



CALL FOR PAPERS & POETRY

CELEBRATING THE BLACK FAMILY: RESISTANCE, AGENCY AND CHANGE

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Foreword: George J. Sefa Dei

Abstract Due: April 12, 2021

Deadline for full submission: June 16, 2021

We invite contributors to submit unpublished theoretical and research papers, critical reviews, as well as poetry, that speak to Black Family Life on the following topics and themes:

- [Re]conceptualizing Black Families
- Black Families in Transition
- Racism, Violence, and Their Effects on Black Families
- Representations of Black Families in Popular Culture
- Organizing Against Violence
- Cultural Retention & the Socialization of Black Children
- Intergenerational Effects of Colonial Trauma in Families
- Resistance through State Structures
- Love as a Political Choice
- Religion & Spirituality as Sources of Resistance and Hope
- Gender & Sexuality in Black families
- Intergenerational Dynamics & Trends in the Black Family/Community
- Critical Black Reflexivity Predictions for the Future
- The future of Afro-centric Values



Submission Details:

Authors include your name, academic or community affiliation and submit an abstract of 300 words or less as a Microsoft Word attachment to: bfiteditors@gmail.com

Background

What is the future for Black families? How do we rethink the role of the Black family for the new futurity of Black and African communities? The existence of anti-Blackness and anti-Black racism continue to wreak havoc on Black existence throughout the diaspora, and the life of Black/African families is steeped in racism and resistance. Yet, notwithstanding the relentless enactment of violence on their bodies, minds, and spirits, Black families are surviving by any means necessary and celebrating the triumphs of life. Black families continue to resist and carve out historical, political, economic, social, cultural, spiritual, and emotional spaces for themselves (Dei, 2017, Maynard, 2017), not as response to anti-Blackness but in spite of it. They celebrate the multiplicities and complexities of being and are continually designing new futures.

There is a need to increase contemporary intellectual discourse on Black family life in ways that promote self-determination and direct anti-oppressive changes in public institutions. Theory can provide a framework for critical analysis and to counter deficit approaches to Black family life that utilize Eurocentric, heteronormative, and homogenized lens to pathologize representation of family life. Therefore, it is salient to use diverse theoretical perspectives such as critical race theory, anti-racism, anti-colonial, black feminist, and afro-centric theory to examine the themes of Black family life. Theory, then, is the vehicle to engage discourses which can align collective energies and increase social justice mobilization and action. For the purpose of this book call, families can be defined outside the boundary of the biological, to include social, cultural, and political groups and organizations who are involved in cohesive relationships.

In Canada, there is an impressive body of historical and contemporary writing about Black Canadians, but relatively few publications have specifically explored the subject of Black families.



Given the limitations of the scholarship on Black families in Canada, this edited collection focuses on a re-theorization of the Black/African family in contemporary social formations and the implications for critical practice for social advancement. We seek to explore the agency and resistance of Black families during continual capitalism, and demographic and economic shifts. Working with a collection of essays, including poetry, drawn largely from Black educators, students, and community workers, this book hopes to shed new insights and contribute to the reformulation of Black life and social existence. Using the Black family as an entry point to critical discussions about the survival of Black families, we pose core questions for reflection:

- In what ways has the Black family sustained Black culture?
- What are the historic lessons that can influence future change for Black families?
- What are some of the current challenges and possibilities for a new future of Black families?
- How do Black families define themselves and tell their stories?
- How do Black families mobilize community energies to address injustices?
- In what ways are Black families resisting against racist institutions?

This book will add to the growing literature that have sought to acknowledge and reclaim Black/Blackness and our collective accomplishments as signifiers of historical and contemporary possibilities. While there has been a struggle for the accurate representation of Black Canadians, many scholars in the African diaspora have written about the necessity and even urgency for Indigenous scholarship grounded in popular tensions and realities (Henry, 1993; Dei, 2017). It is critical to voice the multiple moments and variances of Blackness as Black Canadians are not a homogenous group (Walcott, 1999). Telling our stories of resistance, survival, accomplishments, happiness, and solidarity opens great possibilities for change, and creates intellectual spaces that can develop effective Black leadership. Blackness is an identification that comes with political consciousness and agency (see Dei, 2017). It is more than racial identification; Blackness is about knowledge of culture, politics, history, and engaging the possibilities of the Black experience.

