

# UGA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

## FALL 2021 COLLOQUIUM SERIES



GEORGIA

This talk is part of a series on the Black image that is sponsored by the Willson Center for Humanities and Arts and the Institute for African American Studies



## TWITTER DISCOURSE AND THE NEW DIGITAL NEWSROOM

Dr. Leslie Kay Jones is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at Rutgers New Brunswick, specializing in social movements. She draws extensively on the fields of race and gender, critical race theory, and online social media in her study of collective mobilization. She teaches qualitative and computer assisted research methods, particularly digital ethnography and content analysis. Leslie's article, *BlackLivesMatter: An Analysis of the Movement as Social Drama*, proposes a theoretical model for the role of the Black Twitter counterpublic in mediating the frames of #BlackLivesMatter protests. Her working manuscript argues that Black women are forming intellectual salons through online social media, in which they are making groundbreaking theoretical contributions toward the public understanding of race and gender. Leslie is an interdisciplinary scholar that is active in the digital humanities and digital sociologies communities. She co-directs the Digital Sociology Collective with Drs. Rachel Durso (Washington College) and Francesca Tripodi (UNC). As a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania, she held fellowships at the Andrea Mitchell Center for the Study of Democracy (2018-2019) and the Price Lab for Digital Humanities (2017-2018). In 2016, she began co-ordinating the Digital Sociology Mini-Conference as part of the Eastern Sociological Society annual meeting, an initiative first started in 2015 by Jessie Daniels, Karen Gregory, and Tressie McMillan Cottom. In 2020, the Digital Sociology Mini-Conference became the 1st Annual Digital Sociology unconference, independently hosted by the newly named Digital Sociology Collective.

Leslie Kay Jones  
Department of Sociology  
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October 15, 2021  
3:00 P.M.  
Online via Zoom  
Meeting ID: 957 4581 1720  
Passcode: 774035

<https://zoom.us/j/95745811720?pwd=Ynowc1N5VnZUS3Z4Zmh3d1dpQTlRdz09>

News framing contests are a central feature of Twitter, which is unsurprising given the unique ways that Twitter users engage with news. Twitter users are far more likely to use the platform to follow breaking news stories, directly follow reporters, and to engage with political news than Facebook users. At the same time, news personnel use Twitter as a source of news stories and to connect with interlocutors. Previous research has attempted to explain qualitative differences in the user bases of social media platforms as a function of different technical affordances. It has stopped short of making arguments about the cultural impact of public direct interaction between claimsmakers and media gatekeepers. However interactions between news personnel and media outsiders on Twitter are a daily feature of the discursive space. I argue that the distinctive culture of news consumption and critique that has developed on Twitter presents a unique opportunity to document framing contests within the ideological tensions that produce political mobilization on Twitter. How does direct engagement between Twitter users and news organizations, reporters, and commentators qualitatively affect the functions and possibilities of Twitter counterpublics? By reading Black cyberfeminist news frames from Twitter against the frames that resulted from these ideological battles and which shape the prestige media archive (NYT, Atlantic), I reveal an ideological fissure among feminist media along the faultline of race. I analyze the role of this ideological fissure in limiting the potential for anti-racist feminist frame diffusion.