



A ZINE ON THE CROWN ACT BY THE
AFRICAN AMERICAN POLICY FORUM



DON'T TOUCH MY HAIR



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WHERE WE'RE COMING FROM

On Tuesday, March 28th 2023 (incase you're coming to us from the future) the African American Policy Forum (and our amazing friends Michaela Angela Davis and Shermena Nelson) gathered together to produce the event Don't Touch My Hair: Status of the CROWN Act as a part of Her Dream Deferred 2023

AAPF's campaign focused on elevating the crises facing Black women and girls.



Don't Touch My Hair: Status of the CROWN Act focused on the enactment of the CROWN act and the ways in which Black women's hair and expression continues to be used as a conduit for discrimination, marginalization, violence and internalized self-hate.

Through films, images and historical artifacts this panel brought together leading advocates, artists and academics to root the conversation in the ways in which Black women can celebrate their hair while resisting the misogynoir that implicates the ways in which we choose to wear our hair.





WHAT IS THE CROWN ACT?



The C.R.O.W.N. Act stands for "Create a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair." The CROWN Act was created in 2019 by Dove and the CROWN Coalition, in partnership with then State Senator Holly J. Mitchell of California, to ensure protection against discrimination based on race-based hairstyles by extending statutory protection to hair texture and protective styles...

...Such as braids, locs, twists, and knots in the workplace and K-12 public and charter public schools. Gov. Gavin Newsom signed it into law on July 3, 2019. The inaugural CROWN Act expands the definition of race in the Fair Employment and Housing Act and state Education Code.



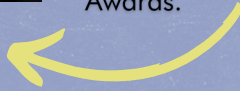
"CROWN Act legislation is an important step to end school push out for Black girls and to end the systemic criminalization and punishment of Black girls in schools."

A WHO'S WHO

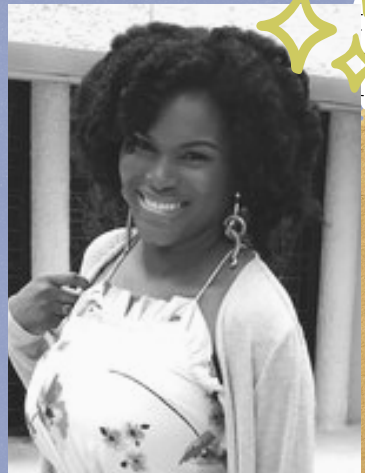
(Meet the Speakers of *Dont Touch My Hair: Status of the CROWN Act*)



Michaela Angela Davis is a writer, creative director, producer and image activist focusing on the intersections of gender, race, fashion, culture, beauty, and identity. She is the creator and executive producer of HULU's *The Hair Tales*, a dynamic six part docu-series celebrating Black women's identity, beauty, culture and humanity, uniquely expressed through the stories in hair featuring Ayanna Pressley, CHIKA, Marsai Martin, Chlöe Bailey and fellow executive producers Tracee Ellis Ross and Oprah Winfrey, recently nominated for 2 NAACP Image Awards.



Shermena Nelson serves as AAPF's Chief of Staff/Director of Programs and Community Engagement. Shermena is an Afro-Cuban macro social worker and attorney who focuses on interventions in larger systems, such as communities and organizations, in order to effect change that will enhance the lives of individuals.



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10 STATS ABOUT BLACK WOMEN ACROSS THREE DIFFERENT STUDIES



In the 2023 CROWN Workplace Research Study, researchers found that...

1. Black women's hair is 2.5x more likely to be perceived as unprofessional.
2. Approximately 2/3 of Black women (66%) change their hair for a job interview. Among them, 41% changed their hair from curly to straight.
4. Black women are 54% more likely to feel like they have to wear their hair straight to a job interview to be successful.
4. Black women with coily/textured hair are 2x as likely to experience microaggressions in the workplace than Black women with straighter hair.
5. Over 20% of Black women 25-34 have been sent home from work because of their hair.
6. 25% of Black women believe they have been denied a job interview because of their hair, which is even higher for women under 34 (1/3)

In 2021, the CROWN Research Study for Girls revealed that...

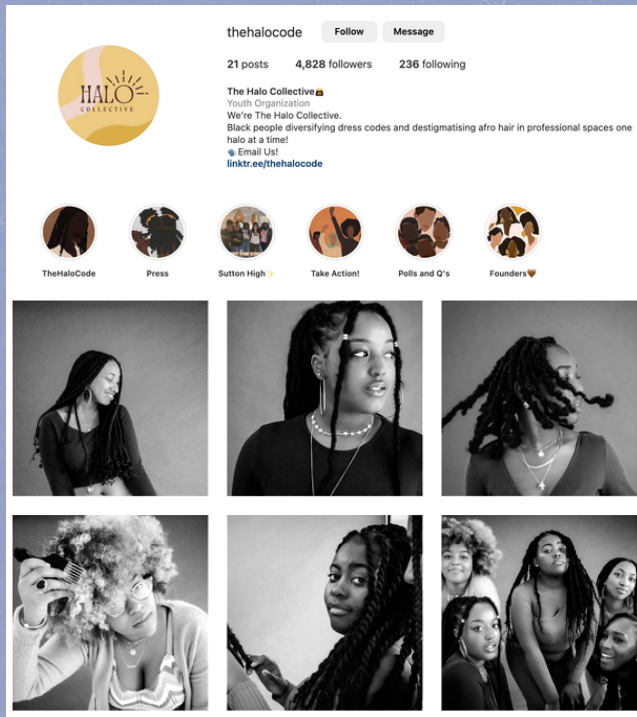
7. 53% of Black mothers say their daughters have experienced racial discrimination based on hairstyles as early as five years old
8. 90% of Black children stating that their hair is beautiful, 81% of Black children in majority-white schools say they sometimes wish their hair was straight
9. 100% of Black elementary school girls in majority-white schools (who report experiencing hair discrimination) experienced discrimination by the age of 10

The National Black Women's Justice Institute notes that...

10. "Black girls are more likely than their white counterparts to be punished in school for subjective behaviors, including hairstyles and dress."

FIGHTING HAIR DISCRIMINATION AROUND THE WORLD

The United States is not the only country working towards legislating against race-based hair discrimination. In the United Kingdom, there is the Halo Code, which is the UK's first Black Hair code.



The Halo Code explicitly protects employees who come to work with natural hair and protective hairstyles associated with their racial, ethnic, and cultural identities. It is a campaign pledge, signed by schools and businesses, that promises members of the Black community that they have the "freedom and security to wear all afro-hairstyles without restriction or judgment". This includes any child who wishes to wear their hair however they choose to in school.



girl

'The Hair Tales' Untangles Black Hair's Role In Female Identity

all the feels

Black Hair Practices

HERE'S WHAT YOU HAD TO SAY



During Don't Touch My Hair: Status of the CROWN act, we heard from you about your hair journey.

"I was told my hair was distracting in a college class. I normally had my natural hair in braids or a ponytail."

"My hair has been naturally worn since 1962 at age 18, thanks to being influenced by Tom Feeling the artist. I am now 79, have the same hair style, ya'll."

"The kitchen smelling like burned hair and ears on Saturday night...my grandma was a wizard with the Hot comb and blue magic grease."

"I can't tell you how many times I have gone from straight to natural depending on where I worked... Those days are gone!"

"The beauty shop is a rite of passage for Black women and girls."

"One of my uncles was like, 'what's the matter, lost your comb?'"

"My grandmother had a fit when I got a perm! I had a fit years later when my aunt put that kiddie perm in my daughter's hair!"

"I still go to Philly to get my hair done sometimes... There is no place like home and no stylist like your OG stylist."

"As a young boy who watched his sister after school until my parents got home from work, my sister, who was four years younger wanted her hair to look a certain way when she went out to play, thus I learned to braid, cornrows and all at age 12. It enabled great bonding with my sister and many years later when I braided my own daughter's hair."

DID YOU KNOW... THAT VERSIONS OF THE CROWN ACT ALREADY EXIST IN 19 OTHER STATES?

Alaska, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington and Minnesota!



THAT YOU CAN LEARN MORE ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF BLACK HAIR IDENTITY BY WATCHING THE HAIR TALES?

DID YOU KNOW (PART 2)...

The Hair Tales is a docuseries about Black women, beauty and identity told through the lens of Black hair. From executive producers Tracee Ellis Ross and Michaela Angela Davis, "The Hair Tales" tells the personal tales of phenomenal Black women in relation to their hair and experiences, connecting them to broader societal and historic themes. "The Hair Tales" features stories from Oprah Winfrey, Issa Rae, Chlöe Bailey, Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley, and many more.

On creating the series, Michaela Angela Davis remarks: "I wanted this series to be a tribute to the tens of thousands of Black women that have stood on their feet with their hands in our heads, sending us out into the world with some dignity, with some money in our pocket, holding down the communities."

- Michaela Angela Davis

• [Our Hair, Our Crowns, Our Stories](#) | [Black America](#)



SO... WHAT CAN I DO?

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1. Learn More About Hair Discrimination.

Ask yourself: Do I know what hair discrimination is? Do I know who is subject to it? How does it impact those who are subjected to it? What has been done to address it? And, what more should be done to ensure that no one is subject to this form of discrimination again!

2. Find Out the Status of the CROWN Act and Other Hair Discrimination-related Laws in Your City and State.

3. Discover and Connect with Organizations Working Against Hair Discrimination in Your State.

Google “hair discrimination organization” along with your state to discover their names and connection information. You will find articles about the work being done around this issue. Skim to find the names of organizations with which you can connect.

4. Create Opportunities for Individuals in Your Area to Learn More About Hair Discrimination Issues Specific to Your City and State.

Sponsor Zoom or in-person educational events! Use social media to spread awareness by sharing informational posts by organizations dedicated to this cause or by creating well-researched posts of your own to share! Organize groups to spread awareness about the issue in your community! Or, access the CROWN Coalition Toolkit for ideas on how to lead “My Hair, My CROWN” sessions to build self-esteem and confidence for kids wearing natural hair.

5. Support Organizations Fighting Hair Discrimination.

The Crown Coalition
The Legal Defense Fund
The National Urban League
Color of Change



**“If we can legislate harm, we can legislate healing...” -
Congresswoman
Ayanna Pressley**

CHECK OUT OUR OTHER EVENTS

At AAPF we have a whole lot of goodness going on! Check it out!



On March 29th, join us in a panel discussion that will feature Black women writers, scholars and activists who have all been pivotal in the articulation of the theory and praxis of Black feminism and intersectionality in the U.S. and beyond. The panel will be an opportunity to take seriously how Black women, girls, and femmes and their knowledge and ability to theorize has always been contested and under threat.



Join us on March 31st for a special in person event! AAPF alongside mental health and well-being practitioners, Shawna Murry Browne, Dr. Mariel Buque, Anana Harris Parris, and Imani Samuels, will provide a communal space of restorative care where we will honor other Black women who are committed to self-care practices that center Black women's ways of knowing and healing.



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POLICY FORUM**

2023 SUMMER FELLOWSHIP APPLICATIONS

ARE NOW OPEN. APPLY TODAY!

DEADLINE: MARCH 31, 2023 AT 8:00 PM EST

bit.ly/YSPAApplication

2023

Young Scholars Program: Art, Activism and Advocacy

**APPLY
NOW!**

**AAFP
YOUNG
SCHOLARS
PROGRAM**

Deadline:
March 31, 2023
at 8:00 PM EST

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