CULTURETECHLENS

Culture, Clearly Seen.

BLACK CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE

THE CULTURETECHLENS INDEX · CTL-IDX-003

The CultureTechLens Index — Edition 2026-10 (Artifacts)

William Maxey

CultureTechLens NFP · Chicago, Illinois

Zenodo · DOI 10.5281/zenodo.23081629 · First published 28 September 2026 · PDF version 29 October 2026 · CC BY 4.0 · Author ORCID 0009-0004-2837-8037

Published 2026-09-28 (advance release; monthly cadence begins first Tuesday of each month). Methodology: CTL-IDX-001 v1.1.

Cite as: CultureTechLens, "CultureTechLens Index, Edition 2026-10: Artifacts (CTL-IDX-003)," 2026-09-28.

The question

"What can an ordinary object remember that the history books forgot?" — the question behind LIFE-001, *How We Lived: An Encyclopedia of Black Everyday Life*. This edition answers it with data: the ten everyday artifacts most resonant in the combined record of public attention and CTL's own verified research.

Rankings describe the data. They do not crown winners.

The CTL 10 — Artifacts, October 2026

1. Cadillac (as cultural object) — 78.8 The month's highest public attention (33,922 lookups) meets deep CTL documentation: the car as a documented vessel of Black aspiration and mobility.

2. Funeral-home advertising church fan — 67.8 Strong on both signals. The everyday sacred object — part worship aid, part community bulletin board — that the archive remembers.

3. Yearbook (1955 Allen University "Yellow Jacket") — 66.5 The month's highest momentum: institutional Black memory gaining attention.

4. Mail-order catalog (Sears / Montgomery Ward) — 65.4 Balanced across all signals: the catalog as documented infrastructure of Black consumer life, also rising in public attention.

5. Transistor radio (Regency TR-1) — 65.3 Balanced across all three signals: the pocket soundtrack of a generation.

6. Murray's Superior Hair Dressing Pomade (tin) — 62.4 Steady across the board: the shelf object with a century of documented presence.

7. Hot comb / pressing comb — 57.1 Deep CTL evidence but modest public attention (958 lookups) — the record holds more than the public currently seeks.

8. 45-rpm single (Chess 1604, "Maybellene") — 47.5 Moderate public attention, thinner CTL evidence (mostly provisional claims) — a documented gap in our own corpus, flagged openly.

9. Afro pick (fist-handle hair pick) — 46.2 The edition's signature finding: the deepest CTL documentation of all ten subjects, yet the lowest public attention (106 lookups). The most documented object is the least looked up.

10. The Black family photograph album — 22.6 The thinnest evidence in the set — no Object Biography yet. The Index surfacing its own research gap: an invitation, not a verdict.

Full signal breakdown

Rank	Subject	Score	Attention (40%)	Evidence (40%)	Momentum (20%)	Pageviews (30d)
1	Cadillac (as cultural object)	78.8	100.0	75.0	44.0	33,922
2	Funeral-home advertising church fan	67.8	70.4	79.5	39.2	6,156
3	Yearbook (1955 Allen University "Yellow Jacket")	66.5	51.0	84.1	62.1	2,015
4	Mail-order catalog (Sears / Montgomery Ward)	65.4	55.8	77.3	60.9	2,655
5	Transistor radio (Regency TR-1)	65.3	65.4	70.5	54.9	4,624
6	Murray's Superior Hair Dressing Pomade (tin)	62.4	65.4	65.9	49.6	4,611
7	Hot comb / pressing comb	57.1	38.1	84.1	41.3	958
8	45-rpm single (Chess 1604, "Maybellene")	47.5	57.5	36.4	49.9	2,928
9	Afro pick (fist-handle hair pick)	46.2	0.0	100.0	30.9	106
10		22.6	32.1	0.0	48.6	680

Rank	Subject	Score	Attention (40%)	Evidence (40%)	Momentum (20%)	Pageviews (30d)
	The Black family photograph album					

How it was scored

- **Public attention (40%):** trailing-30-day Wikipedia pageviews per subject's closest article, log-normalized across the set. (Church fan → Hand fan; pomade tin → Pomade; album → Photo album.)
- **Evidence depth (40%):** from CTL-DR-LIFE-001, the edition's source research package — verified and provisional claim counts, relationship counts, and full Object Biography bonus, normalized across the set.
- **Momentum (20%):** pageview trend, trailing 30 days vs. prior 30 days; 50 = flat.
- Computed by `ctl-index.py`; no hand-tuned scores. Full per-signal data: `index-scores.csv`.

Limitations

- Wikipedia pageviews skew toward subjects with English Wikipedia articles and internet-era attention.
- CTL's corpus reflects what CTL has researched so far; under-documented subjects score lower on evidence depth by construction.
- The Index reflects resonance in the record, not community sentiment on the ground.
- Ranks move month to month; movement is signal, not verdict.

Corrections

None to date. Corrections are logged here with date and description.

Next edition

November 2026: **Moments** — the ten most resonant moments in the Black Chicago record.

References

1. CultureTechLens. CultureTechLens Index, Edition 2026-10: Artifacts. CTL-IDX-003, 2026.
2. CultureTechLens. The CultureTechLens Index: Methodology. CTL-IDX-001, version 1.1, 2026.
3. CultureTechLens. Edition 2026-10 scored table. index-scores.csv, 2026.
4. Public project repository: https://github.com/culturetechlens/culturetechlens-index.git