



# POWER, PRIVILEGE, & OPPRESSION 101

An Primer for Social Justice

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# AGENDA

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- Introductions
- Vocabulary Building
- Understanding Power
- Unpacking Power & Oppression
- Case Studies
- Discussion/Debrief
- Evaluations & Closing

# OUTCOMES

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- To cultivate a basic understanding of Power, Privilege, and Oppression
- Reflect on your personal identities
- Recognize positionality and institutional/cultural relationships to identities
- Initiate/continue conversations and action to build inclusive spaces on campus

# COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

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- Clarifying Question "C"
- The Vegas Rule
- Challenge Ideas, Not People
- Communicate Actively & Constructively
- Take Space, Make Space
- When You're Here, Be Here
- Take Time to Process
- Respect Different Definitions of "Health"



# PRONOUNS & GROUP INTRODUCTIONS

Fill out your name tag. Please include your pronouns!

Example:

Jordan Genderbread

(she/her/hers, they/them/theirs)

Why are pronouns important?

**Important Note:**

Some people might not use pronouns. In that case, use their name instead!



# KNOWLEDGE (CONOCIMIENTO) CHART

The goal of this exercise is to have you **reflect** on the unique characteristics that make you who you are.

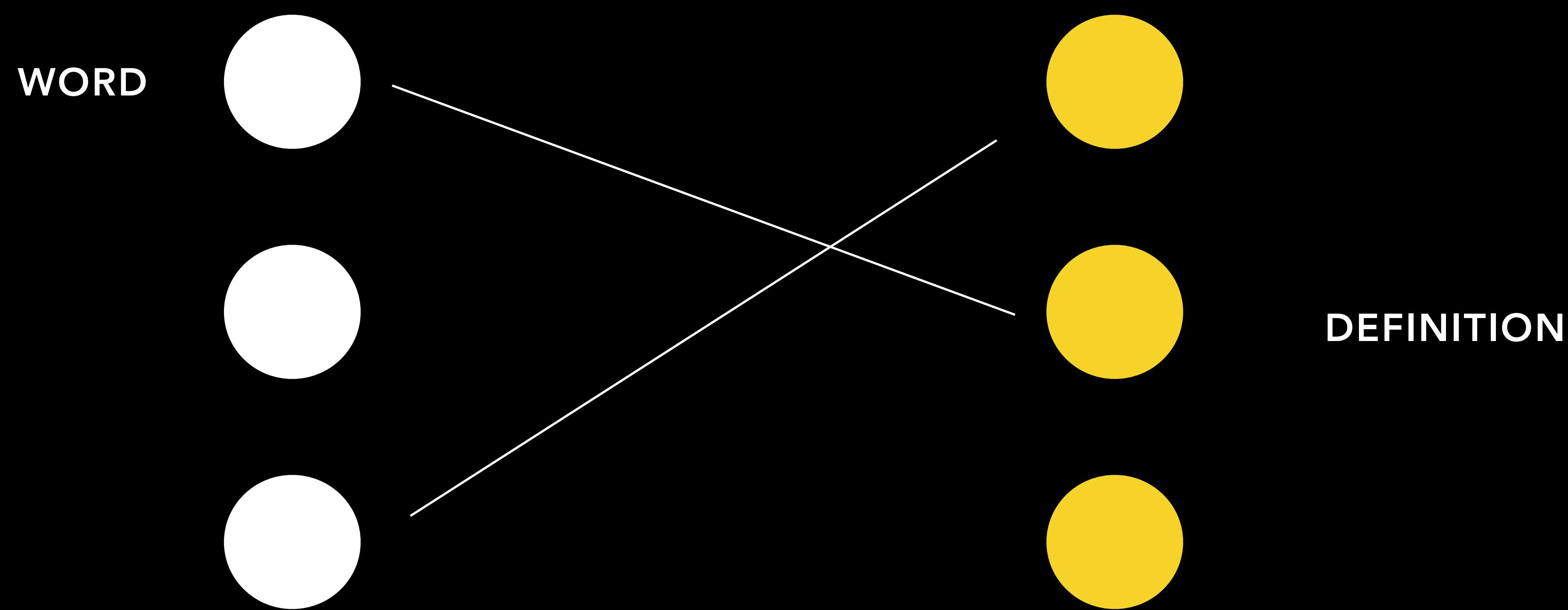
- In groups of 3-4, share your favorite answers on the chart.
  - What do you have in common with others in your group?
  - What are some differences between you and other group members?



# VOCABULARY BUILDING



# THE MATCHING GAME



# DEFINING POWER, PRIVILEGE, & OPPRESSION

**Step 1:** Count off into teams; each team will be assigned a term: power, privilege, or oppression.

**Step 2:** In your small group:

WRITE/DRAW your definition of power, privilege, and oppression.

- You can draw, make a list, create a chart, and more

REFLECT on the narrative question assigned to your group.

SHARE your thoughts with others in your group! Be honest!

**Step 3:** Report out what you've learned.

# UNDERSTANDING POWER

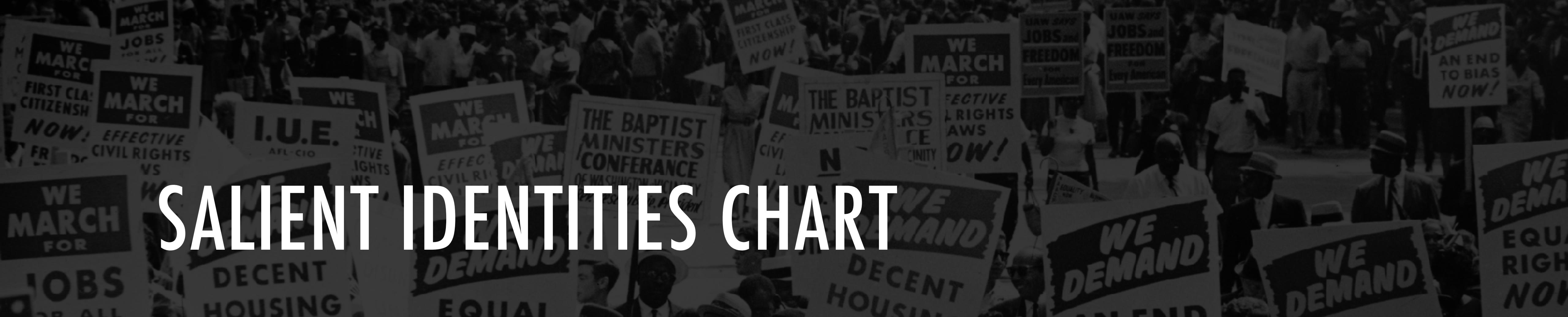




# SOCIAL GROUPS & SOCIAL IDENTITIES

## Social group:

A group of people who share a range of physical, cultural, or social characteristics within one of the social identity categories.



# SALIENT IDENTITIES CHART

The goal of this exercise is to have you reflect more deeply on your own identities and begin thinking about which identities are the **most noticeable** to you and why.

On your own, take note of the following:

- Which of your identities do you think about **most**? Why?
- Which of your identities do you think about **least**? Why?
- How do your identities impact the ways in which you navigate your life?





# SOCIAL GROUPS & SOCIAL DYNAMICS

## **Social statuses:**

**Advantaged:** agent, dominant, oppressor, privileged

**Targeted:** target, subordinate, oppressed, disadvantaged

## **Social construction:**

Taken for granted assumptions about the world, knowledge, and ourselves assumed to be universal rather than historically and culturally specific ideas created through social processes and interactions.

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# SOCIAL DYNAMICS ON CAMPUS

Discuss:

**What does it mean to have power at Scripps?**

**If you are feeling disempowered at Scripps, why might that be?**

**If your peers feel disempowered, how can you support them?**

**What does a balance of power look like on campus? In the workplace?**

# UNPACKING PRIVILEGE & OPPRESSION





# INVISIBLE KNAPSACK & PRIVILEGE

## Privilege:

Unearned access to resources (social power) only readily available to some people as a result of their advantaged social group membership.

**Step 1: Please read the [every feminism article, Privilege 101: A Quick and Dirty Guide.](#)**

**Step 2: In your small group:**

- **WRITE down your reflections on what it means to have various types of privilege.**
- **SHARE your thoughts with others in your group**

**Step 3: Report out what you've learned.**

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# INVISIBLE KNAPSACK & PRIVILEGE

When talking about privilege, most folks feel uncomfortable. Having privilege is not inherently a bad thing, but it is how you utilize it and how others are impacted by it, that you must vigilantly attend to.

What does privilege look like on a college campus?

Can you think of examples of the following types of privilege?

Class

Race

Sexual identity

Ability

Religion

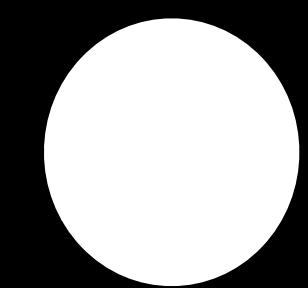
Citizenship

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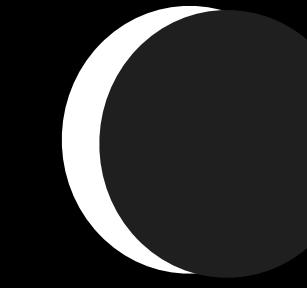


# LEVELS OF OPPRESSION

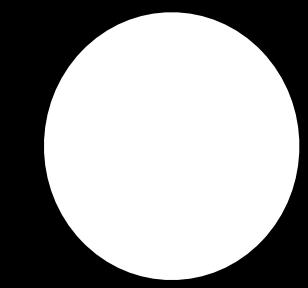
Oppression is a system that maintains **advantage** and **disadvantage** based on social group membership.



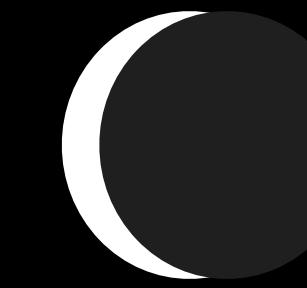
Institutional



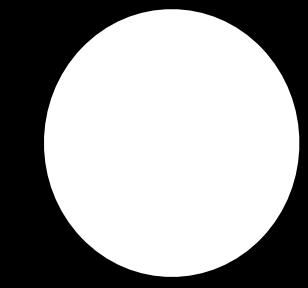
Policies, Laws, Rules,  
and Customs



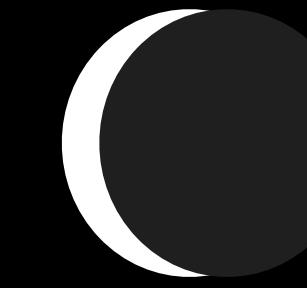
Cultural/  
Societal



Social norms, rituals,  
roles, language,  
music, and art



Individual/  
Interpersonal



Attitudes and Actions



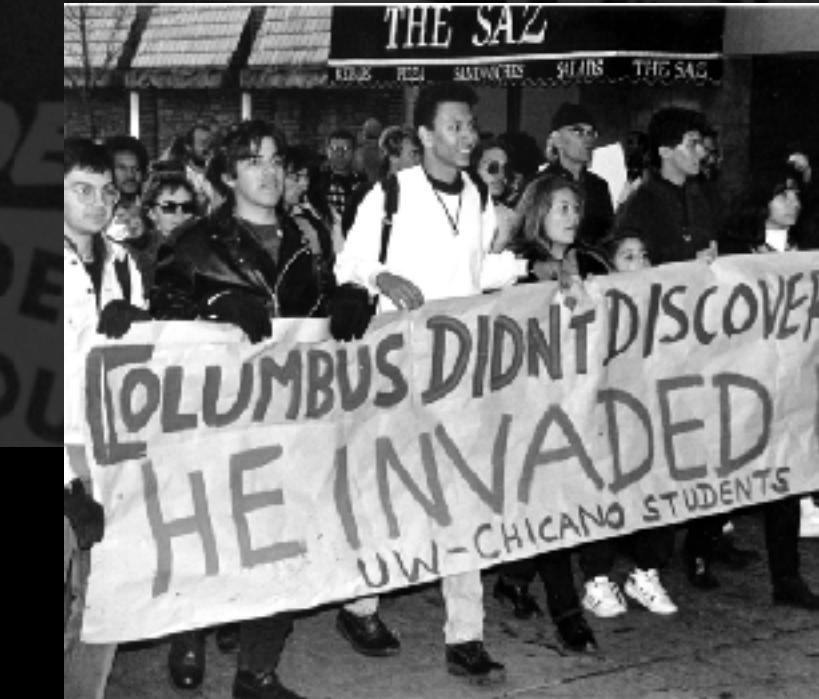
# MATRIX OF OPPRESSION

Race	RACISM
Sex	SEXISM
Gender	CISSEXISM
Sexual Orientation	HETEROSEXISM
Class	CLASSISM
Ability	ABLEISM
Religion	RELIGIOUS OPPRESSION

# A SNAPSHOT OF RACIAL OPPRESSION IN THE U.S.



# NATIVE AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES



1513-1600



Natives thrived on this land long before European contact; history does not start at colonization.

Spanish, French, and British colonials enslave and murder thousands of Native people.

1637-1700



Over 700 members of Pequot tribe were slaughtered.

Day is declared "Thanksgiving"

1700-1830



Native tribes were again massacred, all over the plains in the U.S.

Hundreds of thousands removed from land

Tribes are forced to live on reservations

1900-2000s



Indian Rights movement begins; fight for Native recognition

Treaties are signed, not fully honored by U.S. government

Tribal lands and relocation; establishment of tribal colleges

# BLACK AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES



1600-1868



African Americans were enslaved in the U.S., not legally recognized as citizens or humans until Emancipation.

1896-1954



Blacks were banned from using public facilities or forced to use "colored only" facilities.

Terrorized by Ku Klux Klan, targets of lynchings and extreme violence.

1955-1965



Montgomery Bus Boycott spurs action, Civil Rights Movement begins

Martin Luther King Jr. emerges as a prominent leader of CRM.

Voting Rights Act, Civil Rights Act

1970-2000s



Leaders are assassinated  
Race Riots

First Black President, Barack Obama

Increased police brutality and murders of unarmed black people; Black Lives Matter

# ASIAN AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES



1600-1700s



Spanish bring Chinese and Filipinos to Mexico as laborers.

Chinese laborers brought to work in Hawaiian sugar cane fields

1700s-1880



California gold rush attracts prospectors

Chinese banned from voting or testifying in court

Court rules Chinese not eligible for naturalized citizenship

Anti-Chinese riots

1880-1930



Chinese Exclusion Act passed, bans Chinese laborers for over 30 years and Burlingame treaty limits Chinese immigration

U.S. wins Hawaii after Spanish-American war

120,000 Japanese interned in camps after Pearl Harbor

1940-2000s

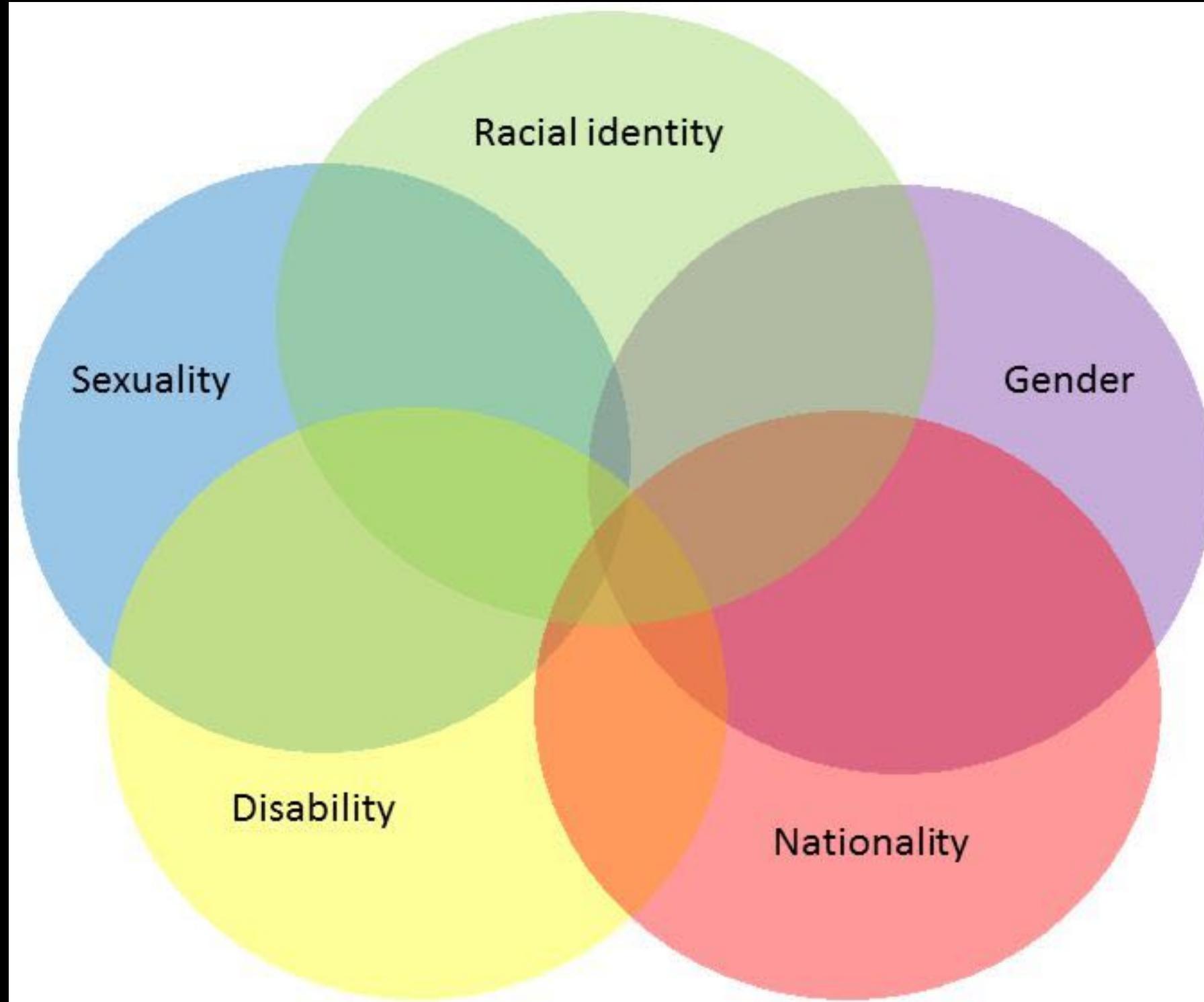


McCarran-Walter Act abolishes race as criteria for immigration

Immigration Act abolishes country preferences to allow Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos.

Japanese survivors of internment camps paid \$20k as reparations

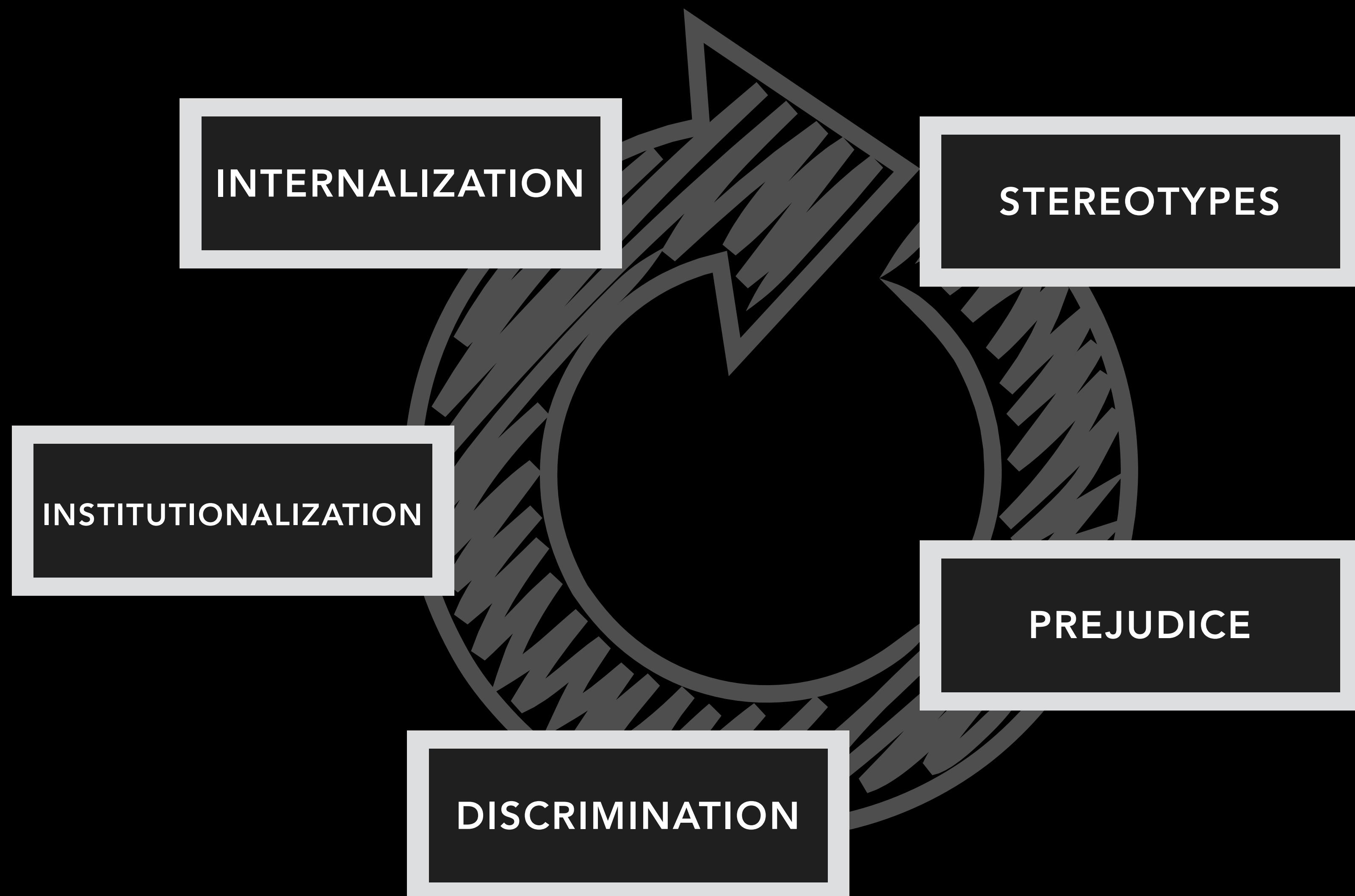
# INTERSECTIONALITY



- Coined by American legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 in "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex"
- Interactions occur within a context of connected systems and structures of power (laws, policies, governments, unions, religious institutions, and media).
- Interdependent forms of privilege and oppression are created in an interactive process.
- Identities are overlapping, as are the types of discrimination one can experience; some are even compounded (ex. Black trans Muslim woman).



# CYCLE OF OPPRESSION





# CYCLE OF OPPRESSION

STEREOTYPES

"WOMEN ARE BAD AT MATH AND SCIENCE"

PREJUDICE

QUESTIONING THE CREDENTIALS OF A  
FEMALE MATH PROFESSOR OR SCIENTIST

DISCRIMINATION

ACTIVELY NOT HIRING WOMEN FOR STEM/TECH JOBS

INSTITUTIONALIZATION

WOMEN MAKE UP 24% OF THE STEM WORKFORCE,  
VERSUS MEN MAKING UP 76%

INTERNALIZATION

68% OF 4TH GRADE GIRLS LIKE STEM  
ONLY 18% MAJOR IN STEM

# CASE STUDIES





WHAT CAN YOU DO?



# FROM THEORY TO ACTION

LEARN

TEACH

ACT

READ, READ, READ!

ATTEND A CLASS OR TWO!

SHARE WITH COLLEAGUES

CONVERSE WITH FAMILY  
& FRIENDS

DRAFT NEW POLICIES,  
SIGN PETITIONS,  
ADVOCATE FOR OTHERS

# EVALUATIONS & CLOSING

