**Extra Credit: Johnson Publishing Co & Fashion Fair Event**

Sunny Lee

New York City College of Technology

BUF 4700: Contemporary Issues In Fashion

Professor Sutton

December 2, 2024

The BACKSTAGE event on November 7, 2024, at 10-11 a.m. is a Zoom webinar from the Research Institute to reflect on the legacy and significance of Johnson Publishing Company through beauty and fashion. Skyla Hearn, Rikki Byrd, and Camille Lawrence were the three featured presenters at the event (Getty Research Institute, 2024). It promises to be a scholarly examination of what was once probably the foremost African American media and publishing institution.

            The Johnson Publishing Company, arguably the most remarkable commercial effort that John H. Johnson initiated in 1942 as the founder of the magazines that documented and celebrated the lives of African Americans in the middle of the twentieth century, renowned as Ebony and Jet (Getty Research Institute, 2024). This event aims on deconstructing the historical impact that company has had on concepts of beauty, representation of fashion, and making cultural narratives for Black Americans.

            The three speakers offer very different perspectives on the topic. While specific information about their backgrounds has yet to be made public, their involvement also suggests an interdisciplinary framing to analyze the contributions of the Johnson Publishing Company (Getty Research Institute, 2024). The webinar’s title "An Unfurling," suggests an all-encompassing, multi-edged probing into the visual and cultural archives of the company that might lead to some not-so-well-known stories and insights about Black beauty and fashion.

            These events, taking place in a Zoom webinar, allow a wider audience to participate in what can only be described as a scholarly conversation and enable engagement from all corners of the globe in an important cultural discourse. The timing in November 2024 may provide a more current context for a historical institution whose past significance is perhaps tied to today's conversations about representation, media, and cultural identity (Getty Research Institute, 2024). As an event, it will provide a scholarly opportunity to critically study a significant African American media institution and its important marks on beauty, fashion, and cultural representations.

**References**

Getty Research Institute. (2024, November 14). *Backstage: An Unfurling of the Johnson Publishing Company | Beauty & Fashion*. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvHap\_5w0QU