DECONSTRUCTING PRIVILEGE

Teaching and Learning as Allies in the Classroom

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8

RECOGNIZING PRIVILEGE BY REDUCING INVISIBILITY

The Global Feminisms Project as a Pedagogical Tool

Desdamona Rios and Abigail J. Stewart

> As psychologists, feminists, and activists, we must ask who is not here, and how does that affect, shape, comfort, or define those of us in the room.
>
> (Fine, 2002, p. 19)

In the introduction to this collection, Kim Case describes an emotional outburst by a student about people of color being "animals" (Case, this volume). In the instance of Case's student, the high visibility of people of color as criminals represents a stereotype not easily challenged because of a lack of positive representations of people of color. Invisibility secures privilege because it allows for discrimination against others based on limited information about them. Invisibility differs from absence because privileged group members use invisibility as an exclusionary tool in educational curricula (among other domains). The absence of representations or information about marginalized groups may also be interpreted by privileged persons as a lack of participation, interest, or contribution by marginalized (and invisible) groups. Understanding invisibility as an act of exclusion provides privileged group members with an understanding of the power of representation for all groups of people across political and social domains. Invisibility is either absolute or relative, with absolute invisibility meaning that no representations of a particular group exist, whereas relative invisibility implies limited representation, including misrepresentations and negative representations of a particular group (Fryberg & Townsend, 2008). Additionally, intersectional invisibility renders some groups invisible at intersections of more than one subordinated status (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008), as experienced by Black feminists and documented in the book *All the Women are White, All the Blacks are Male, But Some of Us are Brave* (Hull, Scott, & Smith, 1982). Groups who see

limited or no representations of their group face the difficult task of resisting negative stereotypes because of a lack of positive examples with which to identify (Steele, 1997). Without knowledge of positive counter examples, privileged group members may not challenge negative stereotypes about marginalized groups (Hegarty & Pratto, 2001; Stewart, Latu, Branscombe, Phillips, & Denney, 2012). In the worst case, people who do not fit the implicit prototype of their identity groups, such as women of color or women with disabilities, may be rendered totally invisible in the imagination of students. Asking students to list the names of famous people of color or persons with disabilities often results in a list of mostly men of color and only men with disabilities, indicating gender privilege in both instances.

Peggy McIntosh (1988) cautioned against imagining privilege as an achievement to be coveted. Privilege operates within an invisible system that normalizes the dominance of one group over another regardless of their intention or desire. In this system of power, those with unearned privilege reinterpret basic human rights, such as access to education, safe housing, health care, and reproductive freedom, as privileges earned under the assumption that everyone has equal access to the same resources (Wise & Case, this volume). Our particular focus includes these unearned privileges, including those that accrue to some groups simply because they belong to socially dominant or high-status groups.

The following sections offer strategies for teaching students about the ways in which invisibility maintains unearned privilege, as well as interventions for making the invisible visible. We use examples from the Global Feminisms Project (GFP), an archive of interviews with women activists and scholars from China, India, Poland, Nicaragua, and the United States, to illustrate these points. Key questions for teachers include:

- Without consistent and frequent examples from instructors of groups who are invisible to some degree, how will students fill these knowledge gaps (if they seek the information at all)?
- How does invisibility of information facilitate students imagining that they earned their privilege when, in many cases, privilege gets granted rather than earned?

Working on the GFP, we learned much about the role of invisibility in our own lives. Even as feminists who consider ourselves to be allies to most groups of people, we discovered some social issues remained invisible to us. For example, the invisibility of disability in mainstream contexts as well as the absence of disability in my (Desdamona's) family rendered the disabled invisible in my imagination. After participating as an audience member for the taping of disability rights activist Adrienne Asch's interview, I recognized disability as a marginalized and invisible identity. As a result, I now include disability issues across my curricula to

reduce the invisibility of this marginalized group. Providing diverse exemplars in curricula moves privileged students away from stereotypes or fragmented ideas about "other" groups, provides marginalized students with exemplars with which they can identify (Rios, Stewart, & Winter, 2010), and illuminates the corners in which groups with intersecting subordinate identities become invisible (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008).

The Global Feminisms Project

The GFP is an archive of interviews with 53 women activists and scholars from China, India, Poland, Nicaragua, and the United States, and two additional interviews with women born in India now residing in the United States (for overviews of the project, see Lal, McGuire, Stewart, Zaborowska, & Pas, 2010; Stewart, Lal, & McGuire, 2011). Although maintained by the Institute for Research on Women and Gender at the University of Michigan, each country's GFP project team selected their interviewees and developed their interview protocols based on their own criteria. Interviews include background information about the interviewee's life, her work, and reflections on her work as it relates to feminism. While interview questions varied across each interview, site coordinators video-recorded all interviews, which spanned 1 to 3 hours. The interviews are available in both written and video form on the GFP website (www.umich.edu/~glblfem). Contextual materials about each site and interviewee are also available on the website.

The archive offers a wide range of interviewees for each site. For example, the India site includes the founders of the academic fields of women's studies and women's history in India (Neera Desai and Vina Mazumdar); a women's rights attorney (Flavia Agnes), a performance artist (Mangai) and writer (Mahasweta Devi), as well as activists in opposition to dowry (Shahjehan Aapa), the legalization of prostitution (Jarjum Ete), a women's mosque (D. Sharifa), and environmental issues (Lata Pratibha Madhukar). Some of these women had educated parents, and have advanced degrees from Western institutions; others had parents with no education, and they themselves have very little education. Some are from relatively privileged castes and others from under-privileged castes. They come from several regions in India and grew up in different religions and speak different languages. This diversity characterizes the women interviewed for the China, Nicaragua, Poland, and United States sites.

How Do I Teach about What Students Can't See?

Invisibility operates at many levels and across many domains to create and maintain privilege (Fryberg & Townsend, 2008). In educational contexts, social representations promote positive possible selves for privileged students, such as discussing only White male presidents of the United States as examples of

leadership (Ruvolo & Markus, 1992), while rendering invisible other information that might inform positive possible selves for marginalized students, such as the leadership of women and people of color who have led social movements. Making some groups invisible reinforces an understanding of who matters in a given context. Privileged group members learn to expect the unearned privilege of consistent representation of identity-matched exemplars, whereas marginalized group members imagine earning the privilege of representation by participating or contributing in a noteworthy way. At the most general level, the GFP offers multiple examples of different types of women in different roles who can serve as positive exemplars for both recognizing and challenging unearned privilege. Additionally, the archive provides marginalized students identity-matched exemplars with which to identify, thus providing a privilege that all students should have.

The GFP interviewees identify examples of the use of visibility and invisibility to create and maintain privilege, especially at specific intersections such as feminists of color, young feminists, anti-capitalist U.S. feminists, and Christian Indian feminists. Additionally, the topics covered in the archive provide multiple contexts with which to ground conversations about diverse groups of women involved in various types of activist work. For example, the narratives include a prominent theme of education, including examples of women who had access to education and, subsequently, access to knowledge or professions that empowered them to pursue key goals in their activism. An important point to make for students is that these women acknowledge and use their privilege to champion for others who do not enjoy the same access to the opportunities they have. Privileged students may believe that education is accessible to all people, and that all groups of people enjoy the same quality of education. Asking students to consider their own assumptions about educational access helps them to reflect on educational privileges they have but do not recognize. Beyond this example, the GFP archive provides a rich source of illustrative examples of invisibility in terms of creating and maintaining privilege across multiple contexts.

"I'm Privileged? I Don't See It": Overlooking Privilege at the Intersection of Identities

Teaching Goals and Main Concepts

In her introduction, Case (this volume) offers a model of privilege studies that includes the need to recognize multiple intersections of privilege and oppression. Intersectionality (Cole, 2009; Crenshaw, 1991; Hurtado, 1996) is a standard analytic tool taught in gender and women's studies, psychology of women, and ethnic studies courses. The theory of intersectionality highlights the ways in which individual persons occupy multiple social locations (gender, race or ethnicity, social class, ability, occupational role, etc.) at the same time,

rather than a single category. Intersectionality offers a way to recognize intragroup differences by highlighting experiential differences at the intersection of multiple social identities located in a hegemonic structure (thus, a middle-class White woman's and a poor White woman's life experiences differ because of social class; Crenshaw, 1991). The results of a system that differentially grants power and privilege to different groups of people include a person experiencing more or less visibility based on holding one or more subordinate identities (Coston & Kimmel, 2012). Possessing multiple subordinate-group identities renders a person "invisible" relative to those with a single subordinate-group identity (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). Arguably, groups with privileged identities, including White people, heterosexuals, people without disabilities, and men, will implicitly interpret their standpoint as representative of a universal standard, norm, or experience. People define those who hold multiple subordinate identities as non-prototypical members of their respective identity groups, thus rendering them marginalized members within an already marginalized group (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). Holding one subordinate identity may render some people highly visible and therefore targets of discrimination (e.g., African American males when driving, White women in U.S. electoral politics; Coston & Kimmel, 2012). Emphasizing the point that being invisible may have different and sometimes worse consequences than being highly visible facilitates an opportunity for students to reflect on important intersections of more or less privileged identities.

Students who hold one or more marginalized identities may overlook the privilege that their non-marginalized identities hold (Wise & Case, this volume). For example, White women or White gay men may not acknowledge the race privilege they have, or heterosexual men of color may not acknowledge their heterosexual and gender privilege. Holding some privilege, albeit context specific, means that prototypical members of a subordinate group enjoy being perceived as credible in both knowledge production and leadership status compared with members who hold a non-prototypical status, such as women of color or gay men of color (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008).

Teaching Examples from the GFP Archive

Using GFP interviews to compare women's experiences, whether in different national settings or within a single setting (e.g., McGuire, Stewart, & Curtin, 2010), provides students with opportunities to imagine groups in more complex ways. For example, although many of the interviewees from India are Hindu, among the scholar activists represented in the group of Indian feminists, D. Sharifa is a Muslim feminist actively engaged in efforts to create a female-friendly mosque. Equally, Flavia Agnes describes her struggle within Indian feminist circles to be recognized and accepted as Christian. In contrast, among the mostly Christian Polish interviewees, Bożena Umińska discusses the intersection

of her Jewish identity and her feminism within an anti-Semitic and misogynist context. Examining the experience of religious minorities in these different contexts can illuminate commonalities across very different identities and experiences, as well as differences between feminists in a single context.

Less routinely discussed intersectional invisibilities are described by other scholar-activists in the GFP. For example, Li Huiying (China site) talks about the difficulty of being a single woman in Communist China with no way to make a claim for private domestic space, and Grace Lee Boggs (U.S. site) defines herself at the intersection of her ethnicity and gender (an Asian American woman), but also describes herself as old, one of the most invisible subordinate identities in the United States.

Classroom Application

Recognizing the dynamic nature of intersectional invisibility includes highlighting the point that even one privileged identity offers a respite from negative experiences that people who hold multiple marginalized identities cannot access. This pedagogical strategy depends on examples of the way that women in the GFP use their own privilege in one sense (e.g., class privilege) to challenge unearned privileges they recognize elsewhere. Students are often resistant to thinking about their own intersectional identities and identifying their privileged and marginalized identities. In an exercise of this nature, they are challenged to think about their experiences and the experiences of others they assume to be similar to themselves. This reflection promotes an important step toward recognizing privileges held by some and the invisible status held by others. Assigning a final paper or writing an exam question that asks students to apply key concepts or research findings to a GFP interview allows them to apply the theory to someone's real-life experiences. Contextual information about the interviewee and the video-recorded interview and transcript can be accessed on the GFP website. Encouraging students to use both formats allows them to refer to the text while viewing the video-recording, with the transcript serving as a reference for direct quotes for identifying:

1. intersectionality or intersectional invisibility as discussed by the GFP interviewee;
2. privileges related to some identities held by the women and the use of this privilege to challenge unearned privilege held by others; and
3. their own privilege even among assumptions that have none.

This exercise encourages students to practice identifying privilege at the intersection of identities in the life of another person and directs them toward reflection of their own invisible privileges.

Invisibility as a Tool for Heterosexism and Homophobia

Teaching Goals and Main Concepts

Sexual identity and heterosexism commonly receive coverage in courses taught in disciplines that explore feminist, queer, and critical race theory. However, the way students learn about non-heterosexual identities varies, including the maintenance of heterosexual privilege via the invisibility of sexual minorities. Importantly, students should understand activism and coalitional work as central to many area studies, including gender and women's studies, queer studies, and ethnic studies. The GFP contains four interviews with women who self-identify as lesbians and who offer accounts of both absolute and relative invisibility in academic settings as well as in the context of their activist work: Cathy Cohen and Holly Hughes (United States), Anna Gruszczyńska (Poland), and Ruth Vanita (India/United States; see Shapiro, Rios, & Stewart, 2010). In their narratives, Cohen, Hughes, Gruszczyńska, and Vanita affirm the relative invisibility experienced by non-heterosexual students and challenge heterosexual students to consider their own invisible heterosexual privilege.

Teaching Examples from the GFP Archive

These four interviews lend themselves to comparative analysis by highlighting each woman's location as a citizen of a particular nation, in the academy, and as a participant in a social justice movement. The invisibility of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) issues is described by the women as a means to maintain heterosexual privilege and homophobic perspectives in their educational experiences. For example, Hughes and Gruszczyńska both discussed the invisibility of lesbians as role models and scholarship by lesbians in their education. Holly Hughes describes her early education as extremely conservative until her teacher, Anita Wendt, gave her "forbidden books ... like *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, *I'm Okay, You're Okay*, [and] *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*" that informed Hughes of alternative political viewpoints. In her GFP interview, Hughes recalled that her feelings of romantic love for her teacher inspired her to seek out information about lesbians. However, the relative invisibility of lesbians in any scholarly texts reinforced the idea of same-sex love as abnormal.

> So, I went to the most important sexual authority of that time ... Dr. David Reuben's *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex But Were Afraid To Ask* ... I noticed that male homosexuals had their own chapter, but the females were just a footnote under prostitution ... I thought that homosexuality had something to do with, you know, attraction between two people of the same sex, but not according to David Reuben, oh no ... the most important part of a homosexual experience, male or

> female, is their compulsive erotic relationship to household appliances. This is not fiction.
>
> (Holly Hughes)

Using Hughes' example encourages heterosexual students to reflect on the unearned privilege of seeing their lives validated by positive representations of heterosexuality in the media (movies, television, magazines) and in their academic curricula (McIntosh, 1988).

Anna Gruszczyńska made a similar point in her GFP interview when she describes the absolute invisibility of women writers, more generally, and lesbian writers in particular in her Spanish Language and Literature graduate study program, pointing out that, "For the whole year, my mentor didn't even pronounce the word 'lesbian.'" Hughes' experiences of seeking alternative information sources about lesbians and Gruszczyńska's experience with exclusionary practices are good starting points for encouraging student reflection about the relationship between positive social representations of your group and a positive self-construal (Blumer, Green, Thomte, & Green, this volume). More importantly, why are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer persons denied the privilege of positive representations and information about themselves in mainstream educational curricula? And, finally, do heterosexual students earn the privilege of seeing exemplars with whom they identify each day they attend school?

Cohen and Vanita experienced invisibility in their often-overlapping social and activist circles. In response to making lesbian and gay rights visible, Cathy Cohen experienced resistance from the African American community. Through this process, she grew to understand invisibility as a powerful tool for marginalizing a subset of people within a larger marginalized group. Here she described her coalitional work as graduate student:

> I also learned lessons about divisions in community, because there were times when ... other black students kind of attacked us for ... working in collaboration with Whites. There were certain students on campus that attacked us for having women leadership, for addressing issues of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender concerns in terms of student body. So, you know, you learn from both ... the victories that you have and the battles that you engage in ... and it was really in undergrad and then in graduate school that I started to have what I think is a feminist analysis that talks about power and oppression at multiple sites.
>
> (Cathy Cohen)

In this comment, Cohen emphasized the importance of developing a politically useful analysis of social structure to address social issues within the activist community. Ruth Vanita described the self-imposed public invisibility of sexuality for lesbian and bisexual feminist activists in India as a double-edged sword that

may have protected them from homophobic backlash while simultaneously suppressing a support system for lesbian and bisexual women. In her GFP interview, she explained:

> Yeah, I would say two things were missing. One was sexuality and the other was depth ... lesbianism was ... I now know that many of the leaders of those autonomous women's groups were either lesbian or bisexual and were actively talking about it among themselves. But in the public, when we came together as groups, you would never talk about it ... that has still not been acknowledged, the amount of lesbian energy that went into the movement in the '70s and '80s. And now in the '90s it began to be acknowledged, and now some of the groups are talking about it.
>
> (Ruth Vanita)

By focusing on changes in public discourse over time, Vanita articulated clearly the invisibility of lesbians in the earlier period.

Cohen and Vanita described experiencing intersectional invisibility and pointed to members of their respective groups who enjoy privileges based on one majority status, such as African American men and heterosexual Indian feminists. Through these examples, students understand invisibility as a tool used across contexts (Poland, India, or the United States, educational settings, activist forums) and across modes of communication (scholarly texts, activist meetings) to maintain a heterosexist culture. The way each woman experienced invisibility informed her of her own privilege, or lack of it. The absence of information distorted their own understanding of lesbian and gay lives, including same-sex love as abnormal or LGBTQ persons as hypersexual or pathological, which prompted them later to engage in anti-homophobia movements.

Classroom Application

These examples illustrate key concepts such as sex, gender, sexuality, sexual identity, sexual orientation, heterosexuality, and heterosexism. Identifying these concepts in video-recorded excerpts from each interview provides a starting point for further discussion about the relationship between binary terms (heterosexual vs. homosexual; normal vs. abnormal) and the invisibility of sexual orientation in educational contexts. Explicitly highlighting the values placed on being on the "right" side of the binary helps students consider other binary categories in their lives, such as white vs. of color, men vs. women, and the unearned privileges that come with identifying with the more powerful category.

Denying Everyday Privileges to the Hidden Minority: The Invisibility of Disability

Teaching Goals and Main Concepts

Identifying invisibility in the curriculum engages students in discussions about visibility as a privilege more generally. Although the field of psychology has diversified in terms of topics and populations studied, relatively little information is included about people with disabilities as a group in the psychology canon or in psychology curricula (Asch & McCarthy, 2003), and even less information is included about women with disabilities. Authors often render the disabled invisible to some degree by devoting little attention to them in psychology textbooks. In particular, most psychology of women courses cover many topics important to most women's lives, yet the experiences and needs of women with disabilities are summed up in one or two paragraphs (Garland-Thomson, 2002). Limited teaching resources make it difficult to incorporate women with disabilities in a meaningful way into a course such as psychology of women, yet this absence of information begs the question, "How does invisibility of people with disabilities encourage negative or limited perceptions of women (and men) with disabilities?" The meaning of special accommodation differs for people with and without disabilities, such that those without disabilities enjoy the privilege of defining "accommodation" in a way that ignores the everyday accommodations made for the non-disabled while defining special accommodations for the disabled as non-normative and a costly inconvenience to the majority.

Teaching Example from the GFP Archive

Adrienne Asch is a social justice activist and scholar interviewed for the U.S. site of the GFP. Her scholarship examines issues of bioethics, reproduction, and disability. In her interview, Asch challenged the viewer to acknowledge assumptions about people with disabilities and issues of identity centrality, sexuality, parenthood, and activism. Asch argued that maintaining the illusion that only persons with disabilities require special accommodation allows non-disabled persons to deny their own privilege while denying special accommodations to disabled persons. Asch described examples of unmarked and unearned special accommodations such as typewriters (now computers) as an aid to writing quickly, and strollers as help to move children more quickly or for longer distances.

Additionally, people who hold one or more subordinate statuses are often denied the privilege of claiming an identity for themselves and the privileged overlook the consequences for imposing an identity onto another person. Highlighting the privilege of self-identification for students provides them with the space to reflect on identity as a source of empowerment. Asch explained in her GFP interview:

> It has been very difficult to force my identity apart from disability, because people ... my whole life, have been trying to tell me that that's the most important thing about me. And so when I say that it actually isn't, and that the most important things about me as far as I'm concerned are that I do bioethics or that I'm a leftist or that I went to Swarthmore, or that I love Renaissance music, people really often don't like that. They want me to tell them that I'm blind.
>
> (Adrienne Asch)

Students who hold privileged identities may not understand the relevance of self-identification because of its invisibility. Non-disabled persons often define persons with disabilities by their disability and often assume that persons with disabilities are incompetent to some degree (Asch & McCarthy, 2003).

Classroom Application

Some scholars refer to individuals with disabilities as the hidden minority (Kleinfield, 1979). Increasing the visibility of this group recognizes them as whole persons rather than as persons with disabilities. We have found it useful to teach about disability in separate learning modules as well as integrated across the curriculum. To demonstrate for students the social construction of disability, we use contextual information, such as definitions of disability and the number of people with disabilities in the United States, along with Asch's interview. This approach guides students to identify the role invisibility plays in maintaining the privilege of special accommodations for those without disabilities while denying needed accommodations to those with disabilities. Equally, it is useful to point out that some individuals are not defined as "persons with disabilities" even though they mention various constraints and limitations on their activities, particularly those associated with aging. Thus, some disabilities are normalized and accommodated, while other disabilities are pathologized and marginalized. Asch argued that everyone will be disabled at some point in their lifetime, many of us from the aging process. For students currently without disabilities, reflection on their temporary ability status and stereotypes related to the disabled community encourages them to use their current position of privilege to advocate for social services for the disabled and re-evaluate their own worldviews about what defines a person with a disability.

Who Makes a "Good" Leader? Based on What We See, It's Being a Man

Teaching Goals and Main Concepts

The GFP disrupts the stereotype of women as ineffective leaders (Rudman & Glick, 2001), as well as associations between masculine traits and good leadership

(Carroll, 2009; Eagly, 2007). A curriculum that includes gender analysis has positive benefits for women students and their possible future selves in terms of careers in male-dominated fields (Rios et al., 2010; Weisgram & Bigler, 2007), and the GFP provides multiple topics related to leadership. Students hear from the activists/scholars themselves about their feminist activism in ways that challenge assumptions about women's relative invisibility in male-dominated fields of practice and study (e.g., politics and political science). Erasing, or making invisible, the participation of female leaders creates the impression that only men possess the agentic traits associated with social and political change. For students who enjoy the privilege of seeing frequent leadership exemplars like themselves, the GFP narratives provide insight into the consequences of being blocked from holding a leadership position and rendering issues invisible that marginalized groups deem important.

Teaching Examples from the GFP Archive

Although Indian activist Lata Pratibha Madhukar (Lata P. M.) played a leading role in an environmental movement, the media failed to recognize her as a leader. In particular, the producers of the internationally acclaimed documentary that chronicled this particular movement, *A Narmada Diary* (Patwardhan & Dixon, 1995), excluded her presence entirely. Lata explained:

> In Anand's film I'm nowhere. I'm there only for half a second in Hutatma Chowk. This has happened not only with me but with many full timers despite second rank leadership positions. . . . A lot has been written about male activists.
>
> (Lata Pratibha)

Lata's narrative highlighted the assumptions about men as legitimate leaders, a privilege denied to women through erasure of their presence and contributions to these movements.

American activist Loretta Ross has held key organizer and participant roles in the March for Women's Lives in Washington, D.C., one of the largest demonstrations in the history of the United States (National Organization for Women, n.d.). However, the demonstration received little media attention compared to smaller demonstrations in Washington, D.C. In these instances, examples of disproportionate coverage of men's leadership and participation in movements compared with women's relative invisibility in media coverage reinforces ideas of who makes a good leader and relevant social issues.

Classroom Application

The stereotype that men have natural leadership abilities facilitates their holding positions of power. The stereotypes imposed upon women, such as being natural caregivers, are often incongruent with characteristics associated with good leadership, such as being aggressive, ambitious, and analytic (Eagly, 2007; Rudman & Glick, 2001). Thus, the high visibility of men in leadership positions secures their unearned privilege under the assumption that they are natural leaders. In Lata's interview, students learn to identify when stereotypes about motherhood (i.e., gender-congruent role) are imposed upon Lata to delegitimize her as a leader (i.e., gender-incongruent role). Additionally, students learn to identify good leadership characteristics in Lata and the invisibility of women's issues. These exercises expose male students to the ways that gendered perceptions of legitimate leadership falls in their favor as well as the relationship between those who lead and the issues addressed in a given context. What issues might men miss based on their limited life experience, or more specifically, not having a woman's perspective? Encouraging students to share their own experiences with leadership positions and perceptions of men and women can facilitate or block access to leadership opportunities.

In the case of Loretta Ross, a comparative approach can be accomplished by providing students with information about a well-publicized demonstration, such as the Million Man March and the March for Women's Lives. Although the Million March did not actually include one million male participants, the March for Women's Lives reached close to that number. Comparing media coverage of these two marches allows students to examine why the media widely covers certain events while ignoring others. The inverse relationship between privilege and invisibility is easily demonstrated in this example because the march that focused on the concerns of people with one key privileged identity (maleness) received much more media attention than a march in which women with privileged identities (White women) allied with women with subordinate identities (women of color).

Making Global Feminisms Visible by Exposing a Privileged Standpoint

Teaching Goals and Main Concepts

Even within a field whose goals include exposing systems of power, privileged standpoints often remain invisible. According to standpoint theory, all persons or groups differentially experience the dominant culture in which all groups exist. In any society, dominant group members enjoy the privilege of having their views validated more often than those held by subordinate groups (Collins, 2000; Harding, 1991; Hartsock, 2003). Chandra Mohanty (1988) cautioned Western feminists against gazing at "Third World women" through "Western eyes," through which global feminism is interpreted as global sisterhood (Morgan, 1984). Accordingly, students may also endorse the idea that gender oppression unites all women, with global feminism being a transfer of Western feminist ideals to Third World women who are assumed to have no experience in organizing their own

political movements (Mohanty, 1988). The GFP interviews disrupt stereotypes of Chinese, Indian, Nicaraguan, and Polish feminists by providing narrative accounts of each woman's participation in various political movements in their countries. Additionally, the diversity of U.S. feminists challenges assumptions that all American feminists are White and middle class. Exposure to women of color like the members of the Sista II Sista collective, and women working on behalf of poor women in Michigan like Maureen Taylor and Marian Kramer, brings the diverse history of feminist activism in the United States to life. Moreover, exposure to these examples shows that gender oppression as the exclusive focus of feminist activism reflects a privileged social position because many women from China, India, Nicaragua, Poland, and the United States experience oppressions as interlocking rather than in isolation from one another (Cole, 2009; Crenshaw, 1991; Hurtado, 1996).

Reflection on the intersection of multiple social identities, including race, gender, sexual orientation, ability status, and social class, helps students think about the privilege of having their basic needs met daily. Although some students may have experience with poverty, many do not. Taylor and Kramer's work focuses on day-to-day struggles faced by the poor. Using Taylor and Kramer's interview (U.S. site) as a basis for discussion, students can reflect on the last time their families worried about where they would sleep each night.

Teaching Examples from the GFP Archive

Many of the U.S. site interviews demonstrate the intersection of gender oppression with other types of oppression. Taylor and Kramer expressed passionate views in opposition to capitalism ("Make no mistake: we hate capitalism. Hate it. It's no good."), often thought of as a defining feature of U.S. life. Through their account, students learn about the differential effects of capitalism for groups of people based on their position in a hegemonic structure. Equally, it would be impossible for students to stereotype all "Third World women" when they are faced with a range of women who work to improve their own lives. Through these examples, students reflect upon why stereotypes persist about the "salvation" of Third World women being dependent on First World intervention (Mohanty, 1988). Similar to the example of men being presumed legitimate leaders and creators of knowledge, First World women hold the unearned privilege of believing they can decide what issues matter most for all women (Mohanty, 1988).

Classroom Application

Teaching materials including transcripts and videotaped interviews and contextual materials are available on the GFP site for each interviewee (www.umich.edu/~glblfem/teaching.html). These materials contextualize feminism in each of the sites and for each woman, and provide rich examples of women organizing based on the needs of their communities, which often includes many issues rather than solely gender oppression (Mohanty, 1988). Comparing historical contexts and a topical example from each site, students can identify commonalities and differences in feminist organizing. To address invisible privileges, this diversity within each site challenges students' stereotypes about U.S. feminists and women from the countries represented in the project. The invisibility of this privileged standpoint relies on the assumption that Third World women need to be saved from their oppressive cultures and makes it difficult for U.S. students to imagine the possibilities of coalition and alliance with women in other countries (Mohanty, 1988). By making visible the diversity of global feminisms, new possibilities open up.

Reducing Invisible Privileges with the GFP Archive

The women in the GFP not only identified invisibility in their lives, they also offered strategies for exposing invisibility as a tool for creating, perpetuating, and maintaining privilege. Screening the interviews, assigning students papers that require comparative analysis across national contexts, and analyzing the lives of individual women help students gain insight into the way that invisibility operates to maintain privileges for different groups of people. D. Sharifa, from the India site, identified privileges that she feels entitled to, regardless of her gender, and flags the invisibility of men's privileged access to what McIntosh (1988) referred to as positive privileges to which everyone should feel entitled. Sharifa explained:

> My action is informed by feminist thinking ... A girl must consider her self-respect, her mind, her thoughts, and decisions to live her own life, as her responsibility. Likewise, her life and all happenings are within the framework of this society. "I have the right to all the privileges and recognition accorded in the society. I have to demand it." That feeling should be there.
>
> (D. Sharifa)

Sharifa emphasized here that basic human rights, such as access to education, safe housing, health care, and reproductive freedom, are entitlements all people should claim. However, many persons who enjoy the privilege of whiteness, maleness, heterosexuality, a non-disabled status, and middle- or upper-class social status, reinterpret access to most privileges as something to be earned, often under the assumption that they themselves have earned these privileges, or that all groups of people have equal access to the resources needed in order to "earn" these privileges.

The narratives in the GFP provide opportunities for students to identify the privilege within a system that normalizes the dominance of one group over another regardless of their intention or desire. Additionally, students learn to identify their own privilege by considering the way invisibility protects unearned privileges while simultaneously denying their benefits to others.

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