

LEVELS AND TYPES OF OPPRESSION: EXAMPLES

INDIVIDUAL

Ableism

- Using words like “crazy,” “stupid,” “lame,” “gimp,” that equate disability with brokenness.
- Not looking people with disabilities in the eye when passing them on the sidewalk, talking to them, etc.

Capitalism/Classism

- An individual believing that poor and low income people don't want to eat healthy.
- Talking to a poor or low income person as though they are less intelligent.

Gender Binary/Transphobia

- Parent gender policing their child: “boys don't cry,” “girls don't get dirty,” “toughen up,” “don't play with that truck, doll,” etc. (This is often based in fear/wanting their child to be safe from bullying and attacks).
- Individual refusing to call a trans or genderqueer person by the pronoun they have said they use

Patriarchy/Sexism

- A feminine person feeling afraid of wearing feminine clothes, or showing skin, and instead feeling a need to wear more masculine clothes in order to gain respect or avoid harassment at work.
- Using words like “bitch,” “girls,” “pussy,” in a way that equates femininity with weakness or wrongness.

White Supremacy and Racism

- Someone crossing the street or locking their doors when a Black man is walking towards them.
- Acting defensive and interpreting it as personal attack when a Person of Color points out racism as it is happening.

INSTITUTIONAL

Ableism

- People with disabilities have higher rates of unemployment, poverty, and homelessness.
- Girls with disabilities are 4 times more likely to be sexually assaulted in the US than girls without disabilities.
- The deinstitutionalization of the mental health system in the 80s has led to the incarceration (rather than care of) people with experiences labeled as mental illness.

Capitalism/Classism

- Studies have found that wealthy districts have three times as many supermarkets as poor ones do, and that urban residents who purchase groceries at small neighborhood stores pay between 3-37% more than suburbanites buying the same products at supermarkets. (Food Empowerment Project)
- In most of the US, schools are funded by property taxes, resulting in poor and low income youth attending schools that receive much as little as 50% of the funding per pupil as schools in wealthy districts.
- Interest rates are based on previous credit, as well as accumulated wealth. Result: people with the least money to spare end up paying the highest interest on money borrowed through credit cards, loans, etc.

Gender Binary/Transphobia

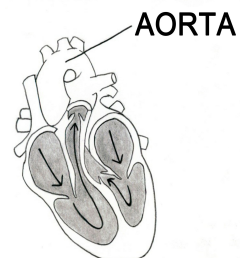
- You need a diagnosis (need to be pathologized) in order to receive trans health care, and trans health care is not covered by most health insurance companies.
- Nationally, trans people are three times more likely to experience police violence.
- Bathrooms are gender segregated in most buildings, forcing trans and gender non-conforming people to have to choose which one to use, and putting them at risk for harassment, violence, and assault.

Patriarchy/Sexism

- Masculine voices dominating in meetings, in terms of time, volume, higher esteem.
- Women and trans people often do unrecognized, undervalued work: taking notes at meetings, recognizing and appreciating people's work, taking care of co-workers, childcare, clean up, etc.
- Globally, men are dominate well-esteemed and well-paid industries (science, political leadership), and in

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the US women earn approximately ¾ of what men earn in a lifetime.

White Supremacy and Racism

- Black men and boys are incarcerated at 6 times the rate of white men and boys in the US.
- Instructing sales personnel to follow People of Color to make sure they don't steal.
- People of Color are paid less than white people for equivalent jobs and education rates. 33% of African American children, 29% of Native American children, and 28% of Latin@ children live below the poverty line (\$20,650 for a family of four in 2007), compared to 9.5% of white children.

CULTURAL

Ableism

- Cultural stories that associate disability with sad, scary, undesirable.
- The myth of independence: that we can be independent, as well as that we *should* be independent.
- Cultural values that place people with disabilities as less valuable, important.

Capitalism/Classism

- Cultural narrative that people who have access to money deserve to have it and have earned it, and those who don't haven't worked hard enough, don't want it, it's their fault, etc.
- Cultural narrative that people's worth is based on our performance as workers: how fast or hard we work, how long we work, how much money we make, how much we contribute to the accumulation of profit.
- The value/belief that plants, animals, land, water, humans, are resources to be exploited and used for amassing profit, rather than things to be tended to, stewarded, and cared for.

Patriarchy/Sexism

- Cultural stories that center misogyny (hatred of women), and devaluethings that are feminized or feminine in our culture.
- Cultural stories that portray men as more competent, “natural” leaders, emotionally stunted, invulnerable, easy to anger, and more deserving of power.
- The myth that current expected gender roles in the US are “natural,” default, or that they are static and have been/will be the same over time.

Transphobia/Gender Binary

- The myth of the gender binary: that there is one (girl/boy, woman/man), as well as the cultural commitment to upholding one.
- The cultural myth that gender and physical anatomy are one and the same.
- Cultural and historical narratives that either portray trans, genderqueer, and gender non-conforming people as anomalies or “freaks” to be publicly displayed, or completely erase trans, genderqueer, and gender non-conforming people from history.

White Supremacy and Racism

- The cultural narrative that white folks are safer, less violent, and better citizens (prominently communicated through main stream media).
- Cultural and historical narratives that teach us to associate white European cultures with “civilization,” “order,” and “advancement” and people of color cultures with “primitive,” “backwards,” and “chaos/violence.”
- In English, “white” is associated with “clean,” “pure,” and “good” while “black” is associated with “dirty,” “disgraced,” and “evil.”

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