

## How to Be a Good Ally: A Guide to Dismantling Colorblindness, White Normativity, and Everyday Racism without Erasing Oppressed Voices

### Presenter

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### Session

- [Poster Session 1](#)
- Commons West
- Easel #38
- 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM

In light of recent events in Ferguson, MO and in the larger context of the Black Lives Matter Movement increasingly coming to the attention of mainstream society, I have encountered many friends, colleagues, and peers who feel too paralyzed to talk about racial and gender inequality, or who engage in conversations about these subjects in problematic ways. The question arises: how does one speak up and speak out against discrimination when one does not belong to groups that experience those oppressions? How does one speak without contributing to the erasure of oppressed voices? I argue that while speaking for others may contribute to erasure, it is far worse not to speak up at all, and there are more effective ways to be an ally. Using salient texts from Critical Race Theory and Feminist Theory, as well as social justice and feminist media outlets run by Women of Color (such as Everyday Feminism, Black Girl Dangerous, and Urban Cusp), I have fashioned a theoretical toolkit to disclose both contexts in which speaking out is or is not appropriate and how one might speak out against oppressions in conscious and responsible ways. Using these texts as a critical framework, I also analyze and provide potential responses to common mistakes (including discursive imperialism and microaggressions) that even well-meaning allies can make. Ultimately, my project seeks to interrogate colorblindness, facilitate respectful interactions when addressing systematic oppression, and encourage those in dominant social groups to venture outside spheres of privilege to engage thoughtfully in conversations with members of oppressed groups.