

Statement on the US Presidential Election: “We are going to stay on the battlefield”

Sunday 18 December 2016, by [The Feminist Wire](#) (Date first published: 30 November 2016).

The Feminist Wire is an anti-racist, anti-imperial feminist media and publishing company whose vision of justice and equity centers those whose lives, well-being, and bodies are the first to be assaulted under conditions of hyper-militarization, capitalism, patriarchy, ableism, white supremacy, and anti-Black racism around the world.

Our work is grounded in a long and rich tradition of Black feminist thought and organizing, which compels us to interpret and respond to the world through an intersectional lens. We realize the conditions impacting the lives of those who exist on the edges of the margins are multiple, simultaneous, domineering, discriminatory, and oppressive. And we know that if we are to collectively win in our quest to remake a just world, we cannot solve problems with single-variable solutions.

Our work is always necessary, perhaps never more so than now.

We recognize that safety is an illusion mostly afforded to the least oppressed in society, and we also understand this moment to be a state of emergency. A new state of emergency for some, namely white folks shocked at the racist, sexist, xenophobic, anti-Semitic, Islamophobic, homophobic, transphobic, ableist, and misogynist behaviors of other white people, and an ongoing yet different and heightened state of emergency for many others, namely those all too familiar with the everydayness of anti-Black violence and genocide against Indigenous peoples.

The 2016 presidential election has deepened and revealed immense fissures in our social fabric along lines of race, gender, class, sexuality, citizenship status, and ability. Though the people voted for Hillary Rodham Clinton by a wide margin [1], the slave-state holdover Electoral College [2] is poised to elect Donald J. Trump as President of the United States. Trump is an avowed and unapologetic racist, xenophobe, misogynist, and sexual predator whose campaign drew heavily upon vocal support from white nationalists while the Republican Party stood idly by. Indeed, their actions of recent years paved the way for a Trump presidency.

We recognize that our democracy has long been compromised by capitalism, neoliberalism, militarization, and special interests, and has been, since the founding of our nation, interwoven with white supremacy and imperialism. The U.S. is a nation of brutal-made-to-be-normalized violence. On this front, Trump’s election is nothing new. Nor are the fissures revealed by the election. What is new is Trump’s blatant disregard for democratic process, his unabashed white supremacy, his vocal misogyny, and his contempt for any semblance of human rights and social justice. He thus provides unrestrained authority and resources to violence of white supremacy and genocide.

Donald Trump is interested in Donald Trump, Inc. Full stop. He is interested in running our nation only to the degree that it is profitable and fun for him and his dynastic family, or beneficial for his supporters. Under a Trump presidency, some folks, especially rich old white men and neo-Nazis, will make out like bandits along with the many white educated women who voted to continue to protect their whiteness at the expense of communities of color and gender justice [3]. Others, including

white working class and rural people who voted for Trump and many others who did not vote for Trump, will not be helped at all. Indeed, they will be harmed, even killed, as a result of Trump policies.

To be clear, mainstream media has been complicit in Trump's ascendance to power, propelling him into the public eye over and over again, with little to no critical reflection. They cut the Donald all manner of slack, while repeatedly subjecting Hillary Clinton to so many double-standards that we lost track. The unqualified wealthy white guy from the white-collar criminal class got a pass, yet again, while the super-qualified white woman had to contort herself into knots to please everyone from the Far Right to the Far Left and points in between. Left-wing men and many feminists of all races threw her under the bus, too, and we need to name this.

We also need to ask why. Did Clinton lose grounding because she is rigorously committed to neoliberal policies and establishmentarian politics? Did she lose favor because of the sedimentary nature of patriarchy and misogyny? Or, was her loss a result of a confluence of factors still to be assessed? Black women were Clinton's strongest voting bloc [4]. Ninety-four percent of the Black women who voted in the 2016 elections voted for Clinton. To be clear, many Black women voters had critiques and concerns about Hillary Clinton, and were committed to holding an envisioned Clinton administration accountable. We are not in a moment of moral crisis, though we do face moral choices [5]; rather, this election exposes the lies and contradictions of white supremacy, and our varied and unequal places within it.

With respect to the media, buffoonish Donald was the story. And so, he became the story. But in this grim tale, there is no happy ending, except perhaps for the Trump family enterprise. Donald J. Trump is bolstered by pillars of white rage and resentment, and is soon to be in control of all three branches of government. And he is not, as some would have it, like the drunk uncle at Thanksgiving who says crazy things but you think "means well." He does not mean well; he is just plain mean. He is also dangerous, and much smarter than his hair and tweets would suggest. Let us also consider the dangerously violent players he is surrounding himself with and putting into power, be it his cabinet or Russia and its role in our current state of emergency.

It is entirely possible that this election cycle and its aftermath is the last gasp of patriarchal capitalist white supremacy. It is equally possible that this is misogynistic white nationalism digging its heels in for the long haul. In either case, vigilance and preparedness are key. How does one survive a state of emergency? We need to ask those who have been there before. Ours will not be the first "autocracy" [6] nor the first dictatorship nor the first power-grab in history; we are not exceptional in this. Fascism and evil wear many faces.

Does this sound alarmist? It should.

The Feminist Wire is fundamentally committed to intersectional truth-telling. We are uncompromising in this, and we will name the damage. We are not the mainstream media. We refuse, here and now and through the next many years, to normalize a Trump presidency. We will not sweep under the rug the President-Elect's racism, misogyny, Islamophobia, or xenophobia, even as we understand the inherent violence of the pre-existing neoliberal order, nor will we participate in any effort to "work with" the administration, to "give him a chance," or any of the inane things we have heard recently. We know this man; like any abuser, he has been revealing himself to us for months now. To neither recognize nor act on the danger he and his administration presents is to be complicit. We will continue to hold each other, the U.S. state, and you accountable to the genocidal violence of white supremacy and its current unfettered authority.

In the words of Sonia Sanchez [7] and Sweet Honey in the Rock [8], "We are going to stay on the

battlefield.”

The Feminist Wire, November 30, 2016

P.S.

* <http://www.thefeministwire.com/2016/11/the-feminist-wire-statement-on-election/>

Footnotes

[1] <http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2016/11/28/hillary-clintons-popular-vote-lead-increases-to-more-than-two-million-votes/>

[2] http://www.slate.com/blogs/xx_factor/2016/11/11/the_electoral_college_is_an_instrument_of_white_supremacy_and_sexism.html?wpsrc=sh_all_mob_fb_ru

[3] <http://www.salon.com/2016/11/26/the-colorblind-sisterhood-fantasy-black-women-voted-for-white-women-and-white-women-voted-for-themselves/>

[4] https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/black-women--hillary-clintons-most-reliable-voting-block--look-beyond-defeat/2016/11/12/86d9182a-a845-11e6-ba59-a7d93165c6d4_story.html?utm_term=.66ae48f838a3

[5] <http://www.nybooks.com/daily/2016/11/27/trump-realism-vs-moral-politics-choice-we-face/>

[6] <http://www.nybooks.com/daily/2016/11/10/trump-election-autocracy-rules-for-survival/>

[7] <http://soniasanchez.net>

[8] <http://sweethoneyintherock.org>