

1. What is the name of the seminar/webinar? Who gave the webinar? What are their respective credentials to teach this professional development? When was it? Where did it take place?

Paula Williams, who has expertise in media, beauty, fashion, and cultural history, presented the online seminar "Backstage: An Unfurling of the Johnson Publishing Company Beauty and Fashion." Additionally, Ms. Williams has experience with Johnson Publishing, where her late father held an editorial and cultural position. This seminar took place November 7, 2024 held on zoom at 10:00am- 11am.

2. What was the webinar about? What were the top 3 most important items that you learned from this professional development and why?

The three most significant things I took away from this webinar were how the Johnson Publishing Company established a platform to showcase Black talent and how JPC provided them with a platform to showcase their achievements, beauty, and self-worth. In this generation, a lot of people have viral moments, and social media has taken everything so literally that it gives you two minutes of fame. This is why I think it's important to have a platform where talented people of color can showcase their true passion because so many people are self-centered about things that are good for them and lack the proper marketing tools to get a head start and a company like JPC provided that outlet. JPC's focus on positive and empowering representation in both fashion and media helped reshape public perceptions of African Americans. This highlighted the power of media in influencing cultural narratives and how representation can be a tool for social change. The webinar focused on John H. Johnson, the founder of JPC, and his innovative commitment to providing a forum for African Americans to self-represent. Johnson believed in the ability of African American media to highlight the beauty, skill, and stories of Black people, which was central to the company's objective. His vision established the foundation for a legacy of empowerment through media and fashion. John H. Johnson's work emphasized the significance of having media that supports communities of color, especially in terms of self-esteem and cultural pride. His commitment to self-representation paved the way for subsequent generations of Black media professionals and creatives, allowing them to express their own stories.

3. How does this professional development relate to the courses or degree you have studied? Explain why?

This seminar relates to my degree in so many ways and touched on many sectors within fashion such as Fashion Marketing, Media, Communications, Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Fashion. JPC's ability to develop a culturally profitable, and influential business model such as the traveling fashion show is a great illustration of how entrepreneurs may carve out new opportunities in the fashion industry by focusing on specialized markets. As a Business of Fashion student, understanding the interplay of culture, entrepreneurship, and market potential is important and can be very lucrative within your fashion career.

4. What is the most important take-away that you have learned from this webinar and what would you tell your peers about this professional development?

JPC transformed the fashion business by defying traditional beauty conventions and enabling Americans a forum to see themselves represented with pride and dignity. This method not only served to elevate Black talent but also promoted cultural pride while filling a void that the industry did not serve. I would tell my peers that the key takeaway from the seminar is to build on cultural history. It is critical that we create brands and showcase all of the creative micro influencers who are creating brands as your own, especially if you have the influence to inspire others and call notice to genuine talent.