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Conflicted Commitments: Race, Privilege, and Power in Solidarity Activism

Gada Mahrouse

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Conflicted Commitments: Race, Privilege, and Power in Solidarity Activism Gada Mahrouse Conflicted Commitments analyzes a form of non-violent, direct transnational solidarity in which activists from the global North travel to support and protect people in the global South. Gada Mahrouse contends that this brand of activism is a compelling site of racialized power relations and is highly instructive for a nuanced understanding of systems of race. Mahrouse argues that the individuals who partake in this form of activism consciously deploy their white, western privilege to offer support and protection to those facing threats of violence. Moreover, given that this type of activism asserts itself as an exemplary form of anti-racist commitment, it illustrates that well-meaning practices can inadvertently reproduce racialized power structures that are embedded in imperial and colonial legacies. Mahrouse focuses on Palestine and Iraq in the post-9/11 era to contemplate the contemporary challenges that these regions pose for solidarity activism. By exploring how individual activists manage and negotiate their dominant positioning in these encounters, Mahrouse reflects more broadly on the ethics of social justice strategies in an increasingly transnational world. A detailed study of the racialized complexities and contradictions inherent in transnational solidarity activism, Conflicted Commitments makes a significant contribution to critical race and feminist studies.

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