

An aerial photograph of a university courtyard. The courtyard features a brick building on the left, a paved walkway, and several circular tables with chairs where people are sitting and talking. There are green lawns and trees scattered throughout the area. The text "Fostering Inclusion: Privilege Learning Byte" is overlaid in the center of the image.

Fostering Inclusion: Privilege Learning Byte

Naropa
UNIVERSITY

Transform Yourself, Transform the World

What is Privilege?

The Merriam Webster dictionary defines privilege as “a right or benefit that is given to some people and not to others.”



Source: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/privilege>



Understanding Privilege

- ❖ “The characteristics of the privileged group define the societal norm, often benefiting those in the privileged group.”
- ❖ “Members of privileged groups experience the comfort of opting out of struggles against oppression if they choose.”
- ❖ The above two points mean “that privilege is rarely seen by the holder of the privilege.”

Source: Wildman, S. (1995). Language and Silence: Making Systems of Privilege. *Santa Clara Law Review*, 35(3), 881-906.

Some Categories of Privilege

Each of us has privilege in our lives. However, the way in which we experience this advantage is varied and can fall into the following, as well as many more, categories:



Race Class
Age Ability
Ethnicity
Sexual Orientation
Gender
Religion

“Seeing privilege at the intersection is complicated by the fact that there is no purely privileged or unprivileged person.”

[http: Wildman, S. \(1995\). Language and Silence: Making Systems of Privilege. Santa Clara Law Review, 35\(3\), 881-906.](http://www.sclawreview.org/vol35/issue3/wildman.html)

Addressing Privilege

- Understand your own privilege – this can be challenging work!
 - Remember there are many more categories of privilege than those just listed on the previous slide.
 - Review the section of “[Helping Students Explore Their Privileged Identities](#)” entitled ‘Challenges to Exploring One's Privileged Identities.’
- Identify and learn about our social, political, and societal structures that perpetuate privilege.





Want More Information?

Articles

- At New York Private Schools, Challenging White Privilege From the Inside (article in New York Times) by Kyle Spencer
http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/22/nyregion/at-new-york-private-schools-challenging-white-privilege-from-the-inside.html?_r=0
- White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack (article) by Peggy McIntosh

Books

- Privilege: A Reader Edited by Michael S. Kimmel & Abby L. Ferber
- Privilege Revealed: How Invisible Preference Undermines America by Stephanie M. Wildman