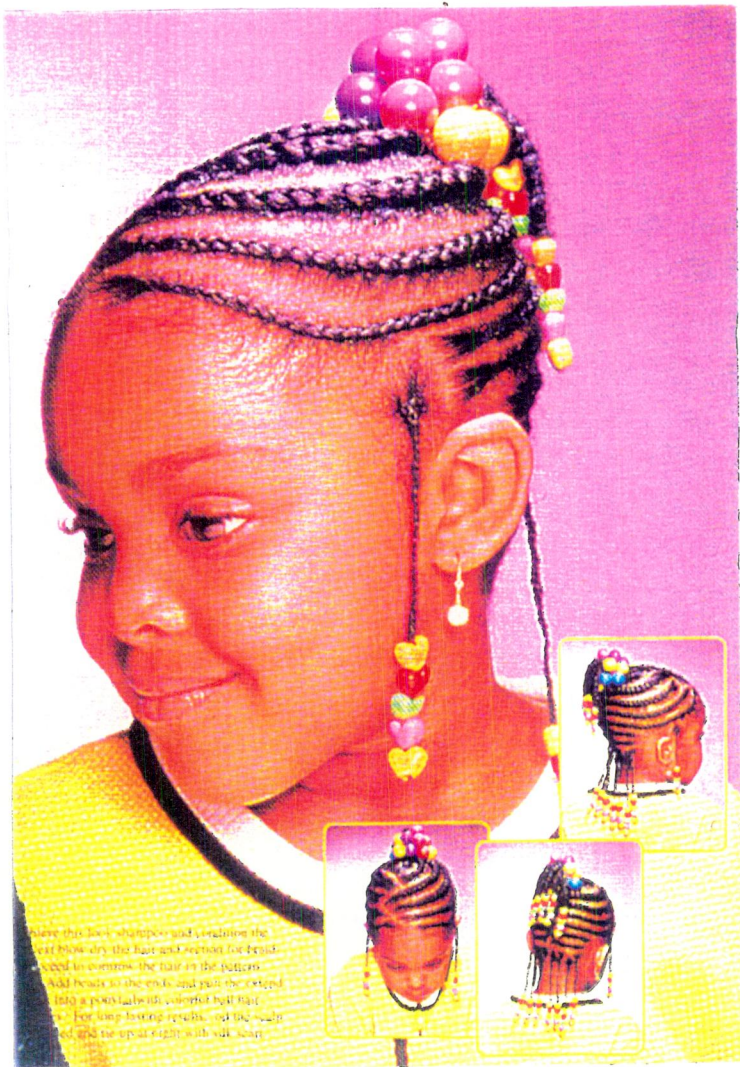
A third hairstyle which touched on, and developed from, the same ethics as the Afro and Braids was the “Dreadlocks”. Dreadlocks originated in countries such as Jamaica and Kenya, although the locks (from which derives their name from fear locks, because of the fear and dread inspired by looking at them, the fact that they were borne of suffering) came to rise in popular culture with the emergence of Reggae music, such as that of *Bob Marley* (Ref: Fig. 13, p.15). Dreadlocks began to make an impact in England and Ireland during the 1980s with many youth cultures, and became a credited street style with both black and white communities. Dreadlocks or ‘dreads’ as they are most commonly known, are formed by allowing the hair to grow naturally into matted lengths. Many black people who sport such Dreadlocks claim that they are an extension of their devotion to the ‘Rastafarian’ faith. This faith relates to the bible:

all the days of the vow of his separation, there shall no razor come upon his head. Until the days be fulfilled, in that which he separated himself unto the Lord, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of his hair on his head grow.

(*Jones, 1990, p.84*)

Although the hairstyles of the black community did not change idealistic views world wide, they are moreover a fashion all of their own, an aspect that black men and women alike could connect with, to unify their struggle. The hairstyles initially did generate a stir, gaining attention worldwide and helping to bring the black community and their plight to a bigger audience.

Fig. 9



Have the hair washed and condition the hair. Dry the hair and section for braiding. Start by combing the hair in the pattern you desire to the ends and pull the ends into a ponytail with colored hair ties. For long braiding results, use the right sized and the great quality with your hair.

Fig. 10



Example of 'Cornrows' being worn by adults and children alike

Fig. 11



Stevie Wonder advocating a 'braided' hairstyle

Fig. 12

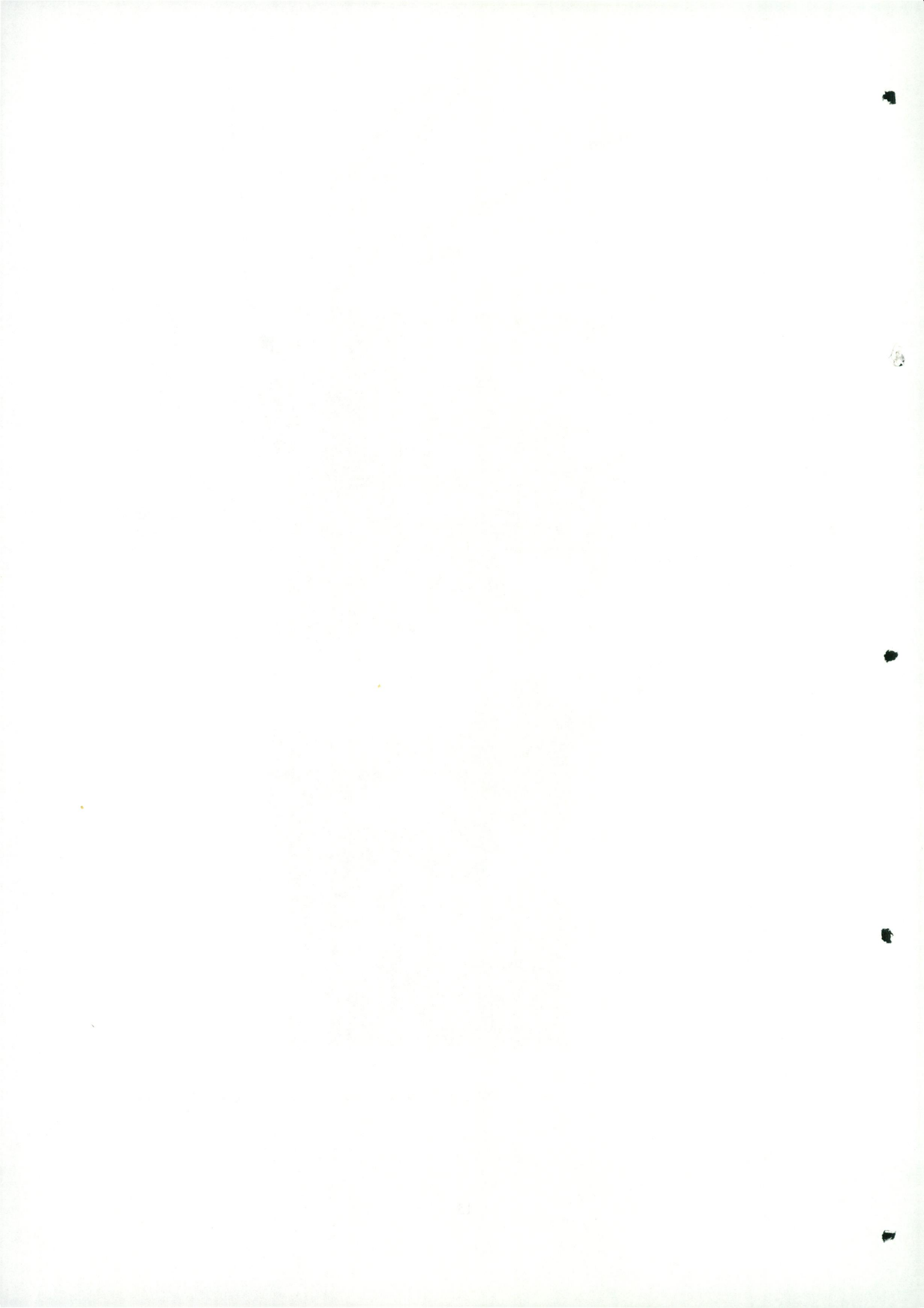


Example of the 'braided' hairstyle filtering into the white community



Fig. 13

Bob Marley advocating the 'Dreadlock' hairstyle



tree!

David Hinds' Tower of Strength

As the leader of seminal British reggae band Steel Pulse, David Hinds has always been a compelling performer and outspoken lyricist. A devout follower of Rastafari, in 1981 Hinds decided to mould his locks into a tall tree of hair, apeing some of the more flamboyant styles of the early Jamaican Rastas. Part of Hinds's stage outfit during Steel Pulse's 1980 and 1981 tours was a bowler hat, and after several months of wearing it, his hair began to take its shape. 'It was then,' he says, 'that I decided to try and grow it all the way up. My hair is an expression of my devotion to the Rastafari faith, and I get a lot of respect from other Rastas because of it. My hair is religious, cultural, not fashionable.'



Fig. 14 Example of 'Dreadlocks', and how they may be visually shocking

CHAPTER 2

Beauty, inherited ideals of aesthetic beliefs

The search for human beauty is as old as humanity itself. So far, since the beginning of the human race there has been a preoccupation, an emphasis and desire for beautification, and to make oneself desirable. There is a constant search for human beauty, to improve the social and sexual appeal of the natural, naked form.

Throughout the centuries ideals of women's beauty and the means of achieving it have changed dramatically. I believe that it will keep on so. From examples in history, women have gone through tortuous acts in order to obtain an ideal of considered beauty at that time. For example, Chinese women had and in some cases still have their feet bound into uncompromising and unnatural bandages to obtain smaller feet as it was thought beautiful for the women to have small feet, to hobble along as they walked. Or, in the Victorian period, when women encased themselves in heavily boned corsets (hardly able to breathe) while being weighed down by a mass of bulk, owing to their panniers, and farthingales. Also during this period, women would pluck the hairs from their front hairline, which gave them the image of a high forehead, which then, was also thought beautiful. These are but some of many aesthetic ideals of human beauty contained in history.

The issue that I am concerned about is that of the representation of fictional, facial beauty: The visual beauty of the dominant white ideal of beauty (Ref. Fig. 15, p. 18). When did the issue of being more beautiful arise? What makes one person more beautiful than the other? And what merits one person's opinion on what is actually beautiful? It has been proven through scientific research and general public statistics, that the human brain has a 'natural' appreciation for symmetry proportion, balance and tone. The aesthetic appeal of any form of beauty depends on such learned fictional ideals of symmetry and regular features and notions that we have acquired. Thus it seems to be the unvarying adherence to the prevailing classical ideals of shape, form and measurable proportions.

One of the most prevailing ideals of beauty that has been excessively dominant for over sixty years is the one which '*Adolf Hitler*' spent some considerable amount of time trying to genetically engineer. This image (created) known as the 'Arien Race' was built upon *Hitler's* own fictional ideals of blond hair, and blue eyes. Why is this image deemed most beautiful to some, and ideal? I would believe that it is most probably a reflection of cultural perceptions and inherited ideals of aesthetic beliefs.

CHAPTER 2

Beauty, inherited ideals of aesthetic beliefs

The search for human beauty is as old as humanity itself. So far since the beginning of the human race there has been a preoccupation in our minds and desires for perfection and to make oneself desirable. There is a constant search for human beauty to improve the social and sexual appeal of the natural naked

form. From the interior ideals of woman's beauty and the means of achieving it have changed dramatically. I believe that it will keep on so. From examples in history, woman have gone through tortuous acts in order to obtain an ideal of considered beauty of that time. For example, Chinese women had and in some cases still have their feet bound into random, twisting and unnatural postures to obtain an ideal of a woman thought beautiful for the women to have small feet, to hold things as they walked. Or in the Victorian period, when women engaged themselves in body-bound corsets (very like to corsets) while they weighed down by a mass of hair, owing to the hair rollers, and false braids. Also during this period, women would pluck the hair from their front hairline, which gave them the image of a high forehead, which then was also thought beautiful. These are of some of many aesthetic ideals of human beauty contained in history.

The fact that I am concerned about is that of the representation of ideal facial beauty. The varied beauty of the dominant white ideal of beauty (Rat, Fig. 1.2, p. 14). What is the issue of being more beautiful? *W* not in the case and person more beautiful than the other? And what makes one person's opinion on what is generally beautiful? It has been proven through scientific research and general public statistics that the human brain has a "natural" appreciation for symmetry, proportion, balance and tone. The aesthetic appeal of any form of beauty depends on such learned fictional ideals of symmetry and regular features and notions that we have acquired. Thus it seems to be the unvarying adherence to the prevailing ideal of shape, form and measurable proportions.

One of the most prevailing ideals of beauty that has been excessively dominant for over six years is the one which *W* (Wick) spent some considerable amount of time trying to generally engineer. This image (created) known as the *W* face, was only upon *W*'s own fictional ideals of blond hair, and blue eyes. *W* is this image deemed most essential to status and ideal? I would believe that it is most probably a reflection of cultural perceptions and inherited ideals of aesthetic beliefs.



Fig. 15

Claudia Schiffer as a representation of ideal beauty



Frederick Blumenbach in 1795 bestowed the name 'Caucasian' to the white race after the slopes of the Caucasus Mountains in Eastern Europe. *Blumenbach* believed that some of the most beautiful people in the world came from that region.

Today in the 1990s there is a growing acceptance of ethnic variations within our own countries, allowing us to see a wider variation of facial characteristics. This in turn has helped to raise the issue of ideal beauty and to ask the question, is there an ideal beauty?

The aim of this chapter is to look at black beauty as opposed to that of the prevailing white Caucasian beauty. I will also look at how the repression of the black population and social class, has been a significant issue in questioning white ideals of beauty.

"Human beauty exists only in the eyes of those with the specific knowledge and cultural heritage that enables them to perceive it".

(*Robinson*, 1998, p.46)

Black Beauty Vs dominant fictional ideals

It is true that every culture has a certain number of differences in what they would consider beautiful, as we have seen in China. However I have decided to focus on the representation of black beauty and how it contrasts with western ideals of beauty.

Novelist '*Simi Bedford*' laments on her first secondary school dance in an English school:

After two minutes walking around the floor – because as far as I was concerned this was not dancing. He asked: 'Are you considered beautiful/attractive in your own country?' I was so worried that he would think all black African women were ugly that I said 'No, No'.

(*Simi Bedford* in conversation with I'anson, September, 1997, p. 313)

While I am discussing black beauty I am fully aware that to a large extent an image has been created for us by the media, channelled for white western eyes. This is what I would have reservations about: I feel that this is not a fair representation of black female beauty. I have noticed that when introducing a

Frederick Blumenthal in 1995 bestowed the name 'Caucasian' to the white race after the slopes of the Caucasus Mountains in Eastern Europe. Blumenthal believed that some of the most beautiful people in the world came from that region.

Today in the 1990s there is a growing acceptance of ethnic variations within our own countries, allowing us to see a wider variation of facial characteristics. This in turn has helped to raise the issue of 'fair beauty' and to ask the question 'is there an ideal beauty?'

The aim of this chapter is to look at black beauty as opposed to that of the prevailing white Caucasian beauty. I will also look at how the reputation of the black population and social class has been a significant issue in discussing white ideals of beauty.

'Human beauty exists only in the eyes of those with the specific knowledge and cultural heritage that enables them to perceive it.'

(Robson, 1998, p.46)

Black Beauty vs dominant fictional ideals

It is true that every culture has a certain number of differences in what they would consider beautiful as we have seen in China. However I have decided to focus on the representation of black beauty and how it contrasts with western ideals of beauty.

Veronica? (w/Veronica) parents on her first secondary school dance in an English school.

'After two minutes walking around the floor - because as far as I was concerned this was not dancing. He asked 'Are you considered beautiful in your own country? I was so worried that he would think all black African women were ugly that I said 'No'.

Paul Beyford in conversation with Eason, September 1997, p. 313)

While I am discussing black beauty I am fully aware that to a large extent an image has been created for us by the media, channelled for white we hear eyes. This is what I would have reservations about, feel that this is not a fair representation of black female beauty. I have noticed that when introducing a

black woman to a western audience, she all too often appears to be light skinned to this audience. With a large helping hand from the media, we could construct/create beauty of any type. However, in this case we make black as white as possible, by not showing a black woman in her true ethnic black beauty but by merging her with more westernised ideals of beauty, to make her more acceptable to a wider western audience. For example, the notion of using a racially mixed woman, with black Caucasian hair, in stereotypical white hairstyles and Caucasian facial bone structure, we represent/see the image of a black woman as an over-tanned white woman. Thus easing this image onto us slowly in order not to upset white conformist ideals.

A lot of white Americans would say, 'Oh, you must be mixed with white'. Then African-Americans also had this gripe about me because they didn't think I looked African enough and I was a token black girl (model). I ended up feeling insulted by both.

(Iman Bowie in conversation with Alek Wek, January, 1999, p. 39)

While I am debating the issue of the representation of black beauty, I am fully aware that one may question, 'What is true beauty in any human' whatever their racial background? I would argue that any ideal of beauty is but a fictional inheritance, what I am referring to is that of the so-called 'pure' or pronounced Negroid type. I say this for want of a better word, with no derogative meaning implied, but refer to the facial structure of broad noses, fuller lips, and tightly coiled hair – an image which may not conform to idealist fictional views of beauty, but why not?

My interest on such a subject matter derives from the fact that 76% of the population in Africa is black. By the year 2050 half the population of the United States of America will be comprised of black and racially mixed people. Yet even so, there still seems to be a problem/issue and debate over their beauty, skin colour and equality. Thus it is the very fact of their skin colour, which makes up that person which is being used as ammunition against them in questioning their beauty. This shows how media neglect and continual enforced idealistic viewpoints can have a primary negative effect.

Do we want to take this one quality and assign the primary worth of a person on that basis. If you reduce people to one aspect of their identity you get a very distorted and ill-functioning society.

(Naomi Wolf, quoted in SCHFER, 1997, p.73)

black woman to a western audience, she still too often appears to be light skin on to
It is in essence... with a large helping hand from the media, we could
constructive beauty of any type. However, in this case we make black as white
as possible, not showing a black woman in her true skin. I look beauty, but by
relying on more westernised ideals of beauty, to make her more acceptable
to a wider western audience. For example, the notion of having a naturally kinky
woman, with black (African) hair in stereotypical white hair styles and Caucasian
facial bone structure, we represent the image of a black woman as an over-
lightened white woman. Thus casting this image onto a white, not to upset
white dominant ideals.

A lot of white Americans would say, "Oh, you must be
mixed with white." Then African Americans also put the
grip about me because they didn't think I looked African
enough and I was a token black girl (though). I ended up
feeling insulted by them.

(Vowles, 1997, p. 30)

With I see debate, the issue of the representation of black beauty, I am fully
aware that one may question, "What is true beauty in any human, whatever their
racial background?" I would argue that any ideal of beauty is but a fictional
invention, when I am referring to is that of the so-called "pure" or pronounced
beauty type. I say this for want of a better word, with no derogative meaning
intended, but refer to the facial structure of blond caucas, white, and tightly
kinky hair - an image which may not conform to idealist fictional views of beauty,
but why not?

My interest on such a subject matter derives from the fact that 70% of the
population in Africa is black. By the year 2050 half the population of the United
States of America will be comprised of black and racially mixed people. Yet even
so there still seems to be a problem issue and debate over their beauty, skin colour
and equality. Thus it is the very fact of their skin colour, which makes up that
person which is being used as ammunition against them in questioning their
beauty. This shows how media neglect and continual enforced idealistic
viewpoints can have a primary negative effect.

Do we want to take this one quality and assign the primary
worth of a person on that basis? If you reduce people to one
aspect of their identity you set a very restricted and ill-
functioning society.

(Vowles, 1997, p. 31)

Enforced codes of regulated Beauty

There may be a suggestion that the questioning, irrelevance or rather the ignorance towards the issue of black beauty, is that it derived during the period of slavery and before the emancipation of black people. We should take note that it was white people who were the dominant figures in society at that time. Therefore it is the supporters of a society who dictate what is important, what is law and ultimately, what is beautiful?

We already know that, yes, white people were the rulers of a society at that time, but what is interesting to know is, how beauty was ultimately monopolised by those who ruled. Thus they were the dictators. They were the section of the world's population who could spend time on beautifying themselves, going on regular visits to the beauty parlour, meeting for leisurely lunches, buying the latest trends in clothing, and sporting the latest styles in hair and cosmetics.

The white people, as we see, had the majority of disposable income at that time and needless to say, the beauty and cosmetics companies revolved around sales and image. Thus such companies directed their advertisements to the sector of the community who had money, (white people) to increase their profits. Meanwhile, at the same time, black people were working slave labour, with little income to supplement their beauty needs. Their skin and features that are biological attributes that were and in some cases still are unfortunately invested with degrading values, were of no interest to such cosmetic and beauty companies.

“The wealthy are beautiful because the workers are wretched”

(*Manning*, 1994, p. 41)

Thus with such a history as slavery, having Afro hair, and being black of skin colour and features, understandably must have caused a certain amount of pressure and a feeling of shame. Insofar as a lot of black men and women spent a lot of time trying to conform to everyone else's fictional acceptable norm. For many black people the pursuit to fit in meant taking extreme measures such as skin bleaching and facial reconstruction while still not being able to conform or to associate themselves, with the predominant white idealistic views of beauty.

To take a male aspect or even a female aspect on this matter, would mean to focus in on such well-known celebrity personalities, as that of *Michael Jackson* and *Latoya Jackson*, brother and sister. From what I can estimate, they must have at one point in the past resented their natural cultural characteristics of blackness. So much so that both have (because of the influx of westernised ideal beauty, and their collective assimilation towards it), endured extensive facial reconstruction to that more like Caucasian, and have straightened their hair and coloured it to blond (*Latoya*), and even undergone skin bleaching. In *Michael's* case this is argued to

Historical codes of racialized beauty

I have not for a suggestion that the questioning, in fact, the ignorance towards the issue of black beauty, is that it derived during the period of slavery and before the emancipation of black people. We should take note that it was white people who gave the dominant figure in society at that time. Therefore it is the members of a society who dictate what is important, what is law and ultimately what is a standard.

We already know that yes, white people were the rulers of a society at that time, but what is interesting to know is, how beauty was ultimately monopolized by black women. They were the dictators. They were the women of the world's population who could spend time on beautifying themselves, going on vacation, visiting the beach, and having for leisurely meals, buying the latest trends in clothing, and sporting the latest styles in hair and cosmetics.

The white people, as we see, had the monopoly of disposable income at that time and besides to say, the beauty and cosmetics companies involved around sales and profits. This then companies directed their advertisements to the sector of the community who had money (white people) to increase their profits. Although at the same time, black people were working hard, with little income to supplement their beauty needs. Their skin and features that are biological attributes were and in some cases still are unfortunately neglected while designing what were of no interest to such cosmetic and beauty companies.

"The women are beautiful because the work is not finished."

(Murray, 1994, p. 41)

Thus with such a history as slavery, having a fair skin and being black of skin colour and features, understandably must have caused a certain amount of pressure and a feeling of shame. Just as a lot of black men and women spent a lot of time trying to conform to everyone else's (fictional) aesthetic norms. For many black people the pursuit to fit in meant taking extreme measures such as skin bleaching and facial reconstruction while still not being able to conform or to associate themselves with the predominant white idealistic views of beauty.

To take a male aspect or even a female aspect on this matter, we need to focus in on such well-known celebrity personalities, as the of Whitney Houston and Lela Bore. Both had and since then what I can estimate they must have been very popular in the past because of their natural colour characteristics of blackness. They are the both have (because of the nature of westernized ideal beauty) and their careers, assimilation towards it, endured extreme facial reconstruction to that more like Caucasian, and have straightened their hair and coloured it to blond. Many of our own underground skin bleaching. In Murray's case, this is argued to

be a severe medical condition known as *Vitiligo*, a skin disorder, which turned his whole body from black to white (Ref. Fig. 16, p. 24). This is an interesting view, as probably the most aesthetic appeal some white people now have towards black people is their exotic skin colouring. Yet it is also an aspect of themselves that some black people are turning away from.

It would be fair to say that the media and cosmetics companies did neglect the market for the African-American men and women, in terms of beauty products. Black women either accepted what the few available brands offered, blended their own foundations and powders or made expensive mistakes with colours designed for white skins. It was thought that a lack of sales would arise, or fewer sales, in promoting black beauty and its products. Even though there are actually many more shades of black skin compared to white, 39 versus 15 to be exact. Thus there was a moral Vs financial issue. However, as a business, such cosmetic companies decided to place emphasis on familiar aesthetic images, images that they knew accredited to sales appeal. This in turn formed a universal vision and helped women to conform to a model of regulated beauty. As a counter-reaction, black women do not see themselves reflected. Thus they tend to feel somewhat unconnected or are totally out of bounds of a dominant image of Caucasian idealistic beauty.

Challenging ideals

However, at last in a fashion world trammelled by the ideals of blond hair and blue eyes, African born model '*Iman Bowie*' (wife of *David Bowie*) became a torchbearer of a new generation of idealistically challenged models. *Iman* brought with her a fresh touch of colour, and culture to the then petrified standards of beauty. *Iman*, obviously affected by the reluctance or neglect of cosmetic companies, later launched her own cosmetic company. *Iman*'s company specialises in catering for the vast amount of black women and skin colours, who found it impossible to find any foundation base to suit their type of skin combination.

Iman's success as a model opened up a pathway for many black models, such as American black model '*Beverly Johnson*' and later on by the success of British model *Naomi Campbell*, who flourished during the eighties. (Naomi once said she chose modelling as a career to challenge idealistic views on Beauty).

Although these black women brought other cultures to the catwalk whilst modelling, I would still argue that, with no disrespect intended, they were a dictation of black beauty representation channelled for a western audience. This was one Somalian woman (*Iman*) descendent from the Egyptians, an American (*Beverly Johnson*) and an English/Oriental mixed woman (*Naomi Campbell*)

be a severe medical condition known as vitiligo, a skin disorder which caused his whole body turn black to white (Ref. Fig. 10, p. 24). This is an interesting view as probably the most aesthetic appeal some white people now have towards black people is that they have skin colouring. Yet it is this aspect of themselves that some black people are turning away from.

It would be fair to say that the media and cosmetics companies did neglect the market for the African-American man and woman in terms of beauty products. Black women either accepted what the few available brands offered, flattered their own features and powders or made expensive mistakes with colours designed for white skin. It was thought that a lack of sales would mean, or fewer sales, in promoting black beauty and its products. Even though there are actually many shades of black skin compared to white, 39 versus 15 to be exact. Thus there was a moral / financial issue. However, as a business, such cosmetic companies decided to place emphasis on familiar aesthetic images, images that they knew succeeded to sales appeal. This in turn formed a universal vision and helped women to conform to a model of regulated beauty. As a counter-reaction, black women do not see themselves reflected. Thus they tend to feel somewhat disconnected or at least out of bounds of a dominant image of Caucasian ideal beauty.

Challenging ideals

However, it is in a fashion world transformed by the ideas of blond hair and blue eyes (the 'hair model' (Wendy Johnson) to the 'Aunt Betty' beauty) became a forerunner of a new generation of ideologically challenged models. Wendy Johnson with her 'fresh' look of colour, and culture to the then peddled standards of beauty, was largely affected by the reluctance or neglect of cosmetic companies. She had her own cosmetic company, 'Wendy's' company, which specialised in catering for the vast amount of black women and skin colours, who found it impossible to find any foundation base to suit their type of skin complexion.

Wendy's success as a model opened up a pathway for many black models, such as American black model, Beverly Johnson, and later on by the success of British model, Naomi Campbell, who founded during the 1990s. Naomi Campbell and other models are seen as a catalyst to challenge idealistic views on beauty.

Although these black women brought other cultures to the catwalk, while modelling, it would still argue that, with no disrespect intended, they were a deviation of black beauty, respectation channelled for a western audience. This was the Sorrellian woman (Wendy Johnson) descended from the Egyptian, an American (Wendy Johnson) and an English, a mixed woman (Naomi Campbell).

(Ref. Fig. 17, 18 & 19, p. 25). Their skin may have been darker, they may also have had African hair, but their features are predominantly Caucasian, (features: long narrow faces, thin noses and a million-dollar pout). It brings to mind the black version of the 'Barbie' doll.

However in today's society, (and I am not condemning past efforts, as they were important breakthroughs in cultural recognition), we have a more colour conscious society and culture conscious society. I would question however, if this is because the black population now have more high powered jobs, i.e. lawyers, doctors, actors and musicians, that they are now beginning to form part of the higher income brackets (I would most probably think so) and they are now contributing to the country's economy (not that they did not before) or is it simply just because people's attitudes have changed?

With the aid however of the media, i.e. T.V., radio and advertisements, we are now in the position to see a broader spectrum in variations of black beauty, and beauty magazines are now promoting a wider scope of images of blackness today (Ref. Fig. 20 – 23, p. 26 & 27). We now have many black models such as *Susan Carman*, *Chrystelle*, *Lorraine Pascale*, *Brandi Quinones*, and of course, the latest fashion industry moneymaker, '*Alek Wek*', a Sudanese refugee.

The annual 'Pirelle' calendar is an expensive calendar that uses Supermodels and nudity in a positive and beautiful way to capture an image of fantasised beauty. It is interesting to know that for their latest edition, based on the fictional ideals of beauty throughout the decades, that the climax of the calendar is focused upon *Alek Wek*. Wek, a Sudanese model, a pure Negroid of the Dynka tribe, is now being heralded as 'Miss December' and being epitomised as the 'ideal' beauty for the year 2000. Ten years ago the consideration of such an idea, or to put *Alek Wek* on the cover of a calendar, would have been impossible let alone label her as the ideal beauty for the year 2000.

...the skin they have been darker they are...
...the skin they have been darker they are...
...the skin they have been darker they are...

...the skin they have been darker they are...
...the skin they have been darker they are...
...the skin they have been darker they are...

...the skin they have been darker they are...
...the skin they have been darker they are...
...the skin they have been darker they are...

...the skin they have been darker they are...
...the skin they have been darker they are...
...the skin they have been darker they are...



Fig. 16

Michael Jackson



Fig. 17



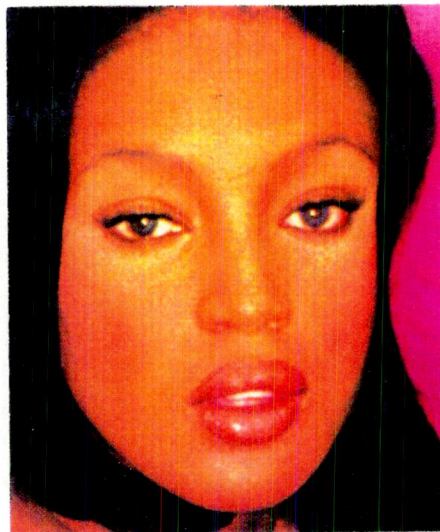
Iman

Fig. 18



Beverley Johnson

Fig. 19



Naomi Campbell

Fig. 20



Brandi Quinones

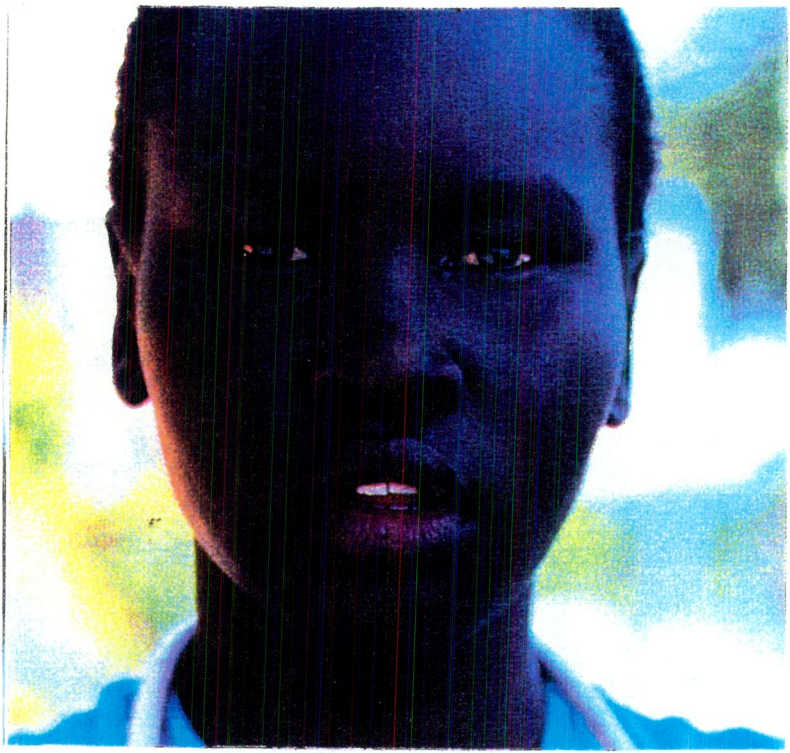
Fig. 21



Lorraine Pascale

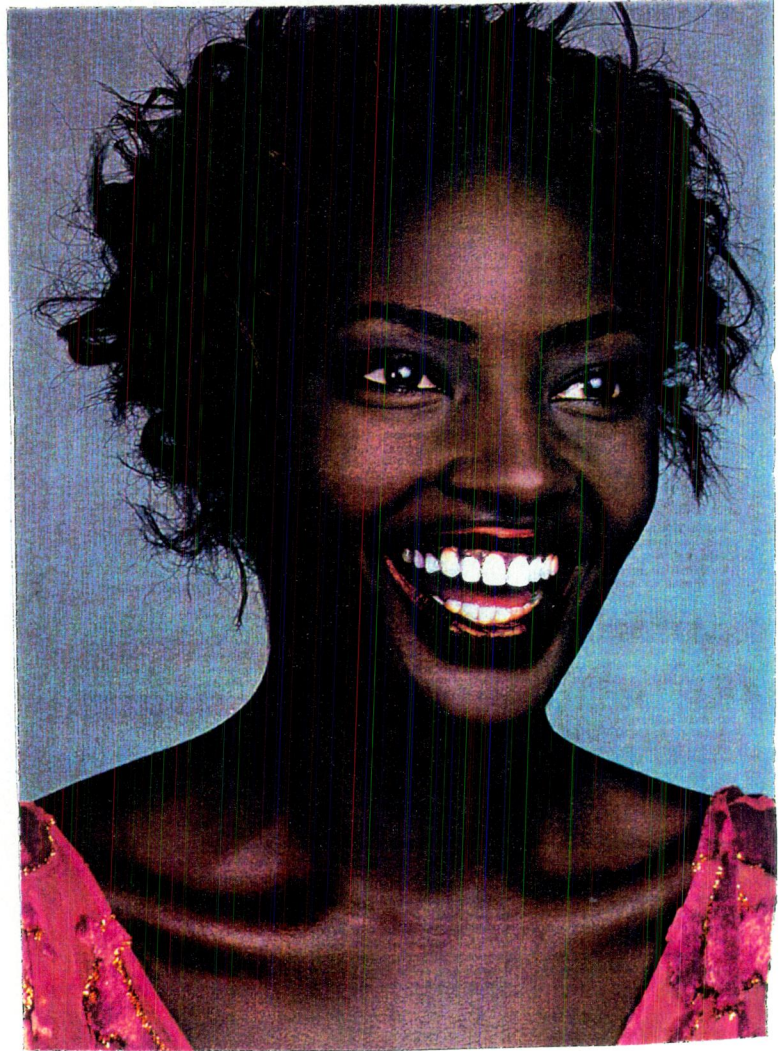
Variations of blackness in the media today

Fig. 22

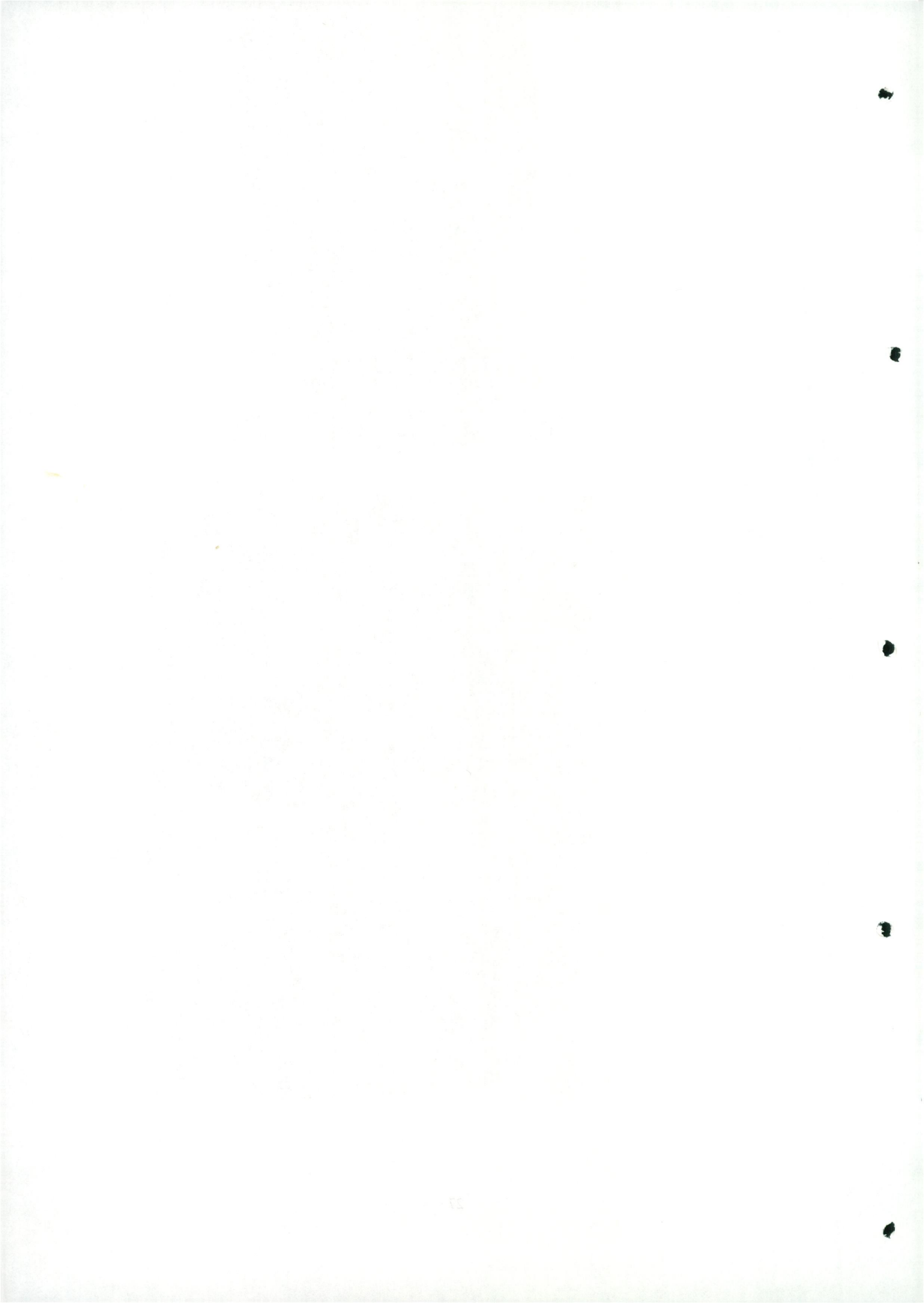


Alek Wek

Fig. 23



Susan Carman



CHAPTER 3

Changing Times

In considering all the facts, ideas and arguments from previous chapters, about Blackness and black representation, we are able to see how a community has been effected at first hand, because that community does not conform to enforced codes of regulated ideals. The impulse to quell the black community resulted in their personal struggles for emancipation, their fight against racism, and emigration to other countries. It was their relative devaluation in society along with the lack of identifiable images, which they could not relate to, that contributed to the emergence of the Civil Rights Movement.

The Civil Rights Movement in turn paved the way for the “Black is Beautiful” campaign and effectively to the impact or emergence of ‘Hip Hop’ music. Although it is said that the world wasn’t built in a day and understandably the above events could not change idealistic points of view instantly, worldwide. But as they filtered through the mass media i.e. magazines, T.V., music, etc., these events did contribute to the increasing visibility of black struggles throughout the decades. Thus, this in turn, has contributed to the attitudes towards the black community today, and initiated the challenge of arguing original western ideals that by now are beginning to be diminished.

Admittedly it has been a long struggle against the visual images of beauty, instilled in the majority of western minds. For the black community the struggle still continues, fuelled by the impact that such western ideals of blond hair, blue eyes and white skin colour have nurtured.

However, today times are still changing. We now live in a more integrated society, and people are increasingly beginning to look beyond what has been acceptable before and are now turning to other cultures for self-education. Naïve in their previous beliefs, western people are beginning to realise that not all black people look alike! That needless to say, just like western people, there are many different characteristics.

“People have some image in their head, but the truth is that, Africans don’t all go around wearing beads and tribal headgear”.

(*Alek Wek* in conversation with *Iman Bowie*, SCENE, 1999, p. 39)

CHAPTER 3

Changing Times

In considering all the factors and arguments from previous chapters about
intolerance and black representation, we are able to see how a community has been
effected in their mind, because that community does not conform to entered codes
of regulated ideas. The impulse to quell the black community resulted in their
personal struggles for emancipation, their fight against racism, and criticism to
other countries. It was their relative devaluation in society along with the lack of
identifiable images which could not relate to that community to the
emergence of the Civil Rights Movement.

The Civil Rights Movement in turn paved the way for the "Black is Beautiful"
campaign and effectively to the impact or emergence of "Hip Hop" music.
Although it is said that the world wasn't built in a day and understandably the
above events could not change idealistic points of view instantly, worldwide, the
as they filtered through, the mass media (i.e. magazines, TV, music, etc.) these
events did contribute to the increasing visibility of black struggles throughout the
decades. Thus, this in turn has contributed to the attitudes towards the black
community today, and defined the challenge of strong original western ideals
that by now are beginning to be diminished.

Although it has been a long struggle against the visual images of beauty, justified
in the majority or western minds. For the black community the struggle still
continues, justified by the impact that such western ideals of blond hair, blue eyes
and white skin colour have nurtured.

However, today, times are still changing. We now live in a more integrated
society, and people are increasingly beginning to look beyond what has been
acceptable before and are now turning to other cultures for self-education. Many
in their previous beliefs, western people are beginning to realize that not all black
people are alike. That needless to say, just like western people, there are many
different characteristics.

People have some image in their head, but the truth is that
Africans don't all go around wearing beads and tribal
headgear.

(Talk back in conversation with Yvonne Bowe, SCENE, 1999, p. 33)

The Rise in Representation

Every decade brings with it its own landmarks and attributes. I believe it is the 1990s contribution to project a fairer representation of the black image; to promote it as a different look on a more equal level. Everything that was once repressed in the past, i.e. culture, skin colour, hair and facial features, are now no longer considered as causing a conflicting image, but thought of as the natural characteristics of that person (as they always have been).

The representation of the black image is being treated just like the typical red-haired, freckled faced, Irish person, of which that image in itself is yet another stereotype. There is now a wide spread image of black people (contrasting characteristically) being used in the media in the 1990s, generated with the help of such channels as magazines, television, radio, billboards, etc.

With regard to fashion magazines, I would think that they have played a major role in the representation of the black female. Never before has there been as many different brands on the shop shelf – *VOGUE*, *ELLE* and *MARIE CLAIRE* being the most popular of the many hundreds. Such magazines however were not as embracing in the past, as they are today, in the publication of the black image. Often they exploited black women with an air of degradation. For example, the 1960s was a period that saw a tremendous leap for the ‘acceptance’ of black people. The Civil Rights Movement ‘allowed’ the black community to interact with the white community and thus to be seen as another representation in the mass media. In 1964, shocking to most people’s ideals, the ‘oddest’ woman exploded onto magazine covers, her name was ‘*Donyale Luna*’ (Ref. Fig. 1, p. 00). She was the first black model to become an international star. *Luna* crashed through the existing colour barriers in the fashion industry. However odd, shocking and explosive she was, this was exactly how she was meant to be perceived. In the six page article feature on her in *HARPERS BAZAAR*, the caption read: “*Donyale Luna*, with all the grace and strength of a Masai warrior!”

Thus the fashion industry were quick off the mark to exploit, and to use black women in this way, an exotic, scantily clad white man’s fantasy. Editors used *Luna* and successors for impact, as fetishistic clotheshorses, to photograph and hang their most outrageous garments on. This has undeniably continued (Ref. Fig. 24 – 26, p. 30 - 32). However some editors were more sincere in their approach and in 1969 *Life* magazine ‘was able’ to put black model *Naomi Sims* (Ref. Fig. 27, p. 33) on their cover with two important words: “Top Model”.

Considering the scarce amount of black representation in magazines. In the past many black girls found themselves flicking through pages of white magazine images (Ref. Fig. 28, p. 35 & 36). As such top brand magazines are published on a mass scale for all people, I would believe that they have a responsibility to have all those people represented and reflected in them fairly.

The Issue in Representation

Every decade brings with it its own landmarks and attributes. I believe it is the 1990's contribution to project a fairer representation of the black image to promote it as a different look on a more equal level. Everything that was once repressed in the past (hair colour, hair and facial features, and now no longer considered as carrying a conflicting image, but thought of as the natural characteristics of that person (as they always have been).

The representation of the black image is being treated just like the typical red-haired, freckled faced, Irish person, of which that image in itself is yet another stereotype. There is now a wide spread image of black people (contrasting characteristics) being used in the media in the 1990's, generated with the help of such channels as magazines, television, radio, billboards, etc.

With regard to fashion magazines, I would think that they have played a major role in the re-education of the black female. Never before has there been as many different brands on the shop shelf - NOOGA, KEE and WAVE, YAKKE being the most popular of the many brands. Such magazines however were not as embracing in the past as they are today, in the publication of the black image. Often they exploited black women with an air of degradation. For example, the 1960's was a period that saw a tremendous leap for the 'acceptance' of black people. The Civil Rights Movement allowed the black community to interact with the white community and this to be seen as another representation in the mass media. In 1964, according to most people, models, the 'reddest' woman exploded onto magazine covers, but more was 'Vivienne Westwood' (Ref. 1, p. 100) who was the first black model to become an international star. A new era dawned through the existing colour barriers in the fashion industry. However, odd, shocking and explosive she was, this was exactly how she was meant to be portrayed in the six page article feature on her in WAVE'S & KEE, the fashion leader. Vivienne Westwood with all the grace and strength of a Model warrior.

Thus the fashion industry were quick off the mark to exploit and to use black women in this way, an extreme scantily clad white man's fantasy. Fashion used Awa and successors for impact as technical clothiers, to photograph and hang the most outrageous garments on. This has undoubtedly continued (Ref. 1, p. 14-20, p. 30-32). However, some editors were more sincere in their approach and in 1969 Life magazine 'was able' to put black model Awa Westwood (Ref. 1, p. 22, p. 33) on their cover with two important words: "Top Model".

In considering the scarce amount of black representation in magazines, in the past many black artists found themselves fighting through pages of white pages for images (Ref. 1, p. 28, p. 30). As such top brand magazines are published on a mass scale for all people, I would believe that they have a responsibility to have all those people represented and reflected in their fairly.



Fig. 24 **Derogative image of the white man's fantasy**

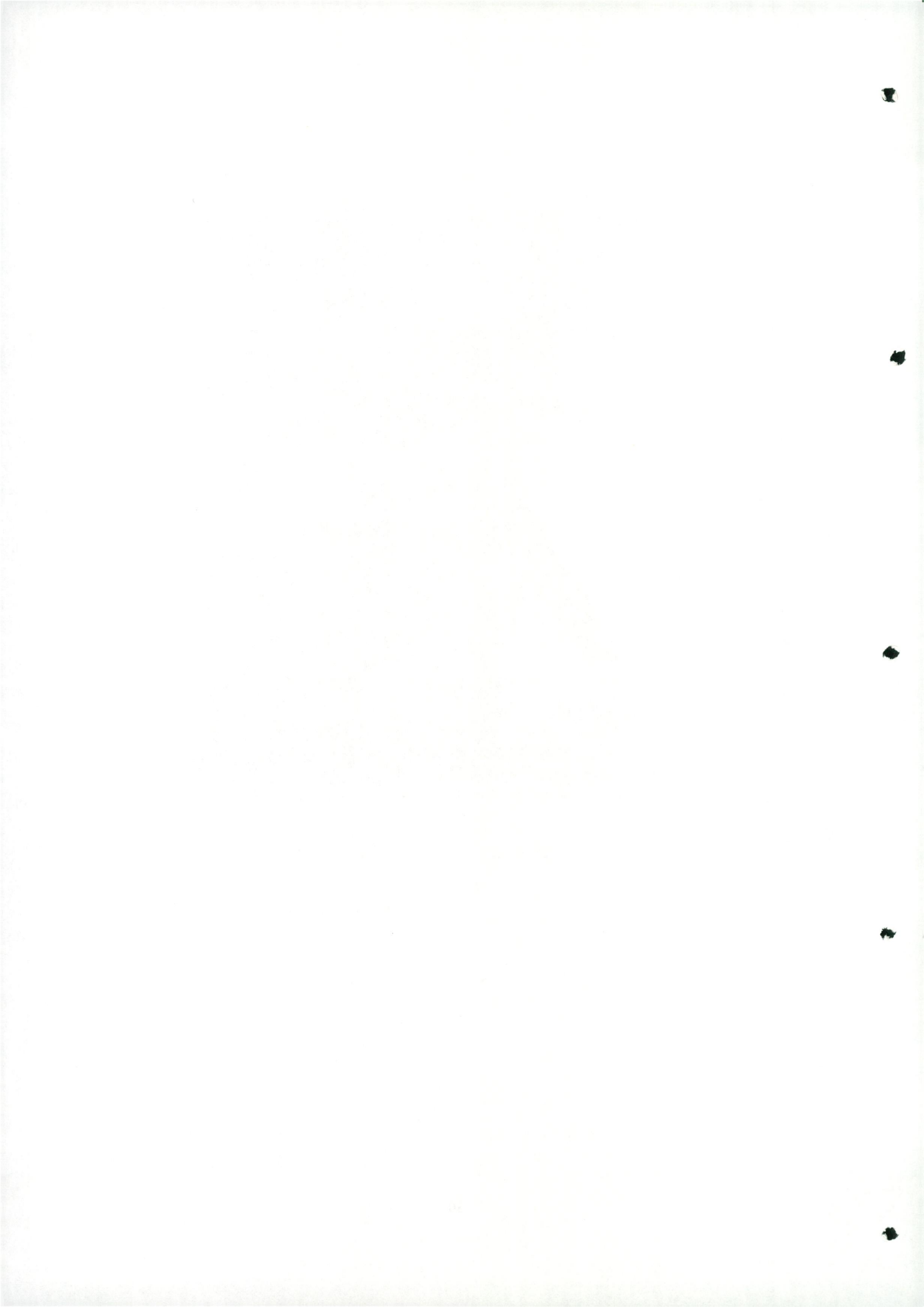




Fig. 25 *Naomi Campbell* being represented as 'wild' and 'unattainable'

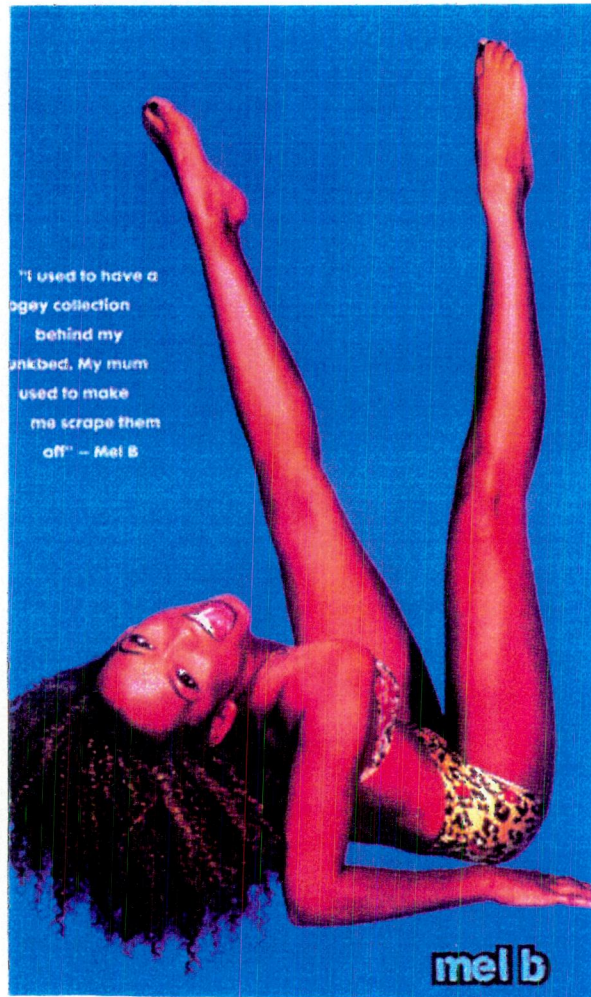
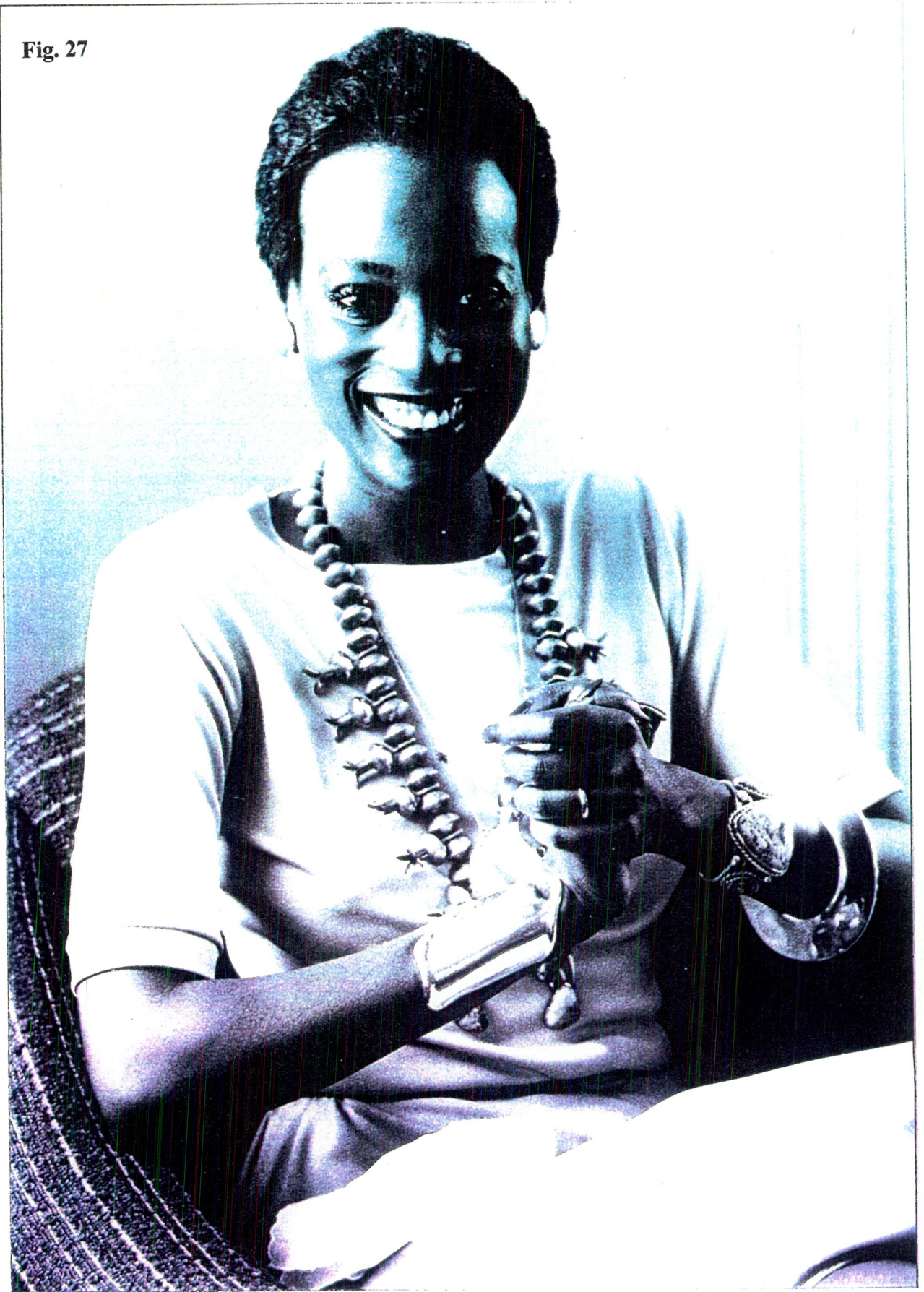


Fig. 26 *Mel B* (Spice Girl) whose image as the 'black' girl gave rise to her being otherwise known as Scary Spice

Fig. 27



Naomi Sims, first black woman to appear in a magazine with the caption "Top Model"

I remarked in a previous chapter on the fact that black people are now holding more high powered jobs, and are gaining more of the financial stakes. Thus they have more disposable income and hence the rise of black models on magazine covers, whereas before, on the covers and inside articles, the black model's skin colour would be altered to a brighter shade (Ref. Fig. 29, p. 37). Today it is not so. In my opinion I have always found *ELLE* magazine to publish a fair balance, and to publish a 'truer' image of a black woman. For example 'Kiera', the black model on its cover for October 1998 generated a thank-you letter to the editor of the magazine, for recognising a niche or need (Ref. Fig. 30 - 31, p. 38 & 39). The letter reads:

The October issue of *ELLE* stood out from all other fashion magazines in the shops because of the beautiful black model on the cover. Unfortunately, this happens so rarely it deserves recognition. So many different models epitomise beauty in their own independent way. Congratulations, *ELLE*. Any more to come?

K GROVER, Hertfordshire

Another letter, dealing with the same topic, to the editor of January *ELLE* reads:

Let me start by congratulating you for putting *Tyra Banks*, a beautiful African-American woman, on your December cover. Unfortunately it's rare to find black models featured on the fashion runways or the pages of top fashion magazines. But it is even rarer to find a woman of colour on the cover. Seeing your own image reflected in the visual representations of your culture is vital. It reaffirms existence and gives a sense of belonging. Your magazine's courage gives me hope that one day more publishers, producers and filmmakers – the imagemakers – will step up to the line and begin to challenge our outdated standards of beauty. Thank you *ELLE* for daring to strive.

YVETTE PERRY, New York, N.Y.

When *VOGUE* magazine featured *Alek Wek* in their magazine for June 1998, the editor also received a similar letter to thank them (Ref. Fig. 31b, p. 39).

Hooray for June *VOGUE*! A black woman who actually looks black and a beautifully full-figured girl are featured in your pages. If more magazines followed your lead, we can end the tyranny of 'Beauty fascism'.

LINDA KENIS, SW3. *VOGUE* 1998, p. 25

I reacted in a very low chapter on the fact that black people are now being
more right covered jobs and are gaining more of the financial sector. They they
have more disposable income and hence the rise of black models on magazine
covers. I have noticed on the covers and inside articles, the black model's skin
color would be shifted to a lighter shade (Ref: 197 p. 17). Today it is not so
in my opinion I have always found VAAE magazine to publish a fair balance, and
to publish a true image of a black woman. For example "Kiva", the black
model on its cover for October 1998 generated a thank-you letter to the editor of
the magazine for recognizing a niche or need (Ref: 197 p. 18 & 199
The fashion world.

The October issue of ELLE stood out from all other fashion
magazines in the shop because of the beautiful black
model on its cover. (Incidentally, this happens so rarely
I have never recognized so many different models
operating freely in their own independent way.
I regret that VAAE may have to come.

K. GUYON, Montclair, NJ

Another letter dealing with the same topic, to the editor of January VAAE reads:

Let me start by congratulating you for putting "New York"
a beautiful African-American woman on your December
cover. (Incidentally it's nice to find black models featured
on the fashion runway or the pages of top fashion
magazines. But it is even nicer to find a woman of color
on the cover. Seeing your own image reflected in the
visual representation of your culture is vital. It reaffirms
existence and gives a sense of belonging. Your magazine's
coverage gives me hope that one day more publishers,
producers and filmmakers - the image-makers - will step up
to the plate and begin to challenge our outdated standards of
beauty. Thank you VAAE for doing so.

YVETTE PERRY, New York, N.Y.

When VOGUE magazine featured Mark Hill in their magazine for June 1998, the
editor also received a similar letter to thank them (Ref: 197 p. 19).

Howdy for June VOGUE! A black woman who actually
looks black and a beautifully full-figured girl are featured
in your pages. If more magazines followed your lead, we
can end the tyranny of "Beauty" as it is.

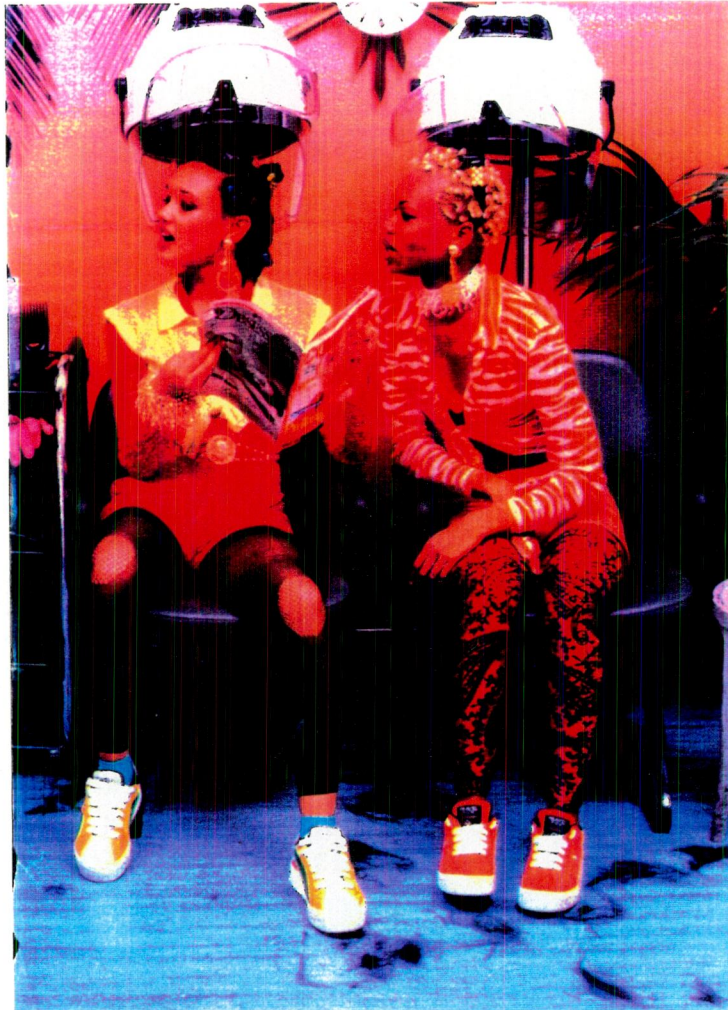
LINDA KIMBLE SW, VOGUE 1998, p. 19



Fig. 28



HeadingTowardsSomethingWithoutEva



NeedingToGetThere.

FlexYourMindWithoutFlexingYourMuscle.® TravelFox!

I.D magazine advertisements with a double meaning. (N.B. magazine covers)

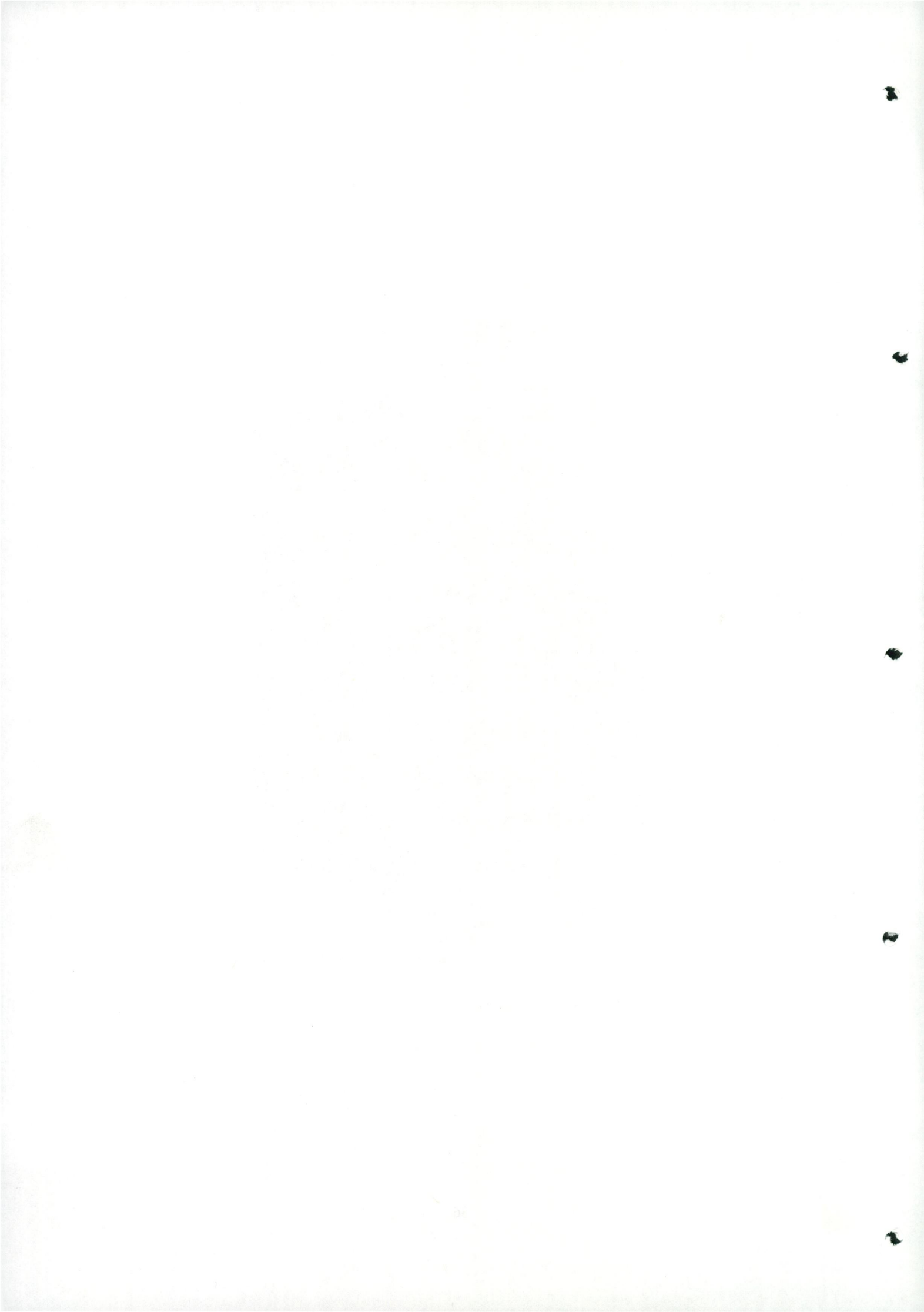
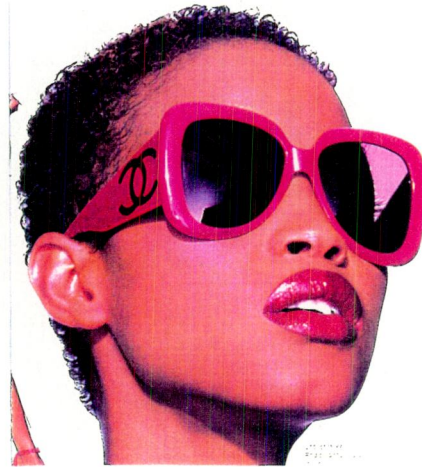
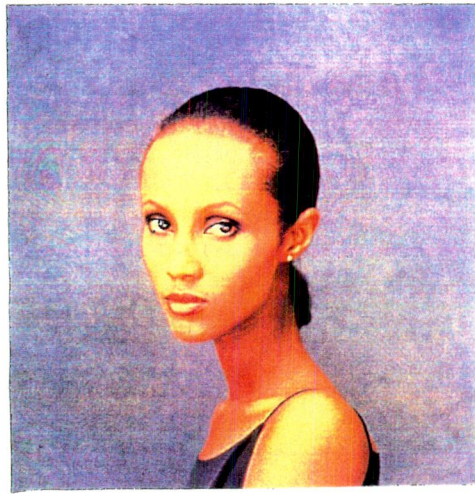
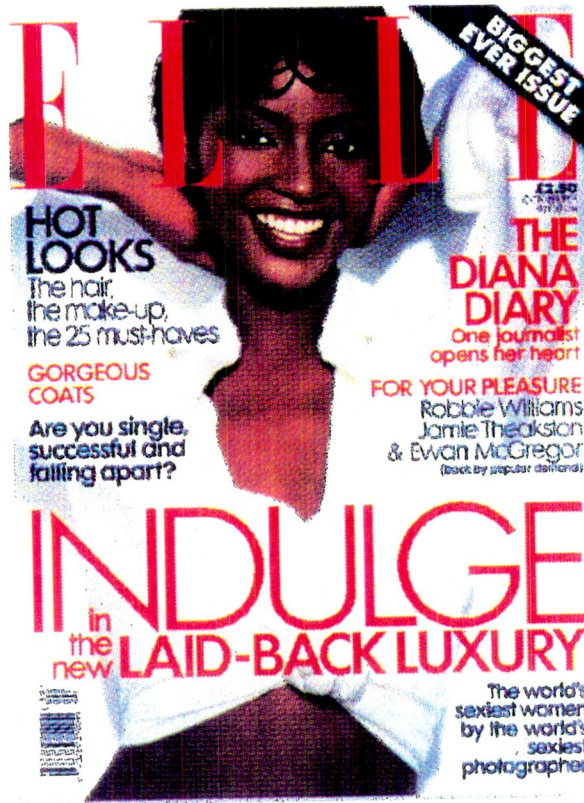


Fig. 29



Variations of blackness being whitened by the media

Fig. 30



Black women being represented on front covers of *ELLE* magazine

Fig. 31

ELLE

**MILLENNIUM
WHITE**
Space-age fashion
for cosmic things

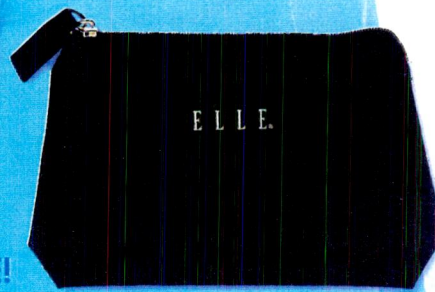
**HOROSCOPE
SPECIAL**
Your comprehensive
star guide to life,
love and men

100% ELLE
Who, where
and what'll
be hot in '99?

FREE!

**YOUR ESSENTIAL
MAKE-UP BAG
WITH EVERY ISSUE!**

U.S. AND CANADA ONLY. RESOURCES.



DON'T MISS NEXT MONTH'S ELLE -- OUT DECEMBER 11



Alek Wek as she appears in a feature by VOGUE magazine

The Power of the Media and a Positive Image

After being interviewed by *Oprah Winfrey*, *Alek Wek* a Sudanese model, sparked off much attention, because of her black features which are distinctive to her tribe in Sudan and do not resemble Caucasian at all, yet she was being hailed as beautiful. This would almost come as a shock to many black women. For *Alek* to be accepted in America as a beautiful black woman and a model is a massive leap of faith for many young black girls (Ref. Fig. 22, p. 27). One thing *Oprah* said to her during the interview on Sky T.V. that surprised me was:

“If you had been there when I was growing up, I would have thought of myself as beautiful”.

This remark, I think represents the power and neglect of the media for an evident culture. How in the past could a young girl who did not see herself, images of herself reflected, feel beautiful? Today there are many black models, varying in nationality, facial features and culture. Young black girls now have such icons as *Naomi Campbell*, *Alek Wek*, *Iman*, *Kiera*, etc. which they can relate to. Although this is a positive thing for black women, this may not be the case for many young black men, represented in such magazines. I have noticed in these magazines that dominantly, black men (and occasionally black women) are all too often being stereotyped. Fewer advertisers and even fewer men's glossies think that black models should be used for anything other than sportswear. However one black male model 'Roy', black, bald and beautiful, has become most successful at challenging these ideas (Ref. Fig. 32, p.42). Based in Paris, where it is almost impossible to find work if you are a black model, 'Roy' appeared in the first ever black model only spread in German *VOGUE*. It was through much persuasion at the start, but eventually 'Roy' was successfully spearheaded by the 'Gianne Franco Ferrer' (a Parisian designer) latest advertising campaign.

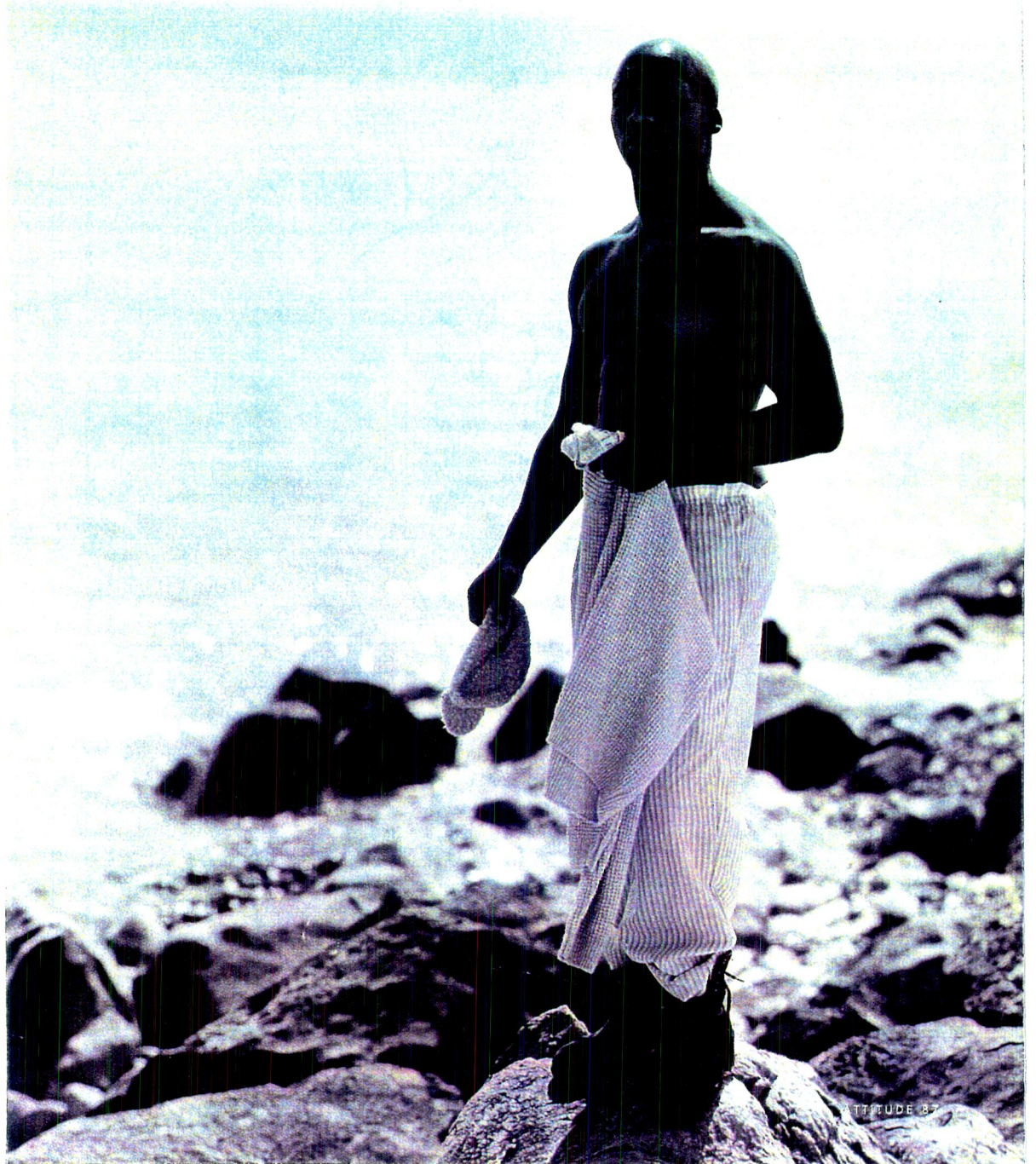
Music has always been a big influential factor in these circumstances. However the vast amount of black representation we see today, owes much to the music industry, with the emergence of black singers, who are all portraying their natural ethnic characteristics, who do not conform to white ideal codes of image. Many young black men and women can now look up to their rock rolemodels who project positive self images of their race and culture, such as *Lyren Hill*, *Mary J. Blige*, *Whitney Houston*, *Mace*, *R. Kelly* and *Boyz 2 Men*.

The representation of black people today and their acceptance by a western world and the fact that we are able to see such a diverse amount of black beauty, I think may not have happened if not for the emergence of 'hip hop' and Rap music. So much so that it is these cultures which shape our communities now. They have a huge influence on what we wear, what we listen to and what is accepted.

In a money-conscious industry it is not strange that the fashion world should pick up on this. There is a vast amount of black bands in main stream pop now, all making money. Thus there are a hundred times the amount of listeners and fans who listen to their music and watch their videos. Hence a lot of designers will offer their clothes to such bands to perform in, knowing that the fans will want to aspire to their role models, (it is now cool to be black!). Designers will generate vast amounts of money from their defusion ranges. Such labels as *Prada*, *Gucci*, *D and G*, *Calvin Klein*, *Adidas*, *Nike*, etc., have all been mentioned and promoted in such bands songs. *Tommy Hilfiger* also markets his label to a predominantly black market (Ref. Fig. 33, p. 43). His advertising strategy, now campaigns to feature more black people, and people of colour as opposed to a majority of whites.

In a money-conscious industry it is not strange that the fashion world should pick up on this. There is a vast amount of black bands in main street fashion all the time. Thus there are a hundred times the amount of black and tan and tan and black to their music and watch their videos. Hence a lot of designers will offer their clothes to such bands to perform in, knowing that the fans will want to have their models. It is now cool to be black. Designers will generate vast amounts of money from their fashion ranges. Such labels as Power, Givenchy, G. A. Jones, Klein, etc., have all been mentioned and promoted in such bands songs. Tommy Hilfinger also markets his label to a predominantly black market (Ref. fig. 33, p. 43). His advertising strategy, how compares to feature more black people and people of colour as opposed to a majority of whites.

Fig. 32



'Roy', one of the first black male models to break ground in fashion advertising

ARENA presents
 in association with
TOMMY HILFIGER

transatlantic

THE SOUND OF URBAN LIVING
 AN ESSENTIAL CD FEATURING THE FINEST
 NAMES IN MODERN MUSIC FROM AMERICA
 AND BRITAIN, SELECTED BY ARENA

FEATURING
 MAXWELL
 MARY J BLIGE
 BRAND NEW
 HEAVIES
 WYCLEF FROM
 THE FUGEES
 SOUL II SOUL
 TRACKS FROM
 MEN IN BLACK
 SOUNDTRACK
 AND MANY MORE

Transatlantic. The Sound Of Urban Living
FREE CD WITH DECEMBER ARENA*
ON SALE 13 NOVEMBER

ARENA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ALTER THE ABOVE LISTING *ONLY WITH COPIES ON SALE IN THE UK

Fig. 33

Arena magazine in conjunction with *Tommy Hilfiger* promoting black music

CONCLUSION

Through the development of my thesis I have come to recognise the power and effect the media has held on my topic. I have noticed that the representation of blackness has been, and still is being channelled through the media, ultimately allowing us to see the images they wish to project.

It is an ironic situation as it is now the media and the many spin-off channels, which enable us to see such variations of blackness. I would be sceptical as to why so much all of a sudden.

In some circumstances, I would argue that the representation of blackness now, at the moment, is but a trend driven issue. We are now living in a media age, and it is because of the media that we can have such a consciousness.

I feel that it can only lead to, in the end, a much more positive expression of blackness, but it is so driven by social and financial morals that the representation today is making money for such media channels. While this is a good thing for the black community, such powerful channels are fickle and bound to change. Once we had the dominant ideal of blond hair and blue eyes. Now, as I said before, it is almost as if it is 'Cool to be black'.

When I was growing up, beauty was all about tall, thin, blond and white. My models were *Cheryl Tiegs*, *Christie Brinkley* and *Barbie*. Today beauty is a much more eclectic collection of features and colours.

(*Bobbi Brown*, quoted in *SCHEFER*, 1997, p. 108)

As we move closer to the millennium, beauty and the representation of it, has come to reflect the social and cultural issues of our day. Although this has been an issue for decades, and is still not resolved, even so, it is another leap forward for the black community.

I think that, more often than not, sometimes, as a race we forget individuality was and is an important factor to our existence, and it should be nurtured, not smothered.

CONCLUSION

Through the development of my thesis, I have come to recognize the power and effect the media has had on my topic. I have noted that the representation of blackness has been and still is being channelled through the media, ultimately allowing us to see the images they wish to project.

It is a ironic situation as it is how the media and the many spin-off channels which enable us to see such variations of blackness. I would be surprised as to why so much of it is a problem.

In some circumstances, I would agree that the representation of blackness now is the most it is but a hard given issue. We are now living in a media age, and it is because of the media that we can have such a consciousness.

I feel that there may lead to, in the end, a much more genuine expression of blackness, but it is so driven by social and financial motives that the representation today is making money for such media channels. While this is a good thing for the black community, such powerful channels are tight and bound to change. Once we had the common ideal of bond hair and blue eyes. Now, as I said before, it is almost as if it is not to be black.

When I was growing up, beauty was all about tall thin blond and white. My models were Cheryl Cole, Kelly Rowland and Beyoncé. Today beauty is a much more diverse collection of features and colours.

(Quoted from a speech in SCWEEK, 1997, p. 108)

As we move closer to the millennium, beauty and the representation of it has come to reflect the social and cultural issues of our day. Although this has been an issue we've debated and still not resolved, even so it is another year forward for the black community.

I think that more often than not, companies as a race we forget individuals was and is an important factor to our existence, and it should be nurtured, not overlooked.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Boyars, Marion,** *Cover Girls and Supermodels 1945 –1965,*
London, Marion Boyars, 1996.
- Cooper, Wendy,** *HAIR: Sex, Society, Symbolism,*
New York, Stein and Day, 1971.
- Freeman, Joe,** *Social movements of the 60s and 70s,*
New York, Longman, 1983.
- Friday, Nancy,** *The Power of Beauty,*
London, Hutchinson, 1996.
- Hansen, Joseph; Reed, Evelyn,** *Cosmetics, Fashion, and the Exploitation of Women,*
New York, Pathfinder Press, 1986.
- Johnson, Kim; Jeffstone Gross,** *Women's Faces: Make-up and skin care,*
U.K., Chio Simple, 1997.
- Jones, Dylan,** *Hair Cults: 50 years of styles and cuts,*
London, Thames and Hudson, 1990.
- Keenan, Bridgid,** *The Women We Wanted To Look Like,*
London, Macmillan, 1977.
- Manning, Louise,** *Cosmetics and Fashion,*
London, Reaktion Books, 1994.
- Mercer, Kobina,** *Welcome To The Jungle: New positions in black cultural studies,*
New York, Routledge, 1994.
- Pratt, Jane,** *Beyond Beauty,*
London, Booth-Clibborne, 1997.
- Robinson, Julian,** *The Quest for Human Beauty,*
London, W.W. Northon, 1998.
- Samson, Eleri,** *The Image Factor,*
London, Keogan Page, 1994.

- Schefer, Dorothy,** *What is Beauty,*
London, Thames and Hudson, 1997.
- Snowden, Jr. Frank M.,** *Before Colour Prejudice*
London, Harvard University Press, 1983.
- Theasander, Marianne,** *The Feminine Ideal,*
London, Reakton Books, 1997.
- Waters, Malcolm,** *Globalization,*
London, Routledge, 1995.
- White, John,** *Black Leadership in America,*
New York, Longman, 1985.

BEDFORD, Simi, "In conversation with I'anson", VOGUE, Vol. No. 163, September, 1997, pp. 310-313.

BOWIE, Iman, "In conversation with Alek Wek", SCENE, Vol. No. 1, January/February, 1999, pp. 38-39.

WEK, Alek, "In conversation with Iman Bowie", SCENE, Vol. No. 1, January/February, 1999, pp. 38-39.

WILSON, Audrey, "Self Report", Braids and Beauty, Vol. No. 3, Summer 1995, p. 64.

What is Meaning?
London, Francis and Taylor, 1997.

Against Colour Realism
London, Harvard University Press, 1988.

The Structure of
London, Routledge Books, 1997.

Globalization
London, Routledge, 1998.

What is the Structure of
New York, Routledge, 1998.

Scholar, Toronto,

Rowden, J. Frank St.

Theodore, Toronto,

Waters, Toronto,

White, John

BEHOLD, SCEN. In conversation with Hanson, VOYAGE, Vol. No. 1A, September
1995, pp. 1-10.

BOWIE, in the conversation with Alex Wolk, SCENE, Vol. No. 1, January, February,
1999, pp. 25-39.

WOLK, Alex, in conversation with John Bowie, SCENE, Vol. No. 1, January, February,
1999, pp. 40-50.

WILSON, Andrew, "The Record", Brits and Beauty, Vol. No. 3, Summer, 1995, p. 44.