

Do You Really Wanna Know the Truth?

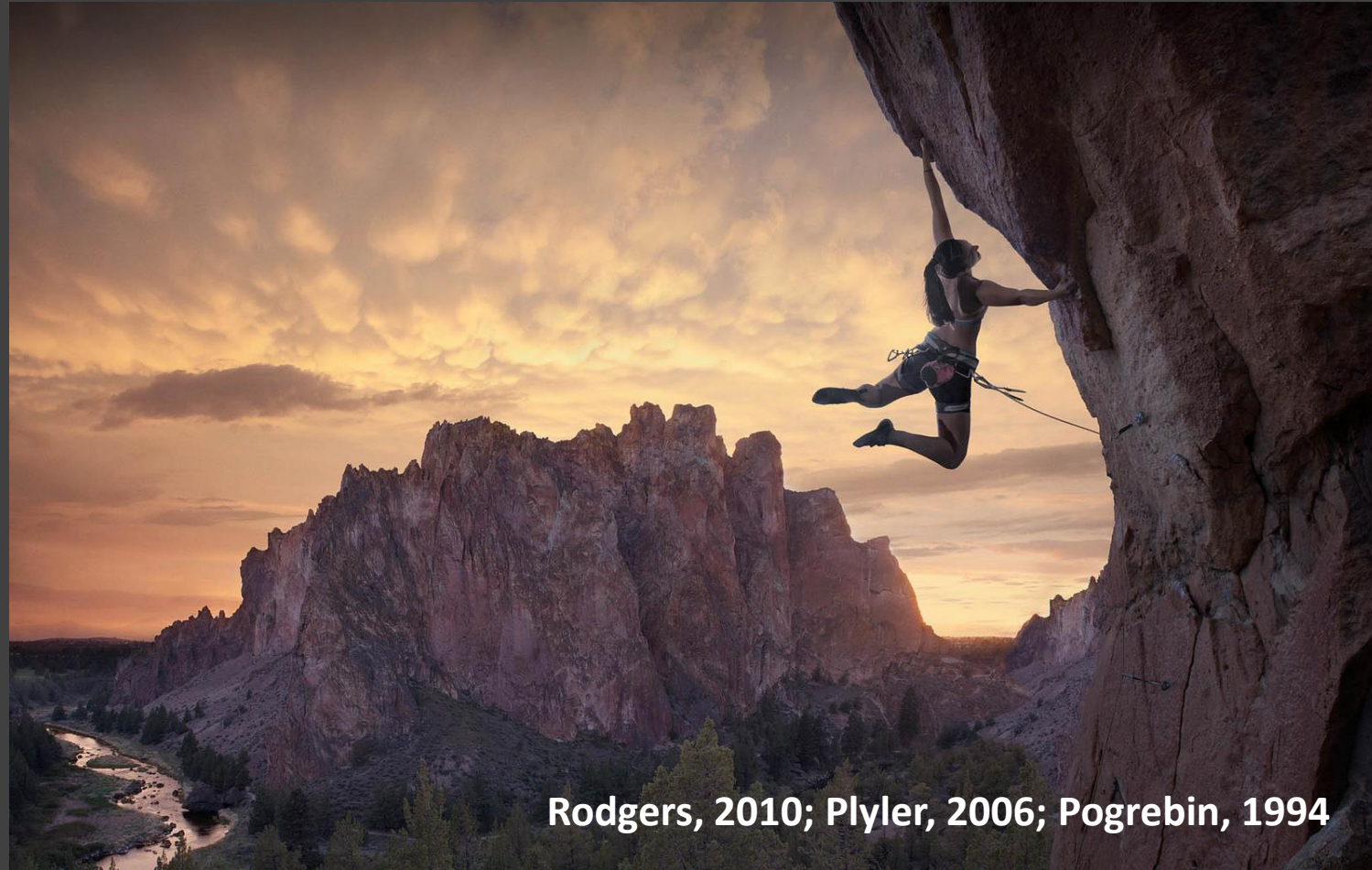
OVERCOMING RACISM CONFERENCE

11/16/2019

Agenda

- Privilege and Burnout
- Racist Attitudes in Activism
- Implications for Racial Justice Movements
- What Would You Do?

Stress Debilitates Activism



Rodgers, 2010; Plyler, 2006; Pogrebin, 1994

Privilege and Burnout

NOT EQUITABLE

Stress Magnified by Intersectionality



Bernal, 2006; Norwood, 2013; Davenport et al., 2011; Jacob and Taylor, 2011, Gorsky, 2019

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White Activists a Primary Cause of Burnout



Gorsky, 2019

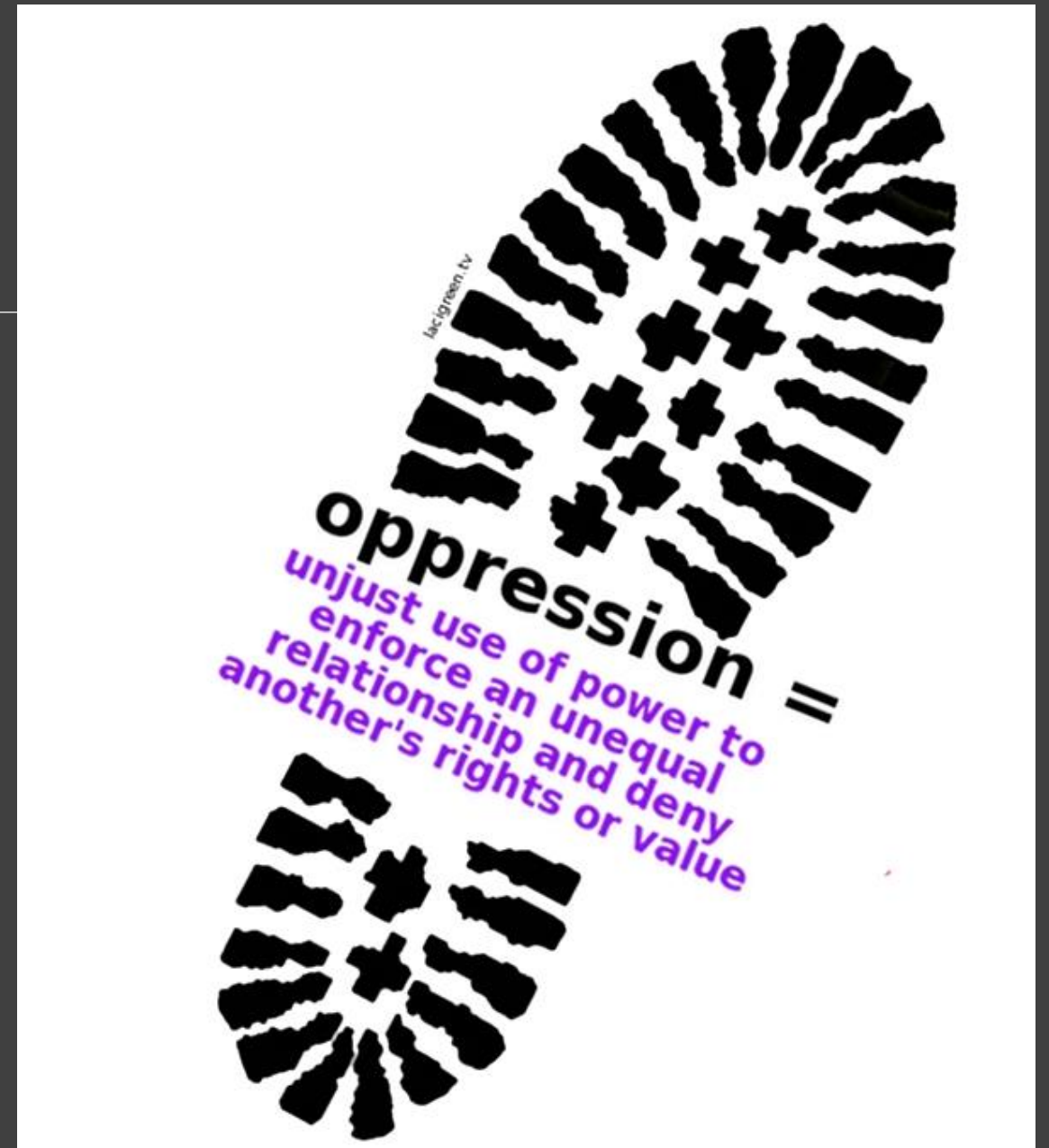
Racist Attitudes in Activism

BURNING FROM WITHIN

Factors Observed

1. Racist views
2. Marginalizing Work of BIPOC
3. Unwilling to Act
4. Exhibiting White Fragility, and
5. Taking credit for BIPOC racial justice work and ideas.

Gorsky and Erakat, 2019



1. Racist Views

“... my [white] allies aren’t really the allies I thought they were ... As an educator I know everyone is developing from wherever they are ... But I feel like if we’re colleagues you should at the very least listen to what I’m saying. At least try to understand where I’m coming from. So my burnout comes from being everyone’s teacher, including people I think should know better.”

2. Marginalizing BIPOC Work

White activists asked BIPOC to swallow their emotions; it felt like a rejection of the activists themselves and a dismissal of their experiences withstanding racism. One lamented how “tiring” it becomes when “well-intentioned, progressive [white] people who think they are lovers of justice” consistently marginalize our emotional responses to racism.

3. Unwilling to Act

They mistook cross-racial dialogue and conversations about racism as activism, rarely getting around to acting on what they learned. One explained, “It was more a case of [white activists] wanting to talk about things but do nothing ... Being aware is one thing, but what is going to be different? .. What are the outcomes to this awareness?”

4. Exhibiting White Fragility

“I have been . . . told that people don’t like my attitude, that I’m too aggressive . . . Right now stating something clearly in a declarative way would be perceived [by white activists] as aggressive. So not only do I have to try to tell the truth about injustice in the world and the injustice in which we operate as a movement, but I also have to make other people feel good about it.”

5. Taking Credit for Work and Ideas of BIPOC

“If we are sitting around the table . . . and I have a suggestion . . . and I’ve been thinking about it, I’ve been sharing it, and it’s gone and ignored. And then a white colleague of mine will say the same thing, but then it’s heard.”

Implications for the Movement

BURNOUT AND MARGINALIZATION

The racism that propelled
participants into racial
justice movements was
reproduced within those
movements.

White activists benefit at the
expense of activists of color.

Climate Activists

Greta Thunberg



Greta Thunberg is a Swedish teenage environmental activist on climate change whose campaigning has gained international recognition. Thunberg first became known for her activism in August 2018 when, at age 15, she began spending her school days outside the Swedish parliament to call for stronger action on global warming by holding up a sign saying (in Swedish) "School strike for the climate".

Autumn Peltier



Autumn Peltier is Anishinaabe-kwe and a member of the Wikwemikong First Nation and an internationally recognized advocate for clean water. She is a water protector and has been called a "water warrior". Peltier addressed world leaders at the UN General Assembly on the issue of water protection at the age of thirteen in 2018.

#MeToo Movement

Tarana Burke



The "Me Too" phrase was created by a social activist and community organizer Tarana Burke in 2006. It was introduced to promote "empowerment through empathy" among women who experienced sexual abuse, particularly those who were of color and belonged to the underprivileged communities.

Alyssa Milano



On Oct. 15 2017, Milano shared a tweet explaining that if people who have been sexually assaulted or harassed tweet "me too," it might "give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem." Millions responded, including high-profile celebrities like America Ferrera, Rose McGowan, Evan Rachel Wood, Gabrielle Union and more. Since then won awards for her activism.



Rapinoe and Kaepernick

Megan Rapinoe



Megan Anna Rapinoe is an American professional soccer player who captains Reign FC in the National Women's Soccer League, playing primarily as a winger. As a member of the United States women's national soccer team member, she helped lead the U.S. team to victory at the 2019 World Cup Championship

Colin Kaepernick



Colin Kaepernick is a former American football quarterback who is currently a free agent. He played six seasons for the San Francisco 49ers in the National Football League and became an international spokesman for racial equality by kneeling during the National Anthem in protest against the treatment of blacks in America.

What To Do About It

BE AN ACCOMPLICE NOT AN ALLY



DISCOMFORT
PRECEDES
VICTORY

What is An Accomplice?

- Accomplices take responsibility
- Accomplices listen with respect
- Accomplices remove guilt and shame from motivations
- Accomplices are at our side
- Accomplices are accountable and responsible to each other

How to Pivot

1. Examine privilege, fragility and structural racism
2. Defer to activists and movement leaders of color
3. Prioritize movement goals over personal recognition
4. Lead peers in equitable behavior
5. Step up and be vulnerable to the cause

How Would You Do It?

PRACTICE TOGETHER

How Social Movements Happen



Emerge

Blumer, 1969; Mauss, 1975; Tilly, 1978

How Social Movements Happen



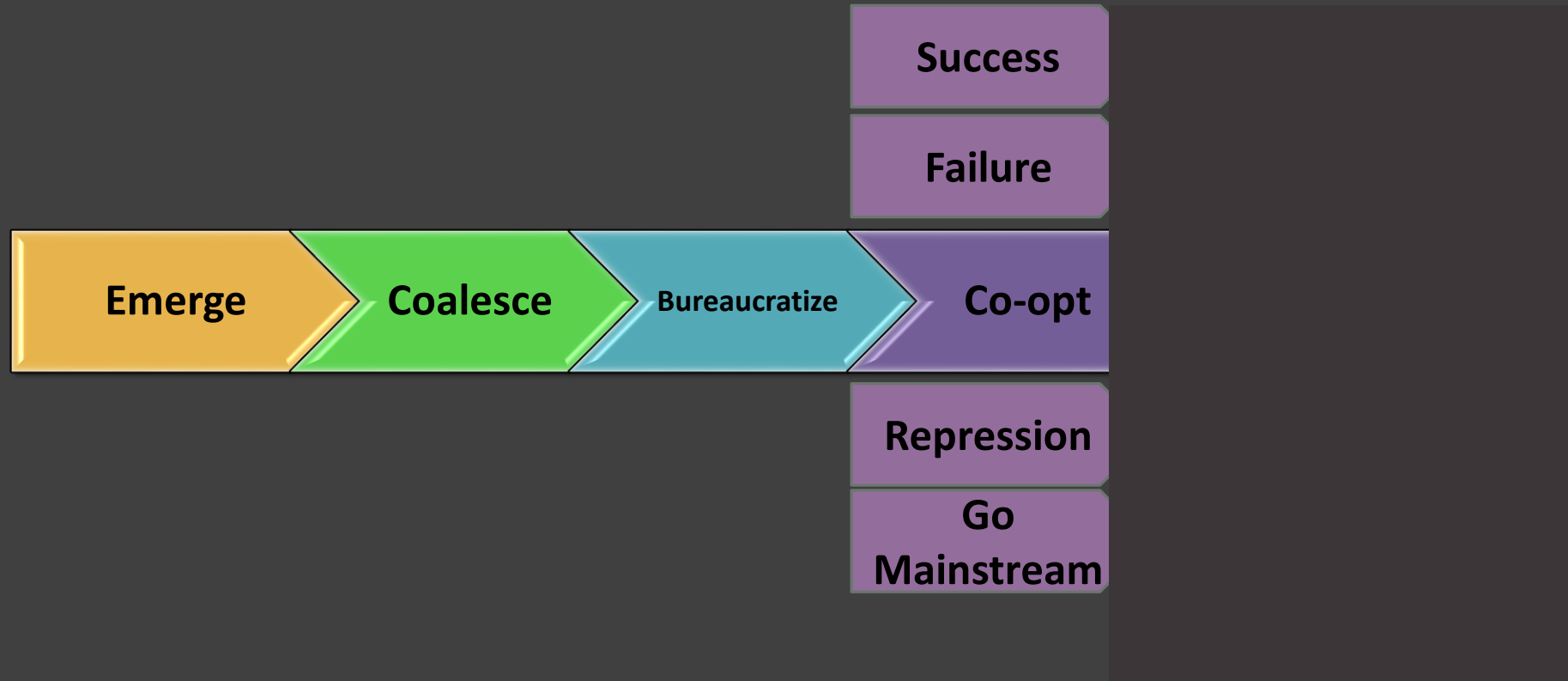
Blumer, 1969; Mauss, 1975; Tilly, 1978

How Social Movements Happen



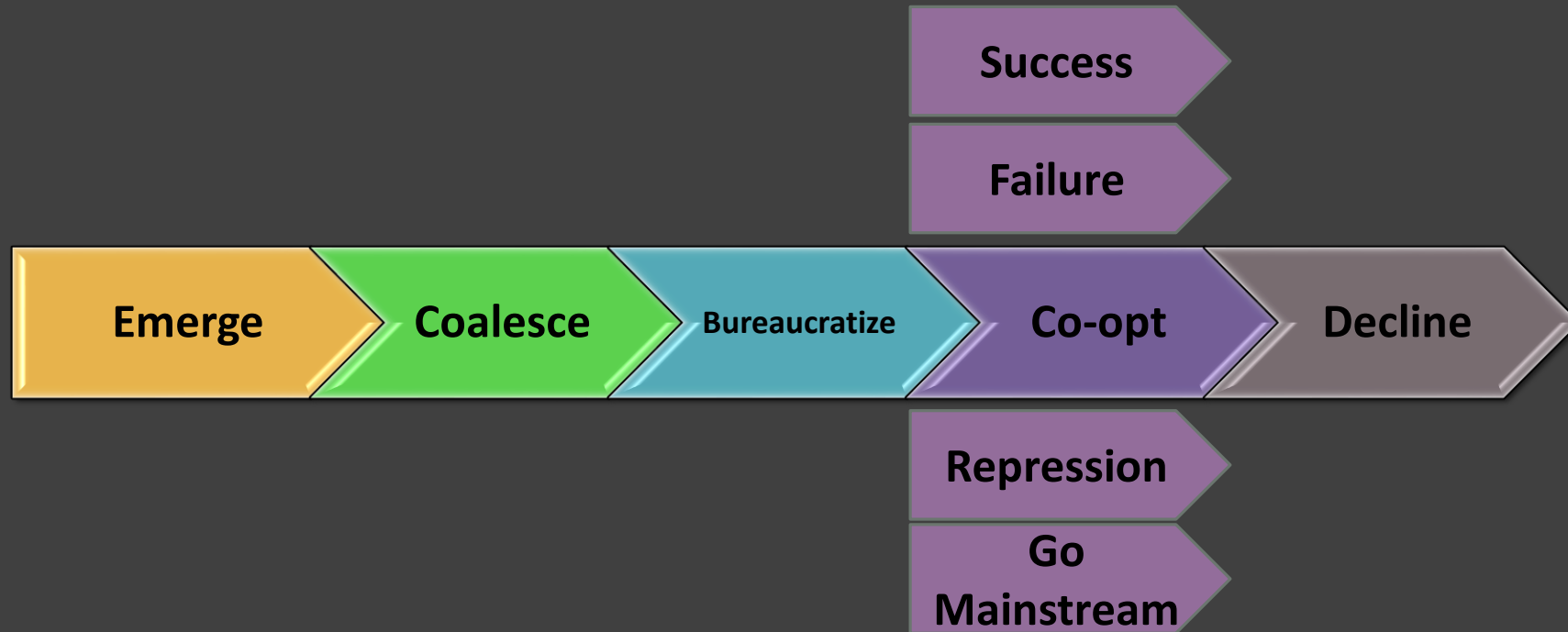
Blumer, 1969; Mauss, 1975; Tilly, 1978

How Social Movements Happen



Blumer, 1969; Mauss, 1975; Tilly, 1978

How Social Movements Happen



Blumer, 1969; Mauss, 1975; Tilly, 1978

Managing Racism at Each Level

5 WAYS WHITE ACTIVISTS SHUT DOWN BIPOC

1. Racist views
2. Marginalizing Work of BIPOC
3. Unwilling to Act
4. Exhibiting White Fragility, and
5. Taking credit for BIPOC racial justice work and ideas.

SOCIAL MOVEMENT STAGES

1. Emerge
2. Coalesce
3. Bureaucratize
4. Go Mainstream
5. Decline

	Emerge	Coalesce	Bureaucratize	Going Mainstream	Decline
Racist Views					
Marginalizing BIPOC					
Unwilling to Act					
White Fragility					
Taking Credit for BIPOC					





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