4-3-2013

I Am Not Your Video Girl

Rashida Aluko-Roberts

Gettysburg College

Follow this and additional works at: http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/surge

Part of the African American Studies Commons, Asian American Studies Commons, Dance Commons, Educational Sociology Commons, Ethnic Studies Commons, Ethnomusicology Commons, and the Race and Ethnicity Commons

Share feedback about the accessibility of this item.

http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/surge/150

This is the author's version of the work. This publication appears in Gettysburg College's institutional repository by permission of the copyright owner for personal use, not for redistribution. Cupola permanent link: http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/surge/150

This open access blog post is brought to you by The Cupola: Scholarship at Gettysburg College. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of The Cupola. For more information, please contact cupola@gettysburg.edu.
I Am Not Your Video Girl

Abstract
“We need girls who are willing to be up on stage with us and who are not afraid to go HAM dancing in front of a crowd. I know at least a few of you who have the confidence/jaw-dropping dance moves to pull this off.”

Keywords
Surge, Surge Gettysburg, Gettysburg College, Center for Public Service, dance, self expression, 2 Chainz, minorities, stereotype

Disciplines
African American Studies | Asian American Studies | Dance | Educational Sociology | Ethnic Studies | Ethnomusicology | Race and Ethnicity | Race, Ethnicity and Post-Colonial Studies | Sociology

Comments
Surge is a student blog at Gettysburg College where systemic issues of justice matter. Posts are originally published at surgegettysburg.wordpress.com Through stories and reflection, these blog entries relate personal experiences to larger issues of equity, demonstrating that –isms are structural problems, not actions defined by individual prejudice. We intend to popularize justice, helping each other to recognize our biases and unlearn the untruths.

This blog post is available at The Cupola: Scholarship at Gettysburg College: http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/surge/150
November 11, 2013

“Women of color constantly face derogatory stereotypes that continually affect how we are portrayed in society. Agreeing to dance to a song that is derogatory and offensive, to not only women of color but also women in general, in such a public setting would only strengthen the already negative stereotypes assigned to women of color. Participating in this dance would be a public mockery of myself and all the women of color who struggle on a daily basis to transcend the demeaning stereotypes that place offensive and unjust limitations on our positions in society.

For many, we are seen as mere statistics in the growing number of teen pregnancies and high school dropout rates. To some, we are “video vixens”, “big booty hos,” “confidence” and “jaw dropping” moves. The list goes...
on. Yet, for the women of color who reject these expectations, society often finds a way to remind us (in this case an innocent email) of the “roles” that are expected of us, despite our successes.

Maybe I was “reading way into it” or I was “seriously overreacting” as many of my friends told me. But I was reminded of what my mother always tells me: “You get back what you give out.” Shaking my non-existent “big-booty” before the entire student body would only reinforce the negative perceptions on a predominately white campus. As a black woman, I now strongly believe that I too am responsible for the messages I send out and how society and others perceive me. Therefore, it is my responsibility to break free from those stereotypes that so often cloud people’s judgment of who we are as women of color and educate them that there are more to women of color than just shaking our “big booty” to a 2 Chainz song.

I am not your video girl!

Rashida Aluko-Roberts ’15
Staff Writer

http://surgegettysburg.wordpress.com/2013/04/03/i-am-not-your-video-girl/