



Intersectionality in nursing practice: exploring a framework for addressing health inequities

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OBJECTIVES

- Learn about intersectionality as a framework for addressing health inequities
- Explore examples of the application of intersectionality in nursing practice
- Apply intersectionality as a tool for reflective practice



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**PUBLIC
HEALTH
SPEAKS**

AND HEALTH EQUITY

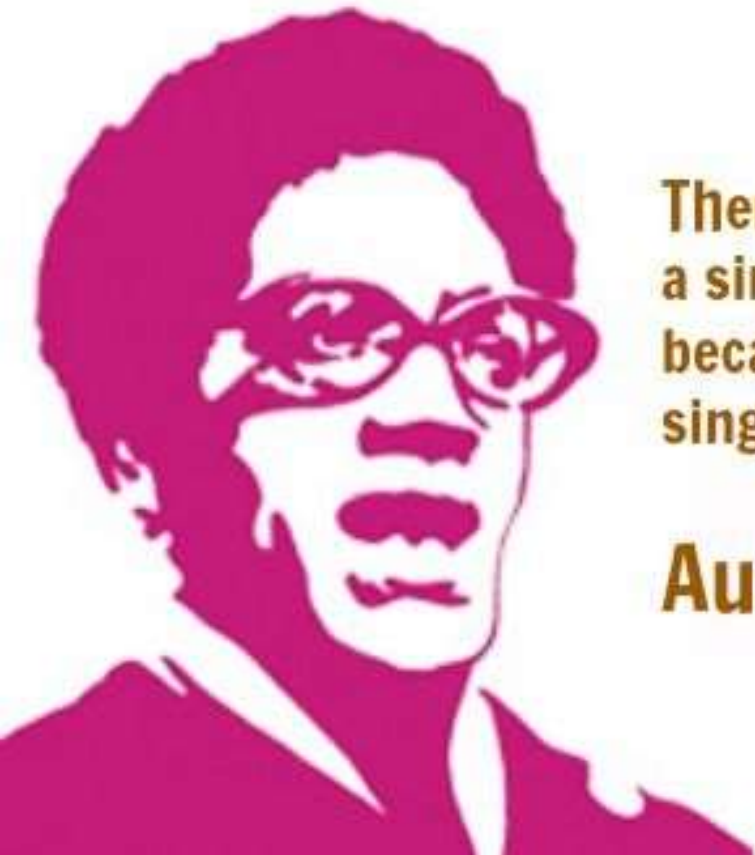
Understanding and influencing the multiple forces that shape social
it can serve as a useful framework for public health action to improve
health equity. In spite of this uptake in public health research, practice

Determinants of Health and National Collaborating Centre Healthy
explores the relevance and application of intersectionality in public health
equity. The group interview has been edited for length and clarity.

ical framework that posits that multiple social
ty, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic
level of individual experience to reflect
s of privilege and oppression at the macro,

**How intersectionality can contribute to
action on the social determinants of health
and health equity and the implications for
public health?**

<http://nccdhd.ca/resources/entry/public-health-speaks-intersectionality-and-health-equity>



There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.

Audre Lorde



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Convergence of perspectives

“intersectionality is the ability to view individuals and communities from a complex and dynamic perspective people are multifaceted, people come from specific places, cultures, religions, languages, and ethnicity, and they have a place in society in terms of the power and privilege that they hold.”

Samiya Abdi, Public Health Ontario



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“the focus in all the work we do with LGBT people, we are constantly looking at the effects of other kinds of social locations, power relations and looking at the different impacts that these things have on health, on access to resources, on the ability to speak publicly.”

Anna Travers, Rainbow Health Ontario



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“I see intersectionality as the next step in social determinants of health frameworks, in that it explicitly pays attention to the relationships between the determinants looking at micro, mezzo, and macro levels of analysis. It does not necessarily limit it us to the typical lists that exist in determinants of health thinking, but most importantly it is explicitly committed to tackling questions of power and how power manifest at all those different levels, including the individual experience.

Olena Hankivsky, Simon Fraser University



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Why intersectionality?

- Single identities or group-specific concerns do not effectively explain health inequities
- Understand connections between structures that shape diverse populations
- More complete understanding of the origin, root causes and characteristics of social issues
- More effective responses to persistent and growing social inequities



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“Intersectionality is the best chance for an effective diagnosis and ultimately an effective prescription”

(Hancock, 2007, p. 73).

Principles of intersectionality



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1 Intersecting Categories

- Human lives cannot be reduced to single categories
- We cannot assume one category is most important for understanding people's experiences and needs

Intersectionality \neq Race + Class + Ethnicity + Sexual Orientation + Age

- Not additive, but interacting and co-constituting



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2 Multi-level analysis

- Effects between and across various levels of society
- Multi-level dimension means addressing **processes** of inequity and differentiation across structure, identity and representation



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3 Power

How power

- operates at **discursive and structural** levels to exclude some types of knowledge and experience
- Shapes subject positions and categories (e.g. “race”) (e.g. racialization and racism)

Processes operate together to shape experiences of penalty and privilege between and within groups



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5 Reflexivity

Importance of power

- Micro level: self and interaction with individuals)
- Mezzo: relationships with groups and institutions
- Macro levels of society

Multiple truths | No universal truths

Diversity of perspectives

Give extra space to voices typically excluded



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6 Time and Space

- How we experience intersecting oppressions depends on when and where we interact
- Different kinds of knowledge are situated--and our understanding of the world is constructed--within specific understandings of time and space
- Privilege and penalty change over time and place
- Fluid, changeable



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7 The Diversity of Knowledges

- Relationship between power and knowledge production
- Perspectives and worldviews of people who are typically excluded can disrupt power. They should be part of an intersectional analysis
- Expands on what is considered “evidence”



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8/9

Social Justice & Equity

Social Justice

- Concern with achieving equity
- Challenge inequities at their source
- Question social and power relations

Equity

- Concern with fairness
- Equalize outcomes between more and less advantaged groups along the social gradient



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10

Resistance and Resilience

- Oppressive values, norms and practices can be challenged from “marginal” spaces and locations
- Subordinated groups can act collectively to question and influence dominant world views
- “No pure victims or oppressors”



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Three Approaches to Conceptualizing Categories of Difference

| SGBA | GBA+ | HIAs | IBPA |
|--|--|---|---|
| Sex & Gender Based Analysis | Gender Based Analysis+ | Health Impact Assessments | Intersectionality Based Policy Analysis |
| Prioritizes sex and gender; does not question primacy of sex and/or gender differences | Emphasizes factors beyond gender in an interactive way; does not challenge primacy of gender | Grounded in social determinants of health; lack of attention to: values, experiences and expertise of policy actors, interrelated nature of social determinants, resistance and resilience, voice and participation of those who are affected by policy process | Emphasizes that people belong to more than one social category at the same time, focuses on interactions of different social locations, systems and processes, investigates rather than assumes the significance of any specific combination of factors |



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Tensions

- The importance of foregrounding specific social locations and social structures
- Complexity in applying an intersectional lens



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