

# Solidarity/La Solidaridad:

## A Primer



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CCM 362

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# What *is* Solidarity?

"Solidarity is not the same as support. To experience solidarity, we must have a community of interests, shared beliefs and goals around which to unite, to build Sisterhood. Support can be occasional. It can be given and just as easily withdrawn. Solidarity requires sustained, ongoing commitment." -bell hooks, scholar, theorist, author of *Feminism Is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*, *Al't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism*, and *All About Love: New Visions*, among many other works

"Solidarity is an attitude of resistance, I suppose, or it should be." -Christopher Hitchens, author, journalist, social critic

"Reciprocity helps us balance the need for self-determination and creative individuality with mutual hope and, therefore, what might be described as 'solidarity.'" -David Blunkett, British politician

"Solidarity does not assume that our struggles are the same struggles, or that our pain is the same pain, or that our hope is for the same future. Solidarity involves commitment, and work, as well as the recognition that even if we do not have the same feelings, or the same lives, or the same bodies, we do live on common ground." -Sara Ahmed, scholar-activist, author of *Living a Feminist Life*, *Willful Subjects*, and *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* among many other works

Systems of oppression (racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia) must be understood as both structural, meaning institutions, policy, law, and economics existing together in tandem as well as ideological, and therefore social and cultural in nature.

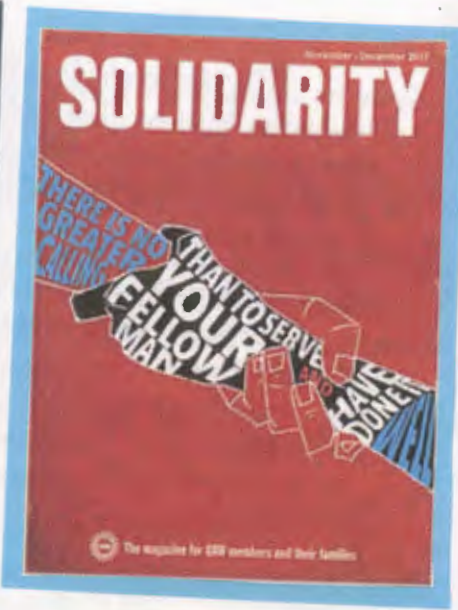
Because of the multi-pronged nature of oppression, our approaches to resistance of these various forms of oppression must be intersectional.

## What is Intersectionality?

- the theory credited to civil rights advocate and critical race scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw that the overlap of various social identities, as race, gender, sexuality, and class, contributes to the specific type of systemic oppression and discrimination experienced by an individual

Meaning that we must think about "isms" as working in tangent with one another, understanding that one form of oppression is reliant on other forms of oppression to persist





"When feminism does not explicitly oppose racism and when anti-racism does not incorporate opposition to the patriarchy, race and gender politics often end up being antagonistic to each other and both interests lose." - Kimberlé Crenshaw

"Among the most troubling political consequences of the failure of antiracist and feminist discourses to address the intersections of racism and patriarchy is the fact that, to the extent they forward the interest of people of color and "women," respectively, one analysis often implicitly denies the **validity of the other**. The failure of feminism to interrogate race means that the resistance strategies of feminism will often replicate and reinforce the subordination of people of color, and the failure of antiracism to interrogate patriarchy means that antiracism will frequently **reproduce the subordination of women**. These mutual ellisions present a particularly difficult political dilemma for women of color." - Kimberlé Crenshaw

**Zero-point epistemology**-the colonial belief that there is only one "correct" or "proper" way of being in the world, the belief that "truth" is logical, linear, scientific, objective.

**Pluriversal alternatives**-a tolerance and acceptance of many different ways of living in the world, of existence. An acknowledgement that there are different ways of seeing, different ways of thinking.

"if all you were ever given is a hammer, everything looks like a nail"



### What does it mean to build a coalition?

Coalition, [koh-uh-lish-uh n] noun

1. a combination or alliance, especially a temporary one between persons, factions, states, etc.

2. a union into one body or mass; fusion.

Or, where one might fall, many will succeed

"Pan-ethnicity is a political term used to group various ethnic groups together based on their related cultural origins; geographic, linguistic, religious, or 'racial' similarities are often used alone or in combination to draw pan-ethnic boundaries. The term pan-ethnic was used extensively during mid-twentieth century anti-colonial/national liberation movements. In the United States, Yen Espiritu popularized the term and coined the nominal term pan-ethnicity in reference to Asian Americans, a racial category composed of disparate ethnic groups having in common only their origin in Asia" (Asian Pacific American Law Journal vol. 2 (1994), p. 43)

Speak with or for,  
not over

### What might be some barriers/challenges to forming coalitions?

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."



Martin Luther King, Jr.

(Letter from a Birmingham Jail)

Coalitional subjectivity: Differential belonging asks people to acknowledge how "we are oppressed and privileged so that we may place ourselves where we can have an impact and where we can share experience." This perspective implies that one does not have to "be" in terms of being a certain identity in order to do political work. Who someone is, is constructed by where they already belong, and where they choose to belong. Differential belonging also compels us to be longing, as in, to desire relations across lines of difference. The result is a coalitional subjectivity that provides the agency to resist in ways not bound by fixed identities or subjectivities as one learns to politicize her/his belongings and adopt impure stances that allow for connection between people and groups who are very different.- Border (In)Securities: Normative and Differential Belonging in LGBTQ and Immigrant Rights Discourse by Karma R. Chávez

## Coalition-building in history

"On September 8, 1965, Filipino American grape workers, members of the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, walked out on strike against Delano-area table and wine grape growers protesting years of poor pay and conditions. The Filipinos asked Cesar Chavez, who led a mostly Latino farm workers union, the National Farm Workers Association, to join their strike. Cesar and the leaders of the NFWA believed it would be years before their fledgling union was ready for a strike. But he also knew how growers historically pitted one race against another to break field walkouts. Cesar's union voted to join the Filipino workers' walkouts on Mexican Independence Day, September 16, 1965. From the beginning this would be a different kind of strike. Cesar insisted the Latino and Filipino strikers work together, sharing the same picketlines, strike kitchens and union hall. He asked strikers take a solemn vow to remain nonviolent. The strike drew unprecedented support from outside the Central Valley, from other unions, church activists, students, Latinos and other minorities, and civil rights groups. Cesar led a 300-mile march, or perigrinacion, from Delano to Sacramento. It placed the farm workers' plight squarely before the conscience of the American people. The strikers turned to boycotts, including table grapes, which eventually spread across North America." - Inga Kim, ufw.org



## What is an Ally/Allyship?

verb (used with object), allied, allying.

1. to unite formally, as by treaty, league, marriage, or the like (usually followed by with or to):

Russia allied itself to France.

2. to associate or connect by some mutual relationship, as resemblance or friendship.

verb (used without object), allied, allying.

3. to enter into an alliance; join; unite.

noun, plural allies.

4. a person, group, or nation that is associated with another or others for some common cause or purpose

An ally is an individual who possess (by complete random luck) status or characteristics that make them benefactors of systems of oppression, that works to dismantle the privileged position in the hierarchy they benefit from. Broadly, this means white people, cis-gendered and heterosexual individuals, documented individuals or "citizens", and members of the middle or upper economic classes. An ally **must** reject the dominant ideology that supports their elevated place in society.

## What is White Fragility?

"White people in North America live in a social environment that protects and insulates them from race-based stress. This insulated environment of racial protection builds white expectations for racial comfort while at the same time lowering the ability to tolerate racial stress, leading to what I refer to as White Fragility. White Fragility is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium"- Robin DiAngelo, author of *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*

## What is a White Savior?

"A White Savior is a common trope used in books, films, and as a way of interpreting actual history. It's also a perspective shared by many white people as we move through the world. In the simplest terms, it's when a white character or person rescues people of color from their oppression. The White Savior is portrayed as the good one, the one that we're meant to identify with as we watch or read these narratives. They usually learn lessons about themselves along the way. The white savior racializes morality by making us consistently identify with the good white person saving the non-white people who are given much less of an identity in these plot lines. It also frames people of color as being unable to solve their own problems. It implies that they always need saving, and that white people are the only ones competent enough to save them"-Celia Edell, writer at [everydayfeminism.com](http://everydayfeminism.com)

Be A Better Ally In 3 Easy Steps:



How do you practice allyship in your everyday life?

**An ALLY**  
is not a noun.  
It isn't an identity, a word, or something to achieve.  
Being an ally is taking action,  
making a stand  
doing something to make a difference  
by standing up  
against oppression and marginalization.  
**You are an ally**  
when someone else recognizes you as an ally

"Allyship is not an identity-it is a lifelong process of building relationships based on trust, consistency, and accountability with marginalized individuals and/or groups of people. Allyship is not self-defined-our work and our efforts must be recognized by the people we seek to ally ourselves with"- Micah Heumann

Kat Blaque  
@kat\_blaque

Allyship should feel uncomfortable to you. if your allyship feels comfy then it's most-likely lazy and ineffective.

45 54

What

NOT

to do...

Trudy  
@thebrudz

Whites using allyship as "threat" to "take away" if PoC critique their privilege? Lemme help. You're relieved of duty. Goodbye. Take care.

Reply Delete Favorite More

RETWEETS 58 FAVORITES 84

10:38 PM - 16 Apr 2014

Trudy  
@thebrudz

Cause last time I checked your "allyship" is just consumption, appropriation, derailment & passive aggression.

Reply Delete Favorite More

RETWEETS 27 FAVORITES 24

10:37 PM - 16 Apr 2014

Trudy  
@thebrudz

And I cannot pay bills with that let alone dismantle oppression. So if allyship is some kinda "condition" to hold over me, GOODBYE. LEAVE.

Reply Delete Favorite More

RETWEETS 13 FAVORITES 13

10:36 PM - 16 Apr 2014

### Local opportunities for allyship/solidarity work:

#### WU CAUSA

WU Causa is a pro-immigrants rights organization. We represent a diverse group of activists who recognize that immigration affects the wider Willamette and Salem communities. We advocate for human rights, equity, and justice by taking political action, spreading awareness, and educating the Willamette community and the broader public.

#### WU Alianza

The purpose of Alianza is to promote Latinx culture as well as empower the Latinx community in an effort to succeed in higher education. These goals will be carried out by providing the campus with ethnic celebrations, films, speakers, and a supportive environment for multicultural students through potlucks, trips, and other cultural gatherings. Alianza will also build a strong connection to the greater community.

#### Willamette Academy

Willamette Academy is a college access program at Willamette University that serves students by providing additional support outside of school through mentoring, tutoring, monthly Saturday sessions and a summer camp.

WA serves Salem-Keizer School District 8th- through 12th-graders from populations that are historically underrepresented in higher education: low-income, people of color, recent immigrants or first-generation college students.



## ***about r/evolution and love-Assata Shakur***

about r/evolution and love

this is the 21st century and we need to redefine r/evolution. this planet needs a people's r/evolution. a humanist r/evolution. r/evolution is not about bloodshed or about going to the mountains and fighting. we will fight if we are forced to but the fundamental goal of r/evolution must be peace.

we need a r/evolution of the mind. we need a r/evolution of the heart. we need a r/evolution of the spirit. the power of the people is stronger than any weapon. a people's r/evolution can't be stopped. we need to be weapons of mass construction. weapons of mass love. it's not enough just to change the system. we need to change ourselves. we have got to make this world user friendly. user friendly.

are you ready to sacrifice to end world hunger. to sacrifice to end colonialism. to end neo-colonialism. to end racism. to end sexism.

r/evolution means the end of exploitation. r/evolution means respecting people from other cultures. r/evolution is creative.

r/evolution means treating your mate as a friend and an equal. r/evolution is sexy.

r/evolution means respecting and learning from your children. r/evolution is beautiful.

r/evolution means protecting the people. the plants. the animals. the air. the water. r/evolution means saving this planet.