

If I told you that getting a hairstyle involves self-expression, self-esteem, and even a sense of social identity, I probably wouldn't be telling you anything new. And if I told you that since the 1800's black barbershops and beauty parlors have been significant gathering places and "community hubs" where African Americans communed to swap stories, gossip, or debate, it may not be news either. The folk tradition of black barbershops as social spaces has been popularized in movies including *Barbershop* and *Barbershop: Back in Business*.

In slavery times, barbering was considered a lowly, or servant profession, a job that was too "undistinguished" to be performed by whites. Following emancipation, blacks skilled at barbering opened their own businesses which initially exclusively served white clientele. They became the first black entrepreneurs.

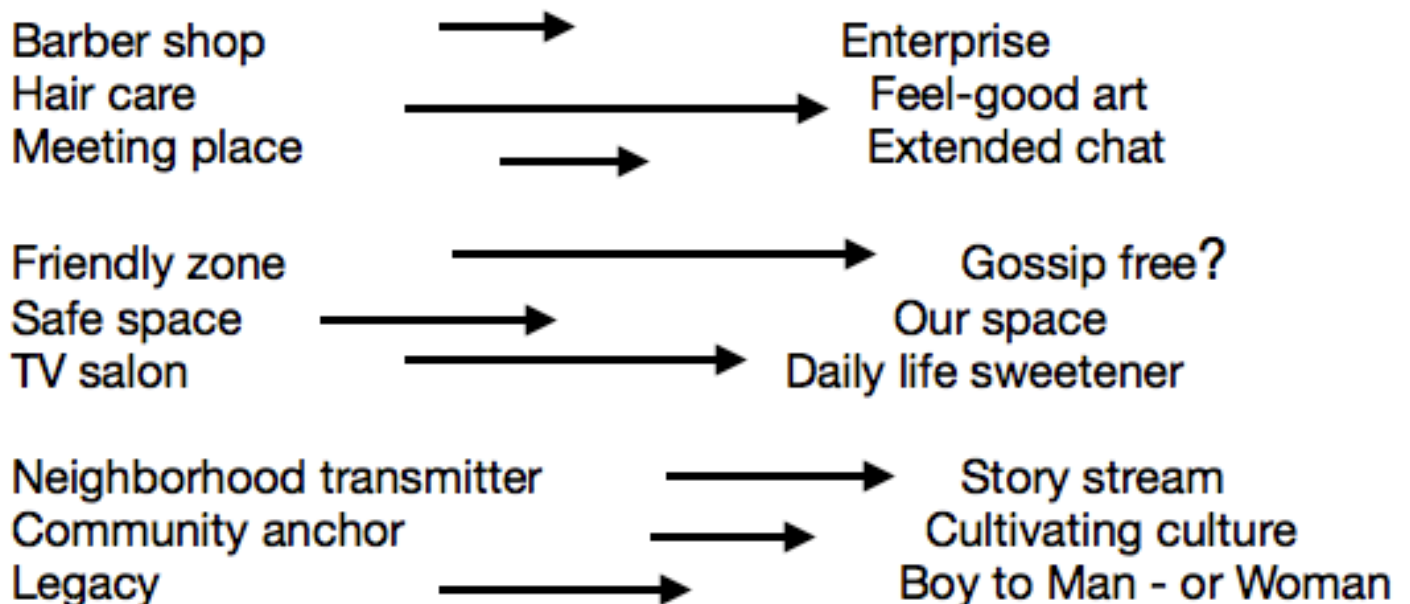
Before emancipation, wealthy white women used black slaves or white servants to do their hair. Following emancipation, both white and black women realized the hair care business was a burgeoning financial opportunity. The beauty industry offered women real financial independence! Madame C.J. Walker became the first black millionaire by building a beauty parlor empire.

It's in recognition that a hairstyle is a major social signifier which makes millions of people feel good about themselves and their role in society that ConNECKtedTOO is sponsoring "the Charleston Cut," an occasion for local barbers to create hairstyles for the Low country. NO SINGLE CUT will be a prizewinner because ConNECKtedTOO does not promote competition among TINY businesses. Participants, however, will be identified with their creation on professional, large-format photographs to be exhibited with artifacts from other ConNECKtedTOO members during a celebration of the role TINY BUSINESSES play in Charleston's neighborhood life.

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## The Charleston Cut - a celebration

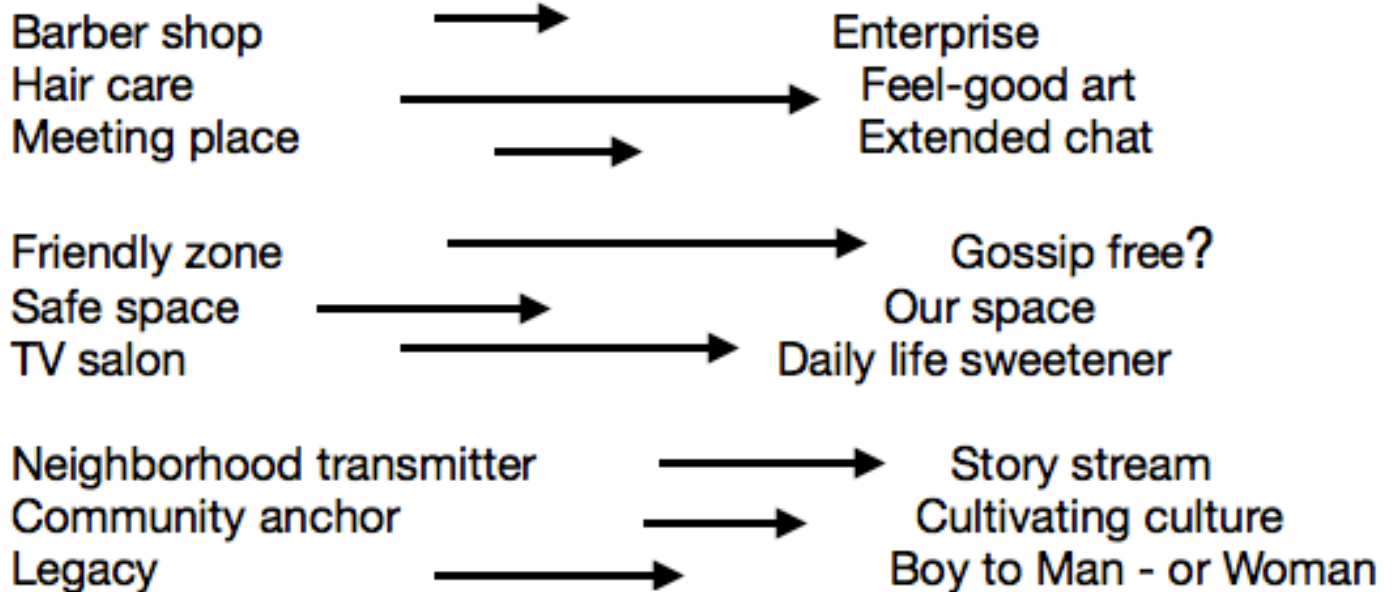
### Barbering as Art - The Charleston Cut



Kick off time: **MOJA festival**

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