

Addressing Intersectional Differences

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“ We have got to know each other better and **each others our ways, our views**, if we’re to remove the scales (‘seeing radical difference where they don’t exist and not seeing them when they are crucial-Quintanales) and get the work done . . . This Bridge can get us there. Can coax us into the habit of **listening to each other and learning each other’s ways of seeing and being .”**

--This Bridge Called My Back: Writings By Radical Women of Color, 1981, vii)

Equity Literacy

Through An Intersectional Lens

Five Paradigm Shifts for Educational Equity

- Advancing Equality --> Advancing Equity
- "Fixing" Marginalized Families --> Eradicating **Marginalizing Practices**
- Color-blindness --> **Self-Examination**
- Learning About "Other" Cultures --> **Fighting for the Rights of All Students**
- Celebrating Diversity --> **Committing to Equity (Justice)**

***So You Think
You're an Anti-
Racist?***
Ideological
Adjustments for
Well-Meaning White
Educators

- The **Potential Inaction** of Dialogue
- From Color-Blindness to **Racial Literacy**
- Racism as **Structural** Oppression
- **Justice Before Harmony**
- The **Inconsequential** Nature of Intent

Why Intersectional Equity Literacy?

A quick review

Defining Intersectionality

Intersectionality promotes an understanding of human beings as **shaped by the interaction of different social locations** (e.g., 'race'/ethnicity, Indigeneity, gender, class, sexuality, geography, age, disability/ability, migration status, religion).

These interactions occur within a context of **connected systems and structures of power** (e.g., laws, policies, state governments and other political and economic unions, religious institutions, media).

Through such processes, **interdependent forms of privilege and oppression** shaped by colonialism, imperialism, racism, homophobia, ableism and patriarchy are created" (Hankivsky, 2014)

KEY TENETS:

- ❖ Experiences **can't be explained through single categories**, because they are multidimensional, complex, and **shaped by different social dynamics operating together (e.g. Social Location)**.
- ❖ Relationships and **power dynamics** between **social locations** & processes are **linked**.
- ❖ We experience privilege & oppression **simultaneously**.

- ❖ Individual experiences are **linked to broader structures and systems** crucial for revealing how power relations are shaped and experienced.
- ❖ We must **consider our own social position**, role, and power with an intersectional approach (**reflexivity**).
- ❖ Explicitly oriented towards **transformation, building coalitions**, and working towards **social justice**.

Jacqui Alexander

Pedagogies [of Crossing] is intended to intervene in the multiple spaces where knowledge is produced. I have **deliberately chosen to interrupt** inherited boundaries of geography, nation, episteme, and identity that distort vision so that they can be **replaced with frameworks** and **modes of being** that **enable an understanding** . . . pedagogic imperative at its heart: the imperative of **making the world** in which we live **intelligible to ourselves and each other** . . ."

--(Pedagogies of Crossing, 2005, p. 6)

Audre Lorde

Certainly there are very real differences between us of race, age, and sex. But it is not those differences between us that are separating us. It is rather our refusal to recognize those differences, and to examine the distortions which result from our misnaming them and their effects upon human behavior and expectation.

-- "Age, Race, Class and Sex: Women Redefining Difference," *Sister/Outsider*, 1984, pg.

**Race & Racism: Structural,
Social and Interpersonal
Dynamics**

Race

An Operational Definition

- ❖ An unstable and decentered complex of social meanings constantly being **transformed by political struggle** (Omi & Winant, 1986).
 - ❖ A concept which **signifies & symbolizes social conflicts and interests** referring to **different types of human bodies** (Omi & Winant, 1996, 2010).
 - ❖ A category of **domination** (Souza, 2001).
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Racism

An Operational Definition

- ❖ **Systemic advantage** of **one group** that is racialized as **superordinate over** another group that is **racialized as subordinate**
 - ❖ The creation or reproduction of **structures of domination** based on **essentialist categories of race** (Omi & Winant, 1986).
 - ❖ As **distinguished from** racial **prejudice or bigotry**, which is **individual**
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Racialization

An Operational Definition

The **extension of racial meaning** to a **previously uncategorized** event, object, person, process, or relationship

Socially Just Teaching Methods

- ❖ Determine the framework
 - Eg. White Supremacy & Whiteness
- ❖ Subordinated knowledges
 - Eg. non-normative knowledge
- ❖ Which voices? What matters?
 - Eg. Whose perspectives get centered?

Towards A Racially Conscious Pedagogy

- ❖ Reconceptualize what you teach in ways that account for race, racism, racialization,
- ❖ Raise questions about race, racism, racialization where they are most effective in your curriculum.
- ❖ Find places where racial power, racism, racialization arise in the texts used.
- ❖ Use those moments in your classroom as teaching moments,
- ❖ Situate your own (internalized) racism and racialization?

Racial Microaggressions

An Exercise in Catching Yourself in the Flow

What are microaggressions?

- 1) Microassaults—intentional acts of racism designed to harm a person of color (e.g., a wait staff gives preferential treatment to a white person over a Person of Color, using racist language).
- 2) Microinsults—possibly unintentional acts of racism that deliver a hidden message insulting to a Person of Color (e.g., statements that imply People of Color received a job or promotion based on the color of their skin).
- 3) Microinvalidations—messages that diminish the lived realities of People of Color (e.g., being asked, “why do you always have to make things about race?” or being told “I don’t see race/color. I’m color blind.”)

Source: Singh, Anneliese, *The Racial Healing Handbook*, New Harbinger, 2019, pg. 106.

Gender & Sexuality

Structures, Stratifications, Processes

Gender As Social Status

- ❖ Structure: the way that social structures like law, social policy, and the economy reflect gendering.
- ❖ Stratification: the establishment of a gender hierarchy where one gender is seen as superordinate and other genders are seen as subordinate.
- ❖ Process: gender as process signals the way we learn to perform gender and engage in gender performativity; some scholars argue that gender is a form of socialization.

Judith Butler on Gender as Performativity

“Your Behavior Creates Your Gender”

<http://bigthink.com/videos/your-behavior-creates-your-gender>

Regarding Classroom Dynamics

- ❖ Structuring Gender & Sexual difference
- ❖ The Trans Phenomena & Gender Nonconformity
- ❖ Disrupting Normative Gendered Power Relations

Socially Just Teaching Methods

- ❖ **Multi-level analysis**, ie. structures, stratification, and processes of gender experiences (cultures, expression, identities)
- ❖ **Relationality** of Power with Social Categories
- ❖ Gender and sexuality epistemologies determine cultures, expressions, and identities

Towards A Gender Conscious Pedagogy

- ❖ Differentiate gender, sex, and sexuality intersectionally.
- ❖ Find texts that help highlight the complexities of gender and sexual identities and cultures.
- ❖ Use structure, stratification, and process as a guideline for gender and sexuality.
- ❖ Foreground gender performance and performativity.

Fausto-Sterling's Five Sexes

Female: XX

Male: XY

Herms: fused & bilateral functional gonads; combinations

Ferms: XX with uterus and testes/penis

Merms: XY with testes but clit and breasts.

Five Genders

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9VmLJ3niVo>

Reflective Pause

Writing Exercise

- ❖ What do you struggle with most regarding gender and/or sexuality in teaching and daily life?
- ❖ Name a moment when you were challenged by gender or sexual dynamics in the classroom? In everyday life?

Exercise: Identifying Benevolent & Hostile Sexism

An Activity For Your Tool Box



Benevolent Sexism

- Women deserve men's protection.
- Women are natural caregivers.
- Women are delicate & sensitive
- Women should be put on a pedestal.

Hostile Sexism

- Women aren't as smart or as competent as men.
- Women exaggerate their problems.
- Women talk too much.
- Women just want special treatment.
- Women are manipulative.

CLOSING INSIGHTS

What is still muddy? What has been clarified? What would you like to know more about?