

FFM

by InStyle PhD

The Fashion Fusion Magazine

**VOL. 2
ISSUE 6**

**RASMIT
KAUR “ROZ”**

FASHION ICON OF
THE MONTH

FASHION HISTORY |
SHOP YOUR CLOSET
SATURDAYS | STYLING

FASHION HISTORY |
SHOP YOUR CLOSET
SATURDAYS | STYLING

REIMAGINING ELEGANCE
FOR THE MODERN ERA

**DANDYISM IN
BLOOM:
ELEVATING
ELEGANCE THIS
MAY**

WELCOME TO THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

“THE ART OF THE LEGACY: DANDYISM, REVOLUTION & THE POWER OF STYLE”

Dear Savvy Stylers,

This May, as the world turns its eyes to the steps of the MET Gala, we turn ours to a theme as lavish as it is liberating—**Dandyism**. But make no mistake: this isn't just about flamboyance or flair. Dandyism, at its core, is a declaration. A resistance. A refusal to be boxed in.

In this edition of Fashion Fusion by InStylePhD, we reflect on why the world often mistakes excellence for excess, and why those of us who dare to demand more are labeled “too much.” Beyoncé reminded us of this recently, as she was criticized for protecting her safety and artistic vision by setting clear expectations. But excellence is not ego—it's integrity. And that is the heartbeat of this issue.

We explore:

- Why Fashion Matters in Leadership—where personal style becomes executive presence;
- The Fashion Industry's Tariff—unpacking the financial and global stakes;
- Suited for Revolution: Women and Dandyism—because tailored suits aren't just for men or the boardroom;
- Why We're Addicted to the Status Quo—and how we unlearn our comfort with mediocrity.

We also proudly introduce our reimagined fashion segment, Wardrobe Whispers, where our closets speak softer, deeper truths. And we're celebrating those who dare to dress audaciously and authentically—including our Style Icon of the Month.

Style Icon of the Month: @Roz_creativestylist | Rasmit Kaur

She's 58. She's fierce. And she's just getting started.

Rasmit Kaur, known to many as @Roz_creativestylist, is a master of eclectic elegance. Her wardrobe is a world of its own—where ethnic richness meets vintage treasure, where cultural heritage dances with contemporary boldness. She is not just a style consultant; she is a style storyteller.

This is the first time Fashion Fusion has featured a Style Icon I don't personally know. And yet, through her feed, her fashion, and her fearlessness, I feel connected to her journey. She tramples on assumptions and walks her own runway with dignity, grace, and edge.

In every photo, she shows us what it means to live in your lane—and own it. Roz, you are fashion. You are leadership. You are an inspiration!

DR. SHARON L. MCDANIEL

Editor-In-Chief, Fashion Fusion by InStyle PhD



This 1928 Jewelry Grecian Cameo Pendant Tassel Necklace brings a vintage-inspired look with its intricate design.



SIMPLY SAYING



When Excellence Feels Like "Too Much"

Why are we uncomfortable when someone refuses to shrink their standard of excellence? In a world that often rewards mediocrity masked as "relatable," we've grown suspicious of high expectations—especially when they come from women, and even more so from Black women.

Recently, Beyoncé was criticized for being "difficult" because she had clear expectations—expectations that not only protected her safety, but ensured an extraordinary experience for her audience. She dared to demand that the stage crew mark her cues with precision, that her surroundings be in order, and that every moving part respect the artistry of her craft. And yet, that level of intentionality was reduced to attitude.

But here's the question: Since when did caring deeply and showing up fully become a flaw?

As a CEO, I've learned that clarity is not cruelty—and I am unapologetic about my expectations. Because excellence is not about ego. It's about honor. It's about honoring the work, the audience, the mission, and those we serve.

So maybe the discomfort isn't with her demands, but with our own diluted expectations. Maybe we've been conditioned to settle, to make do, to believe less is good enough.

But let me say this plainly: Excellence is not "too much." It's exactly what we all deserve.

Your expectation sets the tone. What's yours saying?



SIMPLY YOURS, SHARON

**Fashion Icon
of the
Month**



Rasmit Kaur

QUOTE

“Style is
how I show
resilience.”

RASMIT KAUR

At 58, Rasmit Kaur is redefining what it means to age—and dress—with purpose. Born in Chandigarh, India, and now based in California, she brings a global sensibility to her work as a stylist and content creator. With over 27 years in the fashion industry, including her role as a senior stylist at Anthropologie, Rasmit has cultivated a unique aesthetic she describes as “untucked glamour” with a touch of “intentional disarray.”

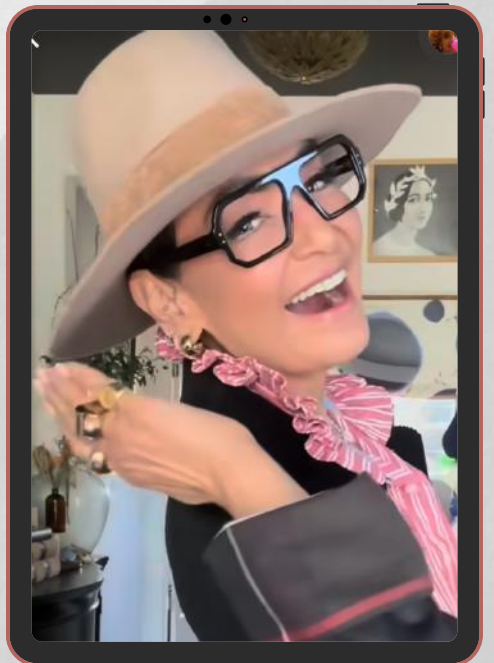
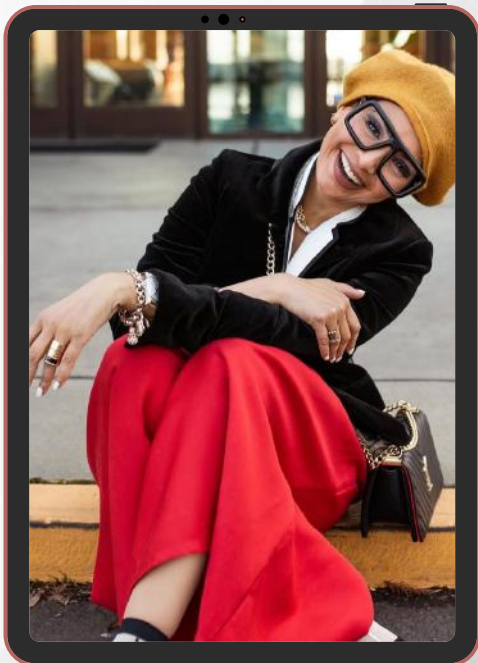
Her personal style is a rich tapestry of cultural heritage and contemporary fashion. From vibrant saris to tailored separates, Rasmit seamlessly blends traditional Indian garments with modern silhouettes, creating looks that are both timeless and avant-garde. Her signature oversized eyewear and bold accessories add a distinctive flair that sets her apart in the fashion landscape.

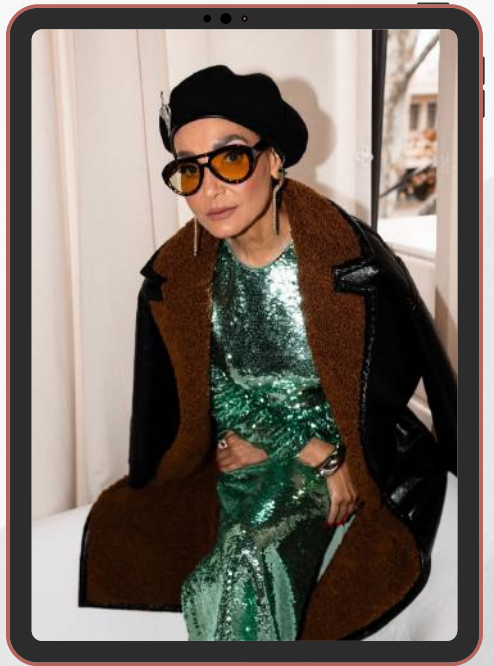
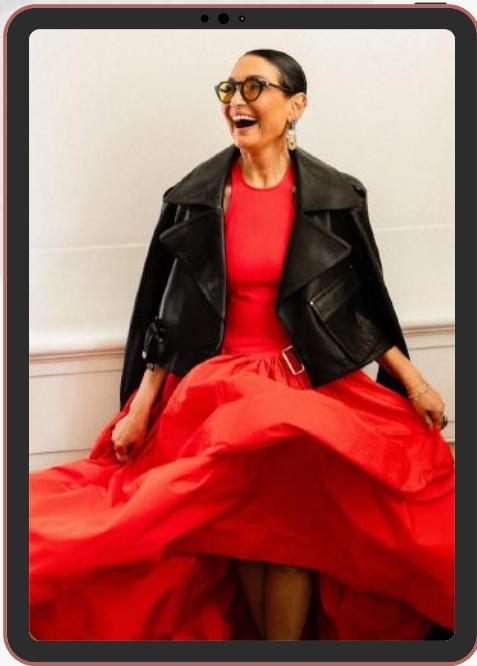


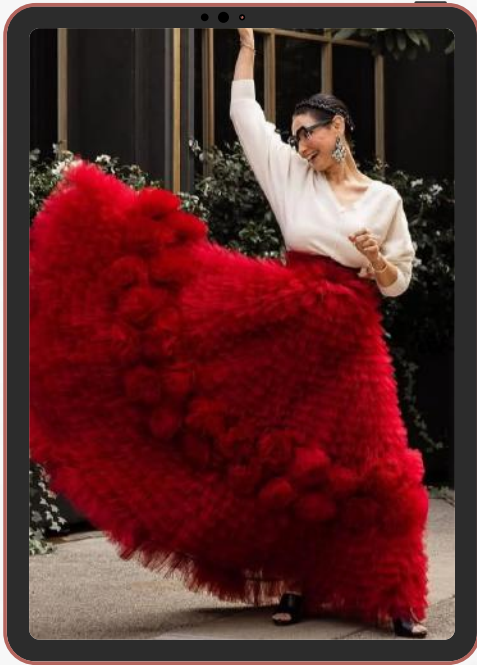
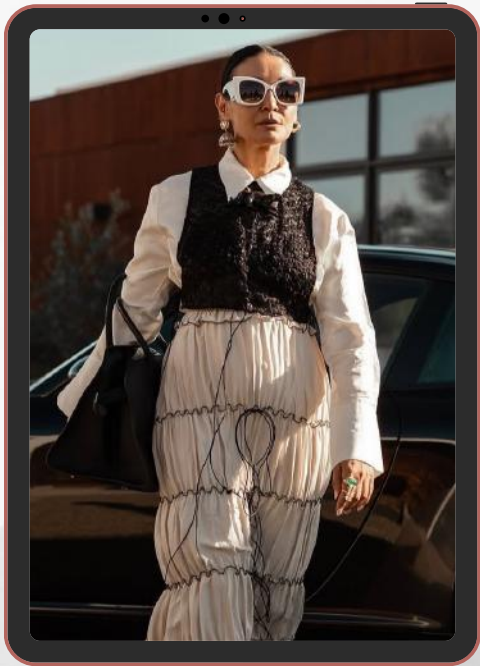
Beyond her sartorial choices, Rasmit is a passionate advocate for pro-age and diversity in fashion. She uses her platform to challenge societal norms, encouraging women to embrace their individuality and express themselves authentically, regardless of age. As she eloquently puts it, “Style is how I show resilience.”

Rasmit’s influence extends beyond Instagram, with a presence on TikTok and Threads, where she shares styling tips, personal reflections, and glimpses into her daily life. Her content resonates with a diverse audience, inspiring many to find confidence and joy in their personal style.

In celebrating Rasmit Kaur as our Style Icon of the Month, we honor not just her impeccable fashion sense but also her unwavering commitment to authenticity, empowerment, and the art of storytelling through style.







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STYLE IS A STRATEGY: WHY FASHION MATTERS IN LEADERSHIP

By Sharon L. McDaniel, PhD
InStyle PhD
Fusion Fashion Magazine

In the world of leadership, we often hear that serious work requires serious attire—plain, understated, and preferably in navy or black. For decades, I've challenged this idea, proving that leadership and personal style aren't enemies, but powerful allies.

Leadership That Speaks Before Words

As founder of a nationally recognized nonprofit, advisor to philanthropic organizations, and advocate for child welfare reform, I've spent countless hours in rooms where facts, figures, and strategic plans determine who gets heard.



Often, I've been the only Black woman—sometimes the only woman—at the table.

In these spaces, I've chosen to arrive not just with my expertise, but with my complete self: the tailored suit and the statement jewelry, the data-driven presentation and the bold lipstick. My gold cuffs and carefully chosen colors aren't accidents—they're part of my message.

Finding My Professional Voice

When I started my organization at 31, I had big dreams but limited resources. My wardrobe, like my business plan, required careful thought with what I had available. Each outfit was an investment in how my ideas would be received before I even spoke.

Early on, I tried toning down my appearance to be “taken seriously”—wearing what I thought was the uniform of success. But something important was lost when I tried to separate my ideas from my identity. The creativity that drives my work suffered when I couldn't bring my whole self to the table.

When I finally embraced my complete identity—including how I present myself visually—I became not just more comfortable, but more effective as a leader.

Style Without Breaking the Bank

Powerful style doesn't require designer price tags. Some of my most impactful professional looks have come from thoughtful shopping at accessible brands that deliver quality and distinction:

- **Ann Taylor and Loft** offer professional staples with modern touches that transition seamlessly from meetings to presentations.



- **H&M's** career collections provide trend-conscious pieces that can be elevated with accessories.
- **Zara** consistently delivers structured blazers and statement pieces that look far more expensive than they are.
- **Banana Republic Factory and J.Crew Factory** provide classic workwear at significantly reduced prices.
- **ASOS** offers an inclusive range of sizes with professional options that embrace color and pattern.
- **Mango** excels at minimalist pieces with interesting details that communicate sophistication.

The secret isn't spending more—it's selecting pieces with intention, focusing on fit, and understanding which elements deserve investment (like a quality blazer) versus where you can save.

The Power of Signature Style Elements

Every leader needs recognition factors—visual elements that become associated with their presence and authority:

- A consistent color palette that complements your skin tone and reflects your energy;
- A signature accessory, whether statement earrings, bold glasses frames, or distinctive scarves;
- A personal “uniform” formula that you can adapt while maintaining your visual identity;
- Strategic use of texture—perhaps you're known for incorporating interesting fabrics or patterns.

Thoughtful grooming choices, from a distinctive hairstyle to a signature lip color. These elements create visual continuity that reinforces your professional brand without requiring a complete wardrobe overhaul each season.

Why What We Wear Matters

How we dress isn't shallow or unimportant—it's actually a form of communication, especially for those who don't fit the traditional image of leadership. For women in male-dominated fields, and particularly for Black women facing both gender and racial stereotypes, what we wear helps shape how our expertise is perceived.

I approach my wardrobe choices with the same thoughtfulness I bring to my professional decisions. Each color, style, and accessory is selected with purpose, knowing it will speak before I do.

Building Your Professional Style Library

Consider creating a “style board” the same way you might develop a strategic plan:

- Document outfits that make you feel powerful and analyze what they have in common.
- Identify leaders whose style you admire and note specific elements that could translate to your context.
- Research color psychology to make intentional choices about the messages your palette sends.
- Schedule seasonal wardrobe reviews to ensure your clothing aligns with your current goals.
- Invest in tailoring—even affordable pieces look premium when they fit perfectly.



The Jenny Bird Viviana Ring is a celebrity favorite, known for its bold design and versatility.

This approach transforms shopping from a recreational activity to a strategic investment in your leadership presence.

Join the Conversation

I invite you to consider:

- How has your workplace or field defined “professional appearance,” and who benefits from these definitions?
- Have you ever felt you needed to change how you look to be taken seriously? What was lost in that compromise?
- What simple style element could become your leadership signature without requiring significant investment?
- Your experience may differ from mine, but what matters is approaching both our work and our appearance with intention, recognizing that leadership—like personal style—is ultimately about authentic self-expression.

Let’s continue this conversation with both depth and style, understanding that bringing these worlds together makes us not just more interesting, but more effective as leaders.



**Luxury Silver Quartz Pocket Watch
Pendant Chain offers a budget-friendly
option without compromising on style.**

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THE FASHION INDUSTRY'S TARIFFS CHALLENGE

WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOUR CLOSET



What Are Tariffs, Anyway?

Think of tariffs as special taxes on products coming into the country from abroad. When the U.S. places tariffs on imported clothing, shoes, or fabrics, foreign companies (or the U.S. companies that import from them) have to pay extra money to bring these items into the country.

How Tariffs Are Affecting the Fashion Industry

Higher Prices at the Register

Perhaps the most noticeable impact is on price tags. When fashion brands face higher import costs, they typically pass at least

some of that expense on to consumers. That \$30 t-shirt might become a \$40 t-shirt, not because the quality improved, but because tariffs increased the cost of bringing it to market.

Disrupted Supply Chains

The fashion industry operates on incredibly complex global supply chains. A single garment might include cotton from Egypt and zippers from Japan and be sewn in Vietnam before landing in American stores. Tariffs can disrupt these delicate networks, forcing companies to scramble for alternative sourcing options or production locations.

Squeezed Profit Margins

For fashion brands that can't easily raise prices (perhaps due to competitive pressures), tariffs eat directly into profit margins. This puts particular pressure on small and medium-sized brands that lack the financial cushion of larger corporations.

Delayed Collections and Limited Innovation

With increased costs and uncertain supply chains, some fashion brands have had to delay new collections or limit their experimental designs. Creative risks become financial risks when profit margins are already thin.

Who's Feeling the Impact?

Small and Independent Designers

Small fashion businesses often lack the resources to quickly pivot their production to different countries or absorb additional costs. Many independent designers report putting expansion plans on hold or scaling back their offerings.

Mid-Market Brands

Brands positioned in the middle market face a particular squeeze—they can't compete with fast fashion on price alone, but they don't have the luxury market's ability to absorb higher costs without alienating customers.



Consumers

Ultimately, fashion lovers are seeing less variety and higher prices, particularly in certain categories like accessories and footwear that have faced steep tariffs.

Strategic Ways to Address Tariff Challenges

1. Diversify Production Locations

Don't put all your manufacturing eggs in one basket. Brands with production spread across multiple countries can pivot more quickly when tariffs change for a specific region.

2. Invest in Domestic Manufacturing

While often more expensive initially, U.S.-based production avoids import tariffs entirely and can create marketing opportunities around "Made in USA" messaging.

3. Review Product Materials

Some materials face higher tariff rates than others. Consider redesigning products to use materials with lower tariff burdens when possible.

4. Apply for Exclusions

The U.S. government occasionally allows companies to apply for exemptions from certain tariffs. This process requires detailed documentation but can provide significant relief.

5. Embrace Vertical Integration

Owning more of your supply chain gives you greater control and potentially reduces the number of tariffed transactions.

6. Focus on Value-Added Services

Enhance offerings that aren't subject to tariffs, like personalization, styling services, or post-purchase support.

For Fashion Consumers

1. Buy Domestic When Possible

Supporting U.S.-made fashion not only avoids tariff impacts but also typically supports better labor practices.

2. Invest in Quality Over Quantity

With rising prices, the "buy less, buy better" approach makes even more sense. Focus on versatile pieces that will last multiple seasons.

3. Follow Trade Policy Developments

Stay informed about changing tariff policies, as these can influence when and what to buy.

4. Explore Emerging Brands from Non-Tariffed Regions

As the fashion world gets more global, exciting designers from countries with favorable trade agreements offer fresh alternatives.



**SUPPLY CHAIN DISRUPTIONS
IN FASHION PRODUCTION**

Looking Forward

The fashion industry has always been adaptable, responding to everything from changing hemlines to shifting consumer values. The current tariff landscape presents challenges, but it's also pushing the industry toward more sustainable and resilient business models.

Smart fashion brands are using this moment to reconsider their entire approach to design, production, and distribution. Those who successfully navigate these changes may emerge stronger, with more transparent supply chains and more thoughtful relationships with their customers.

Fashionably Yours,
Dr. Sharon L. McDaniel



**The Dragonfly Pocket Watch Necklace
adds a nature-inspired touch.**

PRODUCTS

OF THE MONTH



7 AFFORDABLE

Jewelry Brands



MEJURI

Vibe: Minimalist luxury for everyday

Why We Love It:

Fine jewelry made affordable—think 14k gold, vermeil, and responsibly sourced materials. Great for layering.

Top Picks: Bold hoops, dainty stackable rings, and croissant dome rings.



ANA LUISA

Vibe: Sustainable sophistication

Why We Love It: Carbon-neutral brand with timeless pieces starting at \$39. Elegant without trying too hard.

Top Picks: Huggies, layered pendant necklaces, and minimalist cuffs.

BAUBLE BAR

Vibe: Fun, flirty, and fashion-forward

Why We Love It: Statement earrings, personalized name necklaces, and sparkle-heavy holiday drops that won't break the bank.

Top Picks: Custom Pisa bracelets, tennis-style jewelry, and chunky gold chains.





KENDRA SCOTT

Vibe: Southern charm meets boho luxe

Why We Love It: Known for colorful gemstones and mixed metals. Also great for gifting and customizing.

Top Picks: Drusy studs, birthstone collections, and charm necklaces.



SOKO

Vibe: Ethical, artisan-crafted

Why We Love It: Made by Kenyan artisans using reclaimed materials. Stunning pieces with a story—and a mission.

Top Picks: Asymmetric shapes, horn accents, and stacked rings.

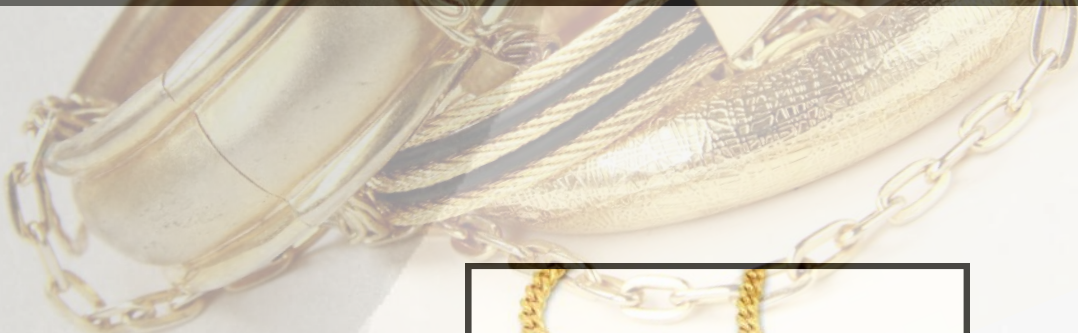
JENNY BIRD

Vibe: Modern, bold, sculptural

Why We Love It: Fashion-forward without the designer price. Perfect for statement makers who love architectural shapes.

Top Picks: Oversized earrings, chain-link chokers, and ear cuffs.





JLANI JEWELS

Vibe: Edgy, urban glam

Why We Love It: Black woman-owned, with affordable bold pieces that celebrate individuality and power.

Top Picks: Gold chokers, statement earrings, and identity rings.



Did You Know

Winifred Mason (1912–1993)

Winifred Mason was an innovative African American jeweler active in New York during the 1940s. She is believed to be the first commercial African American jeweler in the United States.





SUITED FOR REVOLUTION

JANELLE MONÁE AND THE REVIVAL OF
BLACK WOMEN'S DANDYISM

Introduction

As we just witnessed a remarkable display of Dandyism and its opulence at the recent Met Gala, I wanted to further examine Dandyism through the lens of Janelle Monáe.

Specifically, when Janelle Monáe steps onto a red carpet in her signature black and white tuxedo, she's doing more than making a fashion statement. She's continuing a centuries-old tradition of Black dandyism—a style and mindset that has long been a form of resistance against racism and, in Monáe's case, sexism too. While dandyism is often associated with men like Oscar Wilde or Beau Brummell, Black women have been carving out their own space in this world of meticulous self-presentation, using fashion as a powerful tool for social commentary and personal liberation.

What Is Dandyism, Anyway?

Before diving into Monáe's modern take, let's understand what dandyism is. Emerging in early 19th-century Europe, dandyism was characterized by an almost religious devotion to elegance, refined speech, and leisurely pursuits. The classic dandy—usually a man—was known for impeccable attire, particularly tailored suits, and a certain air of nonchalance that masked the careful calculation behind every aspect of their appearance.



When this style crossed over into Black communities, it took on new meanings. As scholar, Monica L. Miller explains in her book "Slaves to Fashion: Black Dandyism and the Styling of Black Diasporic Identity," when Black people adopted dandyish styles, they weren't simply imitating white European fashion—they were transforming it into a powerful statement about dignity and humanity in societies that often denied them both.



Black Women's Historical Relationship with Dandyism

While much attention has been paid to Black male dandies, Black women have been engaging with dandyish aesthetics since the 19th century. During a time when racist stereotypes portrayed Black women as unfeminine or hypersexualized, presenting oneself with immaculate dress and refined manners became a form of resistance.

Take Ellen Craft, who escaped slavery in 1848 by disguising herself as a white male dandy. Her strategic use of fine clothing and careful mannerisms demonstrated an early understanding of how fashion could challenge social boundaries. Similarly, pioneering activists like Ida B. Wells and Mary Church Terrell used their elegant, carefully curated appearances to contradict racist stereotypes and assert their right to occupy public spaces.



Ida B. Wells in 1920 Credit: University of Chicago Photographic Archive, [apf1-08642], Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Throughout history, Black women's engagement with dandyism has served multiple purposes:

- Challenging dehumanizing stereotypes about Black femininity
- Demanding visibility in spaces that tried to exclude them
- Asserting control over their bodies and image
- Navigating and critiquing class boundaries

Enter Janelle Monáe: The Modern Black Woman Dandy

Fast forward to today, and Janelle Monáe stands as perhaps the most recognizable example of a Black woman carrying this tradition into the 21st century. Since emerging on the music scene in the late 2000s, Monáe has made the tuxedo her uniform, a deliberate choice loaded with historical and political significance.

"I feel like I have a responsibility to my community and other young girls to help redefine what it looks like to be a woman," Monáe told Vogue in 2017. "I don't believe in male or female. I think we're all on a spectrum."



Monáe's dandyism blends several traditions:

1. The Classic Tuxedo Reimagined

Monáe's signature look—crisp black and white suits with ties or bow ties—directly references traditional dandyism. But she makes it her own by playing with proportions, occasionally adding feminine touches like ruffled shirts or dramatic elements like cape-like extensions or sculptural shoulders.

Her consistency with this uniform is itself a dandyish trait. Like historical dandies who were known for their distinctive, consistent style, Monáe has created an instantly recognizable aesthetic that serves as both personal branding and political statement.

2. Afrofuturist Elements

What distinguishes Monáe's dandyism is how she infuses it with Afrofuturism—a cultural aesthetic that combines elements of science fiction, magical realism, and African traditions to imagine new possibilities for Black people. Her android alter-ego Cindi Mayweather, introduced in her early albums, allowed her to use dandyish dress as part of a larger narrative about freedom and identity.

"I speak about androids because I think the android represents the new 'other,'" Monáe explained in an interview with The Guardian. "You can compare it to being a minority, or being a woman, or being someone whose sexual orientation is different."

By combining the historical tradition of dandyism with futuristic elements, Monáe creates a visual language that speaks to both past struggles and future possibilities.

3. Gender Fluidity and Sexual Liberation

As Monáe's career has evolved, so has her expression of dandyism. While maintaining her signature black and white palette, she has increasingly incorporated elements that challenge gender norms—from more traditionally feminine gowns with tuxedo-inspired elements to outfits that play with masculine and feminine simultaneously.

This evolution reached a pinnacle with her 2018 album "Dirty Computer" and its accompanying "emotion picture." In videos like "PYNK" and "Make Me Feel," Monáe expanded her visual vocabulary to celebrate queer identity and female sexuality while still maintaining elements of her dandyish aesthetic. The pink "vagina pants" from the "PYNK" video, for instance, represent a bold reimagining of dandyism's focus on distinctive dress to celebrate female anatomy.



"I'm much more open to talking about how I feel," Monáe told Rolling Stone when coming out as pansexual. This openness has translated to her style, which has retained its dandyish precision while embracing greater fluidity and expressiveness.

The Social Impact of Monáe's Modern Dandyism

Monáe's dandyism isn't just about personal style—it's a form of activism that has influenced both fashion and social movements in several key ways:

Challenging Beauty and Fashion Norms

In an industry that often expects Black women artists to present themselves in hypersexualized ways, Monáe's early insistence on her tuxedo uniform represented a direct challenge to music industry norms. "I want to redefine what it means to be sexy and what it means to be a woman.

Showing skin doesn't make you sexy," she told Essence magazine.

This stance has helped create space for more diverse expressions of Black femininity in popular culture, influencing other artists and everyday women to embrace styles that might have previously been considered "too masculine" or not marketable.

Queer Visibility and Representation

As Monáe has become more open about her pansexuality and fluid approach to gender, her dandyish aesthetic has become an important symbol of queer Black visibility. The precision and intentionality of dandyism paired with her exploration of gender fluidity provides a powerful visual representation for LGBTQ+ individuals who may not see themselves in more mainstream queer iconography.

"I want young girls, young boys, nonbinary, gay, straight, queer people who are having a hard time dealing with their sexuality, dealing with feeling ostracized or bullied for just being their unique selves, to know that I see you," Monáe told Rolling Stone.

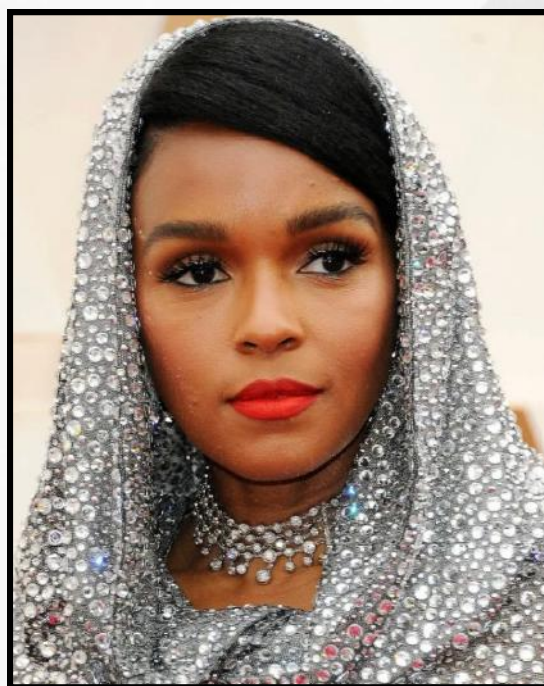
Fashion Democracy and Accessibility

While historical dandyism was often associated with luxury and exclusivity, Monáe has democratized elements of the aesthetic. Through collaborations with affordable brands like Target and her own styling choices that often mix high and low fashion, she demonstrates that the power of dandyish self-presentation isn't limited to the wealthy.

Her 2020 Oscars appearance in a crystal-covered Ralph Lauren hood dress perfectly exemplified this approach—a high-fashion moment that nodded to both futurism and the traditions of Black church ladies' Sunday best, making connections between dandyism and everyday Black aesthetic traditions.

Creating Community Through Style

Monáe's distinctive look has helped foster community among fans who feel empowered by her aesthetic choices. At her concerts, it's common to see attendees sporting their interpretations of her black and white ensembles. This communal aspect of style recalls the ways historical Black dandies created community through shared aesthetic values while allowing for individual expression.



The Continuing Evolution of Black Women's Dandyism

Monáe is not alone in carrying forward the tradition of Black women's dandyism. Her high visibility has helped create space for others exploring similar territory:

- Solange Knowles has incorporated dandyish elements in performances and photoshoots, using precise tailoring and monochromatic palettes to create powerful visual statements
- Filmmaker Lena Waithe often sports meticulously tailored suits on red carpets, bringing Black queer dandyism into Hollywood spaces
- Style collectives like The Dandy Lionesses showcase everyday Black women embracing aspects of dandyism, adapting traditional suits and formal wear to express their unique identities

Unlike their male counterparts, these women dandies must navigate both racial and gender expectations, often resulting in more radical and transformative interpretations of the traditional dandy aesthetic.

Summing It Up: Fashion as Freedom

Janelle Monáe's modern dandyism represents more than just a distinctive look—it's a continuation of a long tradition of Black resistance through style. By using fashion as a canvas for the exploration of identity, gender, and liberation, Monáe connects historical Black dandyism to contemporary conversations about representation and freedom.

"I have always tried to write songs and create art that can fight back against things that I see in society that I don't think are right," Monáe has said.

Her dandyism is an essential part of that fight—a visual reminder that control over one's image and presentation remains a powerful form of activism.

In a world still grappling with racism, sexism, and homophobia, there's something revolutionary about a Black woman claiming the tradition of dandyism and transforming it into a celebration of both historical resilience and future possibilities. When Janelle Monáe steps out in her tuxedo, she's not just making a fashion statement—she's continually making history.

Dapperly Yours,
Sharon



“ For African American women embracing Black dandyism, these boots transcended mere footwear. They became a statement of autonomy and resistance in a society that often sought to marginalize Black identities. ”



SCENT SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH



“
For the Bold, Bright,
and Beautiful...

@InStyle PhD

”



INTRODUCING

Flowerbomb Tiger Lily—a radiant new addition to the iconic Flowerbomb family by Viktor & Rolf. This summer scent is a sun-drenched bouquet that dances between sensuality and vitality. At its heart lies the exotic tiger lily, a symbol of confidence and wild beauty, blooming boldly alongside creamy coconut milk and the juicy sweetness of mango. As it settles, the warmth of benzoin and a touch of solar notes create a lingering, glowing finish that wraps the skin like golden hour on a tropical escape.

Perfect for the woman who wants her presence to enter the room before she does, Flowerbomb Tiger Lily is not just a fragrance—it's a fashion statement in scent form. Whether paired with your flowiest caftan or a sharply tailored linen suit, it's your invisible accessory of elegance, edge, and unmistakable allure.

Wear it. Own it. Let your summer bloom.

ELEVATE YOUR SCENT GAME.
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“Let your summer bloom with bold elegance. *Flowerbomb Tiger Lily* isn’t just a fragrance—it’s your fashion statement in scent.”

—Fashion Fusion by InStylePHD

Why We're Addicted to the Status Quo



Dr. Sharon McDaniel | Fashion Fusion Magazine by InStylePhD.

"The comfort zone might be the most dangerous place to live"

Introduction

Have you ever noticed how we humans stick to the familiar, even when it doesn't serve us well? We order the same coffee every morning, stay in jobs that drain our energy, and sometimes remain in relationships long after they've stopped helping us grow. We're creatures of habit who often choose what's comfortable over what could help us flourish.

This love affair with the familiar—our "status quo addiction"—shows up everywhere in our lives. And while it might feel safe in the moment, it comes with a hefty price tag: stunted growth and missed chances to become who we might be.

So why do we keep choosing the devil we know? What's happening in our brains when we shy away from change? And most importantly, how can we break free when playing it safe is actually holding us back?





Why We Get Stuck: The Psychology Behind Our Resistance to Change

The Comfort of What We Know

Researchers have a name for our tendency to prefer things as they are: "status quo bias." Discovered by economists Samuelson and Zeckhauser in the 1980s, this bias explains why we often choose the familiar path, even when better options exist.

Think about your phone's settings or your insurance policy—how often do you actually change them? Most of us simply go with whatever's already in place. Scientists have found this pattern shows up consistently across different cultures and situations. When given investment choices, for example, most people stick with whatever portfolio they already have rather than making adjustments that could benefit them.

Why Losses Hurt More Than Gains Feel Good

Another key insight comes from psychologists Kahneman and Tversky, who discovered something fascinating about how we make decisions: losing something hurts about twice as much as gaining something equivalent feels good. This "loss aversion" is wired into our thinking.

Here's a real-world example: Imagine you're considering a job change. The new position offers better pay, greater growth potential, and more fulfilling work. Yet you find yourself fixating on what you'd give up—the coworkers you know, the commute you've mastered, the systems you understand. Those potential losses often outweigh the possible gains in our minds, keeping us stuck where we are.

“

"MOST REAL DECISIONS, UNLIKE THOSE OF ECONOMICS TEXTS, HAVE A STATUS QUO ALTERNATIVE—THAT IS, DOING NOTHING OR MAINTAINING ONE'S CURRENT OR PREVIOUS DECISION."

~ SAMUELSON AND ZECKHAUSER

”

Our Fear of the Unknown

We humans also have a deep discomfort with uncertainty. Studies show that people consistently prefer known risks over unknown ones—even when the known option is objectively worse!

Think about it this way: Would you rather take a new route that might cut your commute time in half (but could also get you lost), or stick with your current route that guarantees you'll be ten minutes late? Many people choose the guaranteed late arrival over the uncertain possibility of saving time.

This makes evolutionary sense. For our ancestors, unknown situations could be deadly. That ancient programming still influences us today, making us instinctively prefer predictable situations over uncertain ones—even when rationally we know that growth requires stepping into the unknown.

What's Happening in Our Brains

Our brains are actually working against us when it comes to change. When we consider breaking from our routines, certain areas of our brain linked to conflict and error detection light up like a Christmas tree. Meanwhile, the parts associated with reward and pleasure become less active when we contemplate change.

It's like having an overeager security system that sounds the alarm at the mere thought of deviating from the usual path.

Add to this something called "decision fatigue"—the mental exhaustion that comes from making too many choices. When we're tired from deciding things all day, we naturally default to whatever requires the least mental effort. Usually, that's sticking with what we already know.



How Organizations Get Trapped

This tendency to stay the course doesn't just affect individuals—it can paralyze entire companies. Organizations develop routines and cultures that actively resist change, even when the world around them is transforming rapidly.

The business world is littered with examples:

- Kodak actually invented digital photography but clung to its film business until it was too late.
- Blockbuster had the chance to buy Netflix for a mere \$50 million but stuck with its brick-and-mortar model until bankruptcy.
- Nokia dominated the mobile phone market but couldn't break from its winning formula when smartphones emerged.

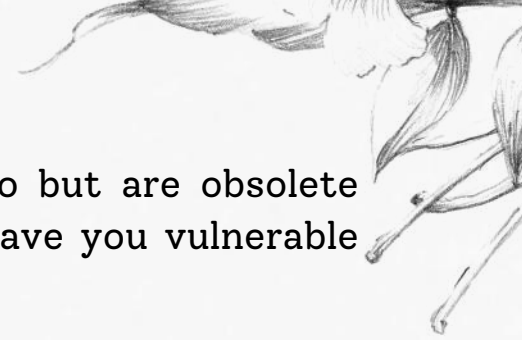
These weren't just bad business decisions—they were textbook examples of how powerful status quo bias can be, even when millions of dollars and thousands of jobs are at stake.

Breaking Free: How to Overcome Our Status Quo Addiction

Recognize That "Safe" Isn't Always Safe

The first step in breaking free is realizing that what feels safe might actually be the riskiest choice of all. Author Nassim Taleb points out that systems that never face stress become extremely fragile over time. The same applies to our careers and personal development—avoiding all risk creates the ultimate risk of stagnation.





Think about skills that were valuable ten years ago but are obsolete today. Staying "safely" in your comfort zone can leave you vulnerable when the world inevitably changes around you.

Set Up Systems That Push You Forward

One effective approach is creating what behavioral scientists call "pre-commitment strategies"—essentially, setting up systems that automatically push you toward growth before your status quo bias kicks in.

This might look like:

- Scheduling quarterly "life review" sessions where you question your current path
- Setting calendar reminders to learn new skills every month
- Creating accountability with friends who expect to hear about your new experiences
- Setting aside a small "experiment budget" specifically for trying new approaches

Take Small Steps Into the Unknown

Psychologist Carol Dweck's research on "growth mindset" shows that people who believe abilities can be developed (rather than being fixed) are much more willing to embrace challenges and persist through setbacks.

You don't have to make dramatic life changes all at once. Instead, think like a scientist running experiments:

- Try a new approach to a familiar problem.
- Spend a lunch break with someone from a different department.
- Take a different route home.
- Allocate 5% of your investment portfolio to a new strategy.
- Dedicate one evening a week to learning something completely outside your expertise.

Conclusion: The Paradox of Safety

Perhaps the greatest irony is that in today's rapidly changing world, clinging to safety often creates its own danger. The most secure strategy might actually be developing your ability to adapt.

Our attachment to the status quo isn't just stubborn behavior—it's a natural tendency wired into our brains through millions of years of evolution. But by understanding these internal mechanisms, we gain power over them. We can develop strategies to embrace growth despite our instinctive resistance.

The question then becomes not whether we can afford to take risks, but whether we can afford not to.

As you go through your week, notice where you're choosing the familiar over the possible. Ask yourself: Is this choice truly serving my growth? Or am I just following the path of least resistance?

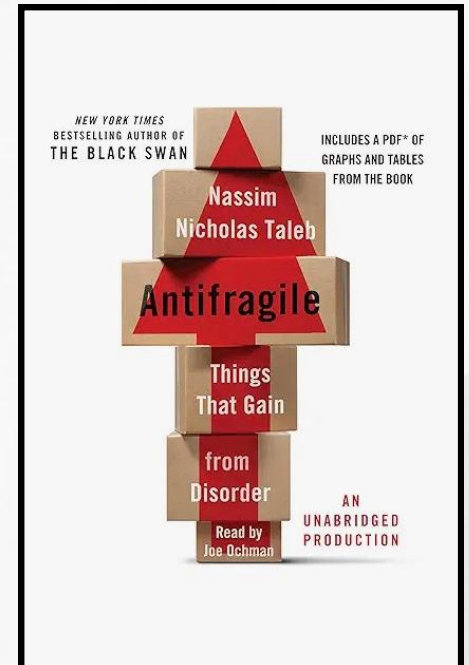
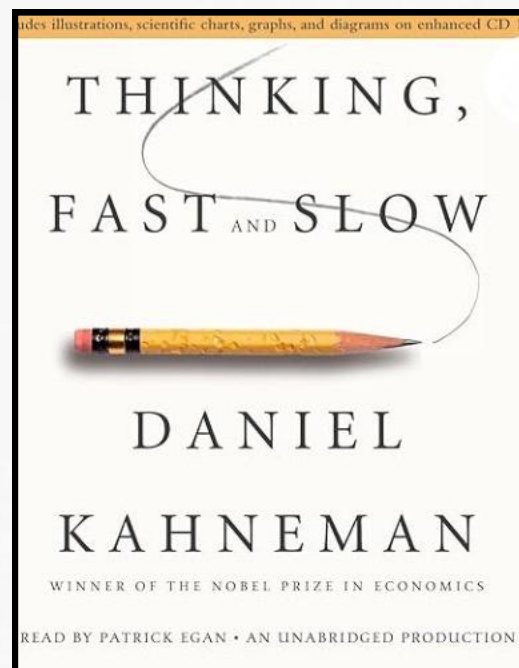
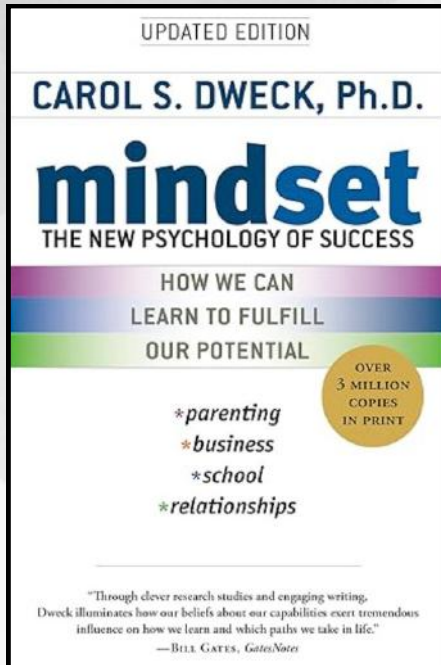
The most meaningful growth often waits just beyond the borders of your comfort zone.



Further Reading

If you're interested in exploring these concepts further, check out:

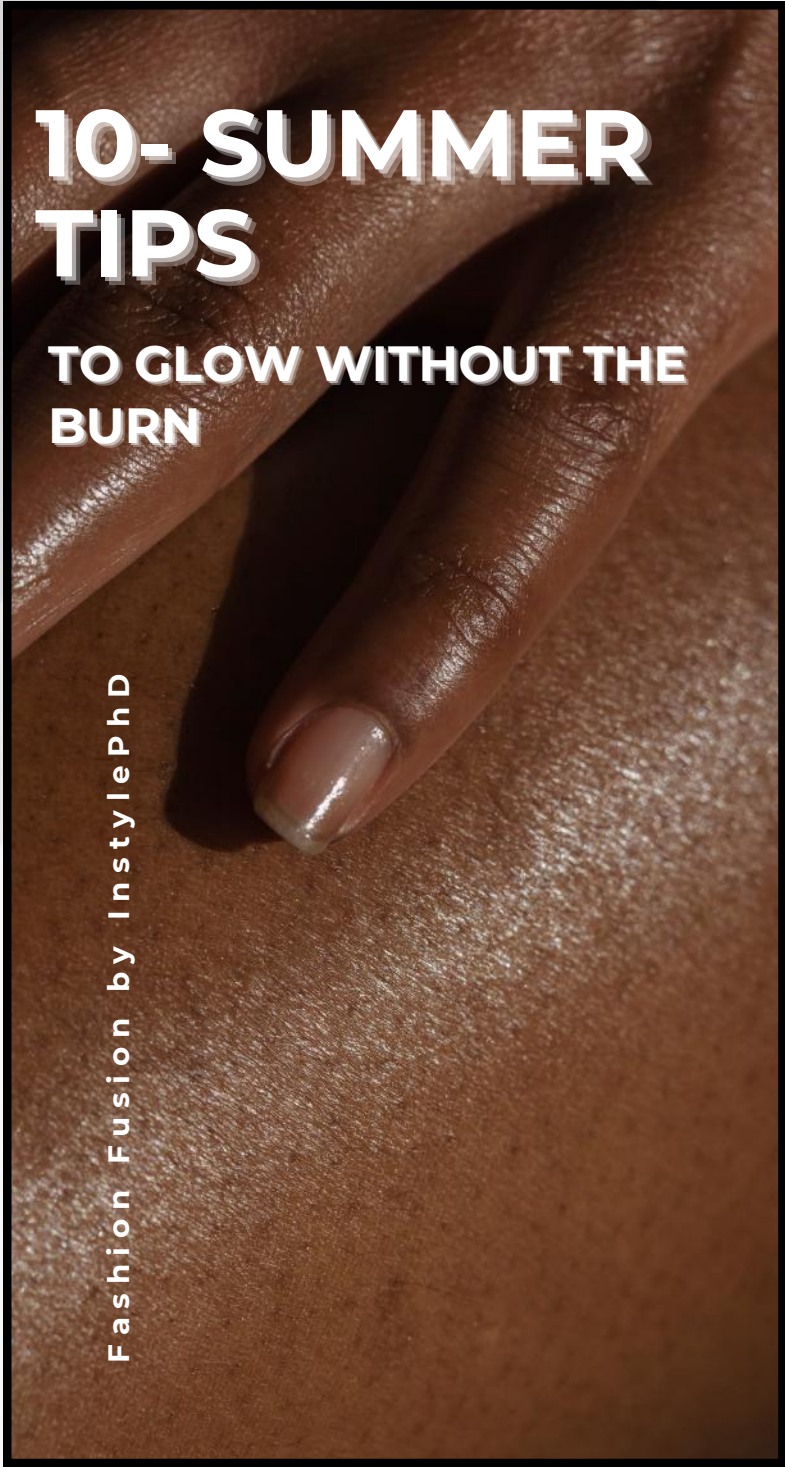
- "Mindset" by Carol Dweck
- "Thinking, Fast and Slow" by Daniel Kahneman
- "Antifragile" by Nassim Nicholas Taleb



Enjoyed this post? I write about a plethora of human interest content. Subscribe to receive my weekly insights directly in your inbox.

What's your experience with status quo bias? Share in the comments how it's affected your life and what strategies you've used to overcome it.

Sincerely yours,
Sharon



10- SUMMER TIPS

TO GLOW WITHOUT THE
BURN

Fashion Fusion by InstylePhD

“

Remember: Skincare
is self-care, and self-
care is always in
season.

”

@InstylePhD

SUN-KISSED

& SKIN SMART

Hot girl summer? More like hydrated girl summer! As temperatures rise and your calendar fills with everything from rooftop brunches to seaside escapes, it's the perfect time to give your skincare routine a sunny little makeover.

Here at Fashion Fusion by InStylePhD, we believe your skin should be as brilliant as your style. So whether you're basking in golden hour or ducking the midday rays with a wide-brim hat and a cold mocktail, we've got your back (and your face) with fresh tips for keeping that summer glow radiant –not roasted.

From SPF reminders to hydration heroes, consider this your go-to guide for glowing through the heat—because beauty and brilliance never take a season off.

The Tips:

1. Lighten Up Your Routine

Trade thick creams for feather-light gel moisturizers. Your skin wants to breathe, not bake.

2. Don't Skip the SPF

No excuses. Use broad-spectrum SPF 30+ daily. Yes, even if you're staying inside scrolling fashion reels.

3. Double-Cleanse the Sweat Away

Sweat and sunscreen love to cling. Gently double-cleanse at night to keep your skin clear and fresh.



4. **Add Antioxidants to Your AM Routine**

Vitamin C serums are summer's skincare MVP. They fight free radicals, brighten, and boost SPF protection.

5. **Exfoliate Wisely**

Smooth, radiant skin is in—but skip the scrubs that feel like sandpaper. Opt for gentle exfoliants once or twice a week.

6. **Stay Hydrated, Inside and Out**

Water is your beauty elixir. Sip often, and spritz hydrating facial mists for that midday pick-me-up.

7. **Protect Your Lips and Eyes**

SPF lip balms and oversized sunnies aren't just chic—they're necessary. Protect those delicate areas from sun damage.

8. **Post-Sun Soothing**

Had a little too much sun fun? Cool it down with aloe vera gel, chamomile spray, or a calming sheet mask.

9. **Avoid Midday Sun**

When the sun is blazing (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.), choose shade, flowy fabrics, and your best dramatic hat moment.

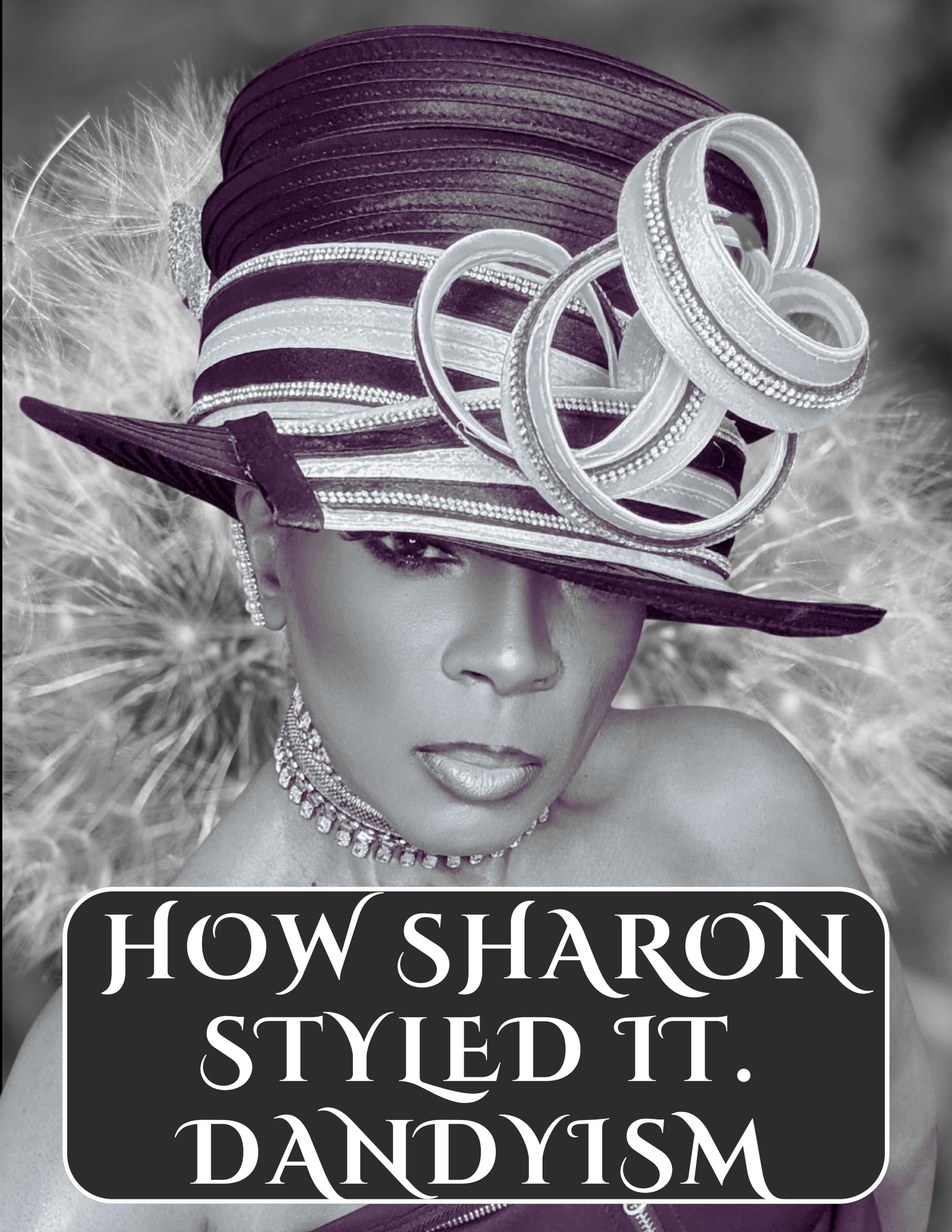
10. **Glow, Don't Glisten**

Blotting papers and mattifying primers will keep you glowing—not greasy—through your summer adventures.

“**Remember: Skincare is self-care, and self-care is always in season.**”

Let this be your glow-up guide to a summer of radiant skin, confident moments, and unapologetic brilliance. Because you deserve to shine—safely, stylishly, and skin-smart.





HOW SHARON
STYLED IT.
DANDYISM





Mae Reeves was a trailblazing milliner who opened one of the first hat shops owned by an African American woman in downtown Philadelphia. Her custom-made hats were worn by notable figures like Ella Fitzgerald and Lena Horne, and her collection is now housed at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture.



"Dandyism is a form of rebellion. It is a way of saying, 'I will not be defined by your standards.'"

– Anonymous



**"To be a Black dandy is to dress as though you know you're loved and therefore have no use for shame. Shame is the enemy of all exuberance."
– Monica L. Miller, "Slaves to Fashion"**





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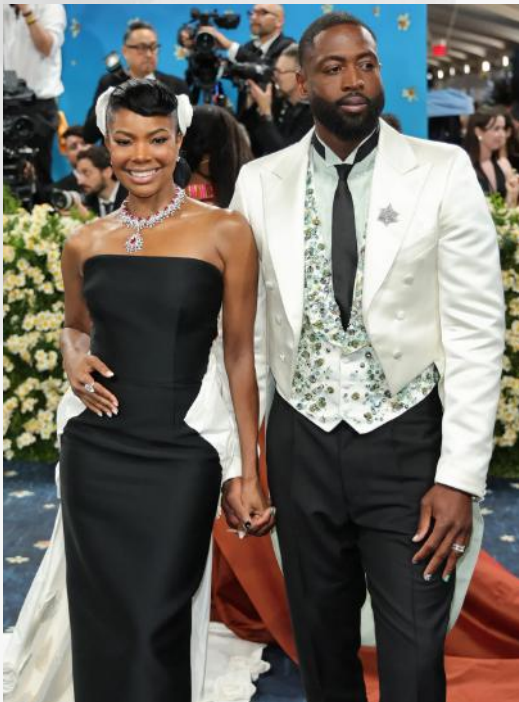
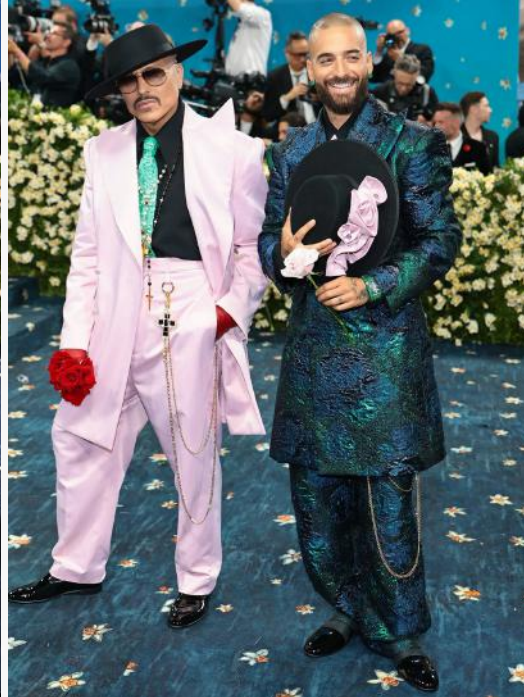
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SIMPLY SAYING: A DANDY AFFAIR



Craving more tales of tailored elegance and sartorial splendor? Dive deeper into the world of dandyism and discover how fashion becomes a statement of identity. Subscribe to my Substack for more.

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