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# Intersectionality

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# *intersectionality*

*it's not feminism if it's not intersectional*

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

If we aren't  
intersectional,  
some of us, the most  
vulnerable, are going  
to fall through  
the cracks.  
-Kimberlé W. Crenshaw





*Intersectionality: deals with every aspect of a persons identity and how those aspects of ones identity create a unique and singular relationship with oppression and privilege . What aspects of your identity grant you privilege, within and outside of what communities? What aspects of your identity subject you to oppression, and is it under members of your own community as well as those outside of it? How do you define your community?*

Ask yourself what is right to you  
The fight to freedom  
cannot be made of selfish, clambering, prisoners  
So desperate to free themselves  
they shackle others  
When you imagine your people  
Who do you see

Ask yourself if what is right to you  
does only right by you  
When you imagine the struggle  
Who is right beside you  
Who is left far behind  
Under your own feet  
Or forgotten

Writing by: Lola Williams

There are so many remarkable women I can thank for my rights, but when I think about intersectionality Sojourner Truth and Emily Dickinson are the first two women that pop into my head. Emily Dickinson was a young woman that was first introduced to me during my junior of year of high school. One of my favorite teachers taught me about women who were poets and writers, Emily Dickinson being one of them. For being so young, she was such a badass and showed this through her poems. Needless to say, she didn't give a fuck about what anyone thought. She was a poet, but more importantly she was a feminist. Anyone who has read some of her poems could tell that she didn't agree with the expectation for women to be submissive to a man. In addition to her work, it was also suggested that Dickinson was homosexual as illustrated in a letter she wrote to her sister. Even if it wasn't explicitly said, I would consider her to be intersectional feminist. Her poems always made me think about how I lived my life and if I was living it with intention. In addition to Dickinson, I think that we can all agree that Sojourner Truth is the essential woman when it comes to intersectionality. I don't have to know much to know the importance of "Aint I a Woman" and the other work Sojourner Truth has done. I read it for the first time years ago and in simpler terms it moved me, but it is even more moving when it is read dramatically. Sojourner Truth is an abolitionist that I will always look up to in my life and a woman that I want to teach my kids about someday like my dad taught me. She helped me understand the importance of working twice as hard and realize the struggles I will face for being colored. That's why today I look up to women like Olivia Pope from the tv show Scandal, Serena Williams, and Michelle Obama. Being African-American, they do not shy away from conversations about their race or gender which is what makes them so badass and powerful. Both Sojourner Truth and Emily Dickinson have moved me and created beautiful poems that should never be forgotten. They taught me something that no one can take away from me.

Writing by: Mya Gamble





# intersectionality poem

Think about your identity  
Think about every little thing that makes you, you  
Your personality, morals, goals...your gender, your sexuality, your race  
Think about choosing between two of those  
I'm telling you know, that's a problem you don't want to face

Intersectionality feminism, a term that is known by some but not all  
Foreign to some and brought down by others  
You grow up as a little girl not knowing how your characteristics are going to affect you  
You don't think about what other people will say, you just be you  
It's not your fault that you didn't know it was oppression

For the little girls out there, don't let society bring down your self expression  
Because you may think of your identity is made up of different worlds  
But the truth is they all come together to form one unique relationship  
A relationship that will remain apart of you no matter the amount of discrimination  
One bad experience and you hope it is only problem you will be facing

But that's just you, for me it was a little different  
I grew up not being comfortable with my skin tone  
It was like little me felt like having dark skin wouldn't make her look pretty  
As I got more comfortable with my skin I didn't think I would have to face oppression  
I felt naive for not knowing if I was facing discrimination

I started to question everything and the way I was seen in the nation  
But then I realized that this gloomy storm wouldn't disappear  
Because as long as I was an African-American woman  
I would have to get used to it and be strong

Because when we find out our worlds collide there is no going back  
Our identity is worth plenty  
So even if we are among those oppressed  
Remember that we can't choose between two worlds because they are one  
And they are apart of you

So, think about the little things that are actually big things  
Because intersectionality is what makes you, you



F a c t

c h e c k

- BLACK TRANSGENDER PEOPLE EXPERIENCE UNEMPLOYMENT AT 4 TIMES THE RATE OF THE GENERAL POPULATION
- THEY ARE 8 TIMES AS LIKELY TO BE LIVING IN EXTREME POVERTY
- ALMOST HALF OF BLACK TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS HAVE EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS
- OVER HALF OF BLACK TRANSGENDER PEOPLE HAVE BEEN SEXUALLY ASSAULTED
- THEY ARE LIVING WITH HIV AT 5 TIMES THE RATE OF THE OVERALL U.S. POPULATION

Writing by: Autumn Sumruld

Support  
your  
Sisters  
NOT JUST YOUR  
CISTERS





## So Then What Am I?

My grandfather told me that I am Black, that I  
come from the strongest stock, people who turned  
living into an art, only ever creating, something from  
nothing, the truest extent of humanness, and I feel  
like an artist, a beautiful, beloved, Black artist  
My wuela told me that I am Latina, that I come  
from a people who neither land, nor white male hate  
and thievery could halt, healers, healing our land  
and our people, our torn culture, patched with love  
and longing for a time when we knew who we are  
My mother told me I am a woman, reviled  
for that thing between my legs, for my walk and  
my talk, for everything that I do, I am told that I come  
from nothing but strong women, loud, angry women,  
beaten, always rising, and I feel taller  
My love tells me I am gay, a shadow people,  
who have only ever known the loneliest parts of love,  
and who have loved in spite of it, a lost people, dead,  
tortured and split apart, always scared, always angry,  
but always loving, always loving

Writing by: Lola Williams

## So Then What Am I?

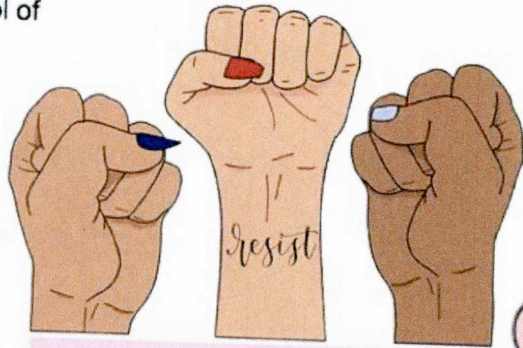
I am told that Black women are lesser, that  
we come from the rib of some man long ago, that  
we are meant to be peace and warmth, when  
we ourselves were never taught to cradle our  
own hearts, to guard them as well as we do our men  
I am told that a Latina lesbian is best saved as  
a porn category, a fetishists wet-dream,  
but never something to bring home to abuela,  
a lost tradition from a trove of stolen lore  
I am told that I am hated because of what is  
between my legs, but I look into her eyes and her  
earnest insistence that she is a woman, despite  
the pain it has already caused her, and I see a sister.  
Perhaps it is just that men hate women, not just  
vaginas or whatever other part of us they can get  
their hands on  
I see what they think I am and I am disgusted,  
I remember who I was taught to be and I am filled  
with a lovely warmth. If they know nothing of  
our struggle, they know nothing of the love that comes  
from it. They know nothing of me.

Writing by: Lola Williams



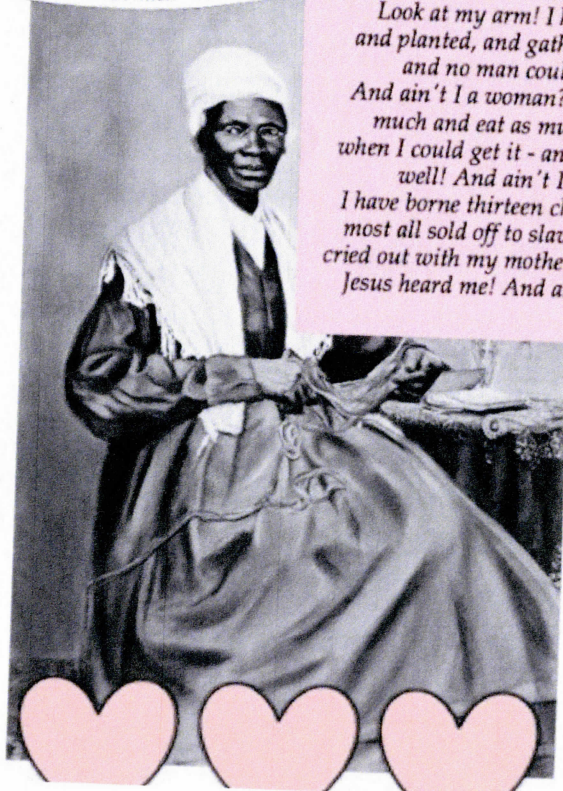
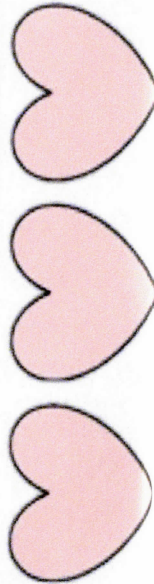
Writing by: Autumn Sumrucl

Although Sojourner Truth lived before 3rd Wave feminism, when intersectionality came to light, she is often seen as the symbol of intersectionality. Her famous speech, "Ain't I A Woman?" demanded freedom for women of color. The speech was given in 1851 at the Ohio Women's Rights Convention. Truth also recruited black troops during the Civil War and fought to secure land grants for former slaves.



*That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man - when I could get it - and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman?*

SOJOURNER TRUTH



Starting in the 90s and moving onto present day times, intersectionality was a concept that was first introduced to us in the third wave of feminism. A big factor of the third wave was women's focus on their pleasure, agency, sexuality, and lastly their identity. When looking at intersectional feminism, identity is the one factor that summarizes what intersectional women believe in. Yes, intersectional feminist want to fight for inequality, patriarchy, reproduction rights. However, it goes deeper than that because they also want to fight for their rights for being a person of color or being apart of the LGBTQ community for example. A good way to understand it is to think about how every woman belongs to a certain race, gender, class, along with other communities. Considering that each of these communities is important to the individual, and essential to their identity, of course they are going to want to fight for their rights within these communities.

Writing by: Mya Gamble

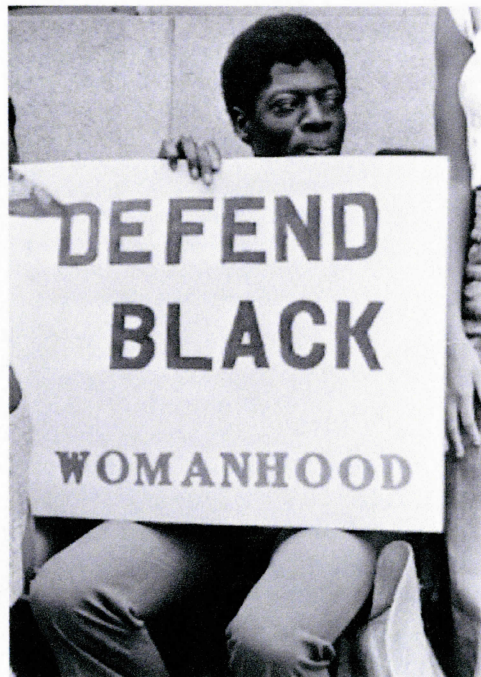
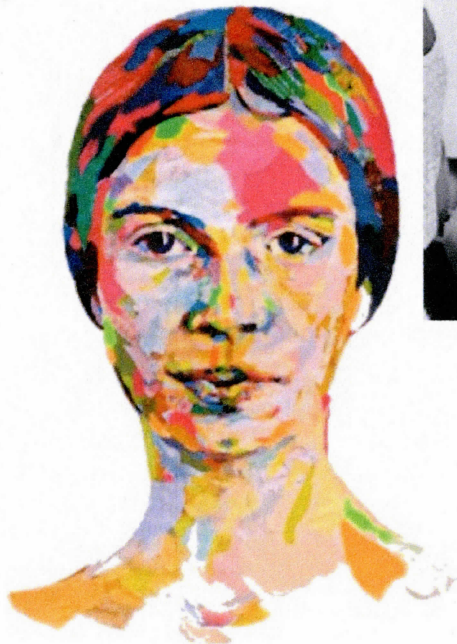


For me personally, intersectionality was a concept and term that was introduced to me a little late in the game. I guess you can say that I wasn't as "woke" as I should have been. I always considered myself to be knowledgeable, but I knew there was more I needed to know about myself, the woman around me, and the women who came before me. Deep down, I was an intersectional feminist, but it took me a while to discover it or know the term for the different rights I believed in. Looking back at it now, I'm disappointed in myself for not knowing earlier. Evidently, my gender is a big part of me and it's something that I would never want to change no matter how hard it is. But growing up as an African-American woman in this world hasn't been the easiest either. I watch the news and see young, colored women facing challenges that I would never wish upon anyone and think about how that could have easily been me in their shoes. Attacking me for being a woman hits hard, but attacking my race also really packs a punch. I can't fight for my rights as a woman without fighting for my rights for being black because it is apart of my oppression.



Growing up, they are several women I looked up to as an inspiration and motivation to be a better me. Ironically, now that I think about it, my father was trying to pound intersectionality into my head and taught me how to be a strong woman when I was just a little girl. He did it in a nice way to help me learn, but he never sugar coated it for me. He made me read books when I was little about colored women and their struggles even if I was too young to understand it. If he was here today, I would thank him for making me read these books and listen to songs about being a woman when I was little because it made me discover and realize so much. I just wish I would have know what he was trying to do at a young age.

Writing by: Mya Gamble



You Cannot Fight Your Sisters Fight  
For Her, You Can Only Ensure You Do  
Not Add To Her Oppression. That You  
Do Not Steal Her Voice, When It Has  
Been Denied To Her For So Long

I want to tell her I don't know  
What my skin means  
Who I'd choose, if given the choice  
That I cannot choose  
No more than I can split my body into parts  
Strip away the me,  
the love hidden between each divide  
If I were to say I don't know who I am  
She'd feel as though I were calling her a stranger  
Not my beloved aunt  
Whose life has been so different from my own  
Whose walk has been littered with glass  
But still moving ever upward  
I don't know how I can say  
That I recognize myself in her  
But not in her skin  
So I stay on my little flat plain  
Glass digging into my feet  
Gazing ever upward

Writing by: Lola Williams

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**Chapman University**

*Created By:*  
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