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Critical Analysis Paper Assignment #1

Castor Oil is a vegetable oil that consists of burning seeds from a plant called *Ricinus*, or castor bean plant (*Potent*, 2019). We've seen a lot of hair product lines such as *As I Am*, *Sunny Isle*, *Shea Moisture*, *Tropical Isle*, and more, who've added this specific oil onto their lines, or have specific hair products dedicated to the oil only. This oil has a list of health, industrial, and pharmaceutical purposes (Kubala, 2022). It is highly used for natural treatments for hair and body. Additionally, the oil is best for digestive remedies and gut health. There are different methods in making castor oil that show its historical roots and its reasons for trending.

There are two types of castor oils. One is known as yellow castor oil and the other is known as black castor oil. *Yellow Castor Oil* is made by pressing fresh castor beans using mechanical pressing. There is also *no heat* included in this process. As for *Black Castor Oil*, this oil is made by burning castor beans and afterwards extracting the oil with heat. The practice of burning the beans originated in Jamaica, hence the term "Jamaican Black Castor Oil" (Frothingham, 2019). As mentioned before, the oil is highly used in hair products, or for the hair. It is used specifically for hair growth, along with helping with dry, split ends, balding, and thinning of the hair. Both processed castor oils are packed with fatty acids which is a good alternative to use during the cold and winter months (Watson, 2016). Not only is castor oil good for your hair, but it has also been used

for centuries to cure numerous skin diseases and infections, as well as to relieve constipation.

Figure 1



Treasured Locks (2022) *Photo of Ricinus, or castor bean plant.*

Historians have found that the castor oil is dated back to ancient Egypt. Egyptians were one of the early adopters of the oil. They initially used it as a lamp fuel before discovering its healing benefits (Tubay, 2022). It was said that it was also used to cure dry eyes or a protectant from irritation. The extract method for the bean plant has remained the same. Of course with today's technology, it is easier to process the oil. According to *Encyclopedia*, medicine men who traveled in the 1800s would carry a bottle of castor oil mixed with alcohol as a cure for constipation and heartburn. The *Ricinus* plant can be found growing in practically any warm region with well-drained soil that has

enough nutrients and moisture to support growth, such as bottom lands, stream banks, and river beds (Encyclopedia, 2018).

On a personal level, when transitioning from chemically processed hair, I chose to use the *Shea Moisture: Jamaican Black Castor Oil Strengthen and Restore line*. Before there was a change in formulas, ingredients, and when they were still black-owned, the *Shea Moisture* line did miracles on getting my original curl pattern. Before using this, I have not seen my curl pattern ever since I was around 10 years old because I would relax my hair. As my hair started to transform, I was also losing hair. To prevent this, I bought *Sunny Isle Jamaican Black Castor Oil*. With the pure oil you can part your hair in sections and leave it on for about 15 minutes and sit under a hot dryer, or you can style as desired. Massaging your scalp while having this oil applied helps it work better and faster. It is also best for those individuals that have visible hair loss and don't know what products to use. Putting it on once a week is the best choice, since there can be a lot of build up on the scalp. The Jamaican black Castor Oil is the key!

Castor oil is the key to nurturing dry skin, a dry scalp, increases blood flow in the scalp, helps with an upset stomach, etc. It is very heavy and sticky but totally beneficial and worth it in the long run. If you're ever looking for an oil or product that helps with hair growth, definitely turn to castor oil!

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Figure 1

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