“If the structure does not permit dialogue, the structure must be changed.”
- Paulo Freire (Pedagogy of the Oppressed)

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“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: /ˌɪn(t)ərˈseksən(ə)lədə/ (t)

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’

Credit: https://nadataconference.wordpress.com/2015/05/27/pre-education-intersectionality/
...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!

Credit: https://nadtaconference.wordpress.com/2015/05/27/pre-education-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??