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Guest Speaker Series

Tuesday,
31 March 2020

2:00pm – 3:00pm

Hornbake South
room 2119

All UMD Faculty, Staff,
and Students are invited.
No RSVP required.



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Blogging Black Feminism

The discussion of black digital life often centers on digital activism with many recent offerings focused on the Black Lives Matter movement. Recent work has also focused almost exclusively on Twitter as a site for exploration. Additionally, black men regularly stand in for studies of blackness online, despite black women's role as original creators of hashtags like #SayHerName. I argue the study of Twitter should be informed by platforms that came before. The activity of blogging in the early 2000s provided a landscape for digital black feminists to work out principles for a new era by utilizing an alternate public sphere and capitalizing on practices of oral communication that have long been significant to African American culture. The digital affords the possibility to shift between rhetorical moves to advocate emancipatory freedom and re-conceptualize emancipation within a digital framework. The digital also provides a new mechanism to create black feminist rhetoric that moves between enclaved, satellite and counterpublic discourse to contend with the matrix of domination. In this talk, I chart five rhetorical moves used by Black feminist bloggers to show how digital black feminists make use of the digital to effect change on black feminism. Through these rhetorical moves, digital Black feminists prioritize an intentional conflation of the professional and personal and wrestle publicly with a complicated relationship to capitalism.

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