SOCIAL JUSTICE TERMS

Language is not neutral. Language is our window to see history and the dynamics at play. Just as our world changes, so does language. "Language evolves. And it's our responsibility to keep up with it." - Disability Regramed on Instagram

About these terms

- **This is not a dictionary**

Dictionaries provide standard definitions of words presented in alphabetical order. Here, terms are grouped by headers that describe the perspective or the location where that term exists or is speaking to.

- **Who defines a term is important!**

We prioritized definitions or explanations from communities that are directly impacted by oppression. We are committed to updating these terms regularly.

- **Language is powerful when there is action behind it. A**

Please do not just read these terms and turn away. Use these terms to personally reflect on your ongoing journey as an ally. Integrate these terms in your day-to-day. Bring it into conversations with others, and let it lead you to policy change. Examine where you can educate others.

Let's begin!

About us

We facilitate transformative spaces for white allies and majority white organizations. Connect with us here: www.invisibleparadigms.com/consulting

INVISIBLE PARADIGMS

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Key Frameworks – *these encompass foundational legacies of oppression and power that co*

Anti-Black: Is a a two-part formation that both voids Blackness of value, while systematically marginalizing Black people and their issues. The first form of anti-Blackness is overt racism. Society also associates un-politically correct comments with the overt nature of anti-Black racism. Beneath this anti-black racism is the covert structural and systemic racism which categorically predetermines the socioeconomic status of Blacks in this country. The structure is held in place by anti-Black policies, institutions, and ideologies. Source: The Council for Democratizing Education

Anti-Oppression: the framework for understanding the world and one's own place in it, questioning and challenging one's practices, and creating new approaches that counter oppression and lead toward reconciliation and decolonization. Source: Asma-na-hi Antoine, Rachel Mason, Roberta Mason, Sophia Palahicky, and Carmen Rodriguez de France

Decolonization: the process of deconstructing colonial ideologies of the superiority and privilege of Western thought and approaches. Decolonization involves valuing and revitalizing Indigenous knowledge and approaches, and rethinking Western biases or assumptions that have impacted Indigenous ways of being. Source: Asma-na-hi Antoine, Rachel Mason, Roberta Mason, Sophia Palahicky, and Carmen Rodriguez de France

Diversity: A justice-orientated state of inclusivity that actively values and celebrates people of all social identities, backgrounds and experiences. With regards to racial inclusivity, this means actively dismantling whiteness while simultaneously empowering people of color. Source: White Coats for Black Lives

Eurocentrism: 1. The process and product of the cultural default of Whiteness. 2. The utilization of European cultural standards as universal standards that all

should be judged by. 3. To orient to European people and cultures as the benchmark of: humanity, culture, truth, virtue, style, beauty, civility, knowledge, and ethics; a deification of European people and their cultures

Intersectionality: Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects. It's not simply that there's a race problem here, a gender problem here, and a class or LBGTQ problem there. Many times that framework erases what happens to people who are subject to all of these things. Source: Kimberle Crenshaw

Mysogyny/ Trans Mysogyny: A tool used by cis/sexism and cisheteropatriarchy to enforce strict gender roles and expectations on girls and women, both cis and trans. It directs concentrated violence and involves active hostility and/or opposition towards those who do not identify, present, or express themselves as masculine and/or men. While some progress has been made, in many parts of the world this historically results in a disproportionate rate of verbal/emotional/sexual/physical harassment, homelessness, poverty, suicide and death by murder." Source: The Anti-Oppression Network

Patriarchy: A sex/gender system of authoritarian male dominance and reinforced female dependency, characterized within capitalist society by certain characteristics. Source: Manning Marable

Racialization: 1. The ongoing process by which we all are shaped by racial grouping or "racialized" by structural policies/practices, institutional/organizational cultures, and interpersonal interactions. 2. Our daily experiences of being "raced" or "racialized." 3. An acknowledgment that this daily experience. Source: YWCA Boston

Racism: Racism is different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices. Racism = race prejudice + social and institutional power. Source: Dismantling Racism Workbook

Transmisogynoir: The marginalization of black trans women and trans feminine people that is inclusive of transphobia, racism, and misogyny, and how all of these intersect. Takes into account that black women face a different, racialized form of misogyny that is compounded with transphobia.

Whiteness: An ideology derives from the historical practice of institutionalizing "white supremacy." "It is like the fishbowl that contains both fish and water. Whiteness, in other words, provides the very context for meaning-making. It supplies the norms and categories against which all groups are measured. But the categories of whiteness are invisible as a constraint because we keep focusing on what is inside them - the water and the fish, rather than the fishbowl itself." – Toni Morrison. Definition by Clarck University

White Supremacy: The idea (ideology) that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to People of Color and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions. While most people associate white supremacy with extremist groups like the Ku Klux Klan and the neo-Nazis, white supremacy is ever present in our institutional and cultural assumptions that assign value, morality, goodness, and humanity to the white group while casting people and communities of color as worthless (worth less), immoral, bad, and inhuman and "undeserving." Drawing from critical race theory, the term "white supremacy" also refers to a political or socio-economic system where white people enjoy structural advantage and rights that other racial and ethnic groups do not, both at a collective and an individual level. Source: Dismantling Racism

Agents of Change - *describes terms, tools or practices that necessary to spark change.*

Ally vs. Accomplice: **An ally** will mostly engage in activism by standing with an individual or group in a marginalized community. An **accomplice** will focus more on dismantling the structures that oppress that individual or group - and such work

will be directed by the stakeholders in the marginalized group. Source: Teaching Tolerance

Accountability: Accountability is a keystone of racial equity work. Accountability, as used in this website, refers to creating processes and systems that are designed to help individuals and groups to be held in check for their decisions and actions and for whether the work being done reflects and embodies racial justice principles. Accountability in racial equity work is about consistently checking the work against a set of questions:

- How is the issue being defined? Who is defining it?
- Who is this work going to benefit if it succeeds? Who will benefit if the work does not succeed?
- How are risks distributed among the stakeholders? How will a group know if its plan has accounted for risks and unintended consequences for different racial and ethnic groups?
- What happens if people pull out before the goals are met? Who anointed the people and groups being relied on for the answers to these questions?
- Who else can answer these questions to guide the work?

SOURCE: Paul Kivel, Racial Equity Tools

Naming: The active practice of articulating, or bringing into focus, a thought, experience that traditionally is not addressed. Source: In.Visible Paradigms

Beautiful Identities - *celebrates and affirms personal identifiers that may be consistently under attack in white supremacy.*

Asexual: an identity term for a people who either do not feel sexual attraction or do not feel desire for a sexual partner or partners. Some asexual individuals may still have romantic attractions.

Black: Black is defined as a person who identifies as Black AND has African indigenous ancestry that predates colonization (be located anywhere in the diaspora–excluding generic claims of Dinknesh (or also known as Lucy) descendants). Source: The Movement for Black Lives

Indigenous: A term used to encompass a variety of Aboriginal groups. It is most frequently used in an international, transnational, or global context. This term came into wide usage during the 1970s when Aboriginal groups organized transnationally and pushed for greater presence in the United Nations (UN). In the UN, "Indigenous" is used to refer broadly to peoples of long settlement and connection to specific lands who have been adversely affected by incursions by industrial economies, displacement, and settlement of their traditional territories by others. Source: Indigenous Foundations

Intersex: A person whose genitals, secondary sex characteristics, chromosomes, and/or hormone levels do not fit into the medical/societal definition of male or female.

Queer: An adjective used by some people, particularly younger people, whose sexual orientation is not exclusively heterosexual (e.g. queer person, queer woman). Typically, for those who identify as queer, the terms lesbian, gay, and bisexual are perceived to be too limiting and/or fraught with cultural connotations they feel do not apply to them. Once considered a pejorative term, queer has been reclaimed by some LGBTQ people to describe themselves. However, it is not a universally accepted term even within the LGBTQ community, so use caution when using it outside of describing the way someone self-identifies or in a direct quote. When Q is seen at the end of LGBT, it typically means queer. In a setting for support, particularly for youth, it may mean questioning. Ask people how they describe themselves before labeling their sexual orientation. **Source: GLAAD**

LGBTQIAP+: Refers to people, or the community of people, who face oppression for their gender identity, sexual identity, or sexual anatomy. The letters in the acronym stand for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Pansexual. The + takes the place of additional letters and their corresponding identities, such as Two-spirit or Polyamorous.

Genderqueer: an identity term for a person who may not identify with and/or express themselves within the gender binary.

Internal Dimensions - *describes terms that one may not immediately recognize or is not externally represented.*

Embodiment: "to study, to examine, to question." Source: Lama Rod Owens The process of locating ourselves within our experience(s) through studying, examining, and questioning our positionality, our Dharma (the whole truth), etc. In anti-oppression, Embodiment refers to the practice of disrupting the habitation already happening in our bodies, our minds, our behaviors, our dynamics of how we relate to another, to create new pathways of spaciousness and liberation Source: Shayla Monteiro

Positionality: is used to refer to our locations in our communities and the world, based on class, geopolitical place, nationality, citizenship, religion, and level of education, to name but a few (Alcott 1988; Anzaldua 1987). For example, you might be living in Canada, in your first year of university, born in South Africa, a Buddhist, and struggling to pay for your living expenses yet able- bodied and employed. All of these locations and your experiences add to your understanding of yourself and the world around you." Source: How Do I Know What I Know, Epistemology And Theory by Bromley

Cisgender: Individuals whose gender identity and expression line up with their birth-assigned sex. Cis is latin for 'on the same side'. A cisgender person is a person whose gender identity is aligned with the sex they were assigned at birth. Source: GLAAD

Gender: A Eurocolonial social construct. Gender is an array of mental behavioral characteristics that relate to differentiate from and go beyond understandings of masculinity, femininity, and neutrality. Source: Smarter In Seconds on IG by Blair Imani and Dr. Shay-Akil McLean

constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society deems masculine or feminine. This social construct is often linked to and confused with the biological construct of sex. Source:

Gender Identity: A person's innate sense of their own gender: being a man, a woman, a girl, a boy, in between, or outside of the gender binary. You cannot look at someone and "see" their gender identity.

Gender Pronouns and Gender Neutral Pronouns: A pronoun is a word that refers to either the people talking (I or you) or someone or something that is being talked about (like she, it, them, and this). Gender pronouns (he/she/they/ze etc.) specifically refer to people that you are talking about. Gender neutral or gender inclusive pronoun is a pronoun which does not associate a gender with the individual who is being discussed [they/them/theirs/ ze]. Source: University of Milwuakee

Trans: Is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. For transgender people, the sex they were assigned at birth and their own internal gender identity do not match. People in the transgender community may describe themselves using one (or more) of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) transgender, transsexual, and non-binary. Always use the term used by the person. Transgender is an adjective and should never be used as a noun. For example, rather than saying "Max is a transgender," say "Max is a transgender person" or "Max is a transgender man." And transgender never needs an "-ed" at the end. Source: GLAAD

White Solipsism: To speak, imagine and think as if whiteness described the world. Source: Adrienne Rich

Neurodiversity: An approach to learning and disability that argues diverse neurological conditions result from normal variations in the human genome. This portmanteau of neurological and diversity originated in the late 1990s as a challenge to prevailing views of neurological diversity as inherently pathological, instead asserting that neurological differences should be recognized and respected as a social category on a par with gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or disability status. Source. www.Disabled-World.com

Institutional/Systemic – *includes pervasive ideologies of oppression that are built into institutions and upheld by*

Ableism: Any statement or behavior directed at a disabled person that denigrates or assumes a lesser status for the person because of their disability. Social habits, practices, regulations, laws, and institutions that operate under the assumption that disabled people are inherently less capable overall, less valuable in society, and / or should have less personal autonomy than is ordinarily granted to people of the same age. Source: Andrew Pulrang

Cissexism: The system of oppression that values cisgender people, upholds the gender binary, and marginalizes, oppresses, and makes invisible the lives and experiences of transgender people.

Ableism: The pervasive system of discrimination and exclusion that oppresses people who are disabled, including differences in mental, cognitive, emotional, and/or physical abilities, through attitudes, actions, or institutional policies. Source: UC Davis

Heterosexism: A system that produces social and physical barriers based on one's sexual orientation, specifically individuals who are questioning, lesbian, non-labeling, bisexual, asexual, queer, pansexual, gay, or identify in any other way that is not heterosexual/straight. Heterosexism depends on the binary of straight and gay, making invisible the vast spectrum and fluidity of sexual orientation. It also enforces, and is enforced by, the gender binary. Source: The Anti-Oppression Network

Ageism: The stereotyping and/or discrimination against individuals or groups on the basis of their age. It may be defined by legal definitions per state to receive certain benefits. Ageism is primarily experienced by individuals older that 50 years. SOURCE: Creative Equals

Sexism: A system that produces social and physical barriers based on gender, specifically for girls and women. Sexism historically conflates one's sex (our

genitalia, anatomy, chromosomes, hormones, and reproductive organs) with our gender (our gender expression and gender identity) and depends on the gender binary of women and men. This binary also erases intersex and trans girls and women. Source: The Anti-Oppression Network

Sizeism: A system of oppression that produces social and physical barriers based on the size of one's body, specifically weight, height, or both. Different cultures have internalized attitudes towards certain sizes, and depending on where one is in the world, someone may be considered especially tall, short, or fat. Specifically in Western culture, sizeism depends on the binary of thin and fat; "average" height and dwarf. The manifestation of these forms of oppression have been linked to eating disorders, depression and anxiety. Sizeism intersects with the medical industrial complex. Source: The Anti-Oppression Network

Systemic Violence refers to institutional practices or procedures that adversely affect groups or individuals psychologically, mentally, culturally, economically, spiritually, or physically. In a school context, such violence is an unwanted interruption of the student's learning process and the quest for full human potential. Structural violence refers to the kinds of harm that social structures in general may perpetrate upon individuals. Source: Criminal Justice

Personal Transformation – *A necessary part of social justice, these terms begin to provide you with different paths into personal transformation.*

Liberation: A state of being grounded in one's evolving identity, free movement, free from bias, imposed expectations, control, and violence towards one's place in the world, including the policing of it. Liberation is an ongoing process and practice of self-governance, accountability, responsibility, and transparency with oneself and within one's community. It requires ongoing acknowledgement of oppression in all its forms and on all levels of society, reparations, meaningful

reconciliation directed by those targeted by oppression, and transformational changes on personal, positional, institutional and systemic levels of society. Source: The Anti-Oppression Network

Self-Reflection: is a process of introspection, self-analysis, and understanding of what is happening inside of you (i.e. thoughts, feelings, etc.) and how this translates into our practice of being, moving, perceiving, and relating to the world and ourselves. Source: An in-depth conversation with Dr. Caridad Souza and Shayla Monteiro

Self-Reflexivity: is a feminist praxis (a theory and a practice) of how we understand ourselves in context (social-historical, etc.) and in relationship to power and privilege. Source: How Do I Know What I Know, Epistemology and Theory" by Bromley.

Interpersonal Oppression – *these terms describe how we may reinforce values of others across social interactions.*

Interpersonal Oppression: The way in which we play violence out on each other, based on oppression. Source: Grassroots Fundraising

Microaggression: a term used for brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative prejudicial slights and insults toward any group. Source: Psychologist Derald Wing Sue

White Fragility: White Fragility is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium. By. Robin DiAngelo

Cultural and Ideological – *these terms include certain sociocultural currencies that allow oppression to exist or displace the humanity of communities it is affecting*

Cultural Appropriation: using intellectual property, traditional knowledge, cultural expressions, or artifacts from someone's culture without permission. It is most harmful when the source culture is a group that has been oppressed or exploited in other ways (as with Indigenous Peoples), or when the object of appropriation is particularly sensitive or sacred. Source:Asma-na-hi Antoine, Rachel Mason, Roberta Mason, Sophia Palahicky, and Carmen Rodriguez de France

Erasure: The conscious and unconscious practice of excluding history, participation, visibility, of marginalized communities and/or leaders from the collective memory of society. Source: In.Visible Paradigms

Heteronormativity: The belief (on an individual, systemic, and ideological level) that straightness and straight relationships are the default, and are more "normal" than queerness. Source: GLAAD

Model Minority Myth: Refers to a stereotype of ethnic, racial, or religious group whose members are perceived to achieve a higher degree of success than the population average. Source: White Coats for Black Lives

Oppression: The systemic and pervasive nature of social inequality woven throughout social institutions as well as embedded within individual consciousness. Oppression fuses institutional and systemic discrimination, personal bias, bigotry, and social prejudice in a complex web of relationships and structures that saturate most aspects of life in our society.

- Oppression denotes structural and material constraints that significantly shape a person's life chances and sense of possibility.

- Oppression also signifies a hierarchical relationship in which dominant or privilege groups benefit, often in unconscious ways, from the disempowerment of subordinated or targeted groups.
- Oppression resides not only in external social institutions and norms but also within the human psyche as well.

Eradicating oppression ultimately requires struggle against all its forms, and that building coalitions among diverse people offers the most promising strategies for challenging oppression systematically. As Source: Adams, Bell, and Griffin, editors. Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. New York: Routledge

Racial Profiling: The systemic targeting, surveillance, policing, and harassment of people of color that begins with the assumption that people of color are more likely to be criminals. At the community level, the discriminatory practice of racial profiling has emerged as a national concern. African-Americans, Native Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, and Arab-Americans, have reported being unfairly targeted by police who use race, ethnicity, national origin, religion and even gender when choosing which individuals should be subjected to stops, searches, seizures, and frisks on the streets, during routine traffic stops, at national borders and in airports.