

INTERSECTIONALITY

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“If the structure does not permit dialogue,
the structure must be changed.”

-Paulo Freire (Pedagogy of the Oppressed)

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A little about
me...

Roots of Intersectionality

“Those of us who stand outside the circle of this society's definition of acceptable women; those of us who have been forged in the crucibles of difference—those of us who are poor, who are lesbians, who are Black, who are older—know that survival is not an academic skill. It is learning how to stand alone, unpopular and sometimes reviled, and how to make common cause with those others identified as outside the structures in order to define and seek a world in which we all can flourish. It is learning how to take our difference and make them strengths.”

(Lorde, 1984, p. 112).

Brief Herstory

- Coined in 1991 by UCLA lawyer + professor + activist Kimberle Crenshaw: *Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color*
- Feminist and Womanist scholars pressed for scholarship that decentered middle-class, educated, white women experiences
- Theoretical foundation: the (re)production of inequalities, dominance, and oppression



Intersectionality defined...

intersectionality

Syllabification: in·ter·sec·tion·al·i·ty

Pronunciation: /,ɪn(t)ərsɛkʃə'nælədē/ 

Definition of *intersectionality* in English:

noun

The **interconnected** nature of **social categorizations** such as race, **class**, and **gender** as they **apply** to a given **individual** or **group**, regarded as **creating overlapping** and **interdependent** systems of **discrimination** or **disadvantage**:

*'through an **awareness** of intersectionality, we can better **acknowledge** and ground the **differences** among us'*

TOP DEFINITION



intersectionality

Concept used to describe ways in which **sh**y social constructs like -isms & -phobias are interconnected (intersectional! geddit?) and not magically separate issues.

Also used to describe how social inequality is experienced as an "intersection" of several forms of discrimination.

For instance, feminism that totally ignores racism is inevitably going to fall flat on its face, and pretending all social issues boil down to "it's all about claaaaaass!" is an exercise in brainlessness.

A transsexual black woman experiences intersectionality because she experiences both transphobia, racism, and sexism.

People who cry "you're just being divisive! these are separate issues!" are ignoring intersectionality.

*"My feminism will be intersectional or it will be bulls**h**t."*

by **thedeadlymoose** April 07, 2013

...and an infographic

Provides a way to think about identity and its relationship to power

Helps us think about the ways power has clustered around certain categories and subordinates others

Moves from the description of difference/similarity to explanation of processes - this is difficult!



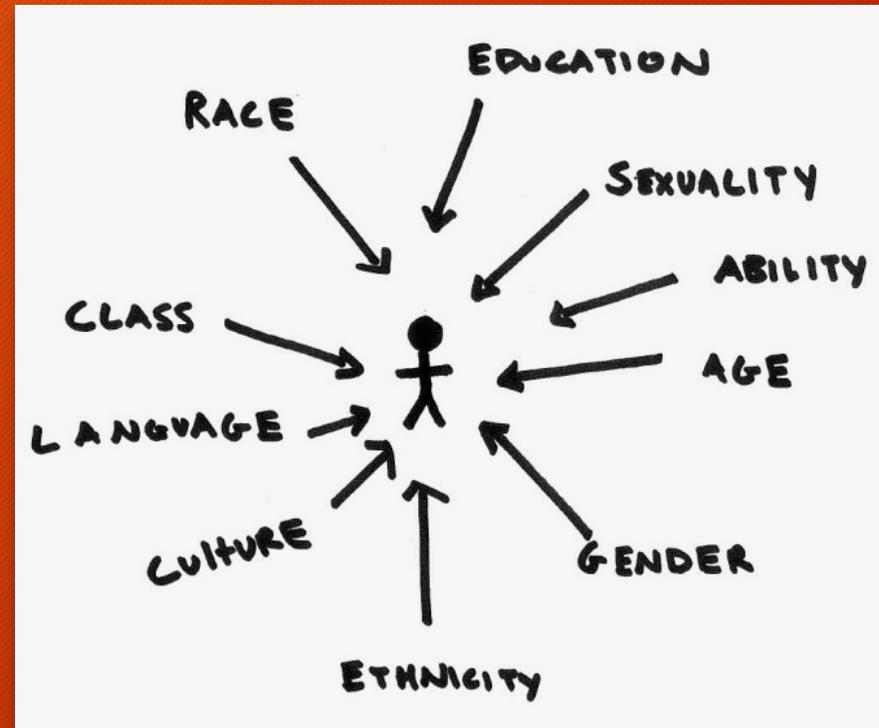
Applications of Intersectionality

Intersectionality brings to light the invisibility of many constituents within groups that claim them as members, but often fail to represent them:

- People of color within LGBTQ movements
- Women within immigration movements
- People with disabilities fighting police abuse
- Girls of color in the fight against the school-to-prison pipeline
- Class considerations in the faculty ranks
- Trans women within feminist movements

Final considerations

- How to be “anti-essentialist” but still consider group relations:
 - i.e. How might we call attention the identity of the “group” when we need to center on the intersectional identities of a few?
- How to apply an intersectional lens in quantitative and empirical work, which has historically relied on discrete measures and subjects



Questions??