

# Barbershops

Hair and Cultural Identity



# Community

- **Black barbershops and beauty parlors traditionally provide a safe communal space**
- **Men and women exchange ideas and pass on knowledge to younger generations**
- **Discourse serves to strengthen the participants' identities as members of the community**

# History

- **Hairdressing was one of the first professions available to blacks after emancipation**
- **Allowed black men a path to financial success and entrepreneurship**
- **Barbers took on roles of leadership in communities**
- **Funded community projects**
- **Employed members of community**



# Rap

- Younger generations asked about progress in school, future plans
- Learned to show deference to their elders
- Learned to respectfully engage in discussion with each other and rap
- **Rap** = to discuss or debate

## Between the Lines

- **Preserve African American history**
- **Often decorated with images of black icons**
- **Learn about aspects of black history not taught in school**
- **Black cultural identity is acknowledged as beautiful and meaningful**

# The Flip Side

- Argued that barbershops teach sexism and misogyny
- Gendered spaces lead to idea of “men’s talk” and “women’s talk”
- Exclusionary
- Reinforces traditional ideas of gender