Welcome!

Challenging Racism & Islamophobia

How to confront and dismantle systems of oppression while building a movement
Agenda

1. Define the terms
   - Islamophobia - what it looks like? how does it operate? who is it tied to?
   - "Blackness" - what does it mean to be black? what is "anti-blackness"?
   - Muslim - what does it mean to be Muslim? Who does this comprise?

2. What does Islamophobia look like in the world today?
   - Whitewashing
   - Pinkwashing

3. What can we do to confront it in the world?
Islam is Not a New Religion in the USA

Earliest accounts of Islam's possible presence dates to 1528.

- Muslims mentioned in Virginia slave codes as early as 1682.

First country to recognize United States independence was the Sultanate of Morocco in 1777.

- American Revolution records several names fighting for the US

Thomas Jefferson explicitly mentioned Muslims in defense of constitutional right to religious freedom
Blackness

- Angry, Thieves, Gangs, Violent, Poor, Lazy, Uneducated, Violence Against Women

Muslim

- Religious extremists, anti-women, terrorism, foreign, to be feared, power hungry
Anti-Blackness

Antagonist behavior against Black People of Color by White People & Non-Black People of Color

- De-genders Black womanhood or genders it as masculine, while always deeming Black masculinity dangerous and criminal
- Black people as always “guilty.” White people always “innocent.”
- Blame Blackness for its own calamities, and rationalizes murder of Black people by scared whiteness as “moral” and “justified”
- Global problem that fuels conflict & war between white, Eurocentric populations and Black/brown populations
Defining Islamophobia

Islamophobia is a racialized system that oppresses Muslims, black and brown people locally and globally.
How Islamophobia Operates

Islamophobic forces employ “contrived fear” or “perceived threat” of Muslims
Background of Anti-Sharia Legislation

Anti-Abortion Laws
DOMA (Anti-Gay Marriage Laws)
Voter Suppression Laws
Right to Work Laws (Anti-Union)
Anti-Immigration Laws

Islamophobia is interconnected with racism, sexism, classism
Myths About Islam and Muslims #1: 
*Islam is inherently violent*
Myths About Islam and Muslims #2: Islam is Oppressive to Women; Muslim men are sexual predators
Pinkwashing

https://www.facebook.com/bbcthree/videos/10155015376850787/
Can Muslim Women Liberate Themselves?

Malala Yousafzi  Linda Sarsour  Southern Workers Assembly

www.MoveToAmend.org
Myths About Islam and Muslims #4: Islam is Incompatible with Democracy
Whitewashing
Black and Muslim Incarceration Rates

Lifetime Likelihood of Imprisonment

- All Men: 1 in 9
- White Men: 1 in 17
- Black Men: 1 in 3
- Latino Men: 1 in 6
- All Women: 1 in 56
- White Women: 1 in 111
- Black Women: 1 in 18
- Latina Women: 1 in 45


Religious background of population, France, 2014
- Muslim belief or background: 12%
- Non-Muslim belief or background: 88%

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Rise in Islamophobia in United States

- FBI data reports 257 anti-Muslim hate crimes committed in 2015 -- up 67% in the previous year.
Being Black and Muslim

The Newburgh Four

#OurThreeBrothers
Are There Comparisons to Islamophobia?


How communities became part of whiteness?
Will Politics of Respectability Protect Muslims?

RESPECTABILITY POLITICS WON'T SAVE YOU.
“In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.”

“The problem of racism, the problem of economic exploitation, and the problem of war are all tied together.”
What Can We Do?

1. Oppose Islamophobic Rhetoric, Policies, and Public Figures
   - Educate ourselves and communities about Islamophobia, racism, sexism, and gender-identity
   - Prioritize support for vulnerable and marginalized communities
   - Contribute to the defense of human rights is our work

2. Look to Muslim Leadership
   - LISTEN to Muslims when they share their thought and experiences
   - Visit the nearest mosque during open houses & public events
   - Do NOT assume you know the solution to their problems

3. Develop your anti-oppression skill sets
   - Acknowledge and be conscious of your privilege
   - LISTEN more than speak, do not assume you know what’s best.
   - Be aware of how much space you take up

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What Can We Do?

4. Challenge and oppose oppression in all forms
   ● Learn how to recognize microaggressions and other hostilities
   ● Interrupt hateful narratives and intervene in hostile interactions
   ● Be prepared to operate in your discomfort zone

5. Stand in solidarity with Muslims and vulnerable communities
   ● Be proactive in outreach to Black and Muslim groups and organizations!
   ● SHOW UP and participate in inter-faith gatherings and alliances
   ● Do NOT proclaim yourself an “ally,” SHOW THEM you are!

6. Build trust and relationships with human beings
   ● Step outside of the internet to meet people face-to-face (No shortcuts!)
   ● Take the time to get to know each other (No expectations!)
   ● BE YOUR AUTHENTIC SELF!
Islamophobia Study List

Recommended Books:
The Muslims are Coming: Islamophobia, Extremism and the Domestic War on Terror. By Arun Kundnani

Islamophobia and the Politics of Empire. By Deepa Kumar

Islamophobia in America: the Anatomy of Intolerance. Edited by Carl Ernst

Learn more at: MERINC.org
Islamophobia Study List

Recommended Books/Articles:

Race, Racism and Social Works: Contemporary Issues and Debates. By Michael Lavalette and Laura Penketh

Confronting Islamophobia in Education. By Dhaya Ramarajan and Marcella Runell.

Islamophobia is giving Muslims Mental Disorders. By Alex Zielinski

Learn more at: MERINC.org