

Beyond Boundaries: Navigating Intersectionality in Human Rights Compliance

Jennifer Booz
Anchorage Equal Rights Commission



Agenda

- Welcome! Today we will explore how intersectionality shapes discrimination and how we can respond with inclusive, compliant strategies.
- Understand intersectionality in human rights
- Identify intersecting identities
- Analyze real-world case studies
- Develop inclusive strategies
- Foster empathy and solidarity

Intersectionality

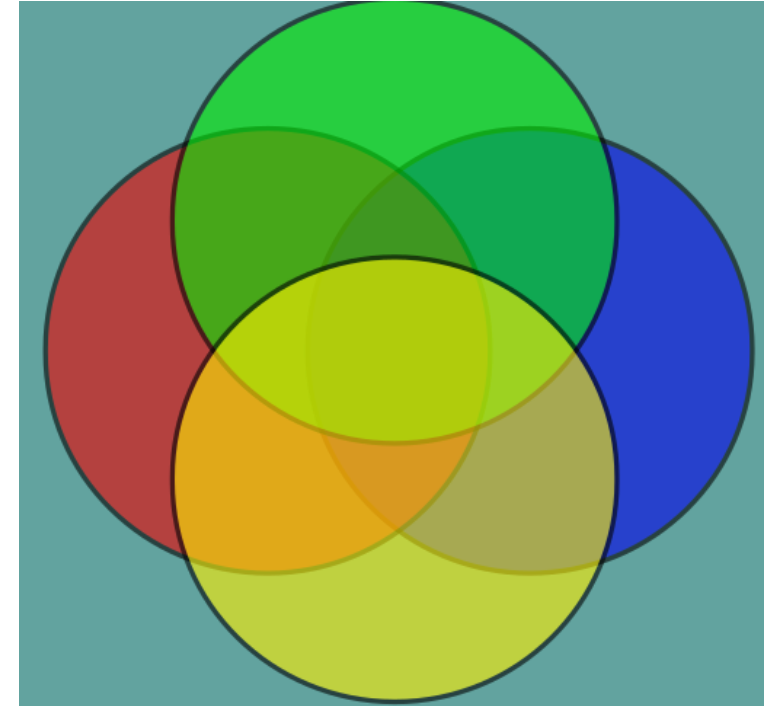
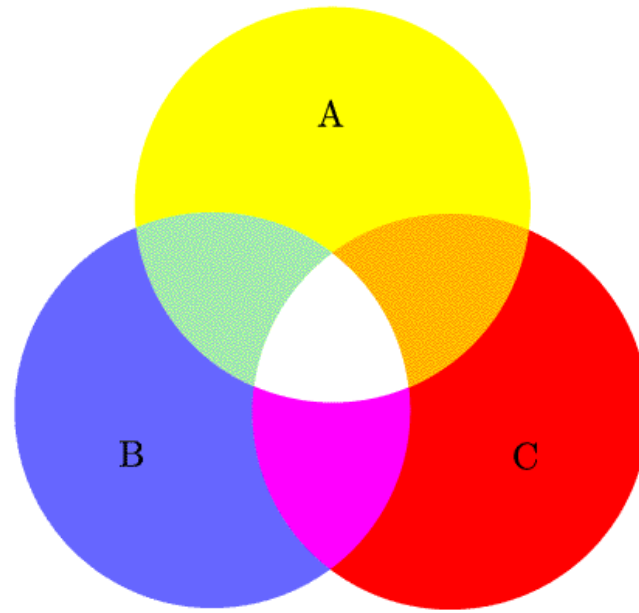
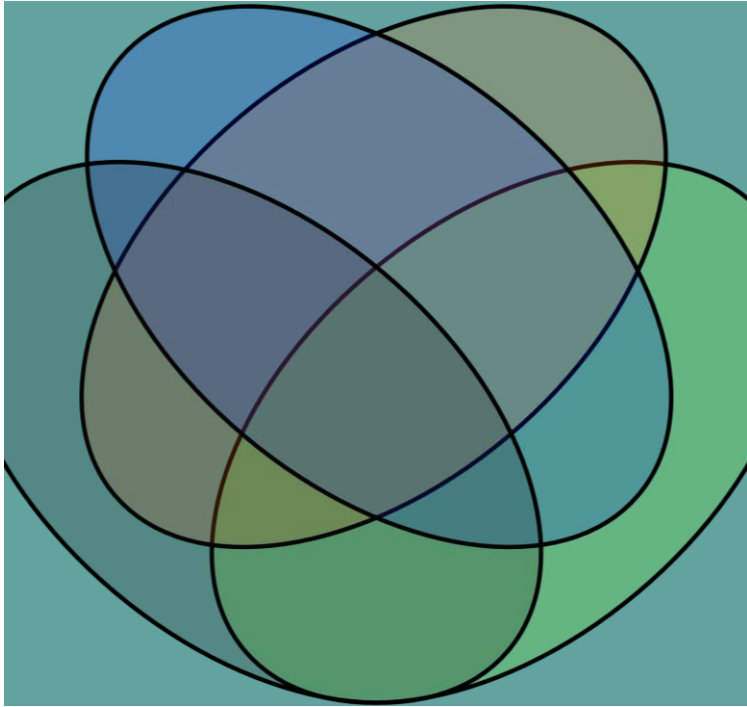
Definition:

Intersectionality is a framework for understanding how aspects of a person's social and political identities combine to create different modes of discrimination and privilege.

— *Coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw*

Key Idea:

People are not defined by a single identity—experiences are shaped by the **intersections** of race, gender, class, disability, etc.



Visualizing Intersectionality

“Where identities meet, systems of power interact.”

Activity – Identity Mapping

Prompt:

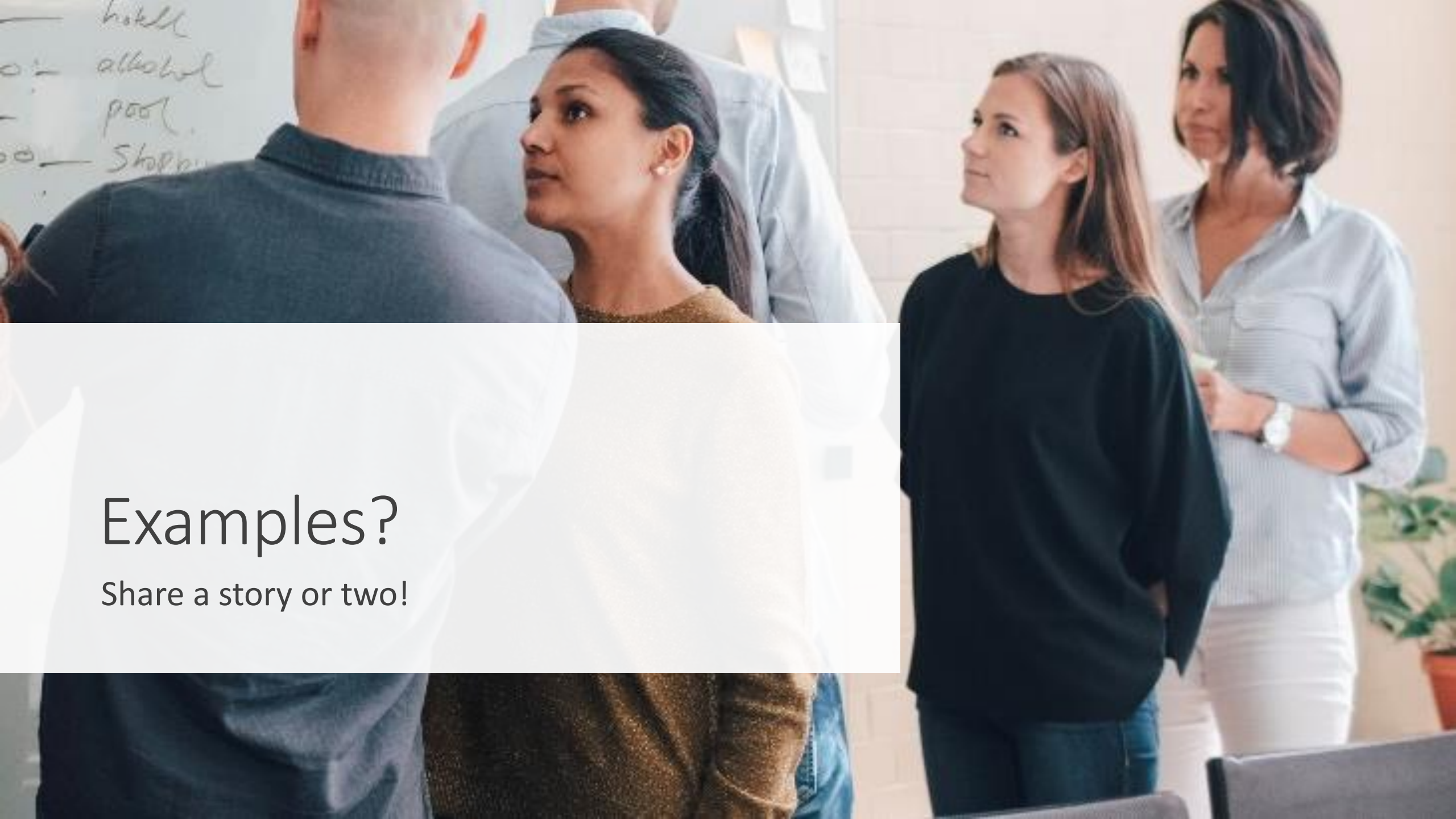
Write down 5 aspects of your identity that shape how you experience the world.

Discussion Questions:

Which identities give you privilege?

Which may expose you to discrimination?

How do they interact?

A group of people are gathered around a whiteboard in a meeting. A woman with dark hair in a ponytail is looking at the whiteboard. To her right, a woman with long brown hair is also looking at the whiteboard. Further right, a woman with short dark hair is looking towards the whiteboard. The whiteboard has some handwritten notes: "hotel", "alcohol", "pool", and "Shopping".

Examples?

Share a story or two!

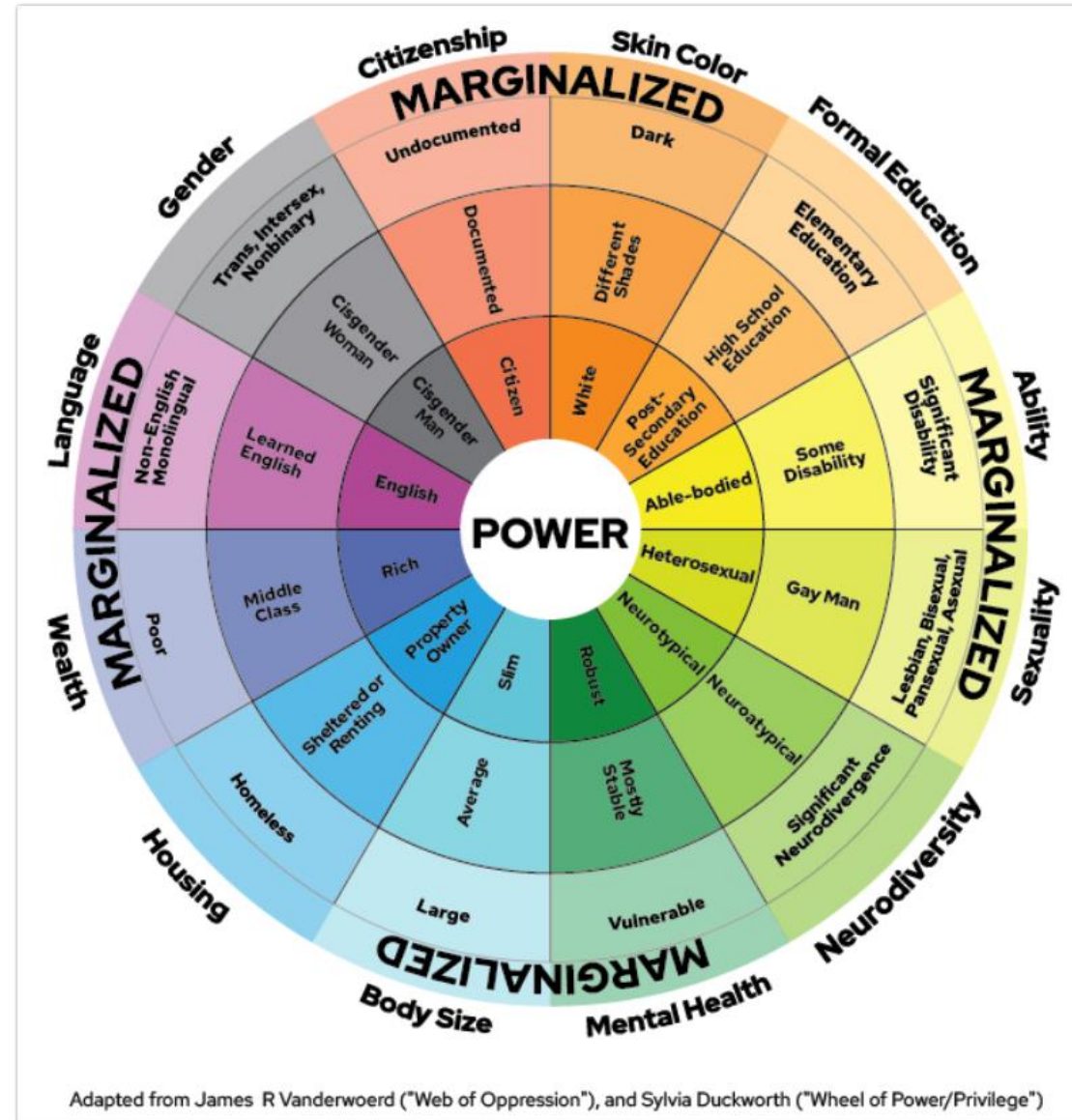
Systems of Power & Oppression

Examples of Intersecting Systems:

Racism + Sexism = Misogynoir

Ableism + Classism

Transphobia + Xenophobia



Case Study – Intersectional Discrimination



Discussion Questions:



What identities are intersecting?



What systems are at play?



How should an appropriate response look?

Case Example:

A Hispanic transgender woman is denied housing due to both racial and gender identity bias.

NASA Fires Woman Over Report

WASHINGTON (UPI) —The space agency's highest ranking black woman says she was fired after reporting to the director that the agency's record of hiring women and minorities was the worst in government.

Ruth Bates Harris said yesterday she will appeal for reinstatement to the Civil Service Commission.

By the year 2001, she charged, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration at its current rate of hiring would have only 9 per cent women or minorities in its work force, compared to a 20 per cent level among all federal agencies now.

The level of women and minorities now working for NASA is 5.9 per cent. She said 87.5 per cent of the women employees are employed in the lowest half of the federal classification system, grades one through nine.

Mrs. Harris, who was NASA deputy assistant administrator for equal opportunity, said she and two colleagues, both men, submitted the report to administrator James C. Fletcher Sept. 21 and three weeks later were given the choice of resigning or being fired.



RUTH BATES HARRIS
Minority report

Incendiary Fire Ruins 8,000 Acres

ALPINE (UPI) — A brush fire that roared through 8,000 acres, destroying some homes and forcing the evacuation of Morena Village, was set off by an incendiary device, forestry officials said.

Firefighters said the blaze was 85 per cent contained today, and full containment was

Case Study – Group Discussion

Breakout or Group Activity:

Review a second case....Ruth Bates Harris.

Questions:

What intersectional issues are portrayed?

What could have been done differently?

How would you respond as a human rights officer?

Strategies for Inclusive Compliance



Use disaggregated data to identify disparities



Include intersectional voices in policy-making



Conduct regular equality audits



Train staff on implicit bias and intersectionality



Empathy & Solidarity

Why It Matters:

- Empathy builds trust with the people who need our services
- Solidarity strengthens advocacy for civil rights
- Intersectionality helps us see the full picture of a situation
- Can help us be better investigators, advocates, community partners

Reflection Prompt:

“What’s one thing you’ll do differently after today?”

Closing & Resources

Key Takeaways:

Intersectionality is essential to understanding discrimination

Inclusive strategies must address overlapping identities

Empathy and solidarity are tools for change and improvement

Resources:

[List of toolkits, readings, local orgs]



Thank you!

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Anchorage Equal Rights
Commission

Jennifer.booz@anchorageak.gov

<https://www.muni.org/Departments/AERC>

