Interrupting Patterns of White Feminism

White Noise Collective
Zara Zimbardo and Nicole Wires

SURJ National Political Education call -- April 18, 2017
Agenda

● 20 min. Introduction, framing & presentation on:
  ○ Feminist Solidarity & Exclusion
  ○ Recurring Narratives of White Women
● 5 min. Surfacing Questions
● 10 min. Presentation: How These Patterns Show Up Today
● 10 min. Breakout Discussions
● 10 min. Sharing Reflections
● 5 min. Closing: Resources & Legacies of Resistance
What is the White Noise Collective?

We explore how internalized white privilege and gender oppression intersect, and investigate ways this can show up, or limit the potential of, white anti-racism work.

We ground ourselves in the big questions of:

- What have been the role(s) of white women in upholding the system of white supremacist patriarchy?
- How can white women disrupt this system?
Intersectionality

The concept and reality that it is not enough to take on one system of oppression without acknowledging other forms of oppression that interlock and fuel one another.

Kimberlé Crenshaw

Patricia Hill Collins
Feminist Solidarity and Exclusion
First-wave Feminism
Second-wave Feminism
Does history need to keep repeating itself?

Rania Khalek
@RaniaKhalek

#SolidarityIsForWhiteWomen when convos about gender pay gap ignore that white women earn higher wages than black, Latino and Native men.
We All Can Do It!

our liberation is intersectional, intergenerational, queer&trans inclusive.
Narratives
Then and Now
Captivity Narratives
Virtuous Victim Narrative
Tulsa Race Riots - 1921
Fun-loving Emmett Till of Chicago was on summer vacation with relatives when he apparently whistled at a white woman.

Two white men kidnapped, beat and shot Till, 14, and threw him in the Tallahatchie River. Though his killers were acquitted, Till’s brutalized face, photographed in his casket, helped launch the civil rights movement.
State Violence
Lynch: Military lied

Despite U.S. reports, she never fired a shot

BY DANN McCLAIN

NEW YORK — Pvt. Jessica Lynch said Tuesday she is disturbed that the military seemed to over dramatize her rescue by U.S. troops and spread false stories that she went down shooting in an Iraqi ambush.

"That wasn't me. I wasn't about to take part in something I didn't do," she told The Associated Press. "I had that pistol for self-defense." She explained that she held the gun to her temple and asked for help.

"I was just, you know, not in the mood of being calm and cool and collected," she said.

Reports circulated by the U.S. military soon after the war said Lynch waged a fierce battle with Iraqi fighters who ambushed her 36th Evacuation Company on March 19 in Najafiyah. She has since said she fired seven shots, but that she did not earn a medal.

And Lynch's new book points out that, despite the "women and themes," of her military Rolodex:

"I never drew the gun again. Not once. There was too much blood and too much fear and I was too sick to even see."

She was rushed to a roadside hospital to receive the hospital staff because the Iraqi government had expelled the U.S. military.

"It disturbed me," Lynch said. "I know that it wasn't the truth."

Still, the appearance of war from the West Virginia took place to say that she was not sure if the military may have exaggerated her story, and that the conservative leaders who ordered her April 1 to be herded. "No matter what I was there to tell, they were there to report the fact of the story," she said.

Lynch, who have had her nose and some hair that falls on her shoulders, physically needs when she received her time in the hospital, a time change.
I am a PROUD Muslimah. I don't need "LIBERATING". I don't appreciate being used to reinforce WESTERN IMPERIALISM. You do not REPRESENT ME!

#MuslimahPride
How do these patterns inhabit consciousness, behavior, relationships?
The desire to save...
Looking away from privilege...
White Fragility and White Women’s Tears...
A desire to be seen as good...

Hold each other responsible

But don’t throw each other under the bus
Cultural Appropriation
Discussion Prompts

● What thoughts, feelings, and sensations come up as you listened to this presentation?
● Which, if any, of the historical narratives or interpersonal patterns do you identify with or recognize in your paid or unpaid work for racial justice?
● What opportunities do you identify for undermining or transforming these patterns and narratives in your life and work?
A Letter to White Southern Women from Anne Braden:

“I believe that no White woman reared in the South – or perhaps anywhere in this racist country – can find freedom as a woman until she deals in her own consciousness with the question of race. We grow up little girls – absorbing a hundred stereotypes about ourselves and our role in life, our secondary position, our destiny to be a helpmate to a man or men. But we also grow up White – absorbing the stereotypes of race, the picture of ourselves as somehow privileged because of the color of our skin. The two mythologies become intertwined, and there is no way to free ourselves from one without dealing with the other.”
Lillian Eugenia Smith (1897-1966)
Marilyn Buck (1947-2010)
Ricky Sherover-Marcuse (1938-1988)
Virginia Foster Durr (1903-1999)
Jessie Daniel Ames

The Grimké Sisters (1800s)
Adrienne Rich (1929-2012)
Peggy Terry (1947-2010)
Anne Braden (1924-2006)
Mab Segrest
Frances E. Kendall

"time to fight"
"It's an old story, isn't it?"