




Using “Intersectionality” in Research on Gender and Fisheries.

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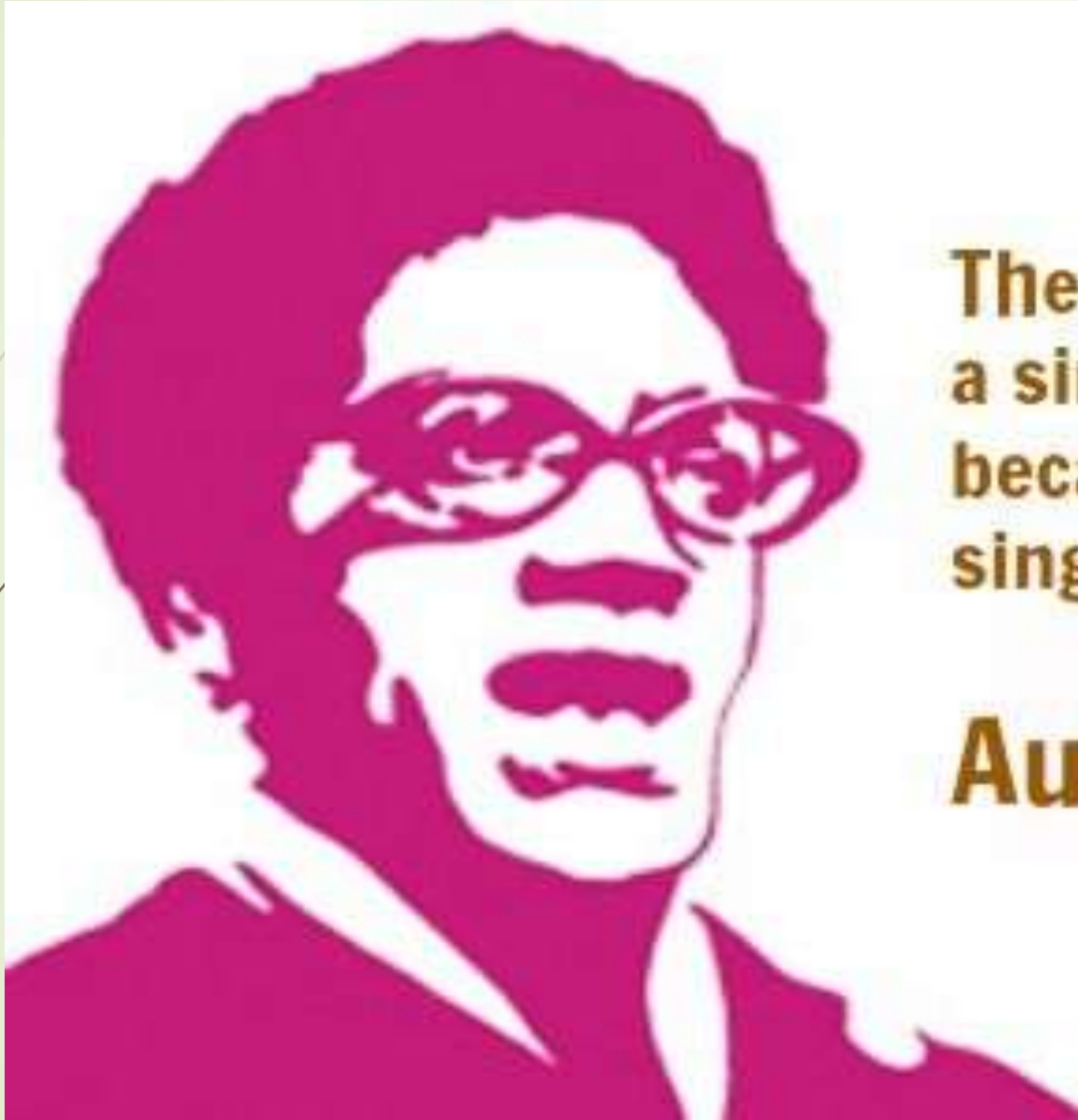
The task for today – to unpack intersectionality as a concept and make it useful

- ▶ Intersectionality – root meaning.
- ▶ No-one is JUST poor, or JUST female, or JUST a fish gleaner, or JUST a mother
- ▶ Power – why it all matters. Who has it, how it can be shared, who benefits from current arrangements, how it can be changed
- ▶ Our task is to see how and where power fits – intersects - with the problems we consider and to make use of “intersectionality” in our research.



Is intersectionality new?

- ▶ Feminist theory got there first e.g. by talking about multiple oppressions, how identities were never singular.
- ▶ How impossible it is to focus on one characteristic to represent all women e.g Beijing 1995
- ▶ CRIAW was using Intersectional Feminist Frameworks in Research 2007
- ▶ OXFAM and other development agencies understood people had intersecting identities and thus problems, which needed complex and intersecting solutions.
- ▶ But some people just knew what it meant. Dorothy Smith on the privilege of “studying up”



**There is no such thing as
a single-issue struggle
because we do not live
single-issue lives.**

Audre Lorde



CRIAW: Intersectional Feminist Frameworks: A Primer

Intersectional Feminist Frameworks (IFFs) aim to foster understanding of the many circumstances that combine with discriminatory social practices to produce and sustain inequality and exclusion. IFFs look at how systems of discrimination, such as colonialism and globalization, can impact the combination of a person's:

- Social or economic status;
- Race;
- Class;
- Gender;
- Sexuality;

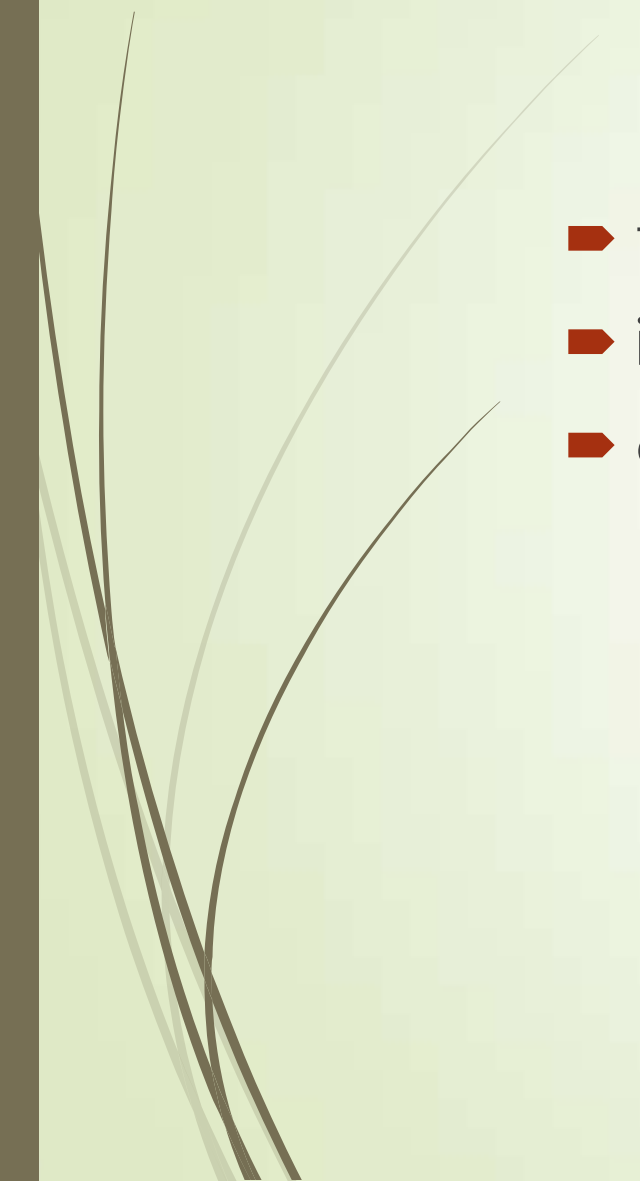


Which resulted in a richer approach to working on diversity

- ▶ are aware of how we are all caught up in systems of power and privilege;
- ▶ Intersectional
- ▶ Integrating world views and knowledge that have historically been marginalized;
- ▶ Understanding that women's varying histories have created many social identities, which place them in different positions of hierarchical power;
- ▶ Making efforts to challenge binary thinking that sustains inequalities, such as able/disabled, gay/straight, white/black, man/woman, West/East, and North/South; and
- ▶ Revealing that this binary thinking is a result of unequal power relations.




So Feminist Frameworks are

- ▶ fluid, specific, diverse, and
 - ▶ interconnected both locally
 - ▶ and globally.
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Other early examples

- ▶ 19th century Black Liberation activist Anna J Cooper
- ▶ Angela Davis
- ▶ Examples in US tend to be about race and gender
- ▶ Examples in UK tend to be about class i.e. being a woman and working class e.g *Stella Browne: A New World for Women*; working class women got the vote much later than property owning women in UK; women workers fired after WW2 to make room for men.
- ▶ Discussions around “Sexual Division of Labour” make clear that sex and class **intersect** to the disadvantage of working class women.

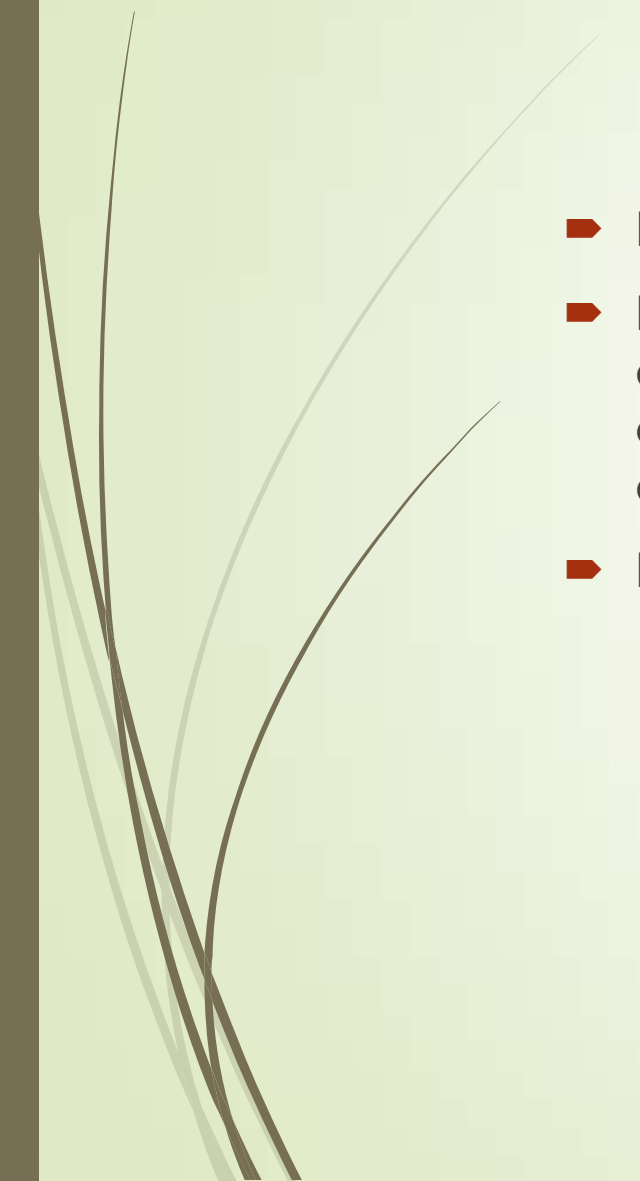



Beginnings of theory based on ideas of intersectionality

- Social inequality
 - Power
 - Relationality
 - Complexity
- 



Intersectionality as critical inquiry

- ▶ Race, class, gender
 - ▶ Because the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism, any analysis that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated.
 - ▶ But, note already, the focus on race and the American context.
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What happened when Crenshaw got involved?

- Social inequality
- Power
- Relationality
- Complexity

But also a narrowing of the range of interests and analysis. Intersectionality became primarily about race, and mostly in the US.





Crenshaw's key example

- ▶ In *DeGraffenreid*, five Black women brought suit against General Motors, alleging that the employer's seniority system perpetuated the effects of past discrimination against Black women. Evidence adduced at trial revealed that General Motors simply did not hire Black women prior to 1964 and that all of the Black women hired after 1970 lost their jobs in a seniority-based layoff during a subsequent recession. The district court granted summary judgment for the defendant, rejecting the plaintiffs' attempt to bring a suit not on behalf of Blacks or women, but specifically on behalf of Black women. The court stated:



Court's decision


- ▶ '[P]laintiffs have failed' to cite any decisions which have stated that Black women are a special class to be protected from discrimination. The Court's own research has failed to disclose such a decision. The plaintiffs are clearly entitled to a remedy if they have been discriminated against. However, they should not be allowed to combine statutory remedies to create a new 'super-remedy' which would give them relief beyond what the drafters of the relevant statutes intended. Thus, this lawsuit must be examined to see if it states a cause of action for race discrimination, sex discrimination, or alternatively either, but not a combination of both.'

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- ▶ But because of Crenshaw's emphasis on race and gender the debate became simplified and more focused on SIMPLY about race (and gender) but mostly about race. E.g
 - ▶ Intersectionality: Patricia Hill Collins and Sirma Bilge
 - ▶ Intersectionality: An Intellectual History. Ange-Marie Hancock



Using Intersectionality in Research that is not just about race

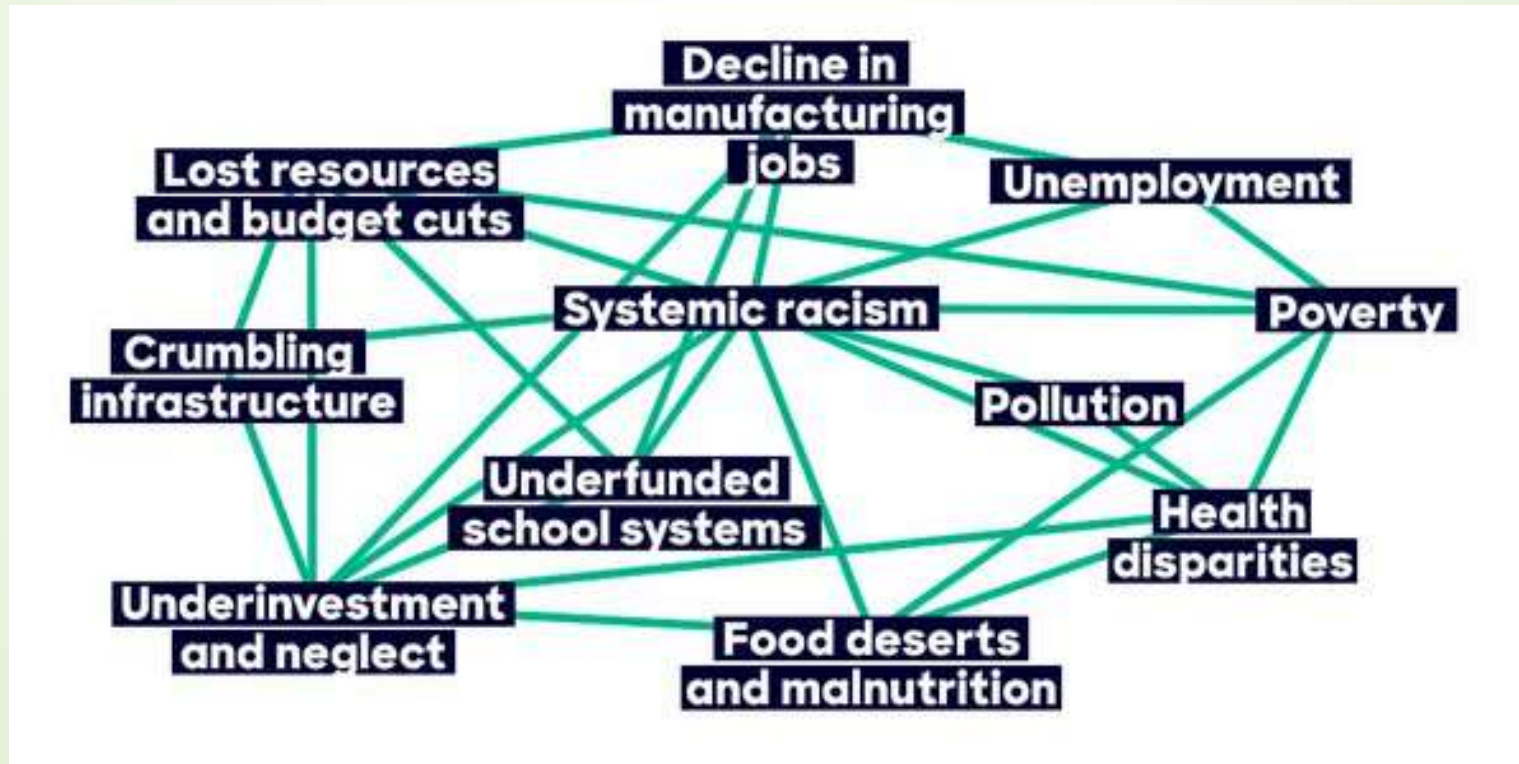
- ▶ “Significant” health gaps found between Canadian and immigrant seniors (Toronto Star 16 May 2017)
- ▶ One problem with white feminism is that it often looks down on other cultures. For example, some white feminists criticize women who wear hijabs under the assumption that their choice of clothing is oppressive. Intersectional feminism requires respecting people of other cultures and religions even if their feminism doesn't look like yours.
- ▶ Being an intersectional feminist is not just about abstract ideals. It's also about examining how intersectionality manifests in our own lives, both when we're oppressed and when we're privileged. It might mean, for example, looking at how being a cisgender woman gives you a privileged position in feminism or how being white has afforded you unfair advantages within the LGBTQ movement.
- ▶ Feminists often talk about the pay gap and other statistics that compare all women to all men. But when we look at race, class, disability, and other factors, it becomes clear that looking at women in the aggregate doesn't tell the whole story. The wage gap, for example, is far higher for black and Latina women, because racial inequality is still a huge problem in the United States.
- ▶ If your intersectional feminism doesn't embrace fat activism, it isn't intersectional



Consequences of taking Intersectionality seriously

- ▶ Using tools for analysis that consider the complexities of
- ▶ women's lives;
- ▶ Making sure policy analysis is centred on the lives of those
- ▶ most marginalized;
- ▶ Attempting to think about women's lives in holistic ways when
- ▶ making policies;
- ▶ Valuing self-reflection in our social justice beliefs so that we include ourselves in the analysis.

Example of how to portray intersectional issues.





Exploring our Intersectional Identities

- ▶ **We all have many identities and social locations. Here are a few possible ones that might apply to you.**
- ▶ - Age, Gender, Religion/Caste, Ethnic Origin, Physical/Mental (Dis)Ability, Sexual orientation - Socio-economic status, Educational background, Employment status, Family/Relationship Appearance, Citizenship, Language proficiency, Political views.....

Can you add any more that are important to you?

- ▶ Briefly summarize your identities using the categories above:
- ▶ The part of my identity that I am most aware of on a daily basis is _____.
- ▶ The part of my identity that I feel others most often identify with me is _____.
- ▶ The part of my identity that I feel gives me the most privilege is _____.
- ▶ The part of my identity that I feel empowers me the most is _____.
- ▶ The part of my identity that makes me feel uncomfortable at times is _____.
- ▶ The part of my identity that I feel I am least aware of is _____.
- ▶ Thinking about privilege and empowerment, how do different parts of your identity intersect one another to give advantage? Disadvantage?
- ▶ Which aspects seem to contradict each other? In what context?



Exercise

- ▶ Develop a chart of the intersectional nature of the gender and fisheries issues in your community or research area.
- ▶ What are the key variables in the intersectional discussion you are looking at – e.g. race, class, ethnicity, location, occupation.
- ▶ Who has the power and how is it exercised.
- ▶ What steps can we take in research and in action to distribute power more equally.