



**Black Boy Joy, Black Girl Magic: The History of Black Childhoods**

Call for Conference Proposals

8th Annual Teaching Black History Conference

July 25-27, 2025

Buffalo, NY – South Campus

We are so excited to open our call for proposals for our 8<sup>th</sup> Teaching Black History Conference. We invite you to submit topics related to this year's theme is Black Boy Joy, Black Girl Magic: The History of Black Childhoods.

#BlackBoyJoy (Young, 2016) and #BlackGirlMagic (Thompson, 2013) began as hashtags used to express positivity and empowerment in a world that perpetrated antiblackness and other traumas against Black people. In teaching Black history, we

sometimes mirror these tragedies through our teaching and forget to explore Black people's full humanity, which considers our daily lives and activities that make us human. Black Boy Joy encourages us to fully be ourselves and highlight the joyful moments in Black life and history. We see joy as positive self-expression, the celebration of happiness, and a form of protest.

Similarly, Black Girl Magic is understood as celebrating the accomplishments and amazingness of Black women. Again, in a world that perpetuates negative stereotypes against Black girls, the hashtag allows us to empower and recognize all black girls who are themselves and express solidarity with each other. Additionally, it helps us celebrate Black girls/women and their moments that many times go unnoticed or uncredited.

Joy and Magic is about celebrating all Black children in all walks of life. Black children have been pivotal in shaping history, driving change in both the past and present. Our conference theme will illuminate their impact and celebrate their contributions across generations.

## OUR CONFERENCE

This multi-day conference aims to bring together educators who seek transformative and engaging ways to teach Pk-12 Black history through history classes and other humanities courses. Workshop presentations are informative and interactive, providing participants with culturally relevant and sustaining strategies and resources to incorporate Black histories throughout the school year and across curriculum disciplines.

## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Our Social Studies Coordinator Retreat and our Writing Retreat will both take place on Wednesday, July 23<sup>rd</sup> and Thursday, July 24<sup>th</sup>. Friday, July 25<sup>th</sup> will involve a plenary opening session, an exploration of Buffalo, and a welcome reception. Presentations will take place on Saturday, July 26<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, July 27<sup>th</sup> in-person on the University at Buffalo's South Campus.

## PROPOSAL FORMAT

Presentations should take the form of workshops that will actively engage conference participants. We welcome submission from all disciplines to teach African his/herstory across subject areas.

In 300 – 500 words, please submit proposals that address the following:

1. Topic
2. Learning Objectives
3. Category (PK/elementary, middle/high, general, or University/Adult)

4. Curricular issue and pedagogical approach(es)
5. Structure of workshop (explain how the workshop will be conducted)
6. Connections to the Black History Consciousness framework
7. Special technical requests

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: March 1, 2025

Submit proposals here: <https://forms.gle/NnagTtZNydvJRWTr7>.

Presentation proposals will fit into one of the following four categories:

1. Early childhood/elementary (PK-6)
2. Middle/High School (7-12)
3. General (all academic levels)
4. University teacher education or the training of practicing teachers

#### GUIDELINES AND RULES GOVERNING PRESENTATIONS

Presenters will be allotted 45 minutes to conduct their workshops, with 15 additional minutes for audience interaction. Presentations will take place on Saturday, July 26<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, July 27<sup>th</sup> in-person on the University at Buffalo's South Campus.

Note: Depending on the number of accepted proposals, the structure and logistics of the conference presentation may change. Presenters are responsible for providing any/all materials they plan to use or distribute in their presentation. Workshops will take place in-person in classrooms. Presenters must use their laptops/computers and internet connection. Commercial solicitation is prohibited at all presentations. If you represent a commercial interest, your presentation must be educational. If the essential purpose is to promote books, materials, or services for sale, it will not be accepted. There will be vendor space for those sorts of inquiries.

Proposals will NOT be accepted after the submission deadline, March 1, 2025. Please submit proposal here: <https://forms.gle/NnagTtZNydvJRWTr7>.

## PROPOSAL TOPICS

While our theme is Black childhoods, we welcome all Black history topics! Potential proposal topics can be found below:

- 1. Reclaiming the Narrative: The Evolution of Black Childhood in American Literature**
  - Exploring how Black childhood experiences have been represented in literature and the significance of reclaiming these narratives.
- 2. Black Play and Creativity: A History of Playful Resistance in Black Childhoods**
  - Investigating how play, games, and imaginative activities served as forms of resistance and resilience within Black communities, historically and today.
- 3. The Role of Elders and Storytelling in Shaping Black Childhoods**
  - Analyzing the importance of oral traditions, storytelling, and intergenerational knowledge sharing in nurturing Black childhoods.
- 4. Beyond the Struggle: Celebrating Joy and Agency in Black Childhoods**
  - Focusing on moments of joy, celebration, and self-determination within Black childhoods, contrasting with dominant narratives of hardship.
- 5. Black Girlhood: A Legacy of Strength, Resistance, and Self-Determination**
  - Exploring the unique aspects of Black girlhood, including its intersection with race, gender, and cultural identity, and its impact on Black childhood history.
- 6. The Impact of African Diaspora Traditions on Black Childhoods in America**
  - Investigating how African cultural practices and traditions have shaped the experiences of Black children in America, from rituals to communal child-rearing.
- 7. Exploring Black Childhood in the Context of the Civil Rights Movement**
  - Analyzing how Black children were impacted by and contributed to the Civil Rights Movement, and their role in the collective fight for justice.
- 8. The Importance of Family and Community in Nurturing Black Childhoods**
  - Examining the role of extended family networks, mentors, and community leaders in fostering the development of Black children.
- 9. The Evolution of Black Childhood Fashion: Expression of Identity and Resistance**
  - Tracing the history of Black childhood fashion as a form of self-expression, resistance, and cultural affirmation.
- 10. Black Boys and Education: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Learning and Achievement**
  - Investigating the unique educational experiences of Black boys, including the historical barriers they have faced and current efforts to uplift their voices and potential.
- 11. The Representation of Black Childhoods in Media and Pop Culture**
  - Analyzing how Black childhoods have been depicted in film, television, and other media, and the impact of these representations on societal perceptions.

12. **The Role of Music in the Formation of Black Childhood Identity**
  - Exploring how music, from spirituals to hip-hop, has influenced the development and identity of Black children over time.
13. **Resilience and Resistance: Black Childhoods During the Era of Slavery and Reconstruction**
  - A historical study of how Black children navigated the systemic challenges of slavery and Reconstruction, emphasizing their resilience and resistance.
14. **Black Childhoods and the Migration Experience: Tracing the Legacy of the Great Migration**
  - Focusing on how the migration of Black families from the rural South to urban North shaped the experiences and opportunities of Black children.
15. **The Impact of Activism on Black Childhoods: From the Civil Rights Era to Black Lives Matter**
  - Examining the ways in which activism and movements for racial justice have shaped the lives, perceptions, and futures of Black children across generations.

#### PRESENTER NOTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION

Those who submit proposals will be notified of their receipt within a week. Proposal decisions will be communicated starting March 15, 2025. If you do not receive notification by March 22, 2025, please contact Dr. LaGarrett King at [GSE-BlackHistoryRLE@buffalo.edu](mailto:GSE-BlackHistoryRLE@buffalo.edu).

**If accepted, you will be required to register for the conference.** The registration fee is USD 100.00. That is at a discounted price from regular registration.

## ABOUT THE CENTER

### Mission

The Center for K-12 Black History and Racial Literacy Education at the University at Buffalo focuses on research projects and teacher professional development activities to improve K-12 Black history education. The center engages in services and teaching related to its research mission while also helping to build networks of people and organizations committed to Black history education.

### Research

Our research mission centers on the enduring question: What is Black History Education? The center's research will focus on how Black history and race are taught and learned worldwide in K–12 schools, teacher education programs, and other educative spaces with a particular focus on research, professional development and learning, networking, and advocacy.

### Education

We seek to educate K–12 students, in-service and pre-service teachers, and the general society through various educational activities, including history clubs, teacher professional development, and community learning labs. The center will serve as a place for education through monthly events held in virtual and community classrooms. Our monthly Saturday schools and professional development events will serve as a space for learning that did not happen in schooling. Our most popular professional development activity is our summer conference. The Teaching Black History Conference is a three-day event where classroom teachers share an effective Black history curriculum and instructional strategies.

Additionally, the center has created a Teaching Black History micro-credential certificate program for teachers and educators to use as endorsements for teaching history classes in their school districts.

### Networking

The center will serve as a networking site for engaging in and collaborating with other people and organizations in helping promote Black history and racial literacy. Our goal is to connect with like-minded individuals and organizations to combine resources to advance our goals of understanding Black history and race within K–12 curriculum, pedagogy, policy, and its psychological and sociological influences. Advocacy The center has a mission to advocate for Black history and racial literacy education. We seek to help educators, community activists, and organizations expand opportunities to learn about crucial concepts related to Black history and race. For more information, please visit our website: <http://ed.buffalo.edu/black-history-ed.html> 6

## References

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- Millanzi, R. (2024). Empowerment, protest and celebration: the representation of 'black girl magic' in speculative fiction and contemporary culture (Version 1). University of Sussex. <https://hdl.handle.net/10779/uos.27612627.v1>
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- Young, D. (2016, August 30). *Thanks to Chance the Rapper, #BlackBoyJoy is a thing*. The Root. <https://www.theroot.com/thanks-to-chance-the-rapper-blackboyjoy-is-a-thing-1790856549>