

Philosophy of Intersectionality

We all have a number of social identities which uniquely shape our experiences of the world. Perhaps you're not just a woman, you're a Latina woman. And perhaps you're not just a Latina woman, you're a Latina bisexual woman. And perhaps you're not just a Latina bisexual woman, you're a Latina bisexual woman that is a nationally ranked water polo player! And so on...

Intersectionality—first proposed by black feminist theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw—is an analytical framework which considers (1) the ways social identities (e.g., race, class, gender, disability, sexuality, etc.) intersect with one another and (2) the patterns of discrimination and privilege that emerge from those intersections. The study of intersectionality allows us to ask questions like: how are the lived experiences of white women different from black women? How does socioeconomic privilege affect experiences of race (e.g., being a wealthy Asian man vs. a poor Asian man)?

In this class we will survey major topics in philosophy of intersectionality. This course is broken down into three main units: (1) the tools of intersectionality, (2) intersectional identities, and (3) intersectionality and society.

Unit 1: The Tools of Intersectionality

Week 1: What is intersectionality?

Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color"

Elena Ruíz, "Framing Intersectionality"

Week 2: Method of intersectionality

Karen Jones, "Intersectionality and Ameliorative Analyses of Race and Gender"

Catherine McKinnon, "Intersectionality as Method: A Note"

Week 3: The metaphysics of intersectionality

Sara Bernstein, "The Metaphysics of Intersectionality"

Week 4: The epistemology of intersectionality

Alexie Labelle, "Bringing Epistemology into Intersectional Methodologies"

K. Bailey Thomas, "Intersectionality and Epistemic Erasure"

Week 5: Intersectionality and language

Lynn Tirrel, "Language and Power"

Louise Antony “Is There a “Feminist” Philosophy of Language?”

Unit 2: Intersectional Identities

Week 6: Gender

Maria Lugones, “Heterosexism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System”

Ann Garry, “Intersectionality, Metaphors, and the Multiplicity of Gender” (response to Lugones)

Week 7: Race

Natalie Cisernos “Critical Race Theory, Intersectionality, and Feminist Philosophy”

Excerpts from Charles Mills’ Black Rights/White Wrongs: The Critique of Racial Liberalism

Week 8: Disability

Excerpts from Elizabeth Barnes’ The Minority Body

Excerpts from Shelly Tremain’s Foucault and Feminist Philosophy of Disability

Week 9: Sexual Orientation

Robin Dembroff “What is Sexual Orientation”

Esa Díaz-León, “Sexual Orientations: The Desire View”

Week 10: Nationalism

Patrician Hill Collins, “It's All in the Family: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation”

Brudget Byrne, “Rethinking Intersectionality and Whiteness at the Borders of Citizenship”

Unit 3: Intersectionality and Society

Week 11: Solidarity

Alison Bailey, “On Intersectionality, Empathy, and Solidarity.”

Adam Cureton, “Solidarity and Social Moral Rules”

Week 12: Medicine

Yen Ji Julia Byeon et al. “Intersectionality and Clinical Decision-Making: The Role of Race”

Yolonda Wilson et al. “Intersectionality in Clinical Medicine: The Need for a Conceptual Framework”

Week 13: Politics

Nira Yuval-Davis, “Intersectionality and Feminist Politics”

Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Intersectionality and Identity Politics: Learning from Violence Against Women of Color”

Week 14: Work and Organization

Joan Acker, "Inequality Regimes: Gender, Class and Race in Organizations"

Jenny Rodriguez "The Theory and Praxis of Intersectionality in Work and Organisations: Where Do We Go From Here?"