

Resisting Race: "Identity Politics" and the Project of Liberation
ABSTRACT DEADLINE EXTENDED UNTIL AUGUST 19, 2016
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University of Oxford

Historically, the loaded term "identity politics" has been used to describe a range of ideas, behaviors and actions under the rubric of moving beyond a class-reductive analysis of power. From the Black Panther Party to Sisters Uncut, identity-based movements have helped to carve out spaces for self-organisation and for the development of a theoretical understanding of constructed identities as a category of power. This has been critical for movements of colour, anti-colonial revolutions, feminist struggles and queer liberation movements. In particular, these spaces have been vital in complicating wider movements; for example, during the struggles of the 1960s and 70s in the West, the creation of women of colour-only spaces intervened in the dominant feminist discourses, creating a more enriched, nuanced analysis of the intersectional nature of patriarchy, capitalism and white supremacy.

The moment at which we are making this intervention is one in which the language of "privilege baiting", positionality politics, confession and "safe spaces" have come to dominate self-defined radical theory and praxis. Indeed, identity politics has taken on a negative valence recently – with many preferring to identify instead with "liberation politics" – due to the theorization and organization along racial, gender or class lines having a tendency to reinforce the very identity categories activists and scholars are seeking to overcome. Critics of identity politics claim that it reduces political and radical collective action to individualism and that it effaces the possibility of solidarity and movement building. For many, this new construction of identity politics constitutes a problematic shift from intersectionality as an analysis of power and an understanding of oppressions as social relations to reductive essentialism and fragmentation. Perhaps more seriously, this conception has been read as a reproduction of the power of capital and the state, whereby focus on the individual – as a confessor, oppressor or victim – has come to replace the theoretical and political work of dismantling the structures of domination.

We invite undergraduates, early career researchers, activists and scholars to intervene in the current debate surrounding identity politics and to interrogate the term "identity" in light of developing literature, theory and praxis surrounding race and resistance. We particularly welcome papers with an interdisciplinary approach. Areas of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Identity politics as/against neoliberalism
- Identity politics versus intersectionality/liberation
- Identity politics and its interaction with neoliberalism/nationalism/the state
- Privilege-baiting and identity politics
- The politics of innocence and the carceral/security state
- Anti-colonial/de-colonial struggles, and identity politics
- Tumblr feminism, online activism and confession as political work
- Radical critiques of cultural appropriation
- Queer liberation and identity politics
- Safe spaces and the politics of comfort
- Trigger warnings, trauma and the state
- Transnational gentrification discourses
- Recovering subaltern studies as anti-capitalist resistance

- Microaggressions and social relations
- Homonationalism
- Whiteness, white fragility and European fascism
- The future of radical movement building and solidarity
- Europeanness and economic crisis
- Victimhood, "safety" and power
- Trauma Exhibitionism
- Anti-Muslim racisms and the Left

Abstracts of no more than 300 words should be submitted by midday on 19 August, 2016 to resistingrace@gmail.com.