

Time: Tuesdays, Noon–1:00 p.m.
Location: 124 Sparks Building
Lunch will be provided.

The Humanities Institute Presents: The Spring 2024 Faculty Scholars in Residence

“Between Protection and Agency: Writing Black Adolescence into Histories of the Black Power Movement”

Talk Date: Tuesday, April 2, 2024

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About the Talk:

While historians have refined popular and scholarly ideas about the role of race, class, gender, and sexuality in the development and trajectory of the Black Power movement (1966-1982), the Black adolescents who came of age as activists of this global struggle remain on the margins of this history as adolescents. Scholars have revealed that Black independent schools established during those years were concerned about developing racial pride in Black children, providing them with food, and ensuring their access to other basic needs, but were the adolescent activists who took over school buildings indoctrinated, unprotected teens or fully autonomous actors? In this social and intellectual history of Black high school-aged activism in Detroit, I argue that marshaling age as a useful category of historical analysis sharpens our understanding of the movement's ideas about Black adolescence and the role of teenaged youth in the movement. Furthermore, this project troubles this binary understanding of adolescent political actors as it reveals the movements' efforts to navigate the double bind of youth protection and youth agency.

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take it!