

What is privilege?

Definition from the Oxford Dictionary

**privilege: a special right, advantage,
or immunity granted or available
only to a particular person or group
of people**

Purpose: We are meeting today to help us better serve our students.

1. Race is a social construct.
2. What is racism?
3. How to NOT have a conversation about racism
4. Awareness of the impact in the classroom

Race is a social construct.

“**Race** is not biological. It is a **social construct**. There is no gene or cluster of genes common to all blacks or all whites. Were **race** ‘real’ in the genetic sense, **racial** classifications for individuals would remain constant across boundaries. Yet, a person who could be categorized as black in the United States might be considered white in Brazil or colored in South Africa.” - Angela Onwuachi-Willig in *The New York Times*

Race is a social construct.

“The only reason you say that race was not an issue is because you wish it was not. We all wish it was not. But it’s a lie. I came from a country where race was not an issue; I did not think of myself as black and I only became black when I came to America.” - Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah*

- race as a social construct
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Race is not biological. It is a **social construct**. There is no gene or cluster of genes common to all blacks or all whites. Were **race** "real" in the genetic sense, **racial** classifications for individuals would remain constant across boundaries. Jun 16, 2015

[Race and Racial Identity Are Social Constructs - NYTimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com/.../racial.../race-and-racial-identity-are-social-co...)
www.nytimes.com/.../racial.../race-and-racial-identity-are-social-co... The New York Times ▾

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Race Is a Social Construct, Scientists Argue - Scientific American
<https://www.scientificamerican.com/.../race-is-a-social-construct-sc...> ▾ Scientific American ▾
Feb 5, 2016 - Du Bois was concerned that race was being used as a biological explanation for what he understood to be social and cultural differences between different populations of people. ... Today, the mainstream belief among scientists is that race is a social construct without biological meaning.

Race and Racial Identity Are Social Constructs - NYTimes.com
www.nytimes.com/.../racial.../race-and-racial-identity-are-social-... ▾ The New York Times ▾
Jun 16, 2015 - Race is not biological. It is a social construct. There is no gene or cluster of genes common to all blacks or all whites. Were race "real" in the genetic sense, racial classifications for individuals would remain constant across boundaries.

What We Mean When We Say 'Race Is a Social Construct' - The Atlantic
www.theatlantic.com/national/.../05/.../race...social-construct/275872/ ▾ The Atlantic ▾

Racism Defined (find a basic def)

“...scholars define racism as encompassing economic, political, social, and cultural structures, actions, and beliefs that systematize and perpetuate an unequal distribution of privileges, resources and power between white people and people of color” (Hilliard, 1992)

Racism defined, cont.

This definition counters the dominant representation of racism in mainstream education as isolated in discrete behaviors that some individuals may or may not demonstrate, and goes beyond naming specific privileges (McIntosh, 1988).

Prejudice Defined

From the Merriam-Webster Dictionary:

“an unfair feeling of dislike for a person or group because of race, sex, religion, etc.; a feeling of like or dislike for someone or something especially when it is not reasonable or logical.”

White Fragility, definition

“White Fragility is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium.”

Robin DiAngelo,

International Journal of Critical Pedagogy, Vol 3 (3) (2011)
pp 54-70

John Metta by “I, Racist” (Add Huffington Post)

- John Metta is a mixed race man who lives in Charleston and works as a writer.
- Eleven days after the shooting at Mother Emanuel AME Church, Metta was asked to address an all-white congregation at Bethel Congregational United Church of Christ in Washington state on the topic of racism and discussing race in the company of white and non-white people.
- The following is an excerpt from that “sermon” and will be used to frame our conversation.

From “I, Racist” by John Metta

“What [white people] are affected by are attacks on their own character. To my aunt, the suggestion that ‘people in The North are racist’ is an attack on her as a racist. She is unable to differentiate her participation within a racist system (upwardly mobile, not racially profiled, able to move to White suburbs, etc.) from an accusation that she, individually, is a racist.”

From “I, Racist” by John Metta

“Without being able to make that differentiation, White people in general decide to vigorously defend their own personal non-racism, or point out that it doesn’t exist because they don’t see it.”

From “I, Racist” by John Metta

“The result of this is an incessantly repeating argument where a Black person says ‘Racism still exists. It is real,’ and a white person argues ‘You’re wrong, I’m not racist at all. I don’t even see any racism.’ My aunt’s immediate response is not ‘that is wrong, we should do better.’ No, her response is self-protection: ‘That’s not my fault, I didn’t do anything. You are wrong.’”

From “I, Racist” by John Metta

“Racism is not slavery...Racism is not white water fountains and the back of the bus...racism is even more subtle than that. It’s more nuanced. Racism is the fact that ‘White’ means ‘normal’ and that anything else is different.

“Racism is our acceptance of an all white *Lord of the Rings* cast because of historical accuracy, ignoring the fact that this is a world with an entirely fictionalized history. Even when we make [things] up, we want [them] to be white.”

From “I, Racist” by John Metta

“Living every single day with institutionalized racism and then having to argue its very existence, is tiring, and saddening, and angering. Yet if we express any emotion while talking about it, we’re tone policed, told we’re being angry. In fact, a key element in any racial argument in America is the Angry Black person, and racial discussions shut down when that person speaks. The Angry Black person invalidates any arguments about racism because they are being ‘overly sensitive,’ or ‘too emotional,’ or ‘playing the race card.’ Or even worse, we’re told that we are being racist.”

“Racism is systematic oppression of one demographic by another one which holds power. How can the systematically oppressed demographic have the ability to oppress those in power?”

From “I, Racist” by John Metta

“But...the irony, the thing that angry Black people know, and calmly debating White people [do not] want to admit:

The discussion of race in America centers around the protection of White feelings.”

Race, like gender, is nonbinary.

Definition from the Oxford Dictionary

**privilege: a special right, advantage,
or immunity granted or available
only to a particular person or group
of people**

Peggy McIntosh's “Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”

Pioneer piece for addressing racial privilege
antiquated vs. relevant examples

Each statement is constructed so that if you can say that it applies to you, you are speaking from a position of privilege.

Think macro not micro.

- ☐ I can avoid spending time with people whom I was trained to mistrust and who have learned to mistrust my kind or me.*
- ☐ I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.*
- ☐ I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely/positively represented.
- ☐ When I am taught about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
- ☐ I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who might not like them.*

- ☐ I do not have to educate my children to be aware of systemic racism for their own daily physical protection.*
- ☐ I can swear, or dress in second hand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty or the illiteracy of my race.
- ☐ I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.
- ☐ I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
- ☐ I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to the "person in charge," I will be facing a person of my race.

- ☐ **I can easily buy posters, postcards, picture books, greeting cards, dolls, toys and children's magazines featuring people of my race.**
- ☐ **If I declare there is a racial issue at hand, or there isn't a racial issue at hand, my race will lend me more credibility for either position than a person of color will have.**
- ☐ **I can choose to ignore developments in minority writing and minority activist programs, or disparage them, or learn from them, but in any case, I can find ways to be more or less protected from negative consequences of any of these choices.**

- ☐ **I can worry about racism without being seen as self-interested or self-seeking.**
- ☐ **I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having my co-workers on the job suspect that I got it because of my race.**
- ☐ **I can be late to a meeting without having the lateness reflect on my race.**
- ☐ **I can chose blemish cover or bandages in "flesh" color and have them more or less match my skin.**

THE LIKELYHOOD THAT I WILL GO TO PRISON IN
MY LIFETIME IS ABOUT 4-11%. A POC'S CHANCES
RUN TO ABOUT 44 - 50%.

PERCENTAGE OF PRISONERS

**BUREAU OF JUSTICE (2010) & US CENSUS (2010)*

WHITES

11%

An infographic featuring a grey silhouette of a person's head and shoulders. The silhouette is set against a white background. Inside the head area, the text '11%' is written in white. Above the silhouette, the word 'WHITES' is written in a grey, sans-serif font. Below the silhouette, there is a grey rectangular block with a white horizontal stripe across its center.

POC

88%

An infographic featuring a dark brown silhouette of a person's head and shoulders. The silhouette is set against a dark brown background. Inside the head area, the text '88%' is written in white. Above the silhouette, the letters 'POC' are written in a dark brown, sans-serif font. Below the silhouette, there is a dark brown rectangular block with a white horizontal stripe across its center.

ALTHOUGH MY FAVORITE STATISTIC IS THAT

82-91% OF HOMICIDES ARE INTRARACIAL
(WHITES KILLING WHITES, POC KILLING POC)

BUT

MAJOR NEWS OUTLETS
FOCUS ON INTERRACIAL
HOMICIDES MORE THAN
60% OF THE TIME!

(75% MORE IF IT'S A
BLACK MALE KILLING
A WHITE FEMALE!)

*FBI CRIME STATISTICS
(2011)



“It’s about socioeconomic.”

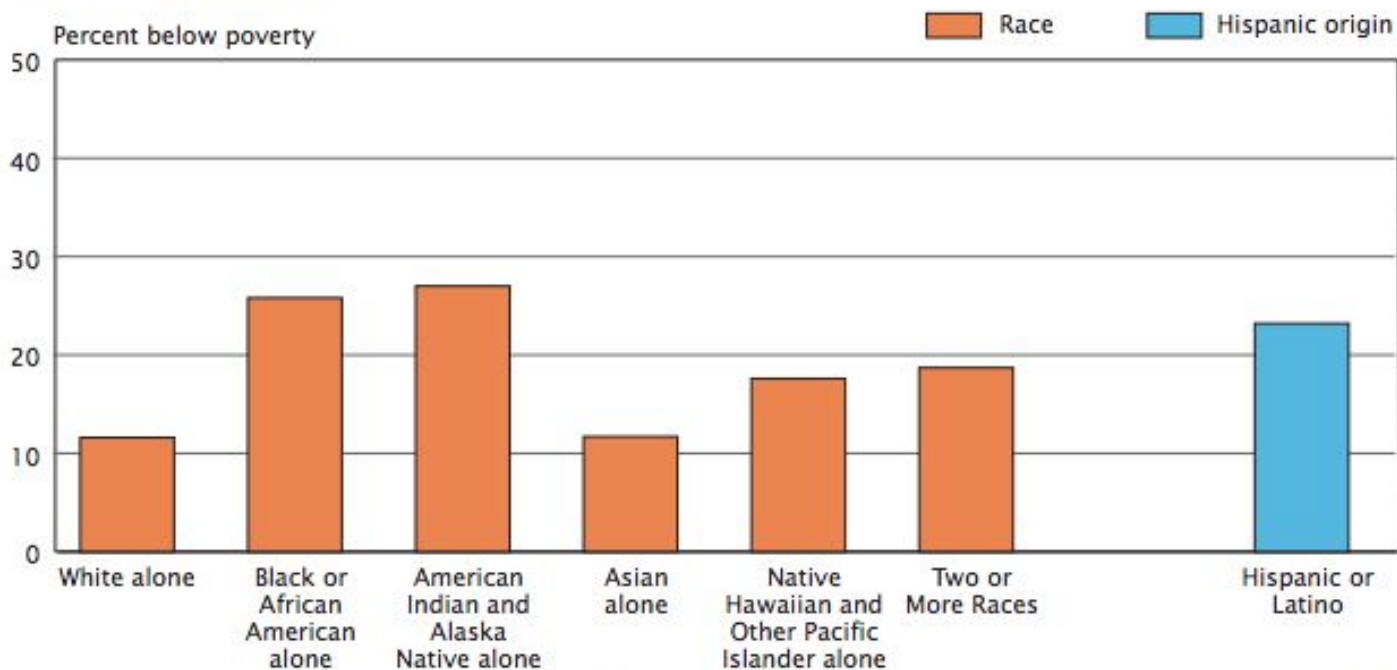
- African American children are 3 times more likely to live in poverty than Caucasian children. American Indian/Alaska Native, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, and Native Hawaiian families are more likely than Caucasian and Asian families to live in poverty (Costello, Keeler, & Angold, 2001; National Center for Education Statistics, 2007).
- Although the income of Asian American families is often markedly above other minorities, these families also often have four to five family members working (Le, 2008).
- Minorities are more likely to receive high-cost mortgages: African Americans (53%) and Latinos (43%), in comparison to Caucasians (18%) (Logan, 2008).
- Unemployment rates for African Americans are typically double those of Caucasian Americans. African American men working full time earn 72 % of the average earnings of comparable Caucasian men and 85% of the earnings of Caucasian women (Rodgers, 2008).

- African Americans and Latinos are more likely to attend high-poverty schools than Asian Americans and Caucasians (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007).
- In 2005, the high school dropout rate of Latinos was highest, followed by those of African Americans and American Indians/Alaska Natives (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007).
- In addition to socioeconomic realities that may deprive students of valuable resources, high-achieving African American students may be exposed to less rigorous curriculums, attend schools with fewer resources, and have teachers who expect less of them academically than they expect of similarly situated Caucasian students (Azzam, 2008).

Figure 1.

U.S. Poverty Rates by Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin: 2007–2011

(For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see www.census.gov/acs/www/)



Note: Persons who report only one race among the six defined categories are referred to as the race-alone population, while persons who report more than one race category are referred to as the Two or More Races population. This figure shows data using the race-alone approach. Use of the single-race population does not imply that it is the preferred method of presenting or analyzing data. The Census Bureau uses a variety of approaches. Because Hispanics may be of any race, data in this figure for Hispanics overlap with data for race groups.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007–2011 American Community Survey.

Want some more numbers and charts?

<https://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/acsbr11-17.pdf>

“When you’re accustomed to privilege, equality feels like oppression.”

Thoughts?

Other types of privilege

Break into small groups, read the privilege lists given to you and think about the following:

1. Which of these privileges do you acknowledge in your own life (or are aware that you don't have access to)?
2. Which surprise you now that you've thought about them?
3. Which do you question?

The Expectation Effect

From “How To Become Batman” *Invisibilia* Podcast

1. What is the implication of The Expectation Effect in relation to notions of privilege and the various “isms” that correspond with that?
2. What is the implication of The Expectation Effect in the classroom?
3. Think about your experiences in school. Does this idea at all impact your viewpoint on your school experiences and observations?

Intellectual Privilege

1. I do not have to worry about failing a class.
2. I have never been looked down upon because of the grades I make.
3. When I make a comment in class, no one questions where I got my information.
4. I can be sure to be accepted into a college when I apply.
5. If I put enough work in, I can be sure to earn passing grades.
6. People are willing to overlook my mistakes because they are just that – mistakes.
7. Continuing education is not seen as a challenge or major accomplishment over adversity.

8. When I tell people what my future plans are, they don't question whether or not I will be a success.
9. As I am perceived as intelligent, my opinions are valued over those who are considered less so, even if they have a better idea.
10. I am more trusted by my peers as leaders as they seem to equate intelligence with responsibility and trustworthiness.
11. I can get away with more lying as my intelligence makes me more trusted.
12. I am given access to better materials at school as I am thought of as more deserving and responsible.
13. Intellectually gifted students are much more likely to be allowed to do things teachers normally wouldn't let students do.

14. I am given first priority in scheduling and the option to participate in extracurricular activities.

15. I do not have to worry about getting good educational opportunities.

16. I do not fear being called on to read out loud during class.

17. I can be confident that if I approach a teacher in a timely manner to ask for help or an extension, it will be given to me.

18. I can read a newspaper or watch a newscast and understand what is being reported.

19. If I move in the middle of the year, I can be pretty sure that I will adjust well to my new school.

20. I can walk through the halls at school without being questioned about my purpose.

21. I can count on going into a new school and finding classes that will be appropriate for my academic needs.

22. When I get a good grade, I will not be accused of cheating.

23. I can feel comfortable approaching my teachers and knowing that my intellect will not be the reason they won't help me.

24. If a teacher asks me to stay after class, I can assume it will be about something other than my academic ability (though it may be about performance).

25. I am frequently approached by teachers and counselors with new opportunities to learn and grow as a leader.

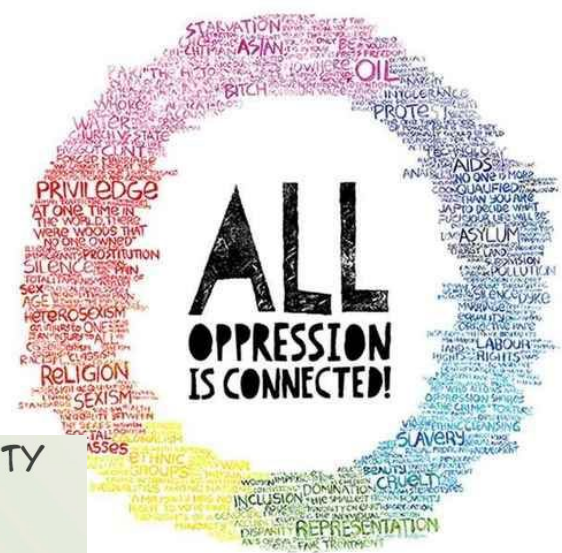
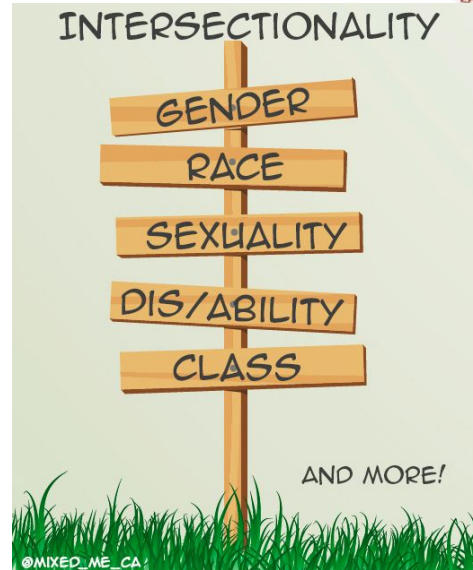
What patterns/commonalities do you see between the lists of privileges we've discussed?

How can we address these privileges and/or make them more visible?

What then?

Intersectionality!

The idea that different parts of a person's identity intersect to either give them advantages or disadvantages. Identity components include race, sex, gender, able-bodiedness, religion, nationality, class, age, etc.



Intersectional Feminism



This is a POP (Prince of Privilege)

white!

heterosexual!

able-bodied!

male!

cisgender!

financially stable!

Christian!



Talk to Zach if you
want. He's down.

Check out this comic: example of the subtlety and power of privilege

<http://thewireless.co.nz/articles/the-pencilsword-on-a-plate>

How do we see privilege at work in this comic?

What factors allow Richard to succeed and what inhibits Paula?

How are traditional gender roles reinforced?