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## Marching for Change: Intersectional Coalition Building, Counter Voices, and Collective Action at the U.S. Women's March on Washington and Beyond

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Before attending the U.S. Women's March on Washington planned for the day after the presidential inauguration, I heard from so many women that they were planning to travel to the Women's March on Washington. They said they were marching for their daughters, for their sons, for their mothers and grandmothers, for sisters and brothers, for themselves, for people of color, for LGBTQIA family members, for immigrants, for all women, and for humanity. They believed that standing together in collective resistance against a new government that threatened: women's rights, affordable healthcare, students' rights, elder care, immigrant rights, women's access to healthcare (through organizations like Planned Parenthood), marriage equality, LGBTQIA rights, public education, and human rights – would make a difference.

The power of collective action caught like wild fire across cities and towns in America embodying Martin Luther King Jr.'s call to action in his "Letter from Birmingham Jail," in which he states, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere" (King, 1963). This cultural phenomenon was similarly reflected in social media feeds that filled with social justice quotations from prominent artists, writers, and activists like Lutheran Minister Martin Niemöller. His lecture, "First They Came for the Socialists," (Niemöller) criticizes the complicity of the German people in general and Protestant leaders in particular during the Holocaust in Nazi Germany. The last line "Then they came for me – and there was no one left to speak for me" (Niemöller) seemed to go viral in social media feeds after the presidential election, a harbinger of the very real consequences of civic inaction and complicity. However, Social media provided a space for resistance – connecting counter voices, building momentum for action, and serving as the primary organizing tool for bringing women to Washington from all parts of the country.

Women smiled when they told me their travel plans – how they were traveling on buses, in cars, by train, and on planes like freedom riders with sisters, aunts, cousins, neighbors, friends

and strangers to demonstrate their support for women's rights as human rights. On January 21, 2017 the Women's March on Washington became a moment of undeniable cultural tension, an outward symbol of growing dissent and resistance among women and allies that crossed boundaries of race, class, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender, sexuality and ability. While words like solidarity have been hard to come by in recent political periods, the women and allies who marched on Washington embodied a palpable solidarity that has been vividly depicted on mainstream media outlets and social media platforms across the country and around the world.

After taking the Metro into DC from Silver Springs, Maryland, my friends and I read the politics of difference on brightly colored signs waving at us as we climbed out of the Judiciary Square Metro station. We merged into voluminous throngs of people marching toward the Washington Mall. Many people smiled kindly, and we shared nods of mutual respect and appreciation for our visible and invisible differences. As we wound our way through the gardens of the Natural History Museum there was a tight shrub line and strangers held back the branches for each other. When we finally trotted out onto the Washington Mall, we were met by a chanting sea of humanity. We stood in awe, reverence, and joy gawking at the pink hats, neon posters, and clever signs. The diversity and strength of the crowd ran through us like a shock wave, and we felt keenly the power of our collective resistance.

### **Building Coalitions across Difference**

In a guest post appearing just after the Women's March in *Contexts* (a publication of the American Sociology Association) University of Maryland Sociologist Dana Fischer discusses the difficulties of bringing together such a diverse array of people, viewpoints and interest groups. Fisher notes, "The challenge of the Women's March is that it mobilized people from across a broad range of progressive issues. Just look at its list of partners, which represented women's

rights, immigration rights, LGBTQ rights, racial justice, and environmental protection, among many others” (Fisher 2017). Fisher underscores the power and the complexity underpinning the intersectional demonstration that became The Women’s March on Washington. Understanding that the strength of the march resides in the diversity of people and issues united in resistance while also recognizing that these diverse interests, positionalities and perspectives could potentially keep participants siloed and segregated thereby threatening the power of the demonstration is critical to catalyzing the political momentum from The Women’s March on Washington and building a larger social movement. While it is also clear that the global impact of women’s marches around the world and across the U.S. symbolize a deeper coalition of resistance, the linchpin for creating a sustainable movement resides in the ability of organizers to foster and build coalitions across these issues to ensure that participants and social change agents remain focused on a shared vision of resistance and action. This means that individual marchers within constituent groups must be able to see themselves and their concerns as part of the larger social movement.

Although galvanizing a unified social movement across coalitions of diverse interest groups will most certainly not come easy, individual lived accounts from The Women’s March on Washington overwhelmingly express that unity, solidarity and coalition building prevailed at the march through visible sights, signs, and sounds. Fisher writes, “Walking through the crowd in Washington, DC on Saturday, I witnessed the diversity of the progressive movement in America first hand. Women in hijab chanted; women, men and children in pink pussy hats yelled; men and women held handmade signs in drag; and families came out in Black Lives Matter T-shirts” (Fisher 2017). Fisher’s lived account of the protest provides a compelling audio-visual description of the solidarity, unity, and collective resistance from The Women’s March on

Washington. Fisher explains the myriad of ways in which people cross-pollinated one another's causes, reinforced the points of each other's issues, and re-articulated a shared need for social justice for all across race, class, gender, sexuality, religion, ethnic and other lines.

In truth the visual mosaic created by the march itself could not have been more powerful if it had been staged for television. The scope and size of the march and the diversity of the demographic composition of the marchers provided at once a wide-angle lens of all those who marched and cut-away side view of all those whom they represented. Photos from the march offer a gritty core sample of American cultural identities in terms of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, ethnicity and religion with activists standing shoulder to shoulder in coalition against misogyny, heterosexism, white supremacy, xenophobia, and the very real threat to recognizing women's rights as human rights. However, Fisher maintains, "Channeling the momentum of the Women's March means appealing to participants' central issues—the ones that got them off the sofa and into the streets—and motivating them to stay engaged by identifying opportunities to participate in actions that target the initiatives of the Trump Administration. It will not be a one-size-fits-all strategy" (Fisher 2017). Fisher's assertion remains a sore spot and something of a sticking point in terms of developing a unified social movement since the Women's March on Washington and its sister marches across the country and around the world. As Cultural Studies Practitioner Tracy McLoone points out: "If you can't come to a compromise between like-minded or sort of like-minded people it's going to be hard to counter the forces that you want to counter." McLoone further explains that although attending the Women's March on Washington may have been a unifying action, she is not convinced that community organizers, interest groups, march attendees, or political organizers have figured out solid strategies for making real political change (interview 5/4/17).

While McLoone's critique focuses on the dearth of organized and strategic action after the Women's March on Washington and indeed after global Women's Marches held around the world and in many cities across the U.S., there is no denying the powerful and visible unity and diversity of the participants who rallied and marched. Dr. Jennifer Martin's survey of U.S. Women's March Participants reveals the genuine diversity of those who marched: women comprised 91% of the crowd, 25% of marchers identified as people of color, 17.9% of the crowd identified as LGBTQ while 4.8% identified their sexuality as other. Interestingly 76% of marchers noted their party affiliation as Democrat while 14% indicated party affiliation as Independent. Additionally, 65% of protesters noted that they had engaged in women's and/or gender activism prior to the Women's March, and 99% of marchers who responded to the survey indicated their plans to continue engaging in women's and gender related activism in the future.

**Research conducted by Dr. Jennifer Martin  
University of Mount Union**

<b>W O M E N S  M A R C H  2 0 1 7</b>	<b><u>Gender:</u></b>	<b><u>Sexual Orientation:</u></b>
	Male: 5.9 % Female: 91.8 % "Other": 2.3 %	Straight: 77.3 % LGBTQ+: 17.9 % "Other": 4.8 %
	<b><u>Gender:</u></b>	<b><u>Political Party Identification:</u></b>
	White: 75.2 % African-American: 0.8 % "Other": 24 %	Democrat: 76.3 % Independent: 13.9 % Republican: 0.9 % "Other": 8.9 %
	<b><u>Plan to engage in other forms of activism related to women's/gender issues in the future?</u></b>	<b><u>Engaged in activism related to women's/gender issues before today?</u></b>
	Yes: 98.7 % No: 1.3 %	Yes: 64.3 % No: 35.7 %
	<b><u>2016 presidential campaign:</u></b>	<b><u>Marched in Washington:</u> 45.5 %</b>
	Much more politically active: 49.1 % Somewhat more active: 29.7 % Slightly more active: 11.3 % No more and no less active: 9.7 % Much less active: 0.3 %	<b><u>Marched in another city:</u> 55.5 %</b>
		<b><u>Popular Cities:</u></b> Cleveland, South Bend, NYC, Delhi, Madison, Raleigh, St. Paul, and Topeka

While the survey results are not complete yet, Martin's preliminary results indicate the very real resistance of people across categories of difference including: race, sex, gender, sexuality and political affiliation. They also explain that people who showed up for the march are not one time marchers, but rather identify themselves as change agents. Interestingly, blog posts by a diverse pool of women reinforce this concept that women marched for very different reasons, but felt a sense of shared social responsibility as they marched not only for themselves but for other women.

For example, Sister Colleen Gibson, a nun of St. Joseph of Philadelphia, submitted a blog post to the *Global Sisters Report: A Project of the National Catholic Reporter* in which she notes:

I marched for the uninsured woman I accompanied through treatment for breast cancer, which could have been caught by access to preventative care. I marched for the asylum-seeking family my sisters welcomed into their convent so that they would have a home as they tried to find safety and welcome in a new land. I marched for the children in our schools who don't know where their next meal will come from after they go home. I marched to defend the arts which have transformed my life. I marched in honor of all the strong women who've formed me and have given me the gift of faith. I marched for my sisters who couldn't; for the sister who days before the march tucked a 10-dollar bill in my pocket to help pay for my transportation because she knew she physically wouldn't have been able to march that long. (Gibson 2017)

Indeed, Sister Colleen explains that she marched as extension of those in need, and although many conservatives may have viewed the Women's March as a pro-choice rally, many Catholic sisters marched for other reasons. Instead of focusing on the polarizing positions of pro-life and pro-choice, Sister Colleen chooses to connect with women's rights and declares, "Women deserve equal rights. We deserve a world where all people have access to healthcare; where the water we drink is safe; where race isn't a qualifying or disqualifying attribute; where children can be brought up in loving families; where the press is free to report; where facts matter and righteousness and compassion are the principles we live by" (Gibson 2017).

## Cultivating Intersectional Counter Voices

Similarly Brenda Gonzalez Ricards, California Regional Director, for the National Council of La Raza posted in the La Raza Blog:

What I found most moving, was the intersection of issues championed by both the speakers of the rally and displayed in the signs of participants. I saw non-Black participants with signs that said “Black Lives Matter;” I saw cis-women advocating for the trans community; I saw Catholic nuns support Muslims; I saw faces of all colors with tears in their eyes after hearing Sophie Cruz’s uplifting and powerful message to children fearing deportation. This outpouring of support across issues was what I found most powerful. It is this building of coalitions across issues that makes me optimistic for the future and proud that NCLR was an official partner. (Ricards 2017)

Brenda Gonzalez Ricards’s account of the intersectional nature of the march dovetails with statements by many young Latinxs which were included in Andrea Gompf’s *Remezcla* blogpost titled “What the Women’s March on Washington Meant For Young Latinxs” (Gompf 2017).

Here Brenda Perez, Yadira Molina, and Jessica Torres explain why they marched and what the march meant to them in terms of their own efficacy, value, and position in U.S. culture:

Brenda Perez, 19, exclaims:

I’m here to support women and everything against Trump. Our family is from Mexico, so his presidency really affects us all. Being a young Latina woman today, there’s a lot of emotions. With the presidency, you start to feel like the country’s against you – but then coming out to this march you see that many people are with us and for the community. And you start to feel like part of the U.S. again. (posted in Gompf 2017)

Yadira Molina, 24 states:

I am the daughter of an immigrant, first generation to go to college and to get a Master’s degree. I’m here [to advocate] for abortion rights. My mother had an abortion when she was really young, right after she had me, and it’s something that she really struggles with... so, thinking of her, thinking of all the strong women I’ve been surrounded by and even the strong men who have supported me, being out here and seeing those same types of people all come together has been very encouraging. (posted in Gompf 2017)

Jessica Torres 33, declares:

I had such a serious reaction, an almost physical reaction to the election results. I would have felt terrible if I didn’t come out here and lend my voice to all these amazing voices



out here today. The other side of this sign says ‘Conseguir puentes en lugar de muros.’ [Building Bridges Instead of Walls] You know, as many people have said here, we’re not protesting what we’re against, but more what we’re for. And we’re for inclusivity, we’re for diversity. And we have to counter what’s in the White House right now, we have to be that counter voice. (posted in Gompf 2017)

What Torres, Molina, and Perez are all focused on is moving forward with allies to continue to fight for human rights for Latinxs, for immigrants, for people of color. Although Molina specifically mentions her mother’s own personal struggle with abortion in the U.S., all three women mention the importance of community building and collective resistance.

Resisting through a growing coalition of counter voices now seems critical to understanding the impacts that the Women’s March has had on participants and the broader protest culture in the United States. As Cultural Studies practitioner Katy Razzano notes, “Although there is not enough evidence for a causal link, it’s clear that Women’s March set the tone for the marches that came after like The March for Science (April 22), The Climate March (April 29), Tax March (April 15), May Day (International Worker’s Day, May 12)” (interview 5/9/17). The counter voices of Perez, Molina, Torres, resonate with Gompf’s lived account reinforcing the message of intersectional solidarity, coalition building, and collective resistance.

Gompf notes:

On one of the largest protest days in U.S. history, I saw men, women and children of all races, ages, ethnicities and orientations flooding the streets of D.C. There were at least half a million of us, sharing space respectfully, delighting one another with innumerable creative signs, slogan t-shirts, props and costumes. There were advocates for equal pay, climate change action, Black Lives, reproductive rights, disability rights, health care access, immigration reform, LGBTQ rights, criminal justice reform and Native land rights. (Gompf 2017)

However Gompf expresses concern stating that ...“it remains to be seen how this upsurge of civic mobilization will get channeled into continued, meaningful action. The march gave many hope that a broad-based coalition of marginalized communities and middle class white women,

united under an intersectional platform, could be possible. But others expressed doubt about what this solidarity will mean moving forward” (Gompf, 2017). Gompf’s question of what this solidarity will mean in terms of an intersectional platform remains a space for contestation for significant numbers of women of color who chose not to attend the Women’s March on Washington.

### **Resisting Whitewashed Solidarity**

In an Op-Ed piece appearing in *COLORLINES*, Jamilah Lemieux explains some of the problematic aspects of the Women’s March on Washington. First the original name of the march “million women march” appeared as an attempt to co-opt the energy of the 1995 Million Man March and the 1997 Million Woman March organized by Minister Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam. Secondly, there is the documentable problem that 53% of white women voted for Trump. Finally, LeMieux points to the fact that women of color co-chairs had to rename and take over the march to move it in the right direction. LeMieux states, “I’m really tired of Black and Brown women routinely being tasked with fixing White folks’ messes. I’m tired of being the moral compass of the United States.” (LeMieux, 2017). What LeMieux articulates is a hard-nosed critique of white women’s privilege (what Simone de Beauvoir once described as white ruling class women’s complicity with the oppressor) that many believe led to the current election outcome. Additionally, this schism has been re-articulated through media coverage of three Women’s March on Washington signs which read as follows: 1) Don’t forget white women voted for Trump; 2) Being scared since 2016 is a privilege; and 3) I’ll see you nice white ladies at the next #BlackLivesMatter March right? These signs and their images provide a distinct and important context for understanding LeMieux’s critique – that white women’s privilege pervaded the Women’s March on Washington. Collier Meyerson, a reporter for *Fusion*, explains:

Take for example, [this image] “Don’t forget white women voted for Trump.” A black woman stands in the foreground, while white women in pink hats stand behind her. The sign is correct, 53% of white women voted for President Trump, while 94% of black women voted for Hillary Clinton.

Another sign, “Being scared since 2016 is a privilege,” is both an acknowledgement that black and brown women have been afraid in this country since its inception and a critique of some white women who only began to mobilize after Trump's election.

I’ll see you nice white ladies at the next #blacklivesmatter march right?” reads the sign held up by actor Amir Talai, which brings up a similar point: if the women’s march was meant to be for all women, then it only makes sense white women would show up for black women at Black Lives Matter marches too. (Meyerson 2017)

Meyerson concludes:

These viral signs reveal deep divisions in the midst of a march meant to unify. And this fight is nothing new—race has always played a contentious role in feminism. Though they were always there, black and brown women have been sidelined in the histories of the suffrage and the women’s liberation movements. (Meyerson 2017)

Certainly, it is important to acknowledge the critique of Lemieux that white privilege remains an ongoing obstacle in intersectional coalition building and political activism that must be named and addressed. As Meyerson points out, we must recognize the dissent represented by the images and signs pointing to white women’s failure to show-up for their sisters of color and the historical marginalization of women of color in suffrage and women’s liberation movements. In keeping with these critiques, we cannot afford to proffer another version of whitewashed solidarity, but rather we have to do the hard work of making sure all counter voices have an opportunity to be heard and that all people within this movement of collective resistance have a place at the table to develop coalitions for political change.

### **Cultivating an Intersectional Feminist Movement**

This is perhaps no better evidenced than through the blog post of Ieasha Prime, a leading Muslim educator and Executive Director of Barakah. Prime notes in her April 4 blog post appearing in *Sapelo Square*, an online resource for Black Muslims:

Although as Black Muslim women we may not be fighting for the same things as White and Latina American women, we often have a common enemy; therefore, we are fighting against some of the same things. I would be remiss if I did not stand up and speak out against the culture of violence and epidemic against the vulnerabilities of women in general and Black Muslim women in particular. Black Muslim women are disproportionately affected by the U.S. government's policies on women's issues, health care, education, housing and immigration. (Prime 2017)

Here, Prime provides a clear articulation of how intersectional feminism operates within a collective and progressive movement to produce a coalition politics of social justice. Prime identifies key differences in identity markers in the relationship to power and systems of oppression among the constituencies of marchers while underscoring the importance of holding fast to a common goal of resistance. Jenée Desmond-Harris supports Primes' analysis in a recent article appearing in *Vox* where she writes, "To understand the Women's March on Washington, you need to understand intersectional feminism...it's much bigger than check your privilege." (Desmond-Harris 2017). Desmond-Harris explains the importance of intersectional feminism in constituting an inclusive movement for political change. She also recognizes that engaging in conversations about power and privilege as they relate to race, class, gender, sexuality and other identity markers is not an easy undertaking, but Desmond-Harris argues that social media sites connected to the Women's March on Washington have opened up space for different voices to be heard (Desmond-Harris 2017). These conversations continue to push the movement of collective resistance forward, and there can be no doubt that intersectional feminism going mainstream (appearing in *Vox*) represents a significant ripple in the water of social change.

It is perhaps even more significant that Desmond-Harris, Prime, Fisher, Gibson, Ricards, Gompf, and in fact most feminist bloggers articulate the importance of recognizing not only the individual reasons why women marched on Washington, but understanding the structural reasons for why so many women and allies marched on Washington. In this way, they explain to readers

that women and allies marched in response to structural oppression: white supremacy, capitalism, heterosexism, and patriarchy – and the very real consequences of oppression in their everyday lives. In fact, the Facebook page for the Women’s March invited “ALL women, femme, trans, gender non-conforming and feminist others” to march on Washington. Marchers showed up and respected the differences in their relationships to power and oppression and ardently embraced the march as a moment of coalition building, of mutual understanding and shared social responsibility for all who rallied and actively resisted. While it may be fair to say that it is unclear precisely where this resistance is going in terms of a formalized political movement, it is also fair to say that what happened at the march did not stay at the march. A sense of solidarity, collective resistance, and community prevailed at the Women’s March on Washington and started a ripple in the water that was felt around the globe. As Cultural Studies practitioner Ellen Gorman commented, “Some women say that marching doesn’t do that much good, but I disagree” (interview 5/18/17). Gorman suggests that even people who watched the March on television have been changed by it and are willing to take action like calling their congressional representatives or attending town hall meetings because the march made taking political action seem more legitimate.

A self-proclaimed independent, Michael Tworek writes in his blog post about the Women’s March on Washington:

...what I saw was neither dishonest nor disingenuous. This diversity of motives is a cause for celebration and action, not criticism and cynicism. Along Independence Avenue, I marched with families of all types strolling hand in hand with their children. I saw fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, aunts and nieces. I noticed Catholic nuns walking side by side with transgender persons for social justice and respect. I saw scores of men, young and old, chanting “her body, her choice” of their own prompting...A little while later, a Muslim woman with a headscarf holding a sign with “This is an Intersectional Feminist Revolution” on it. She told me what intersectional feminism meant to her. Proud to be an American, she explained to those around her why she and the women in her family were at greater risk in the United States today than before... But near the

Washington Monument, I saw white, Hispanic, and Asian men and women chanting “Black Lives Matter.” A middle-aged African-American woman responded enthusiastically: “Thank you! Yes, we do!” (Tworek 2017)

Tworek’s lived account of the Women’s March further reinforces the need for an intersectional feminist approach to collective resistance that moves beyond deconstructionist models of critical theory. In her recent book, *Writing beyond Race: Living Theory and Practice*, bell hooks articulates a theory of radical action of love that might just help get us there. hooks points out:

If we were to gather all of the cultural criticism and critical theory on the subject of white supremacy, whiteness, race, and racism in this huge body of work, we would find little or no focus on love. Yet all our deconstructive explanatory theory is meaningless if it is not rooted in the recognition that the most fundamental challenge to domination is the choice to love. Love as a way of life makes it possible for us all to live humanely within a culture of domination as we work for change. The radical nature of love is that it is profoundly democratic. Irrespective of our status and station in life we can choose love; we can choose to leave dominator thinking behind (199).

While some academics may eschew this approach sighting it as undertheorized and a sign of weakness, I contend that what hooks speaks to is a way to move from purely deconstruction to a praxis of transformative deconstruction and coalition building through collective resistance and lived experience. For me the Women’s March on Washington served as a model for hook’s kind of radical political action. This model does not disavow the need for critical theory nor critique-al approaches to culture, but rather creates a space for the transformative action of radical love through coalition building as a next step. After reading and hearing so many lived accounts of resistance and of transcendent and powerful experiences of marchers whose collective voices rang out in solidarity, I am convinced that hook’s praxis of radical love as a transformative action was actively deployed at the Women’s March on Washington. However, for me this does not mean the work is over, but rather it means that the long road of dismantling domination and oppression remain at the heart of our ongoing struggle as we continue to lift up our counter voices.

## **Making Change**

In fact, counter voices are at the fore of 2018 midterm elections in U.S. House races and gubernatorial elections. A press release from The Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers-New Brunswick indicates that “For the first time, 11 women have been nominated for gubernatorial races in a single election year, while at least 185 women have won nominations in U.S. House races” (Record Number). According to CAWP Director, Debbie Walsh, more than twice as many women filed as gubernatorial candidates in 2018 than in the prior record year 1994 (Record Number). While the Women’s March on Washington is not the only factor in the dramatic increase in women’s candidacy, convening such a large group of women for the purposes of political change enabled D.C. based NGOs to register large numbers of women in in political candidacy workshops and activist training sessions. Barbara Burrell notes, “EMILY’S List, which supports pro-choice Democratic women candidates, reported 500 women attended its candidate training workshop the day after the march (Burrell 2018). There can be no doubt that the march catalyzed participants to action, but perhaps more importantly it gave them a forum for connecting with other women to get involved and organize for change.

In an article for *Vox*, Anna North explains how Women’s March organizers, Tamika Mallory, Linda Sarsour, Carmen Perez, and Bob Bland kept moving forward with events, trainings, and workshops focused on political engagement at all levels. North maintains, “Over the past year, the march has become a crucial hub for left-wing organizations, and a potent political force for 2018” (North 2018). Increases in women’s candidacy across the country have skyrocketed as more than 26,000 women have reached out to EMILY’s List (North 2018) and other activist organizations report dramatic increases in trainings and workshops after the march.

In particular, Planned Parenthood held a workshop after the march drawing 2,000 activists trained to build support and fight against termination of federal funding for the organization (Burrell 2018). What seems clear is that the Women's March on Washington created a powerful space for convening women, for making connections and for building coalitions. North's conception that the march served as a hub for political change explains the framework of political organizing in which the march serves as the center of the wheel for organizing, while NGO's and local activists represent the spokes of the wheel reaching out into local communities to create regional and national change. Furthermore North contends, "The Women's March has helped women channel their post-election energy into political action" (North 2018). What North underscores is the real work of the U.S. Women's March in directing women's energy into organized political action for change.

This directed action for change is similarly reflected in the 2018 Power to the Polls campaign, a nationwide voter registration drive targeting first-timers in swing states ahead of the midterms, developed by the U.S. Women's March organizers (Alter 2018). In a *Time Magazine* article titled "It's a Women's Wave Coming.' The Women's March Is Turning into a True Political Force," Charlotte Alter explains how the political momentum from the U.S. Women's March on Washington contributed to the construction of a much larger social movement bolstered by ongoing organizing, marching, and rallying one year later. Alter argues, "This year's anniversary March [2018] was a celebration of everything the women's movement has done in the last year, from organizing calls to Congress to coalescing around the #MeToo campaign" (Alter 2018). Similarly North explains, "This year's voter registration drive is emblematic of the march's growth from a single protest into a force in electoral politics" (North 2018). What both North and Alter point to is the power of the U.S. Women's March on



Washington to bring women and allies together, to build coalitions across differences including historically marginalized and underrepresented groups such as people of color, women, LGBTQIA members, undocumented workers, and many others, to raise counter voices through collective action, and to organize in order to guard against complicity or silence by refusing to be siloed or segregated within the walls of systematic oppression. Like North and Alter, we can follow the threads of coalition building and collective action from the U.S. Women's March on Washington through to the creation of a tapestry of political actions including: large scale enrollments at trainings for Planned Parenthood and EMILY's List, record breaking numbers of women gubernatorial candidates winning nomination, wide-spread citizen engagement in #MeToo events, dialogues, and forums, and broad-based support for voter registration through the #PowerToThePolls campaign. This tapestry is reflective of a colorful mosaic spun from intersectional coalitions and collective resistance as seen in the images of the U.S. Women's March on Washington.

What we cannot afford to lose sight of this shared vision of social justice moving against systems of structural oppression: white supremacy, capitalism, heterosexism, and patriarchy – and the very real consequences of oppression in the everyday lives of women. We must hold onto what bell hooks names as the radical and transformative power of love to dismantle these systems of oppression. We must live out the praxis that is called for by the sign carried by Jessica Torres at the march that reads 'Conseguir puentes en lugar de muros' [Building Bridges Instead of Walls] (posted in Gompf 2017). Only by building bridges across our differences can we make real political change, and collectively move against misogyny, heterosexism, white supremacy, xenophobia, and the very real threat to recognizing women's rights as human rights. Only then can we truly move toward social justice for all.

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