



# Intersectional Perspectives: Race, Class, and Gender in Contemporary Social Life

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9:00am – 4:30pm

## Summary

A child holds a prism to the sun, mesmerized by the scattered array of colorful light that results. She cannot look away. Her vision of a solitary and monolithic light fundamentally shifts to one that reveals variation and difference, sharing some seemingly important properties but diverging in a myriad of directions.

The prism serves as an illustrative metaphor for the concept of intersectionality. Borne out of feminist thought, early intersectional writing brought attention to the ways that women's life experiences were significantly diverse by way of race and social class, and defied encapsulation by a singular narrative. An intersectional lens instead identifies how the confluence of status characteristics produce a constellation of social locations, identities, and experiences. In particular, intersectional perspectives allow us to explore lives on the margins of society, and the inequality and disadvantage that accumulates and results along overlapping race, class, and gender lines.

The objectives of this workshop include review of the origins and theory of intersectionality, discussion of contemporary case studies that utilize intersectional perspectives, and workshop activities that will help illuminate the prism metaphor. We will conclude the session by returning to the workshop series theme of "Democratic Governance, Public Policy, and Social Justice," and discuss ways that intersectional perspectives both challenge and empower us as a polity. Just as the child could not look away from the prism, intersectionality similarly commands our attention as an essential lens for understanding both strife and social change in contemporary global society today.





## Outline

- **Part I: Introduction to Intersectionality**
- **Part II: Origins and Practice of Intersectionality**
  - Lunch Break -
- **Part III: Intersectionality in Global Context**
- **Part IV: Intersectionality, Democracy, and Social Justice**

## Required Readings\*

### **Kimberle Crenshaw Ted Talk:**

Crenshaw, Kimberle (TEDWomen 2016) *The Urgency of Intersectionality*. Available at [https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle\\_crenshaw\\_the\\_urgency\\_of\\_intersectionality](https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality)

### **And please choose ONE video from the Feminist Freedom Warriors archive:**

<http://feministfreedomwarriors.org/>

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade and Linda E. Carty. 2018. *Feminist Freedom Warriors: Genealogies, Justice, Politics, and Hope*. Haymarket Books.

## Recommended Readings

Crenshaw, Kimberlé. 1991. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color" *Stanford Law Review* 43 (6): 1241-1299. [https://www-jstor-org.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/stable/1229039?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www-jstor-org.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/stable/1229039?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents)

Choo, Hae Yoon and Myra Marx Ferree. 2010. "Practicing Intersectionality in Sociological Research: A Critical Analysis of Inclusions, Interactions, and Institutions in the Study of Inequalities," *Sociological Theory*, 28(2): 129-149. <https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/doi/full/10.1111/j.1467-9558.2010.01370.x?sid=EBSCO%3Aedswss>

Lewis, Hope. 2003. "Embracing Complexity: Human Rights in Critical Race Feminist Perspective" *Columbia Journal of Gender and the Law*; New 12(3): 510. <https://heinonline.org/HOL/P?h=hein.journals/coljgl12&i=520>

Collins, Patricia Hill. 2017. "The Difference That Power Makes: Intersectionality and Participatory Democracy," *Investigaciones Feministas*, 8(1): 19-39. <https://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/INFE/article/view/54888>

