#### We should be womxnist, not feminist killjoys. Feminism excludes women of color and prioritizes the needs of white women.

Fatema Hayat 14. What is a Womanist?. https://progressivepupil.wordpress.com/2014/03/04/what-is-a-womanist/

Alice Walker, a poet and activist, who is mostly known for her award-winning book The Color Purple, coined the term Womanist in her 1983 book In Search of Our Mothers’ Garden: Womanist Prose. Walker defined a womanist as “Womanish, the opposite of girlish…Being grown up…A Black Feminist or Feminist of Color…A woman who loves other women, sexually and/or non-sexually. Appreciates and prefers women’s culture, women’s emotional flexibility (values tears as natural counterbalance of laughter), and women’s strength. Sometimes loves individual men, sexually and/or non-sexually”. The complete text of the definition can be seen here. There are other simpler definitions for the term such as the one used by The American Heritage Dictionary, which recognized the word in 1993 and defined it as“ Having or expressing a belief in or respect for women and their talents and abilities beyond the boundaries of race and class; exhibiting feminism that is inclusive especially of Black American Culture”. Now that we know what it is to be a Womanist. How is it different from Feminism? And why is the Womanism Movement important? The feminist movement traditionally was a middle class white women’s movement and rarely included women of color. In its first wave in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the movement fought for suffrage rights for white women, and later in its second wave the focus was on cultural and social rights which involved sexuality, family laws, workplace, and reproductive rights. Although Feminism addresses and fights for gender equality, it rarely addressed equality and justice for black women. It was never involved in the civil rights movement to help guarantee black women social equality. Unfortunately, there have also been some claims that some members of the feminist movement were racist. Justine Tally mentions in her article Why ‘Womanism? : The Genesis of a New Word and What It Means, “many early so-called feminists supported racist eugenics initiatives, including sterilization of minority women”. Photo courtesy of alicewalkerfilm.com Photo courtesy of alicewalkerfilm.com During that period, women of Color or African American women were not only suffering from political and social inequality similar to their white sisters, but they were also racially oppressed due to the color of their skin and ethnicity. The white wom[x]en of the feminist movement failed to recognize this aspect, it did not encompass the realities and perspectives of the African American Wom[x]en’s suffering from slavery and segregation. This is why many women of color couldn’t associate with Feminism and found representation and identified with the new term “Wom[x]anist”. Another difference between Feminism and Womanism is that some feminists present men as the enemy in their fight for equality in a patriarchal world. It can be seen as a separatist movement, unlike wom[x]anism that emphasizes women’s relationships with men and the importance of family who are “committed to the survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female” (Alice Walker). Wom[x]anism not only fights for the gender equality but for justice against racial oppression against African American men and women. Finally, Wom[x]anism is not against the Feminist Movement, but as Alice Walker states in her famous quote, it is just a darker shade that included and represented other wom[x]en’s perspectives and voices. “Womanism is simply another shade of feminism. It helps give visibility to the experience of black women and other women of color who have always been at the forefront of the feminist movement yet marginalized and rendered invisible in historical texts and the media”.

#### Feminism can’t be made inclusive – even still, WOC’s narratives are excluded within feminist spaces – only womanism enables all individuals to be included

Renee Martin 10, 4-1-2010, "I'm not a feminist (and there is no but)," Guardian, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/apr/10/white-feminism-black-[x-womanism, accessed 4-1-2017

Chloe Angyal is correct when she asserts that most young American women believe in equal rights. However, for some women, eschewing the label of feminist is not about avoiding being called "ugly" or an "angry extremist". For some women, avoiding the label of feminist comes from a place of self-love and balance. Feminism is the form of women's organisation that is prioritised both in the media and academia, but many black women have turned to wom[x]anism in an attempt to counter the ways in which the combined oppressions of race and gender affect our lives. Wom[x]anism is not just feminism for women from minorities; it is based in our spirituality, honouring our foremothers and a desire to support both men and women. While wom[x]anism at its heart is pro-woman, it is also about understanding the communal value of all people of colour. I'm not a feminist (and there is no but), because my life experiences lead me to believe that feminism was not created for women like me. The name of the first feminist hero mentioned by my professor in my first women's study lecture was Simone de Beauvoir, and the trend of focusing on white women would continue throughout my education. Inclusivity to the women's studies department that I was a part of meant using the work of bell hooks occasionally. However, she quickly became an additive, thrown in to give the appearance of intersectionality. I would have to scour the library and online journals to learn names like Patricia-Hill Collins, Audre Lorde and the woman who would become my inspiration, Alice Walker. And so I followed indexes and bibliographies, desperate to read journeys that mirrored my own. I sat in seminars where I became the "token black woman" when they deemed it necessary to actually consider something outside of the white woman as monolithic representative. Despite feminism supposedly being a movement to end women's oppression, women's studies seminars and lectures are where I learned to recite "Ain't I a Woman" out loud to protest the assumptions about my race and my culture. It is where I learned that the sisterhood and camaraderie lasts only as long as you don't insist on interrogating oppression from multiple sites. Just as the primary and high school education system includes black history month as an additive in a faux attempt at inclusivity, so too are the works of black women occasionally intermingled within women's studies curriculum. Including the works of black women occasionally in a women's studies program is not inclusive; it simply mirrors all of the previous modes of pedagogy that marginalises students of colour, while reifying white hegemony. In fact, the very existence of separate classes dealing with the works of black women, indigenous women and Latina women signify a failure to fully integrate the work of women of colour in all academic endeavours. Despite protestations, the ghettoisation of the work of women of colour too often frames white womanhood as the monolithic norm. Today, feminism has moved out of the academy. The conversations that occur in the feminist blogosphere serve as modern-day consciousness raising sessions, as they formulate new theory and supposedly make room for voices that have previously been silenced. The internet has been constructed as the great equaliser, yet blogs which are largely run by white women like Feministe, Feministing, Pandagon and Bitch PhD dominate the blogosphere, thus replicating the very same hierarchy that academia has been perpetuating for a very long time. Blogs run by traditionally marginalised women do not attract the same attention by the media. When feminists are pulled from the internet for interviews, it is routinely the same white feminist voices representing the broad perspectives that are visible on the internet. Unlike academia, where the power dynamic between professor and student does not allow for radical confrontation, marginalised women have forcefully made themselves heard through a series of boycotts, as well as critical essays confronting feminists of privilege regarding race, ableism and transphobia. Despite repeated calls for change, the dynamics remains the same because the powerful blogs maintain the ability to silence and effectively ignore the critique of marginalised women simply based in size and clout. Though the different strata of women's organising often finds itself fighting the same issues, differences in race, class, ability, and cisgender status continue to divide activism, making it impossible for real ally work to occur. How can you claim the label of those who would oppress you to see their goals realised, even when commonality exists in some areas? Not owning the feminist label is not always about equivocation; for some women, it represents truly loving oneself in the face of bigotry.

#### Feminism is and always will be whitewashed – stop trying to reclaim something that prioritizes the needs of white women over everyone else

Helen Pluckrose 16, 12-29-2016, "Why I No Longer Identify as a Feminist," Areo Magazine, https://areomagazine.com/2016/12/29/why-i-no-longer-identify-as-a-feminist/, accessed 4-19-2017

Two weeks ago I posted that I would be hosting a webinar for white women on how to be intersectional in their feminism. I intended to have two sisters co-host (read: get Becky and Emily all the way together) with me. The cost? $80 per person. I instructed anyone interested in attending to email me for more details. Within a few hours, 30 white women and emailed me. Of the 30, seven were letting me know they’d love to take part in the webinar but couldn’t afford the $80. Now the sisters were telling me, “A couple of hours talking to a bunch of white women is worth at least twice that.” But of course, white women felt it was completely fine to subtly urge a Black woman they don’t know to invest the kind of emotional and intellectual labor it would take to prepare and administer a webinar instructing white women how to care about anybody other than their god damned selves to reconsider how much she was charging or at least give some special snowflakes (read: the good white women) a discount. I canceled that shit before I could even began planning it because as I realized long ago, white women are much too fucking exhausting for me to ever try to work with them en masse, even for profit. I’ve written about this before. Lately though, the thinly-veiled racism, narcissism and collective arrogance of white women have reminded me why I will never associate myself with feminism: I cannot stomach white women. To be clear, I understand that white women do not own the patent or the rights to feminism. Black women were feminists before it had a name and philosophy. Still, feminism has been hijacked by white women and truthfully, one cannot be a feminist if she intends to exclude some women from her fight (Are y’all picking up what I’m putting down Susie and Megan?). But even had I not been born done with white women, the last week of their collective bullshit alone would be enough for me to wash my hands with them. To start in true form, a white woman in Texas (despite the fact that The Independent’s misleading headline calls her a “teenager”) lied about being gang raped by three Black men. I’m not surprised given the historical context of white women lying about Black men and boys raping or otherwise offending them (often resulting in fatal consequences), but that makes it no less repulsive. As a woman who makes a practice of believing women when they say they were raped or sexually assaulted, white women make it very difficult to stand in that principle. Playing on the American delusion that white women are irresistible and thus always susceptible to violation by Black brutes only further tests my already tenuous and tepid inclination to give them the benefit of the doubt. I have a Black son, brother and husband who could all have their lives ruined by a white woman’s treachery. And then I’m strapped with the knowledge that most likely 3 in 5 of the Black women I know have been sexually assaulted. So white women will have to do their own heavy lifting to sift through allegations to decide which one of their sisters to believe. I’ve just doubled down on my commitment to making space for my sisters who have been preyed upon, believing them and helping them heal. That’s a commitment that extends to Black girls, who aren’t allowed to be victims and whom nobody, including white women who insist they’re here for all girls but can’t stop their attention-seeking fuckery long enough to share an article about the dozen or so Black girls missing in D.C. I tweeted as much and my mentions filled with white women reminding me that we all need to stand together. I shouldn’t single them out or make assumptions based on the color of their skin they said. “You can’t talk about what you don’t know,” they chastised. And in their rush to defend themselves from accusations that they don’t care about Black girls, they forgot to mention the missing Black girls, proving as they have been for centuries that white women don’t give a fuck about anybody but white women. Follow Kinfolk Kollective @knflkkollective Yo, white feminists, let me interrupt y'all making pussy hats to ask why y'all silent about the #MissingDCGirls? 8:12 AM - 24 Mar 2017 901 901 Retweets 1,352 1,352 likes Then they demanded I try to educate them. For free. They still believe they can exploit the labor of a Black woman (just like all of you white women who will scroll past the donation link to your right but email me to to tell me how much you enjoyed an article and how it opened your eyes), expecting us to patiently guide them to being less shitty people. Nah, Beckster. I dragged the feminist horse to the informational, intersectional well, but I won’t be standing there making sure you drink. Now to complete the trifecta, because white women never miss an opportunity to show that their only loyalty is to their own interests, white feminists have been having orgasms since Tomi Lauren announced she’s pro-choice. One “liberal, feminist woman” was so impressed with Lahren that she declared she owed Lahren “an apology” for “tearing a strong, confident woman who holds her values close to her heart down simply” because they don’t agree. Yes, with a single endorsement of abortion rights, Lahren earned the “long overdue respect” of white feminists. All is forgiven. After all, white women’s gripe with Lahren wasn’t based on her rants which challenged their human rights. They just wanted to be sure that she wasn’t conservative enough to infringe on the rights of white women. Her stance on Black and brown people immigrating, which effects other women, can be overlooked. Her pro-cop, anti-Black bullshit that emboldens millions of white people to continue supporting the state-sanctioned, extrajudicial killings of Black people, including the perpetually ignored Black women, are cool. Those are just differing opinions. I mean, white people can disagree on the varying degrees of humanity that non-white people deserve while still respecting each other. That whole racist thing is not a deal breaker for pussy hat wearers. So long as Lahren makes it clear that she stands for white women having access to abortions, she’s entitled to respect. White women are exhausting. As fuck. I don’t have the time, energy or interest to ignore that to accomplish some colorblind mission of women’s equality. Black women have been standing with and for each other forever. I don’t need white women to teach me how to be there for and fight for other women. Black women invented feminism. But as with most movements, feminism has been painted white. And with that rebranding comes whitewashing. So if feminism means being there for all women, it’s a hard pass for me. I’m not losing my voice screaming for white women who don’t even whisper for me. I reserve my lungs and alto for Black women like I always have. I don’t need a label for that. I don’t need an ideology for the space I make and hold for Black women. I don’t need a sign, a banner or a march to show solidarity with my real sisters. I’m not a feminist because I don’t give fuck about white women. I draw deep lines between us and them. And I’m alright with that. I’ll just continue supporting and loving Black women and girls. That’s all the movement I’ll ever need.

This isn’t to play down the pain that so many are feeling right now. That is valid, it is real. But it’s not a pain that resonates with people of color and queer folks. We were already existing in a continuous loop of pain and frustration. We were already on the defense, gasping for air. I am confused by those who said they didn’t vote for Trump, who consider themselves liberal, as progressive. As educated and aware. I’m even more confused by the response of white women specifically. White women who so often blame white men for any of the chaos existing in the world, yet never take responsibility for contributing to that racist world. Yes, America and the rest of the world don’t really care about women, but when women do get a platform, it’s usually white women speaking. Black women, brown women, and immigrant women are still overlooked by those shouting “FEMINISM! FEMALE IS THE FUTURE!” Too often in our society, white women have value while women of color do not. On Tuesday, the numbers were very clear: White women showed up more for Trump than they did for Hillary Clinton. Yet, so many white women pointed fingers at everyone but themselves when Trump was elected president. When the conversation started to slowly turn to blaming white women, I watched my white friends break down. I watched them become fragile, and the white tears made many appearances. I watched them complain, and blame, and refuse to recognize that there needs to be a change to what we call feminism. It was peak white feminism, doing what it does best, looking out for the white female while stepping over and on top of women of color. I watched as my Black and brown friends spoke of their fears and talked about the abuse they were already experiencing, and white women were too busy crying to reach out and hold them up. In the same way that Black and brown women have continually done. An anti-Trump protest in NYC this weekend. Photo by Mathais Wasik (Creative Commons). So I’m done catering to the fragile white woman. To the ignorant comments: “We are all women, feminism is for all of us.” What are they playing at? It’s never been for all of us, no matter how hard women of color have tried to make it for them as well. They are still rejected from the narrative of womanhood. As a Black nonbinary person who is female bodied, I have raised two brown children in an America that has always been Trump America to me and my Black family. I’ve spent the last few years coming to terms with the fact that I have to fight for my space in this world. I do not get to hide behind pointing fingers at white men. I do not get to scream “Sexism!” to cover the fact that I contribute to racism. Black women do not get the luxury of still having white privilege, but having people make space for them because they are women. Often, requests for “diversity” are worded “Women and people of color.” This is exclusive to white women, keeping women of color from sharing space with men of color. After last week, we need to change that language. I fear what white women will do while adjusting to this new America, the America that women of color have already known, have worked hard to be strong in. I wonder if they’ll repeat the same cycle as before. Using their gender when they see fit, but ultimately still choosing race over gender. I see them in the streets shouting about feminism, but where have they been when Black mothers were mourning the murders of their sons? Where were these feminists when mothers at Standing Rock were attacked with children in hand? Where are these feminists when immigrant mothers are threatened to be sent back to their countries? Why doesn’t their feminism extend that far? Is it because even fighting for equality comes with access and privilege? I suppose I should be happy that so many bubbles have been burst for white women, but I’m skeptical. In a month, will they still be taking to the streets and accompanying us? Will they still be organizing and demanding change? Will they finally have understood why their white feminism is dangerous and harmful to other women? I had a conversation with many white women this week who attacked many organizers of color, activists who eat, live, and breath fighting for space in this white America, simply because they couldn’t bring themselves to vote for Clinton nor Trump. Yet, it was people of color who showed up for Clinton, the candidate they had promised was here for us. They blamed women who have laid their bodies and lives down for their children. Women who, like me, do not have the comfort of whiteness to fall back into. I agree that white men hold a certain privilege that none of us will be able to experience—let’s always continue to dismantle that—but let’s also be real with ourselves. White feminism, white women who believe themselves to be just and “well-meaning,” are also contributing to white supremacy. By ignoring this, by not calling out white women, we are encouraging a cycle that will come to a head if it hasn’t already. Tuesday was a perfect example of how white women have coasted. The white woman is coddled, is praised for speaking up for herself, and is given space to be a feminist. That space and that voice, however, is not inclusive to those who have different pigments. And still the white woman would deny that she is racist. How could she be if she’s fighting for feminism, if she’s trying to destroy the white man, if she is being good? The spaces she fills, though, are often filled with other white bodies and have little regard to the plight of women of color. Enough is enough. It is time for white women to take responsibility for having a hand in where our country has ended up. We, all of us, can do better. No one is going to get a pass in this situation. The America we are now experiencing was created by those who have privilege, have the comfort of moving through the world relatively safely. It’s time to get uncomfortable, though. It is time to practice those speeches of equality and justice. It’s time to go beyond “well-meaning,” beyond charging crystals and pulling tarot cards. It is time to speak up, own up, and actually act out what feminism supposedly means. For too long, the emotional labor that comes with talking about race has been put on people of color. It can no longer be this way. This past week has shown us that the idea we’ve held of what a racist person looks like, poor, uneducated, and unaware, isn’t actually the right profile. It is the middle class, college-educated, and “progressive” person who is more concerned with clinging to their privilege at the expense of hurting those who do not look like them. It is up to white Americans, in particular white women, to step into the gap. To change the conversation about gender, to include the conversation about race, about class. This is no longer about diversity. It’s about being inclusive.