ARTFUL ANTI-OPPRESSION

A TOOLKIT FOR CRITICAL & CREATIVE CHANGE MAKERS

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HEY CHANGE MAKER,

Meegwich, for picking up this resource. Merci, for all the ways that you're invested in learning about and practicing anti-oppression. Thank you for having the courage to prevent discrimination and fight for equality. Gracias, for your commitment to building equitable access to resources in your work, community & personal life. Shishi for believing in the possibility of healthier ways to live and love together. Asante sana for the ways you are resilient. Shukran for your abounding creativity.

YOU MIGHT ASK, "WHAT DOES ARTFUL ANTI-OPPRESSION MEAN ANYWAY"?

Anti-oppression refers to all the ways an individual, community, institution or system actively prevents, challenges and ends oppression against other people. It means taking a stand against and addressing the ways that oppressed peoples are prevented access to crucial resources let alone choices. It means addressing violence, abuse of power, and the ways people are manipulated, limited, controlled, silenced, incarcerated and erased. It is widely understood that oppression in all its forms can cause mental, emotional, physical and spiritual trauma to people, communities and ecologies. Trauma can cause deep, devastating and sometimes irreparable damage, particularly when it is rooted in harms passed through many generations.

This text proposes that anti-oppression principles and practices should be woven into our personal and social values. In fact, it may likely help you to be a better colleague, neighbor, friend, partner and change maker all around. Ideally you'll feel inspired to be artful in the ways you practice anti-oppression and share this with others!

The arts can be such a powerful and transformative way to learn about, express and practice Anti-Oppression. The arts can allow people to explore themselves, express their feelings, share their stories and communicate in ways that are multidimensional (not just text based). The arts can also give us an outlet to process, heal, to witness, to collaborate and feel heard. The arts can be used to bring communities together to organize creatively around local issues and celebrate our achievements and cultures! The arts can also be used as teaching tools to explore critical equity concepts in a way that is accessible & engaging for diverse learning styles & needs. We also believe that the arts sector, like most fields, can continue to improve equity practices making more resources available and exhibiting more art works from a broader diversity of peoples.

This resource has been assembled through research, community consultations and drawing upon a legacy of organizing, education & socially engaged arts in the Americas. It holds critical theory & grassroots perspectives. It incorporates activities, ideas, concepts, stories, perspectives and art from dozens of creative change makers. Many of these folks are artists, educators, organizers, activists and healers living in Toronto, (Canada) Turtle Island, so the context of this text is largely North American. However, contributors also hail from diverse cultural groups, identities and experiences from all across the globe.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

It has been designed to be engaging for leaders of all ages, creeds, and experiences. However it is not exhaustive. It can be used for individual and group learning. We hope this resources grows organically by being used, and added to by community over time. So keep in touch!

1. The sections of this text are color-coded to help you identify the themes being explored for quick reference.
2. Each section includes:
   a) Critical materials: critical concepts, word definitions, historical contexts, case studies, related artists & arts works.
   b) Creative materials: Brainstorm questions, Arts based activities to explore these concepts deeper.
   c) Research materials: Related resources, texts and web links to help you continue learning & growing!
3. Words with an * beside them can be found in the Glossary at the back of the text for deeper definitions.

Note: All activities include information about approximate time to run, suggested materials and are graded as level 1, 2 & 3 based on the complexity and facilitation skills involved in order for the exercises to be most effective. When in doubt, invite a senior facilitator to support you.

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SOME KEY TERMS TO ROOT THIS WORK

Equity refers to systems & strategies for understanding and influencing the idea and practice of "fairness". For example, the distribution of resources in political, professional and social situations. These resources can include basic needs like food, housing, clothing, and money, but also education, employment, and safety from violence among other things. In order to have equity in diverse communities we must be able to identify the forms of oppression and discrimination that causes inequity and challenge these.

Oppression is the use of power to marginalize, silence or otherwise subordinate one social group, often in order to further privilege the oppressing and/or dominant person or group. It is Prejudice + Power.

Internalized oppression is a belief that there is something wrong with being part of a marginalized group. Shame, self-hatred, and low self-esteem results when members of an oppressed group take on society's attitudes toward them and adopt myths and stereotypes about themselves. Internalized oppression can manifest through a sense of inferiority, lowered expectations and limited imagination of possibilities, among other things. Consider how this plays out in the different forms of oppression explored in this toolkit.

Discrimination is any action that denies social participation or human rights to an individual or categories of people based on prejudice.

Prejudice is an attitude, perspectives and assumptions based on limited information, often stereotypes. Usually, but not always, negative. Prejudiced beliefs, language and practices are damaging on personal and social levels because they deny the individuality and complexity of the person. It forces people into basic (often derogatory) caricatures, one-dimensional identities, and hurtful labels. No one is free of prejudice because we have unfortunately all been raised with prejudiced ideologies all around us. Even if our families taught us about equity many dominant narratives in society teach us prejudice in so many ways. Examples of prejudiced perspectives: Women are weak; Asians are good at math, Youth can't make wise decisions, etc.

Marginalization is the effect of people being considered outside of, different or other than the ruling class and dominant ideas of what is normal. Often marginalization is directly connected to a person or groups real or perceived class, education, social networks, race, ability, age, gender and sexuality among other things. People who are marginalized or "othered" in a society will often experience social and systemic exclusion resulting in limited access to resources and opportunities.

Normativity This refers to the values, standards and models in society that are considered normal, what we ought to think, how we are supposed to behave. For example in the West it is considered normal to shake hand when you greet someone. People that deviate or stray from these norms or pre-scribed ways of being are often punished in a variety of ways by society ranging from being ostracized or excluded, looked down upon and even legal consequences like imprisonment.

Anti-oppression work (Also referred to as "Anti-O") in real terms includes but is not limited to indi-vidual and group strategies for:
- Seeking & holding the complex histories that have gotten us here,
- Interrogating and dismantling systems and social practices that are oppressive,
- Excavating & leveraging the power & privileges we have in the world,
- Healing from personal, community and ancestral oppressions,
- Creating & fighting for community based resources and spaces that are accessible, inclusive, and affirming for all people, especially those underserved and exploited in our society.
- Celebrating the resilience of folks surviving and thriving creatively in spite of oppression.

START WITH YOU

Social justice requires the power of many people working together, however each person is their own agent of change. One person's actions can have an immense ripple effect on others around them. For better or worse. In fact Anti-O work begins with the ways we uproot our own prejudices, and learn to see others and ourselves as whole & dynamic. In order to be most effective in Anti-O work it is crucial to understand how you've experienced & been affected by oppression, as well as the ways you have power and privilege at other peoples expense.

"ALL OPPRESSION IS CONNECTED"
MURAL BY JIM CHUCHU
INSPIRED BY THE POETRY OF
STACEYANN CHIN

Ask Yourself...

• Do you generally feel like you have choices, opportunities and the resources you need to grow?

• Are resources being shared fairly among the members of your communities?

• What are the differences in barriers or opportunities you & your communities experience?

• What historical & political contexts have created these inequities?

• Have you had meaningful opportunities to share your experiences of oppression and feel heard, understood or valued?

• Are there ways you can use the power or privileges you have to create more opportunities for others?

SOME PERSONAL PRACTICES:

*Inspired by the Anishnabek First Nations "Seven Grandfather Teachings".

- **Courage**: Challenge yourself to address oppression and interrupt discriminatory behavior wherever it occurs. Consider context and the safety of your community members in your response strategy. Consider that your silence or inaction can suggest you approve of or condone oppressive behavior. Aim to uncover the intentions of the person who has acted in a discriminatory way. Target what they did and not who/what they are. For example "You may not support racism but what you did is racist. Is that your intention?"

- **Healing**: If you are the target of oppression may you find meaningful ways to reject hurtful experiences as "your fault", and may you find supportive community based forms of resistance. May you find ways to release and heal the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual hurt caused by your experiences of oppression, violence or trauma. Try to identify and alter cycles of hurt in your communities. Share your healing tools & stories with others if helpful.

- **Honesty**: Speak your truth and honor that there are many truths connected to most human histories and dynamics. Never assume that your experience is the same as other peoples or project what is "normal" or "a given" onto others. When you speak try not to generalize feelings, thoughts or behaviors and don't speak on behalf of a group of people even if you are a member of this group. Use "I" statements, like "I believe this…" or "I've observed that…" centered in your individual experience. Learn about the history of your ancestors and of the lands that you live on and share these openly.

- **Humility**: When someone offers feedback around oppressive behavior, it is important to treat it with care. It likely took a lot of courage for that to share, especially if they are targeted by this oppression in society and are used to being silenced and excluded. Never shut down or invalidate someone's experience. You may not always understand or agree with everyone but differing perspectives should at least complicate your understanding of things.

- **Love**: Yup Love. Love your self in spite of hurtful things said and done to you. Love yourself enough to forgive yourself for your mistakes and shortcomings. Love yourself and your communities enough to heal, laugh, create and celebrate together.

- **Respect**: Listen actively when talking about oppression and power with community (don't wait for the first opportunity to interrupt or insert your opinion!), and centering the voices of marginalized folks whenever you can. Appreciate and affirm the perspectives and contributions of people different from yourself. Never make assumptions about people or their experiences.

- **Responsibility**: Aim to be responsible, caring or at least reduce harm with your words, actions and emotions whenever possible. Aspire to know when and how to prevent, deescalate or engage in conflict. Apologize and work to make amends when you cause hurt (even if it wasn't your intention to cause hurt!), especially to your community and folks in your support system.

SOME ARTS ACTIVITIES TO GO DEEPER:

1. "Emotional Responsibility Notebook"

Keep journal & writing utensils with you for occasions when you feel strong emotions emerge in group dialogues, or social power dynamics. Write it down! Notice and write about if you feel defensive, angry, triggered, guilty, hurt, argumentative etc.

What personal circumstances might be connected to these feelings? Are you being threatened or feeling uncomfortable? Is it important to share your feelings in this context? Will this focus or derail the conversation and is this necessary? What is your power or privilege in this dynamic? What is at stake?
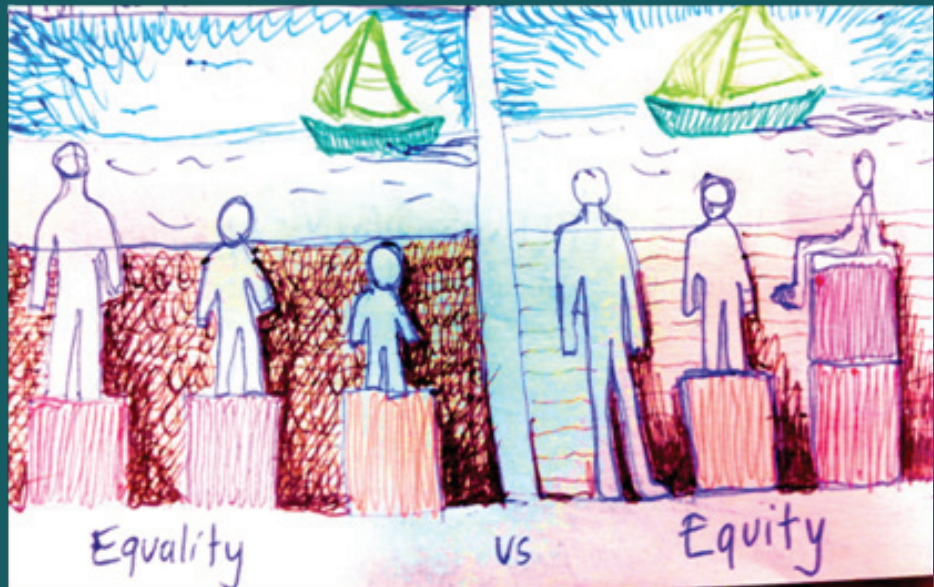
Sketch made by participant at a Jumblies Artful Anti-O training.

Read over your writings before proceeding, Reflect on where they are coming from and Respond accordingly. See if this tool can help you develop a personal awareness about the ways you feel, think and engage in conversations about oppression and discrimination.

2. "What Inequity Feels Like"

Think on a situation or context when you felt you were being denied access to necessary resources for unfair reasons. Free write, draw or explore movement and dance as a way to express the emotions this brings up.
What does it feel like to get this experience and the emotions connected out of you for a moment and explore it artistically?

HOSTING ANTI-O BASED LEARNING WITH THE COMMUNITY

One of the most powerful ways you can create change actively in your life and communities is by hosting opportunities for people to talk, learn and create around Anti-O & other tools for social justice work. Hosting is an art in and of itself. Hosting is about all of the different ways we can invite and convene folks to work through hard things like oppression, historic violence and trauma in ways that are respectful, inspiring, accountable, critical and creative. Hosting can also be a powerful tool to strategize, respond and innovate with groups. Hosting isn't about directing, leading or being the authority on a subject, but rather about creating the conditions (space, energy, trust, resources etc.) for folks to share and learn together. Hosting responsibilities could include skill sets in facilitation, storytelling, supporting democratic visioning & decision-making. Skills also include arts education, grassroots research, conflict negotiation, mediation, environmental design, documentary media, event organizing and child care, among other things. Ideally, hosting a community gathering involves many people at all stages. Luckily this isn't a new thing! Communities have been doing this all over the world for a long time, which means we have ancestors, elders and mentors (current & yet to meet!) who can counsel and work with us.

SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR HOSTING:

Be encouraging – there are too many reasons why working through oppression & building anti-o strategies is hard and risky work. Many folks impacted by oppression have reason to distrust, feel angry or feel vulnerable. Other folks struggle with guilt, fear of being shamed or defensiveness. Encourage folks to share their stories, to be courageous and proud of who they are. Encourage folks to look within, to challenge their egos and their privileges, and to feel motivated by this spirit work.

Be aware of Power Dynamics – There are power dynamics at play anytime people are together. This can be mutually beneficial, consensual, manipulative, or downright abusive. Read the "Power section" in this toolkit to learn more about sources of power dynamics. Learn to identify these in action with groups and aspire to prevent, name out loud, challenge and transform them collaboratively. Often this can play out in the ways people participate. Note who shares the most and how they assert themselves. This is also referred to as "taking up space". If particular people or groups take up space often, name this and invite them to consider why and how they generally feel confident to talk, ask and answer questions, assert their opinions, interrupt and/or discredit other peoples opinions. This can be an opportunity for them to see and challenge their power and privilege. If particular people or groups don't often speak, locate themselves at the edge of the group, or hesitate to share personal stories consider how to build trust, repair conflicts, center their voices and affirm their contributions.

Challenge prejudice, bias & discrimination - Biases, stereotypes, labels and prejudices expressed in a group will undoubtedly cause harm, break trust and likely create conflict. When discrimina-

tion goes unchallenged in groups it can appear like it is acceptable or even supported. Not engaging with discrimination does not make it harmless or go away. Those targeted by discrimination may respond with anger, internalize what's being said as true, or just leave. Those perpetuating discrimination may continue thinking their opinion and actions are accepted and normal. You may not always know exactly how to best negotiate the situation but always aim to respond proactively. Each section in this toolkit will offer you insights about various forms of discrimination and prejudice, as well as how these are instilled and maintained in society.

Foster Respectful Communication - Dialogue, debate and creative expression are necessary to build understanding and strategize together. As a host, aim to provide resources for participants to learn and practice listening actively, to communicate respectfully, and manage how much space they take up. Hone your skills in supporting fair & effective brainstorms, consensus building and decision-making. Create communication and conduct "ground rules" with groups and commit to them (See Community Commitments activity at end of this section*). Use visuals, the arts and other alternative (non-verbal) tools to encourage different learning & communication styles, abilities & needs. Support the use of diverse & indigenous languages, not just colonial languages like English, French & Spanish. Invite different opinions, and diverse perspectives, and don't be afraid of disagreements. Debrief often! Trust the wisdom in the room, especially if you are a diverse group.

Prepare for conflict: Yup. In fact, conflict is often inevitable, especially when exploring oppression and privilege with folks who have experienced advantage and disadvantage in the same room (which may also be inevitable). Build your skill set in facilitation, harm reduction practices, conflict prevention & de-escalation, as well as transformative justice. When you are hosting and conflict arises take a moment to get grounded, and be fully present. Breathe. Don't get defensive, be dismissive or avoidant. Always aim to create space for all perspectives and experiences in a conflict, but also center the voices of those with less power and/or who have been directly targeted. Work towards negotiation and resolutions that are mutual. If appropriate, seek counsel and mediation outside of your hosted group for more support. Remember that conflict, when negotiated with respect and care, can also be very transformative. Find more related tools in the Accountability section.

Build understanding of peoples lives and cultural contexts - As host, you have an opportunity and responsibility to learn about the identities, experiences, histories and cultures of the folks you are working with. This can help you to more effectively identify existing conflicts or power dynamics between different groups of people, and to better understand what informs a persons feelings and perspectives. You can and should do research often. Explore books, web content, art, and events created by and for the diverse folks you work with. Build real relationships with people in your community and aspire to experience people as whole and dynamic. Commit time to learn about each other, to share stories about your lives, your histories, your cultures, and your

experiences in meaningful ways. Create new and shared definitions together. As a host, learn and practice cultural competency*. Always be respectful and sensitive, observe cultural protocol*, and acknowledge elders & mentors when they share stories and teachings. Know what appropriation* is, looks like and how it impacts marginalized peoples. Encourage folks to share about themselves outside the scope of stereotypes. Remind participants that performing or mimicking cultures that are not their own is risky and can be hurtful.

Host accessible and inclusive spaces – Some of the most effective and underused strategies for engaging diverse communities across differences, is to design, plan and create environments that are inclusive of various different identities, cultures, belief systems, classes, and accessibility needs. If you don't have diversity in your group, note who is missing from community. How can you reach & engage them more effectively? What targeted resources could you be providing? Are you offering programs, mediums or topics that are relevant? Is the space you are working in accessible for wheelchairs and other mobility devices? Do you have messaging and signage that is welcoming, particularly to folks often excluded? Can you offer translation or ASL* interpretation for folks who don't communicate through spoken English? Always work towards an accessible ideal.

Use the arts!!! - The arts can be great tools for doing self-reflection, animating complex concepts, for visualizing an experience, or expressing feelings. The arts can help pull out stories, inspire innovative responses and strategies. Start with individual experimentation, invite self-portraits and storytelling as trust is built. Remember to share art works by diverse artists dealing with social justice themes and issues. Capture brainstorms in graphic recordings. Use movement & performance activities to embody concepts and themes. Use large art projects to bring folks together and collaborate. Share and celebrate the art works you make together widely!
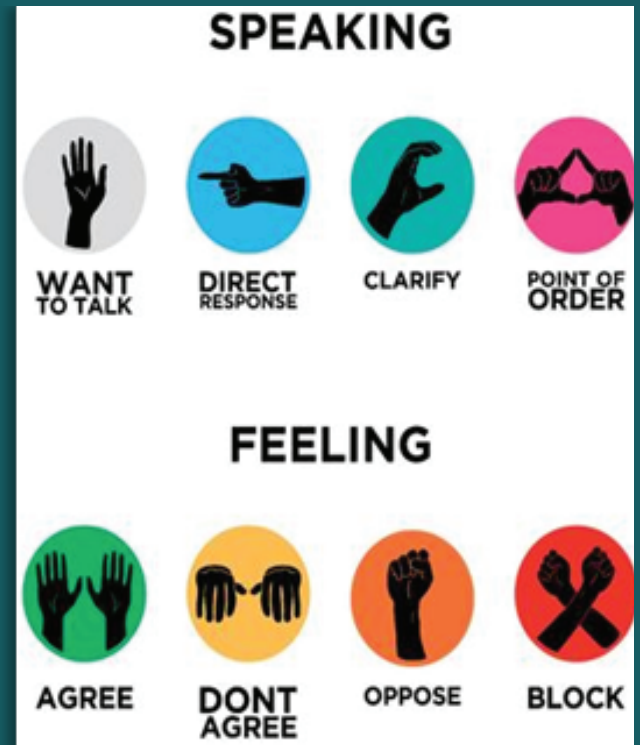
OPENING ACTIVITIES FOR HOSTING:

1. A Public Transit Visualization

*Invite participants to close their eyes and visualize as they listen or imagine the scenario as someone interprets for them. Adapt the story as appropriate to your community where useful.

- Facilitators script: You've just embarked onto a busy city bus or subway car. You do an environmental scan to see who is around you and if there is a spot to sit. At one end you see an old couple sitting together holding hands lovingly. You continue panning and see a group of youth who are being boisterous and noisy. On two seats near you there is person who seems to be passed out from having drank too much alcohol. Across from you there is an attractive young professional. Suddenly, a small group starts doing a flashmob performance of "I Will Survive". There musical rendition is very good! You realize you've reached your stop and you leave... Now open your eyes or come back to the group.

- Debriefing the activity: Now look back and consider when you were imagining these strangers. What did they look like? What are the genders of the elderly couple? Did you assume they were straight/heterosexual? What were the boisterous youth wearing & what are some of their cultural, gender and racial characteristics? What was the perceived class, social location & mental ability of the person who seemed to be inebriated & passed out? Did you assume this was a man? How do you know the person sitting across from you is a "young professional"? What beauty & class standards might make them appear "attractive"? Were all of the performers doing the flash mob performance perceivably "Able bodied"? What does this tell us about the assumptions and stereotypes we have about one another? Where do these come from and what are the effects?
Use this to inspire critical dialogue or response based art making!

Resources.

Facilitation 101

- http://www.youthactionnetwork.org/rac/Fireitup/FireItUp.pdf
- http://seedsforchange.org.uk/facilitationmeeting
- http://www.pyeglobal.org/training/pye-training/
- http://www.artreach.org/about.html

How To Build "Community Terms of Agreement"

- http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/activities/groundrules.htm
- https://p2pu.org/he/courses/77/content/837/

Consensus Building & Shared Decision-Making

- http://www.wikihow.com/Reach-a-Consensus
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consensus_decision-making
- http://dotmocracy.org

Open Space Technology

- http://www.openspaceworld.com/users_guide.htm

No General Hatefulness Poster

- http://industrialantioppression.blogspot.ca/

Consensus Building Hand Signs Poster

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:OccupyHandSignals.pdf

RACE & ANTI-RACISM

SKIN DEEP: RACE & RACISM

Race is a classification system used to categorize humans into large distinct groups through anatomical, cultural, ethnic, genetic, geographical, historical, linguistic, religious and/or social characteristics and affiliations. The term Race is often used today to describe a persons skin color, ethnic features and traits. For example, the color of ones skin, the color of their eyes, shape of their facial features and hair texture. Common racial classifications include "Black", "Native", "Asian", "Arab", "White" etc. However, there is much debate over Race as a biological classification given that there are so many nuances and blurry lines between ethnic groups, differing ethnic traits that get flattened, or "mixed-races" that get invisibelized. As such, Race is said to be a social construct. Something developed within legal, economic and socio-political contexts. Ethnicity is a social category of people who identify with each other based on common ancestral, social, cultural and/or national experience. For example, Jewish is an ethnic identity as well as religious.

"Fight Racism", Faviana Rodriguez

The term Race and the process of 'Racial categorization' or "Racialization" emerged in the 17th century through European colonization and imperialism. As Europeans encountered people from different parts of the world they began to consider physical, social and cultural differences among groups as hierarchical (some groups superior to others) which legitimized the rise of the Atlantic slave trade and subordination of African peoples, and the genocide and assimilation of Native communities among other things.

Europeans began to sort themselves and others into groups based on physical appearance, and to attribute to these groups behaviors and capacities such as intellectual, behavioral, & moral qualities. To be specific, this classification placed particular European groups at the top of a "Racial hierarchy" (for example Irish, Greek, Italian etc were excluded until the 19th century) considered "white".

This belief system is called "White supremacy". The ruling classes of British & French colonial settlers built the government, laws, social and economic systems upon this belief (much of which remains today). Addtionally, these categories were and continue to be integrated into political terms; used to impose slavery, segregation (Jim Crowe, Japanese internment), residential schools,

and indentured labor among others. Also, this was/is used to prevent certain groups from voting, accessing public & private property, police targeting etc. Another dimension of white supremacy is an assumption that white standards (Also see 'Whiteness') are to be considered what is "normal" and "best", which includes perceptions of class, gender, sexuality, & ability.
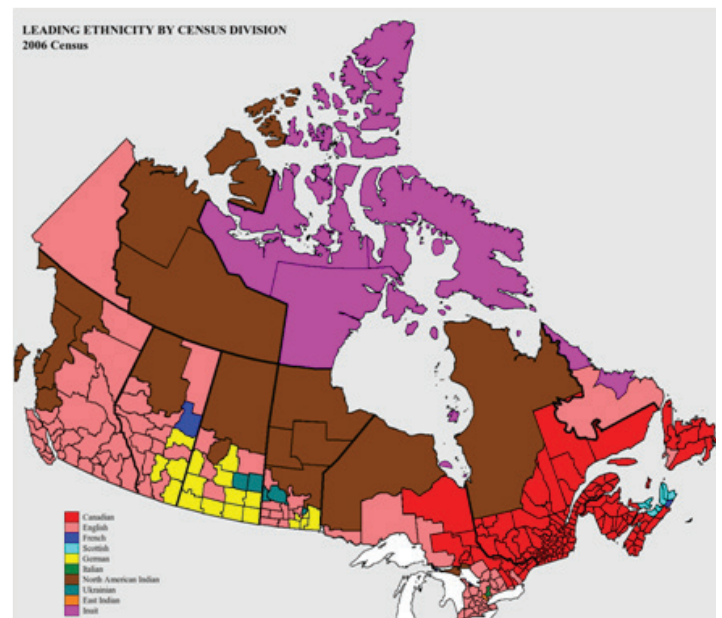
When you consider the "race" of most political leaders, CEO's of corporations, heads of large organizations, and the "Heroes" in most mainstream films & TV shows which racial groups are represented? Why?

While race is understood to be a social construct by many, it is also undeniable that race has real material effects in the lives of people through institutionalized, systemic and social practices of preference and discrimination.

FOR EXAMPLE...

The Canadian census (2006) uses the Racial category "Latin American" (Previously Hispanic) to categorize peoples from a vast land base and with
immensely differing ethnic, cultural & linguistic identities. This glossing over perpetuates essentialism, assimilation, prejudice and stereotypes. In the census individuals & groups who are 'Non-native, non-Caucasian in race and nonwhite in color' are also referred to as "Visible minority groups" (literally meaning 'fewer' & subordinate' identifiable by 'non-white' skin color).

LEADING ETHNICITY BY CENSUS DIVISION
2006 Census

Canadian
English
French
Scottish
German
Italian
North American Indian
Ukrainian
East Indian
Inuit

The 2011 National Household Survey (NHS indicates that '49.1% of Toronto's population is composed of visible minorities (half the population) 1,264,395 non-Whites, or 20.2% of Canada's visible minority population, live in the city of Toronto. However, in the present day labour market, if occupation is taken together with income and ethnicity is combined with race, minorities have been experiencing higher unemployment rates, earning lower incomes and hold fewer positions of authority compared to their "White-Caucasian" counterparts.

Racism is a set of beliefs, which assert the natural superiority of one racial group over another, at the individual but also the institutional level. In one sense, racism refers to the belief that biology rather than culture is the primary determinant of group attitudes and actions. Racism goes beyond ideology; it involves discriminatory practices that protect and maintain the position of certain groups and sustain the inferior position of others.

"I realized that I was connected to Africa. I wasn't just a Colored girl. I was part of a whole world that wanted a better life. I'm part of a majority and not a minority. My life has been a life of growth. If you're not growing, you're not going to understand real love. If you're not reaching out to help others then you're shrinking. My life has been active. I'm not a spectator"

"I think that in order to struggle you have to be creative. In my life, creativity has been something that has sustained me; it awoke my spiritual struggle." – Assata Shakur

This can look like prejudice and biased attitudes including slurs and acts of physical violence, as well as stereotyping that presumes negative attributes of a group of people. The Ontario Commission for Human Rights defines racial profiling as any action undertaken for reasons of safety, security or public protection that relies on stereotypes about race, colour, ethnicity, ancestry, religion or place of origin rather than on reasonable suspicion, to single out an individual for greater scrutiny or different treatment. For example, when the Toronto police force specifically target young black & brown men well above any other group with intimidation, carding, arrests with little to no evidence of criminal offence, incarceration and more severe sentencing. Subtle racism is one of the most common ways racialized people experience inequity on a regular basis, such as being treated differently from others despite being in a comparable situation. For example, management excessively monitoring racialized people in the work place compared to their white counterparts.

Another complex dynamic of racism is Shadism; the discrimination of individuals based on their skin tone, shade or pigment. Shadism posits that the lighter ones skin is the higher they are in a hierarcy with 'White" and "Whiteness" at the top as a standard of beauty & superiority. This form of discrimination can happen between distinct racialized groups (for example Chinese towards Indian) and within specific a racialized group (for example lighter skinned black people towards darker skinned black people). This can be a form of internalized racism (believing the stereotypes and prejudices), and also a form of privilege that an individual or group seeks as a "model minority" aspiring to gain acceptance by the ruling white class.

Anti-Black Racism is a form of racism that particularly targets black, African & afro-diasporic peoples. This term identifies the ways that social racism and systemic racism particularly targets and harms black communities. For example, police practices like harassing, carding, arresting, incriminating and incarcerate black people (largely black men) at a substantially higher rate then any other group in North America. Anti-black racism refers to the ways that black issues can be overlooked or flattened into "people of color" issues, which denies the complex set of historical and contemporary dynamics targeting black people in north America. Anti-Black Racism also considers the ways that black communities have been enslaved and manipulated by colonial powers. While some ethnic groups have been supported historically to access state resources over time black communities have been overtly denied access, as with Jim Crow racial segregation laws*.

Anti-racism includes beliefs, actions, movements, and policies adopted or developed to oppose racism. In general, anti-racism is intended to promote an equitable society in which people do not face discrimination on the basis of their actual or perceived race, however defined. In order to practice anti-racism one must also deconstruct how racism works in society.

A few examples of anti-racist organizing that you should check out include:

• The Civil Rights Movement,
• Artists of the Harlem Renaissance,
• The Black Panther Party,
• The North American Anti-Racist Action Network,
• The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP),
• Urban Alliance for Race Relations in Toronto,

"For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us to temporarily beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change. Racism and homophobia are real conditions of all our lives in this place and time. I urge each one of us here to reach down into that deep place of knowledge inside herself and touch that terror and loathing of any difference that lives here. See whose face it wears. Then the personal as the political can begin to illuminate all our choices."
– Audre Lorde, Activist, artist, academic

Writing Self-Determination.

LEVEL 1 | TIME: 40 minutes or more. WHAT YOU'LL NEED: Paper & Writing Utensils

Invite your participants to do free writing around the ways that they would like to self-determine their identity. More specifically invite them to write about the words, and expressions they would like the world to use when talking about how they see, understand and experience their ethnicity, culture, language and spiritual identity. Encourage them to formulate this writing as a type of public speech, spoken word piece or passionate declaration.

• Have participants share the writing together in the group. Invite the audience who hears each performance to reflect back what they hear and what they've learned in greater detail about the individual who's just shared their work. Remind your group to use this as cues for how to refer to and speak about each other in the future. Document the performances through audio or video recording (with group consent) as an archive of your experience together.

A Poem From Our Elders.

LEVEL 2 | TIME: 90 minutes. WHAT YOU'LL NEED: Paper & Writing Utensils

Assemble texts, stories, poems and songs from radical Black and Afro-diasporic artists. This could include artists from the civil rights movement, the Harlem Renaissance, the Black Panther Party, well-known artists like Nina Simone, Zora Neal Hurston, James Baldwin, Maya Angelou, Alice Walker, Langston Hughes and many others! Select one to two texts that really resonate for your group.

• Read the text over several times with passion. Have participants listen closely, pull out and map keywords that stick out or resonate for them. Then ask participants to choose 5 to 10 of these words and write each one on an individual sticky note or piece of paper.

• On a wall, table or floor have participants lay words out alll together. Invite them to play with the words creating statements, sentences and phrases almost like refrigerator magnet poetry. When a structure or strong statement emerges photo document it and/ or read it out loud together.

Hip-Hop Stories.

LEVEL 2 | TIME: 90 minutes or more. WHAT YOU'LL NEED: Paper & Writing Utensils

In society there are four kinds of stories that are told about race and racism:

- **Stock Stories** are the most public and common in dominant mainstream institutions like schools and government. These stories are told by dominant & ruling classes, and are passed on through historical and literary documents, celebrated through public rituals, monuments, and in media representations. They're often considered by society as valiant, meaningful, and most importantly "the truth".

- **Concealed Stories** coexist alongside stock stories but often are silenced and hidden from public access. These stories offer alternative perspectives that often discredit or problematize stock stories. They generally come from people who are marginalized by dominant culture and recount their experiences and critiques like a talk back to mainstream narratives.

- **Resistance Stories** share historical and contemporary acts of resistance to racism. They challenge stock stories and fight for more equal and inclusive social arrangements. These stories tell about luminaries & revolutionaries who have been excluded in history books, and offers antiracist perspectives and practices that have existed through history. The counter story is a new story that is deliberately constructed to challenge stock or dominant stories.

- **Counter Stories** build on and amplify resistant stories and offer ways to critique & interrupt the status quo. These stories work for new possibilities and social change.

- Look to grassroots hip hop culture and pull out three examples of Concealed, Resistance and Counter based stories in "the five pillars of hip-hop". Talk about what is being said and how it's being done artistically. Draw from this inspiration and compose a new piece of rap, music, spoken word poetry, break dancing, or graffiti works. Share it widely!

Resources.

Racism in Canada:

- http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/racial-discrimination-brochure
- http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/news/canada-racism/

Anti-Racism:

- http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/examples-racial-discrimination-factsheet#sthash.

  P5jhqvWH.dpuf
- http://www.stopracism.ca
- http://www.anti-racism.ca/node/18
- http://www.columbia.edu/itc/barnard/education/stp/stp_curriculum.pdf

Shadism:

- Graphic & film by Nayani Thiyagarajah: http://shadeism.com
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shadism
- http://www.tumblr.com/tagged/shadeism
-

Anti-Black Racism:

- https://www.facebook.com/blacklivesmatterTO
- http://www.racefiles.com/2014/12/01/the-language-of-anti-racism/

Great Authors writing on Blackness & anti-racism:

- Bell Hooks
- Audre Lourde
- James Baldwin
- Franz Fanon
- Angela Davis
- Stacey Anne Chin
- Black Girl Riot
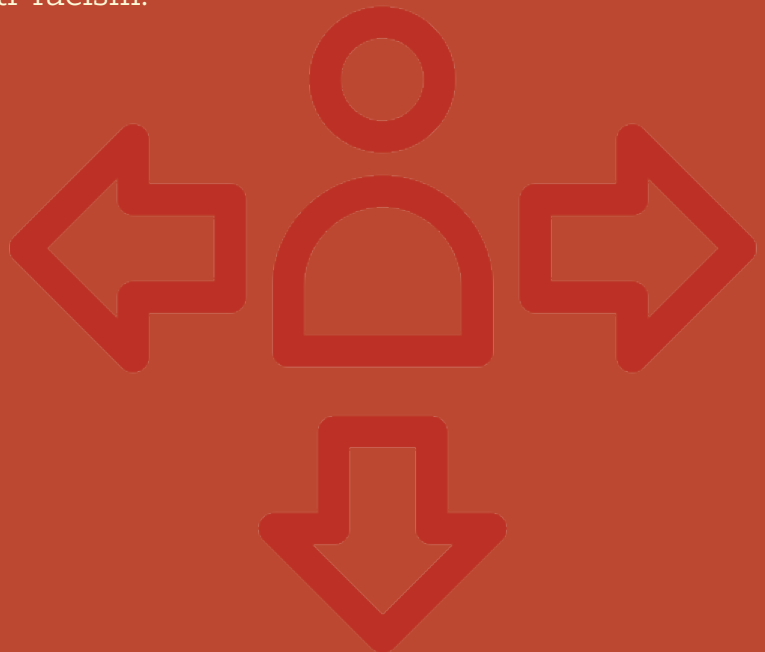
BIOLOGICAL SEX
& FEMINISM

SHAKE WHAT YOUR MAMA GAVE YOU:
BIOLOGICAL SEX & SEXISM

Sexism or sexist discrimination is prejudice or discrimination based on a persons biological sex. Sexist attitudes may stem from assumptions, and stereotypes of gender roles (specific gender roles ascribed to specific sexes), as well as a belief that one sex is superior to others. In the context of north America Sexism privileges Men, Masculinity and the Male sex as superior to other sexes.

From soirart.tumblr

A QUICK PRIMER ON SEX

Sex or Biological sex refers to our physical anatomy, which includes our internal and external reproductive and sexual organs, chromosomes and hormones. Our biological sex is how we are defined as female, male or intersex, and is established when sperm fertilizes an egg. Note; gender and biological sex are distinctly different categories of human identity.

A person with XX chromosomes and female sex and reproductive organs is biologically female. When she reaches puberty, she will produce hormones that will cause breasts and other physical female characteristics to develop as well as menstruation.

A person with XY chromosomes and male sex and reproductive organs is biologically male. Upon reaching puberty he will produce hormones that cause sperm production and other physical male characteristics to develop.

Approximately 1 in 2000 babies born in North America are Intersexed; having external sex organs that are not easily identifiable as female or male (somewhat male, somewhat female or a blend of both), they may have both ovarian and testicular tissue, or they have different sex chromosomes such as XO or XXY.

Patriarchy refers to a social system in which males are the primary authority figures at the center of social organization, political leadership, morality, control of property and where fathers hold authority over women and children. The female equivalent is called Matriarchy. Both have existed around the world at different times through history, though patriarchy has become the dominant global power model through colonization. Other models also exist in which gendered roles and power attributed are more fairly balanced.

What are some examples of how sexism plays out in subtle and overt ways? How does our society uphold stereotypes about women that are disempowering or objectifying? How are women affected by this at all life stages (young girls, adult women, elders)? What does this look like in the streets, in homes, in workplaces, in media and in art?

Misogyny is the hatred, dislike or mistrust of women and is often a basis for Sexism. This can include sexual objectification, sexual harassment and sexual assault, as well as other forms of violence directed specifically at women. All sexes can perpetuate or internalize misogyny.

Sexism affects everyone!!! Yup, it's true.

Sexism informs so many of the standards and stereotypes about sex roles and gender roles that we are all supposed to uphold. This relates to beauty norms, to jobs and social activities we're "allowed" to pursue, right down to the ways we're allowed to walk, talk, feel and think. The cost of not performing these roles or fitting into these stereotypes is high. Just a few examples include;

- Rates of dieting, surgical body modification and eating disorders among women trying to achieve impossible beauty standards.
- Rates of sexual harassment and violence that women experience when simply walking down the street. Those who perpetuate this type of violence express entitlement to women's bodies and often imply that the fault lies in a woman's choice of clothing or appearance, rather that the self-control of the attacker.
- Rates of violence men experience for not being "masculine enough". This might include dressing in ways or doing activities that are considered feminine or not "typical masculine behaviour". It relates to men being policed for showing "feminine emotions" and can also be linked to homophobia projected at men.
- The ways young girls are coddled when they cry and encouraged to engage in play that replicates domestic chores, while young boys are told to toughen up when they cry and encouraged to learn trades. As if learning how to cook, care for children, use tools or fix a car aren't useful life skills for all people?!
- Intersexed people often have (historically and still today) their sex & gender chosen for them in infancy. For example, removing an enlarged clitoris or small penis and raising the child as a biological girl, denying them the chance to choose their gender for themselves. This has resulted in stigma, isolation, depression, mental health struggles and suicide for intersexed people raised in a sex & gender they didn't actually identify with.
- Sexist gender standards also create forms of hyper masculinity (machismo) and hyper femininity while drastically limiting our choices to participate in social activities and in the work force, to explore new fashion or expand our emotional landscape based on our preferences and interests!!! Consider how film, TV & mainstream media perpetuate this phenomenon.

WHAT DOES A FEMINIST LOOK LIKE?

Anyone who advocates for and supports the rights and equality of women! This should naturally include women, men, intersexed and trans folks, elders, and young people alike!

Feminism is a collection of different movements and ideologies aimed at defining, building and defending equitable political, economic, cultural and social rights for women (Beginning in the19th century & ongoing). The issues and campaigns worked on by feminists have changed and expanded over many years and through different movements, reflecting the social and political climates of the times.

From www.facebook.com/whoneedsfeminism

Feminist issues across different movements and waves in North America have included:

• Gaining the right for women to vote politically
• Challenging family law and social norms which gave husbands control over their wives, children and property.
• Fighting for reproductive rights for women, including access to contraceptives and the right to choose abortion.
• Seeking workplace rights like equal opportunity hiring practices, equal pay, maternity leave and anti discrimination policies.
• Protecting women and girls from domestic violence, sexual harassment and sexual assault.
• Challenging stereotypical gender roles, objectification and sexist representation of women in culture, media and art.
• Celebrating female sexuality, and fighting for the rights of queer women and sex workers.
• Deconstructing how sexism, racism, homophobia, classism and colonization interact as to better understand how women of color are affected by sexism in particular ways.

"The Personal Is Political" – Carol Haisch
Infamous Feminist Quote. What does this mean to you?
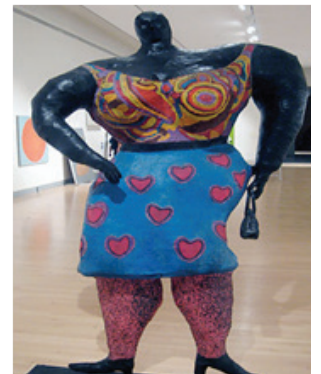
"Black Rosy", Sculpture by Niki deSant Phalle

ACTIVITIES:

Representation In Media.

LEVEL 2 | TIME: 60 minutes or more. WHAT YOU'LL NEED: A variety of mainstream magazines, scissors, markers, glue sticks, Bristol board, tables for a work surface.

Have your group sift through a variety of mainstream magazines and pull out advertisements using human bodies to sell products. Once you've got several assemble them all together across a table and discuss some of the themes, images and messages emerging from the ads. Discuss:

Are the images empowering? Are they stereotypical? Are they overtly sexual? Do they represent a diversity of body shapes, ethnicities and abilities? What is being said about beauty? What is being said about gender and/or fashion? What is different about the ways men and women's bodies are used in ads? Is this empowering and in what ways?

2.0 - 40 mins: Now have the group cut up the ads and remix them into a collaborative 'adbust' poster using images, words and colors to create a visual that is empowering and challenges mainstream representation of the sexes.

3.0 - unlimited: Invite your group to create a piece of fashion that responds to, resists against and confronts these examples of mainstream advertising. This could be a sketch or design of a feminist piece of fashion. You could also actually create a physical piece of fashion-wear! You could even go so far as to host a fashion show of feminist wearable art! Or create a performance piece that includes the fashion you created!

The Guerrilla Girls

Feminist Films.

LEVEL 1 | TIME: 30 to 60 minutes. WHAT YOU'LL NEED: Flip chart, markers, a computer with internet access for film searches as necessary.

Brainstorm any films that can pass the "Bechdel test" – A film with at least two female characters who have names, who are seen talking to each other about something other than a man. If there is doubt about a film use the internet to watch trailers or other video clips to assess the film together. Which films make the list?! Which ones don't?

- Who are commonly the lead characters in films? How often are women secondary or tertiary characters in a film? How often are women simply there to support the lead male character or act as the object of desire? What are the archetypal female roles in film? What does this tell young people about gender roles and power?

- Take this exercise a step further and invite participants to develop an empowered character for a "Feminist Film". This could include writing, sketching or performing who they are, their interests, their 'super powers', and their objectives in the film.

Anti-Sexist Songs.

LEVEL 2 | TIME: 60 minutes or more. WHAT YOU'LL NEED: Writing materials, a printer, a simple audio recording device that produces mp3/mp4 audio files.

- Invite participants to bring in the lyrics for a few mainstream songs which have denigrating, misogynist or stereotypical messages. Select one that you will remix together by changing the lyrics, twisting words, hijacking statements and possibly even giving the song a political bent.

- OR Study a few mainstream songs that have sexist lyrics and then have the group write a new song or poem that either responds to these sexist songs or offers an empowering message about women.

- If your group is musically inclined have them perform (spoken word, singing etc.) and record the song and invite participants to share the mp3 with their friends. Be sure to get signed media release forms from all participants before sharing publicly. ;)

Checking Cat Calls.

LEVEL 3 | TIME: 60 to 90 minutes. WHAT YOU'LL NEED: Flip chart, markers, open space for movement.

This activity draws from Forum theatre methodology and exercises to look at lived experiences of oppression and then troubleshoot responses and resolutions together.

- In a circle together invite participants to share an instance where they experienced overt sexism in the public. Remind them to be careful with themselves as it can be emotional & possibly triggering to share a difficult personal experience. Participants can also always pass.

- Now have the group select 1 story that was shared that they can all relate to or want to troubleshoot responses for.

- The story teller then chooses participants to play the roles of all the people in the story and directs the 'actors' how to perform, what to say and other key elements to recreate the scenario.

- Have the actors perform the story once while the other participants are active audience members. Then have the actors re-perform the story a second time but now the audience can stop the actors at any point and propose a different action or strategy that might actually challenge oppression or bring justice. To do so the audience member substitutes in for the actor and now performs the role differently. As the facilitator be sure to ask participants and actors if the proposed responses are realistic, effective, reducing harm etc.

- Repeat the story several times giving audience members a few chances to troubleshoot response strategies until the group feels like they've found an effective approach.

Who Needs Feminism? – Social Media Project: http://whoneedsfeminism.com/   *http://whoneedsfeminism.tumblr.com/*

Resources.

Feminism

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminism
- http://www.feminist.com
- https://www.facebook.com/WhoNeedsFeminism
- http://ucfeminism.tumblr.com

Media Literacy

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bechdel_test
- http://www.gender-focus.com/2013/06/26/how-to-do-feminist-tanalysis/
- http://www.racialicious.com/2012/10/02/when-will-the-media-startportraying-black-women-without-betraying-them/
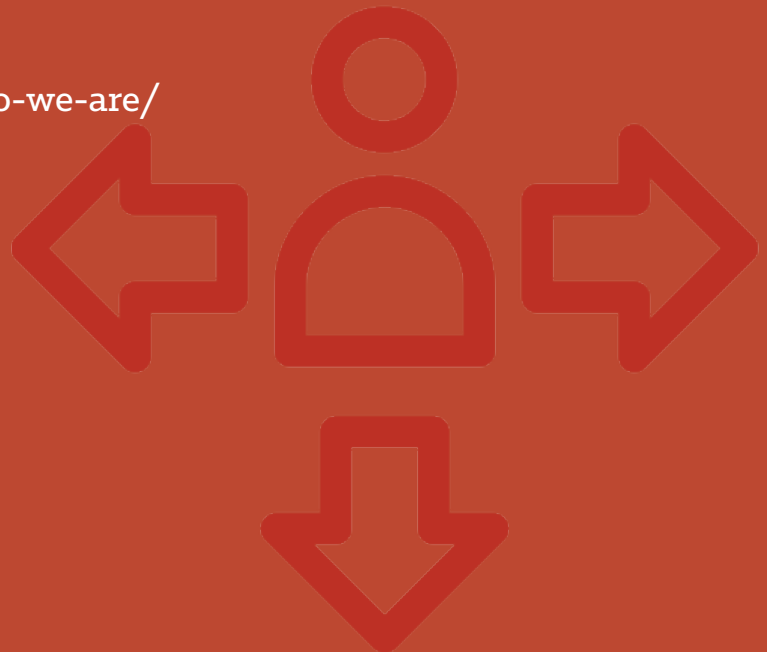
Biological Sex & Intersex

- http://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-info/sexual-orientationgender/female-male-intersex
- http://www.isna.org

Sexism & Misogyny

- http://feminspire.com/this-is-what-sexism-looks-like/
- http://www.thefword.org.uk/search?tag=misogyny

Forum Theatre

- http://theforumproject.org/whatisto/
- http://mixedcompanytheatre.com/who-we-are/

GENDER & GENDER-FREEDOM

BREAKING THE BINARY: GENDER & GENDERISM

Gender is a slippery characteristic of human identity and often gets confused with or flattened into sexual biology and sexuality. It is often assumed that if you are born a biological male, that your gender is naturally "masculine" and transversely that you need to "act masculine to be male and to be a man". It is also often assumed that there are only two genders, masculine and feminine, and that Male is the opposite of Female. This is called 'The Gender Binary'.

But wait! We've already established that there are more than two sexes?! Does this mean there are more than two genders? What gender is associated with intersexed people in this binary model? And if we consider that intersections of race, ethnicity, class, age, location and ability as well as culture all influence gender roles and norms how can we clearly define what masculine or feminine actually looks like?

Gender is a social category in which each individual makes choices (conscious and unconscious) about their gender presentation. However these choices are hugely influenced by some or all of the following factors:

Biological Sex: Hormones have a huge influence on the formation of the human body. For example, female bodies with more estrogen levels may develop breasts for example or Male bodies with more testosterone may develop more overall body hair. These hormone related developments vary for every human and interplay with sex (male/female/intersex) ethnicity, family genetics, health, nutrition and ability among other things. There is no standard for what a female, male or intersexed body should look like. One can also do hormone treatment to manage or change hormone levels.

Family and Culture: We are each born into a family and/or community with it's own set of traditions, beliefs and cultural practices. These can vary between different groups based on ethnicity, religion, politic, class, nationality and region etc. Self-perception can be formed through the ways we are raised and affirmed for our gender performance and in a conscious effort to maintain membership in a given social group.

Systemic Conditioning: The majority of social groups today are influenced by dominant and ruling class beliefs about gender. While there is variation from one group to the next, most typically favor men. There is a direct relationship to sexist and patriarchal systems that have global influence as a result of colonialism. The gender binary, gendered expectations and penalties for not performing normative gender are widespread around the globe.

Self Expression: We also have choice, especially when we allow ourselves to be the unique and dynamic people we are! In subtle and overt ways we communicate gender through the ways we talk, walk, emote, and behave. We can express our gender through our clothing and style, through colors and fit.

We can also express gender through the things we do and how we do them! This kind of individuality manifests even in the strictest social groups.

Who and what has taught you about the gender roles expected of you in your community and/or society? How did you know you were meeting those expectations? How did you know you weren't meeting those expectations? How did/does that make you feel?

Gender Identity: Refers to how you think about and understand your gender. This doesn't necessarily have to be expressed in an outward way.

Gender Expression: Refers to how you demonstrate or perform your gender through the ways you act, dress, behave and interact with others.

Sex: Refers to the reproductive and sex organs, the chromosomes and hormones in the body.

Attraction: Refers to who one is physically, spiritually and emotionally attracted to and relates to ones sexuality.

These elements affect one another but do not determine one another as they develop independently. People's sexual orientation doesn't determine their gender expression. Their gender identity isn't determined by their biological sex.
Genderism is the cultural belief that gender is a binary, that there should only be two genders, man and woman, and that gender is inherently linked to one's sex assigned at birth.

Genderism privileges people who are 'Cis-gendered'; someone who identifies as the sex/gender they were assigned at birth. For example, your birth certificate says female, you identify as female, you've been socialized as a female and are read as female in social settings. Genderism can reinforce negative attitudes and discrimination towards people who display expressions of gender variance or 'nonconformity' or whose gender identity is incongruent with their birth sex. This can also perpetuate sexism by forcing rigid gender roles, sexist stereotypes and hyper-masculinity/feminity. Often Genderism is directly linked to underlying Sexism.

Gender bashing and gender policing are overt forms of discrimination including verbal, physical, sexual violence and social rejection because of someone's perceived gender violation. This includes Transphobia (discrimination against transsexual or transgender people). These are social repercussions for not performing expected gender roles correctly or not fitting into the Gender Binary.

This might look like a cis man being bullied for dancing ballet, a cis woman being insulted for not shaving her legs, a genderqueer youth being attacked for being in "the wrong bathroom", or a transwoman being harassed for looking like a "man in woman's clothes". The stakes can be very high to perform within the gender binary system which greatly affects access to family, housing, employment, institutions & social services etc. This can put much pressure on a gender nonconforming person to "pass" as cis-gendered, to experience gender identity disorders, or forces them to conceal their gender identity.

Gender non-conforming identities might include:

Genderfluid: A dynamic mix of masculine and feminine gender expression which is not static and may shift along the gender spectrum. Also known as Genderplural.

Gender Neutral: (Neutrois, Agendered) Refers to a gender identity that is neutral or null, genderless and neither male or female.

Genderqueer: A term referring to individuals or groups who "queer" or problematize normative notions of sex, gender and desire in society. This gender identity falls outside the gender binary. This may also refer to people who are Transgendered and Queer (challenging norms of both gender identity and sexual orientation).

Transgender: A term with several definitions, frequently used as an umbrella for all people who not identity with their assigned gender at birth or the binary gender system. Some trans people feel they exist not within one of the two standard gender categories, but rather somewhere between, beyond or outside of those two genders.

Transexual: A person whose gender identity is different from their biological sex, who may undergo medical treatments to change their biological sex, often times to align it with their gender identity, or they may life their lives as another sex.

Two Spirit: Is an umbrella term refering to gender variant individuals historically documented in over 130 Indigenous tribes communities and in every region across North America. Many native tribes consider there to be four or more genders: masculine men, feminine men, masculine women, and feminine women. Today the term two spirit usually indicates a native person who feels their body simultaneously manifests both or a different balance of feminine and masculine. Most native communities have terms in their own languages and spiritual roles for their gender-variant members.

Third gender: In a western framework third gender describes individuals who are categorized (by their will or be social consensus) as neither or 'other than' man or woman relative to an individuals gender role in society, gender identity and sexual orientation. To other cultures around the world third gender may represent a state between man and woman, of being both, of being neither, and the ability to cross or swap genders.

Social Organizing & Movements:

Transgender activism (challenging Genderism) is one of many LGBT social movements working for equity and human rights for transgender people. This includes having gender recognized in human rights charters around the world prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender. However, this work can be difficult to do even within the LGBT community as Gays and Lesbians may also perpetuate the gender binary and exclude trans people. Interestingly, the notorious 'Stonewall riots' which sparked the beginning of the LGBT rights movement in north America was a riot of mostly trans women (See Miss Major, Marsha P Johnson & Silvia Riveira) challenging police violence.

"The first question we usually ask new parents is: "Is it a boy or a girl?" There is a great answer to that one going around: "We don't know; our baby hasn't told us yet." Personally, I think no question containing either/or deserves a serious answer, and that includes the question of gender".
– Kate Bornstein, writer and gender theorist

ALL GENDER
RESTROOM

Anyone can use this restroom,
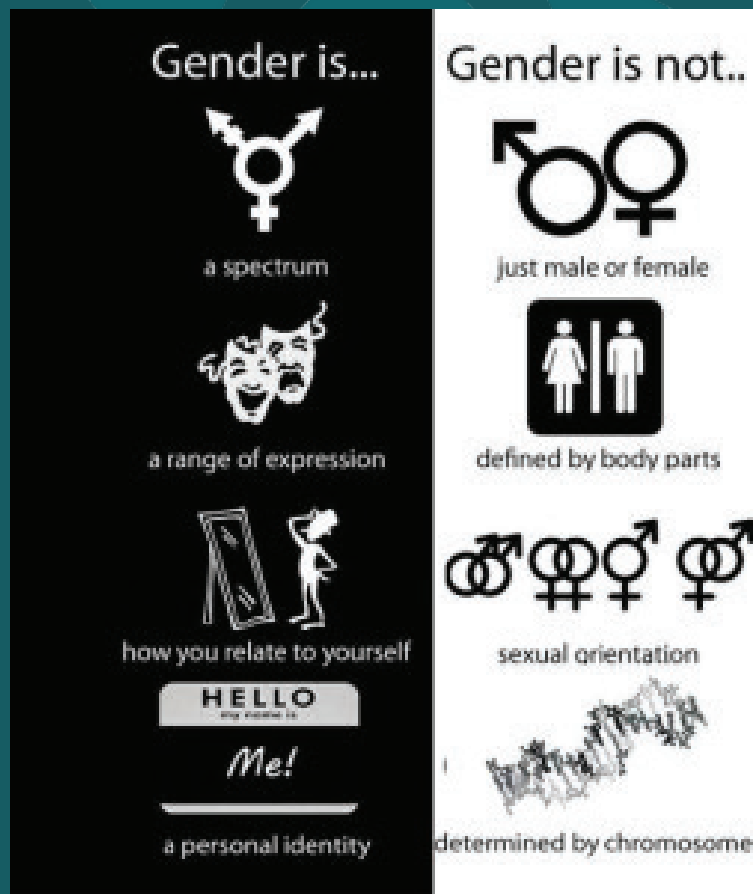regardless of gender identity
or expression

What's Your Preferred Pronoun?

LEVEL 1 | TIME: 10 minutes or more. WHAT YOU'LL NEED: A check in at the beginning of your gathering or workshop.

At the very beginning of your session & regularly during your group check-ins ask participants to share their name & preferred pronoun in a go around. Give examples: Male pronouns like he and him. Female pronouns like she and her. Gender plural terms like They and them. Using a persons name instead of a pronoun. Or others?

- After the check in is done invite participants to reflect on how it felt to be asked about their gender identification. Was it uncomfortable and why? Was it exciting and why? Any new discoveries? Remind people that their pronoun can change. What's important is that we are given the space to self determine how we identify and no one is left making assumptions about another's gender.

- Remember sexual biology is separate from gender identity. It can be very powerful for a transgendered person to feel like their gender identity can be accepted and celebrated.

Gender is...
a spectrum
a range of expression
how you relate to yourself
HELLO
Me!
a personal identity

Gender is not..
just male or female
defined by body parts
sexual orientation
determined by chromosomes

An Every Day Girl/Boy.

LEVEL 2 | TIME: 90 minutes. WHAT YOU'LL NEED: Flipchart paper or whiteboard & markers to capture your illustration.

On a whiteboard or flipchart trace the outline of a non-gendered human being (like the gender gingerbread). Ask your group to turn this gingerbread person into an everyday boy in your community by drawing on traits. This could include adding facial features, expressions, clothing, accessories, props, colors etc. Continue to ask the question "what are the characteristics of an everyday boy in your neighbourhood"?

- When the group feels they have successfully captured the image stop and debrief people's observations, actions and feelings. Is this realistic & age appropriate? What does this tell us about assumptions and stereotypes? How do expected roles, power, & sexualization play out in this depiction?

- Now repeat this process again starting from a blank gingerbread person and asking your group to characterize an everyday boy. Have them sketch it out, observes the ways this process feels similar or different to the first half of the exercise. When the image is done debrief and ask critical questions about what is been represented. Offer local and cultural context when deconstructing gendered clothing when possible.

- Facilitator consideration: Have objects like guns, knives, alcohol and muscles emerged for the 'boy'? Have symbols like a mini skirt, big breasts, long hair, shopping bags and high heels emerged for the 'girl'? This can be very common and may suggest something about how images from media inform how we understand gender identity.

- Now give participants a mix of visual arts and drawing materials plus largeformat paper and invite them to create a gender fluid/free human being that is empowered rather than powerful or weak in relation to others (at their expense). Hang all the drawings, do a "gallery walk" & share back with each other.

What does it take to pass?

LEVEL 3 | TIME: 40 minutes. WHAT YOU'LL NEED: Open space that participants can move freely in with a line on the floor at the center. The line can be created with chalk or masking tape.

Split your group in two. One group will be the audience observing from the sideline. Ask the second group of participants to line up all together. Have them consider a context, space or situation where they have to make decisions about their gender; actions, Gestures, language, tone, posture, role, clothing and sexuality in order to pass for safety purposes.

- Now explain that the line in the middle of the room represents a border, a physical, conceptual or political border that they cross regularly. When walking towards the line they will perform what's it like "being themselves freely" when they walk toward the line. As they cross the line they move into "an imagined space" where they have to perform a certain way so their gender is perceived very specifically. For example, a woman walking alone on a busy street at day crossing into a woman walking alone at night on an empty street. Another example, a queer youth who can be eccentric when in the downtown core of an urban space but when traveling out into the parameters of the city has to perform more strict gender roles in order to be read as either male or female to escape homophobia or transphobia. Have participants walk back-and-forth across the line several times. Ask them to really take note of how this feels.

- What are the changes that they make? Ask the audience to share what they're observing. How does this make them feel to observe this? Ask the walkers to share about their experience? What was the boundary they were crossing and what was at stake? How does this make them feel?

- Take this a step further and ask participants to do solo free writing listing the variety of times and conditions when they have to perform a particular kind of gender in order to experience safety. These are the effects of gender policing, misogyny, homophobia and transphobia. Invite them to write a poem or short story about what their gender could look like if they didn't experience gender policing. These samples could be woven into a group book, a zine or read together in a public showcase of poetry and stories.

Resources.

Gender

- https://www.genderspectrum.org/understanding-gender

Genderism

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genderism

Gender Identity

- http://gender.wikia.com/wiki/Gender_Wiki
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:Transgender
- http://www.familyservicetoronto.org/programs/dks/res_trans.html
- http://transactivists.org
- http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2011/11/breaking-through-the-binarygender-explained-using-continuums/
- http://www.rainbowresourcecentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/TwoSpirit.
- pdf

SEXUALITY
& ANTI-HOMOPHOBIA

BEYOND HETEROSEXISM & HOMOPHOBIA

"The important thing is not the object of love, but the emotion itself".
- Gore Vidal

"Sexuality" describes all of the ways a person expresses them self as a sexual being. This includes experiences and expressions of desire, attraction, intimacy, sensuality, self-pleasure, love, eroticism, sex, romance, relationships, sexual health, and reproduction among other great things. That sounds sexy no?! A person's sexuality and sexual identity is dynamic, complex and shaped by many things throughout one's life. Predispositions, preferences, culture, social norms, politics, and beliefs as well as experiences, physical attributes, biology, emotions and spiritual connections with others may all have influence. Sexuality can be static and fluid, something that may feel clear at an early age or that requires exploration over time to unfurl.

CIRCLES OF SEXUALITY

Historically, Sexuality has been understood in many different terms at different periods of human social development. Sexuality was fundamentally understood and organized around reproduction, but also for social engagement, spiritual fulfillment and self-pleasure. Examples of sexual diversity & exploration can be found all across the globe and in most cultures. During the European Victorian period (17th-20th centuries) greatly influenced by Catholicism and capitalism, sexuality became viewed as perverse and reserved solely for reproduction. At this time women were also considered the property of men, and homosexuality was frowned upon and illegalized. These views have been spread throughout the world as a result of European colonialism (also see imperialism*)

Sexual orientation refers to who your attraction or romantic feelings may be directed towards. An example being attracted to someone who is from the opposite gender and/or biological sex as you. This may include, *heterosexual* relationships between cis gendered men and women. However, this could also look like someone who is "feminine" gendered that is attracted to "masculine" gendered people regardless of their sexual biology (intersexed, transgendered, gender queer etc).

You might also be attracted to the same gender and/or biological sex as you. This could look like two cis gendered *gay* men, a cis gendered woman with a trans woman, or a cis gendered woman with a masculine gendered woman who identify as *lesbian*, among other things! Amazing right?

You might also be attracted to all genders and/or biological sexes, or be attracted to someone's personality regardless of gender/or biological sex. For example, this might look like a woman being attracted to cis gendered men and women and identifying as *Bisexual*. It could also look like someone attracted to people who are gender-queer regardless of their biological sex and may identify as having a *Fluid sexuality* (Also Pansexual, Omnisexual).

And still, some people aren't attracted to anyone sexually. This is called *Asexuality* and relates to a person who doesn't experience sexual attraction and doesn't seek out sexual interactions in intimate relationships. As a result, an Asexual person may chose partners based on personality rather than s exual attraction based on gender or biological sex.

Brainstorm Questions

If a masculine woman and a feminine man were in a relationship together who would be the "dominant one?? What might power dynamics look like? Would this be considered a "heterosexual" or "Queer" relationship? Is it possible to have an intimate relationship without gendered power dynamics?

Clearing some things up... Orientation, Conduct & Identity?

Sexual orientation relates to who we are attracted to. This can happen in ones head without ever engaging with others, for example having secret crushes. Sexual Conduct relates to who we have sexual interactions with. This is about how we outwardly express desire, about who we date and have sex with, who we partner or reproduce with as well. This means someone can have a dynamic sexual orientation even if it "looks straight" on the outside. It is important to consider that the relative safety you experience in your surrounding environment can greatly influence the freedom or repression of sexual conduct.

Sexual Conduct relates to whom we have sexual interactions with. This is about how we outwardly express desire, about who we date and have sex with, who we partner or reproduce with as well. This means someone can have a dynamic sexual orientation even if it "looks straight" on the outside. It is important to consider that the relative safety you experience in your surrounding environment can greatly influence the freedom or repression of sexual conduct. For example, as the social and political climate in some parts of the world becomes more hospitable for diverse sexual orientations & relationships other than just heterosexual & monogamous we see more people coming out or expressing sexually diverse orientations and identities.

Sexual conduct may also relate to the kinds of relationship structures you work in consensually with others (regardless of marriage). **Monogamy**, is a partnership of two people exclusively with each other. For example, reflected in the "Nuclear Family" model. **Polyamory** may be several

people in intersecting intimate relationships and/or one person having partnerships/loverships with multiple people. In all cases safety, consent, good communication & clear commitments between parties involved is crucial to any healthy relationship!!!

"We demand that sex speak the truth […] and we demand that it tell us our truth, or rather, the   deeply buried truth of that truth about ourselves which we think we possess in our immediate   consciousness." – The History of Sexuality, Michel Foucault

Yup. "Normativity" influences sexuality too! In huge ways!
In the context of North America, for example, the dominant story which has been told to us about "normal" and "ideal" sexuality & sexual expression has been limited to Heterosexuality. This is called *Heteronormativity*. This can look like only offering models of hetero relationships in media & education systems and suggesting this is best for people while denigrating or showing very little of other sexual identities. It also looks like assuming that everyone "normal" is straight. This is based on an assumption that all other sexualities are 'abnormal', are unfortunate, and are to be deterred. As a result, *Heterosexism* is a social and political system that advantages Heterosexual people at the expense of non-heterosexual people. This narrow view can also perpetuate *Homophobia*, which is the irrational fear and loathing of homosexuality and queer identities. Tragically, this has perpetuated much state & social violence against people of all genders and sexual identities, through anti-gay laws, criminalization, exclusion from many institutions & services, family rejection, limited spousal rights and great isolation historically and still today.

Can you see the connections between homophobia, genderism, transphobia and sexism? What are the relationships between gender, sex, sexuality, power & oppression? Who benefits the most from these power dynamics?

A Queer Eye…
So what's Queer really mean anyway? It gets used in all kinds of creative ways! Is it a good term?
• In most English dictionaries it still means "strange, odd, weird, different, abnormal" etc.
• Historically "queer" was used as an insult and slur towards homosexual people.
• It has been reclaimed by non-heterosexual people to refer to diverse sexualities.
• It is also used to refer to a non-heteronormative Identity, a Political, a Gender, a Culture and specific Communities!
• It may also sometimes be used as an umbrella term for the 'LGBTTQQ2SSIA' community in general.
• Its use is versatile, is about self-identification & depends on the person using the term.
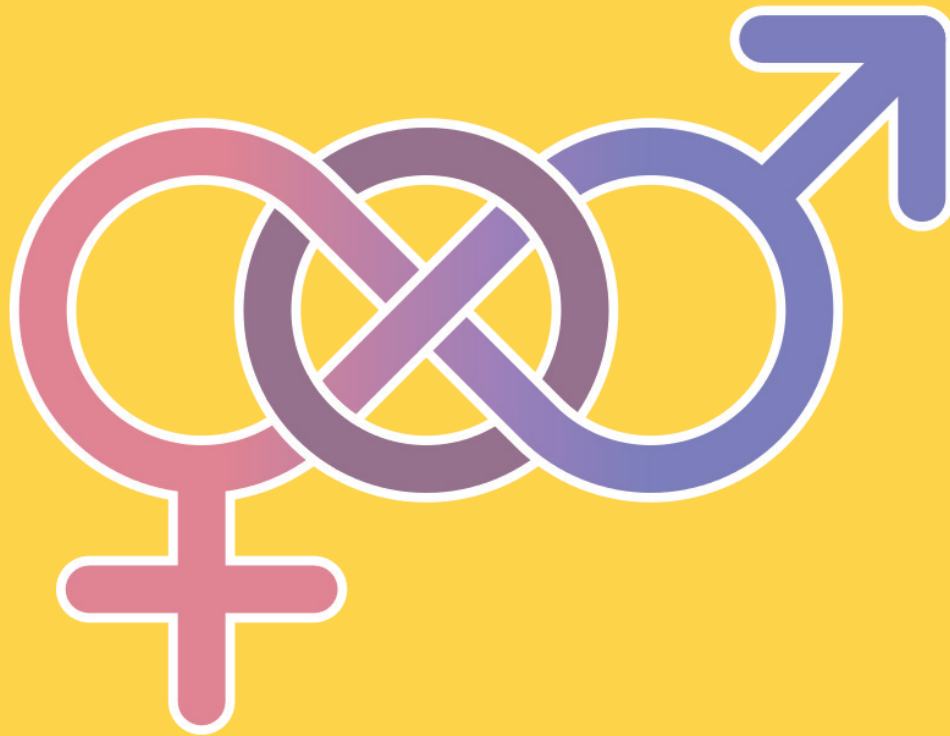
The 'LGBTTQQ2SSIA" acronym reflects the growing diversity of sexual identities & stands for:

- **Lesbian:** Women attracted to other women

- **Gay:** Men attracted to men

- **Bisexual:** An individual attracted to men & women

- **Transgender:** Past or present transition from one gender to another, or transgressing gender altogether.

- **Transexual:** Has or is transitioning from one biological sex to another.

- **Queer:** Non normative gender and/or sexual identity, and/or being attracted to other queers.

- **Questioning:** Still exploring ones sexuality

- **2 Spirited:** Native term & identity, a person having both masculine & feminine spirits.

- **Intersexed:** Sex that may include variations & combinations of male & female biology, chromosomes & hormones.

- **Asexual:** Not sexually attracted to anyone, not interested in sexual intimacy

LGBTTIQQ2SA

Stonewall: An Intersectional Case Study

Most LGBT activists will site the Stonewall riots in New York city's Greenwhich village in 1969 as marking the beginning of the LGBT rights movement in north America. The riots were a series of spontaneous demonstrations against a violent police raid on the Stonewall inn, a gay nightclub. To be precise the patrons of the Stonewall attacked that night were poor & racialized (black & latino) effeminate gay men, drag queens, street living youth, and transwomen such as trans activists Sylvia Rivera & Marsha P.Johnson. Despite being some of the most marginalized people in society these patrons refused to be dragged away by the police and fought back causing a string of rioting in the streets, which attracted large media attention. Within months several gay rights groups and publications were established and demonstrations were staged across North America in response. However, the gay rights movement of the 70's & 80's (arguably still today) focused primarily on the rights and needs of white gay men often completely excluding trans, racialized and poor people despite their roles in sparking & sustaining national political organizing. How does this illustrate the ways an 'intersectional analysis' of oppression is necessary to actually challenge homophobia?

Genderism can reinforce negative attitudes and discrimination towards people who display expressions of gender variance or 'nonconformity' or whose gender identity is incongruent with their birth sex. This can also perpetuate sexism by forcing rigid gender roles, sexist stereotypes and hyper-masculinity/feminity. Often Genderism is directly linked to underlying Sexism.

Gender bashing and gender policing are overt forms of discrimination including verbal, physical, sexual violence and social rejection because of someone's perceived gender violation. This includes Transphobia (discrimination against transsexual or transgender people). These are social repercussions for not performing expected gender roles correctly or not fitting into the Gender Binary. This might look like a cis man being bullied for dancing ballet, a cis woman being insulted for not shaving her legs, a genderqueer youth being attacked for being in "the wrong bathroom", or a transwoman being harassed for looking like a "man in woman's clothes". The stakes can be very high to perform within the gender binary system which greatly affects access to family, housing, employment, institutions & social services etc. This can put much pressure on a gender nonconforming person to "pass" as cis-gendered, to experience gender identity disorders, or forces them to conceal their gender identity.

GENDER NON-CONFORMING IDENTITIES MIGHT INCLUDE:

Genderfluid: A dynamic mix of masculine and feminine gender expression which is not static and may shift along the gender spectrum. Also known as Genderplural.

Gender Neutral: (Neutrois, Agendered) Refers to a gender identity that is neutral or null, genderless and neither male or female.

Genderqueer: A term referring to individuals or groups who "queer" or problematize normative notions of sex, gender and desire in society. This gender identity falls outside the gender binary. This may also refer to people who are Transgendered and Queer (challenging norms of both gender identity and sexual orientation).

Transgender: A term with several definitions, frequently used as an umbrella for all people who not identity with their assigned gender at birth or the binary gender system. Some trans people feel they exist not within one of the two standard gender categories, but rather somewhere between, beyond or outside of those two genders.

Transexual: A person whose gender identity is different from their biological sex, who may undergo medical treatments to change their biological sex, often times to align it with their gender identity, or they may life their lives as another sex.

Two Spirit: Is an umbrella term refering to gender variant individuals historically documented in over 130 Indigenous tribes communities and in every region across North America. Many native tribes consider there to be four or more genders: masculine men, feminine men, masculine women, and feminine women. Today the term two spirit usually indicates a native person who feels their body simultaneously manifests both or a different balance of feminine and masculine. Most native communities have terms in their own languages and spiritual roles for their gender-variant members.

Third gender: In a western framework third gender describes individuals who are categorized (by their will or be social consensus) as neither or 'other than' man or woman relative to an individuals gender role in society, gender identity and sexual orientation. To other cultures around the world third gender may represent a state between man and woman, of being both, of being neither, and the ability to cross or swap genders.

Western cosmetics and entertainment industries typically celebrate one way of being sexy, sexual, and sexually fulfilled. The reality is that there are as many ways of being all such things as there are people.

I Wonder...

LEVEL 2 | TIME: 20 to 40 minutes. WHAT YOU'LL NEED: Access to natural space & writing materials.

Organize your group into pairs (A & B) & have them each find a specific object in nature that draws them in. Explain that they will take turns exploring their natural objects outloud and in depth always starting with the question "I wonder"? For example, I've chosen a blade of grass and pose questions like "I wonder if this grass is really greener than on the other side?", "I wonder if this grass thinks of itself as sharp", "I wonder if this piece of grass misses it's family?", "I wonder how old this piece of grass is?" etc.

- Have the A's begin and give them 3 mins to wonder about their object. Then invite participants to switch roles and have the B's wonder for 3 minutes. Afterwards give them 3 minutes in their pairs to reflect on their experiences and observations of each other. Likely most pairs will make a special kind of connection having witnessed the whimsy of peoples unique wonderings!

- In the same pairs, now invite participants to first visualize their sexuality in their hands as complex things they can hold for a moment. Now B's start wondering about their sexualities for 3-5 minutes, asking questions about the textures and dimensions of their sexual identities. Then switch and have A's wonder for 3-5 minutes. Base the timing on the energy and engagement of participants. Have pairs share back reflections about one another for a few minutes.

- Then have participants individually free write and/or draw for 5-10 minutes about what they learned in wondering about their sexuality in this way.

- Invite your participants to share a strong or insightful element of their reflections with the group.

Yes, No, Maybe.

LEVEL 3 | TIME: 30 to 60 minutes. WHAT YOU'LL NEED: Writing materials.

Sexual diversity is about celebrating all of the ways that people express their sexuality. An essential element of practicing healthy relationships is learning what you like, communicating this, and thus giving and getting consent to explore. By strengthening our communication skills and ability to express desire and boundaries we are able to explore our sexuality in deeper and richer ways.

- Invite your participants to free write about how they would define consent. What does this look like and feel like? How do you know it is happening? Invite participants to share their reflections and discuss insights. Now ask participants to create a list of goals for their future sex and sexual relationships as well as how to achieve these goals. This is a very private exercise and not meant to be shared with the larger group. This list could be considered the "yes list". Things I absolutely want to try or keep doing.

- Now have them create a second list that Maps current boundaries that they have around sex and sexuality. This list is the "no list". Remind them there are no rights or wrongs, there are no value judgments based on what is a yes or a no item.

- Now invite participants to create a list of "maybe items". These are things that the participant might be interested in depending on the person or context of the situation which they should also jot down. If useful there are many different kinds of yes-no-maybe list templates online with exhaustive lists of sexual interests & activities, just Google it!

- Invite participants to share about how & why this tool could be useful for individuals, couples and society in general. Remind them that this is a great exercise to repeat every few years and is really useful to share with partners to open a sexy dialogue about desires and boundaries.

Resources.

Local Organizations & Events:

- http://egale.ca
- http://www.soytoronto.org
- http://www.rainbowhealthontario.ca/home.cfm

History of Sexuality:

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_History_of_Sexuality
- http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_the_history_of_sexuality/
- http://sociology.about.com/od/Works/a/The-History-Of-Sexuality.htm

Stonewall:

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonewall_riots

Arts Based:

- http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/text/poetic-forms-techniques
- http://static.diversityteam.org/files/293/y4d-dictionary.pdf?1309977896
- http://www.radicalphabet.org/D-is-for-Disability-Justice
- http://queerdictionary.tumblr.com
- http://zinelibrary.info/files/learning%20good%20consent2.pdf
- http://www.khaoskomix.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/YesNoMaybe.pdf

Glossary of Terms

Affirmative action (known as employment equity in Canada) is the policy and practice of intentionally creating opportunities for members of marginalized groups to participate more equitably in society and to counter the many unequal barriers they face. This could include: more diverse outreach, pay equity, more targeted opportunities to upgrade skills, opportunities to progress in the workplace, improved worker benefits etc.

Apartheid: Apartheid is Afrikaans (one of the official languages in South Africa) for "the state of being apart". It was a system of racial segregation in South Africa that existed from 1948-1994. Similar to the Jim Crow Laws, the ideology of Apartheid saw the removal of rights and freedom for black, "coloured" (people of mixed origin) and Indian people. During this era all public services were segregated, with inferior service being provided to people of colour.

Assimilation: This is a process of changing your culture, language and ideology to resemble those of another group. For example immigrants often change characteristics about themselves so that can fit in with the rest of society. This is not often done by choice, but because immigrants do not want to face xenophobia which is the hatred or fear of foreigners by citizens of the country. Persons that are successful at assimilating often receive rewards in society such as inclusion or citizenship.

ASL: American Sign Language is a visually observed language that includes hand gestures along with facial expressions, and other body movements. It is one of many visually observed languages that are used by people that are deaf to verbal communication, especially in North America. It has its own unique grammatical rules and sentence structure.

Binary: In technical terms, this refers to something composed of two parts. When used to describe the Gender Binary, this refers to the classification of sex and gender into two distinct, opposite and disconnected forms of 'masculine' and 'feminine'.

Criminalization: Refers when certain behaviors, cultures, or identities are transformed into a crime as they are seen as outside of the norm or deviant. For example in many states in the US, marijuana is still criminalized. Or for example, the ways that sex work and sex workers are criminalized and thus targeted by the police rather than being protected.

Consent: To give permission for something to happen or making an agreement to do something. In order to be accountable to others and not cause harm it is important to seek their consent before taking action.

Consensus: A general agreement about something. It's an idea or opinion that is shared by all

people in a group. Consensus Building refers to a process of decision-making that seeks the consent of all stakeholders.

Critical: Being critical means exercising careful analysis and judgment. Critical theory is a point of view that emphasizes that we reflect on society by applying knowledge from the social sciences.

Cultural Appropriation: This occurs when people of another culture adopt various aspects of a person's culture. Persons of the dominant group in society tend to do this to oppressed groups, appropriating music, dance, religions, symbols, objects, ways of speaking. These elements are then used by the dominant group out of the original context. For example this is often seen around Halloween in North America where people who are not native, dress in traditional native wear.

Cultural Competency: This is the ability to interact well with persons from different cultures and even socio-economic backgrounds. To do this effectively, one needs to be aware of their own cultural worldview, which comes with its specific ideologies, be aware of different cultural practices and cultural differences.

Diaspora: This refers to a group of people with a shared ancestry or who are from the same geographic area, but who are spread out around the world. The Palestinian diaspora for example is made up of communities of Palestinians who live outside of Palestine.

Discourse: A written and spoken communication. For example, "Anti-Oppression discourse" would include verbal dialogue, workshops, online resources, books and even media discussing Anti-O.

Economic System: A system of production and exchange of goods and services as well as the allocation of resources in society. This includes the combination of institutions, agencies, sectors and consumers that uphold the economic structure.

Entitlement: This is the feeling or belief that you have a right to have, to do something or the belief that you deserve to be given something. Entitlement stems from a feeling of privilege or immunity or a special right.

Fair Trade: An organized social movement whose stated goal is to help producers in developing countries achieve better trading conditions and to promote sustainability. Members of the movement advocate for the payment of higher prices to exporters, as well as higher social and environmental standards.

Globalization: A process of interaction and integration among the people, companies and governments of different nations. This process is driven by international trade, investment and information technology. It has effect on the environments, cultures, politics, economics,

development and human well being of societies around the world.

Grassroots: Refers to a movement driven by a community's politics and issues. The term implies that the creation of the movement and the group supporting it are natural and spontaneous. These movements operate at the local level, often volunteer based and led by, for and with the people. These movements are not governmental or led by the ruling minority.

Identity Politics: Refers to political arguments that focus upon the interests and perspectives of specific groups with which people identify. This also includes the ways in which people's politics may be shaped by aspects of their identity through loosely related social organizations. For example, the "Queer Community".

Ideology: Ideology includes all doctrines, norms, belief and even myths that guide a system, country, social movement and individual. Democracy is an example of a political ideology and racism can be seen as a social and cultural ideology.

Imperialism: Refers to a policy of extending a country's power and influence through colonization, use of military force, or other violent or manipulative means. For example, the United Kingdom established colonies and eventually overtook the governing structures in many places like India, Canada, South Africa, Belize, Trinidad etc. The wealth and resources extracted from these places were then shipped back to the UK.

Jim Crow laws: The Jim Crow laws existed in the United States of America from 1892 to 1965 and enforced racial segregation. Examples of such laws include segregated areas for whites and blacks in all public spaces such as schools, restaurants and hospitals and bans on interracial marriage. In some states there were even specific laws pertaining to the segregation of Chinese people as well. Consequences for breaking these laws included fines and even imprisonment. The Jim Crow Laws can be closely compared to Apartheid in South Africa from 1948 to 1994. The Jim Crow Laws can also be compared to The Indian Act in Canada, which was established in 1857 and still exists today with amendments. The Indian Act has been described as invasive and paternalistic towards Native people as it limits them from having full autonomy or being able to make their own decisions and act independently. One famous example of an oppressive law under the Indian Act was the Potlatch Law of 1884, which banned Native people from performing traditional ceremonies. Other oppressive laws included the institution of Residential Schools for Native children ripped them from their families and stripped them of their culture.

Othered: This means being different from the norm or mainstream and often comes with social consequences like exclusion. For example immigrants often feel othered, being made fun of for the way they dress, act or speak. The othering diminishes when people assimilate.

Paradigm: Is a distinct concept, thought pattern, or worldview. In social sciences, the term is used to describe the set of experiences, beliefs and values that affect the way an individual perceives reality and responds to that perception. "Paradigm Shift" implies the act of change in

how a society goes about organizing and understanding reality. For example, the main objective of this toolkit is supporting a social paradigm shift in which human differences are celebrated, equity is central in sharing resources, and self determination is accessible to everyone!

Pedagogy: This is the theory and practice of education or the praxis of education and looks at the best ways to teach. Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator examined the relationship between teacher, student and society in his book <u>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</u>, and proposed that we do not see students as empty vessels buts as co-creators of knowledge. Pedagogy to Freire includes assessing power imbalances and its impact on students who have been historically disenfranchised or oppressed.

Praxis: This is a balance between theory and practice, where the individual gets to embody or apply the concepts that they learned. Paulo Freire discussed praxis in the <u>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</u>, saying that it is a great way for people to learn and to achieve freedom.

Racialized: The process of ascribing ethnic or racial identities to a relationship, social practice, or group of people that do not necessarily identify as such. It is often born out of the interactions between minority groups and a group that dominates and ascribes identities to others for the purpose of continued domination. For example, The racialization of labor in which workers are hired or segregated based on perceived ethnic difference.

Reparations: Compensation or making amends for wrongdoing, abuse, injury or injustice. Historically reparations were demanded for war damages and could be material as well as symbolic. For example the government of Canada issued an apology to the Native community for the Residential Schools program as well as provided a $350 million fund to help those affected by the schools. Today it is acknowledged that for reparations to truly make amends for violations of human rights it must be accompanied by prosecution, truth-seeking and institutional change.

Settler: Settlers are those who are not native to a country or area but migrated and established residence. Often settlers colonize the area they inhabit, imposing their own ideology and displacing the original inhabitants of the land. This is the history of the natives of North America, they were colonized by the Europeans and displaced from the land.

Solidarity: This is when people with privilege, or those who are part of a dominant group in society show empathize with and support and create allyship with people in society who face oppression. Solidarity can also be between oppressed groups who realize the connected nature of oppression. For example the Black Lives Matter Movement showing solidarity for the Free Gaza Movement.

Sweatshops: This is a pejorative (expressing disapproval) term for a workplace that has socially unacceptable working conditions. The work may be difficult, dangerous or be paid a wage that is not fair. Workers in 'sweatshops' often work long hous for low wages, regardless of laws mandating overtime pay, or minimum wage. Child labor laws may also be violated.

State: A state is an organized community occupying a definite territory, living under one government. Many societies have been governed by states for centuries.

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NIA Centre for the Arts

SWB — Schools Without Borders

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GYC — Grassroots Youth Collaborative

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TYC — Toronto Youth Cabinet — 15 Years

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