

“Celebrating 75 Years of Johnson Publishing Company: Beauty, Fashion, and Culture,” was a webinar presented by Skyla S. Hearn, Dr. Rikki Byrd, and Camille Lawrence. The webinar took place on Nov 7, 2024, and was hosted by J. Paul Getty Research Institute. The speakers discussed the significant impact the Johnson Publishing Company had on Black culture and lifestyle fashion. Hearn is an archivist, photographer, and writer dedicated to preserving Black cultural heritage through community-focused archival practices. Dr. Byrd, a writer, educator, and curator, is the founder of the Black Fashion Archive and co-founder of the Fashion and Race Syllabus, and she serves as an assistant professor of visual culture studies at the University of Texas at Austin. Lawrence, an art historian and founder of the Black Beauty Archive, integrates her background as a beauty practitioner to document the innovations in Black beauty culture. Each speaker's expertise uniquely navigated viewers to explore the intersections of history, black culture, and aesthetics within the Johnson Publishing Company's legacy.

The Johnson Publishing Company Archive is now co-owned by the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture and the Getty Trust. The webinar celebrated the historical contributions of the Johnson Publishing Company that were particularly showcased in *Ebony* and *JET* magazines exhibiting trends in beauty, fashion, and culture. The conversation explored how the Johnson Publishing Company captured both American and European fashion trends and documented the Black cultural experience through photography, innovative runway shows, and editorial features. The speakers delved into the archives and its current role in preserving Black beauty and fashion history. The speakers also discussed the importance of community-driven archival practices and first-person narratives in shaping historical perspectives. The speakers highlighted the important memories that magazines like *Ebony* and *JET* created for them. The session highlighted JPC's pivotal role in representing Black excellence and artistry.

One of the most important lessons was the power of visual storytelling in shaping cultural narratives. Johnson Publishing Company's images and features not only celebrated beauty and fashion but also asserted Black identity and pride. A second lesson was the significance of community-centered archival practices, as emphasized by Skyla S. Hearn. These methods ensure that history is preserved authentically and easily accessible for people of color. Johnson Publishing Company is committed to making the archive public by 2029 highlighting the importance of accessible historical preservation, which democratizes cultural heritage and fosters broader understanding. The last lesson displayed the value of historical research in creating authentic marketing campaigns that honor cultural legacies. The focus on representation and community archiving aligns with the goals of storytelling in marketing, especially in crafting narratives that resonate with diverse audiences.

The most significant takeaway from the webinar was the transformative role of archives in preserving cultural identity. This webinar bridged the gap between academic learning and

professional practice by emphasizing the cultural and historical foundations of modern fashion and beauty industries. Johnson Publishing Company's legacy demonstrates how documenting beauty and fashion within Black culture not only celebrates artistry but also challenges stereotypes and reshapes societal narratives. This webinar serves as an inspiring example of how cultural heritage can inform and enhance professional practices, from marketing to design. One would see sharing these insights with others would encourage more thoughtful and inclusive approaches to fashion, history, and storytelling in their work.

# Professional Development Opportunity

Alyssa Adomaitis posted on Oct 15, 2024 7:22 AM

Dear Students:

My friend [Camille Lawrence](#) (founder of the Black Beauty Archive) is part of this online event hosted by Getty. The story of JPC and Fashion Fair is fascinating and an important part of American history – and, I think our students would be interested!

It's on Nov 7th, 1pm (details in the link). Students can register online.

[https://www.getty.edu/visit/cal/events/ev\\_4287.html](https://www.getty.edu/visit/cal/events/ev_4287.html)



## [Backstage: An Unfurling of the JPC | Beauty & Fashion | Getty](#)

To watch online, register via Zoom. Please note this event will be held at 10am PDT/12pm CDT. Throughout its 75-year history, the Johnson Publishing Company (JPC) showcased the gamut of makeup, hair, skincare, fashion design, and style in Black culture. Elaborate photographic spreads captured the allure and grace of actresses such as Lena Horne and Dorothy Dandridge, runway shows featured models Pat Cleveland, Richard Roundtree, and Naomi Sims, and the images captivated audiences with the latest American and European fashion trends. This conversation with Getty archivist Skyla S. Hearn, archivist Camille Lawrence, and historian Dr. Rikki Byrd explores the JPC's coverage of beauty and fashion in magazines like Ebony and JET and the company's overall contribution to the beauty and fashion industries. Skyla S. Hearn is an archivist, photographer, and writer dedicated to supporting communities marginally reflected in broader historical contexts; centering community archival practices; and committed to amplifying

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