

Interrogating Privilege Checklist

These checklists aren't exhaustive; we hope they help us make the abstract concept of privilege a little more concrete. We hope some of the items on the checklists are relevant, and we also encourage you to add to these lists.

Becoming aware of privilege may be painful, but it is also an opportunity to learn about how we can work together to build a more just and inclusive world. Please feel free to take breaks from this as you need.

Class Privilege

- I have usually had access to healthcare.
- I can afford to visit a healthcare professional multiple times per year.
- I have access to transportation that will get me where I need to go.
- New products are designed and marketed with my social class in mind.
- I have knowledge of and access to community resources.
- I can swear or commit a crime without people attributing it to the low morals of my class.
- I can update my wardrobe with new clothes to match current styles and trends.
- People do not assume that I am unintelligent or lazy based on the dialect I grew up speaking.
- Regardless of the season, I can count on my home remaining a comfortable temperature.
- I know that I will be able to go to the grocery store when I need to and will be able to buy healthy foods that I want.
- Whenever I've moved out of my home it has been voluntary, and I had another home to move into.
- I can plan on getting a raise at my job.
- I can plan on taking time off when I'm sick or when I need to recharge without worrying about its effects on my finances.
- My decision to go or not to go to college wasn't based entirely on financial determinants.
- I have a safe and reliable place where I can study/work on my own.
- My commute is easy, predictable, and in my own control.
- Financial security is not a chronic source of anxiety and stress.
- People of my class identity, who I can identify with, appear frequently in respected leadership roles in in the institution(s) where I work/study.
- People of my class identity, who I can identify with, are generally represented as protagonists in media and popular culture.
- People of my class identity, who I can identify with, directly control the narratives of our local and general culture.
- Other _____

White Race, Ethnicity, and Culture Privilege

- I can take breaks from engaging about race and ethnicity when I want to.
- I can expect that I'll receive days off from work for holidays that matter to me.

- People know how to pronounce my name; I am never mocked or perceived as a threat because of my name, or told that my name is unexpected, unpleasant, difficult, or a burden.
- I know that the police and other state authorities are there to protect me.
- People of my race are widely represented in media, positively as well as negatively.
- When I am told about our national heritage or about 'civilization', I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
- I can expect to see many students and professors of my race or who look like me on campus.
- I do not often have to think about my race or ethnicity--in fact, I don't really notice it.
- I do not have to worry about incarceration unless I commit a very serious crime.
- People do not assume that I am unintelligent or lazy based on my race.
- There have never been attempts to scientifically or socially eliminate people of my race or ethnicity.
- I do not have to choose between the stress of experiencing racial microaggressions from professors/supervisors/colleagues and the stress of confronting these folks about these issues.
- Other people attribute my successes to my personal merit.
- My race or ethnicity will not make people around me uncomfortable.
- I do not have to worry about being chosen last for a job or housing due to my race or ethnicity.
- I can move into a new neighborhood, start a new job, or enter a new school or class and know that the people around me will generally respect and feel safe around me.
- I can go to a store or spend money knowing that no one will be suspicious of me.
- I am seen as an individual; I am never held personally responsible for the actions of other people of my race or ethnicity.
- People don't repeatedly ask me to identify myself racially as part of getting to know me.
- I am never worried that other see me as a "token" representative of my racial or ethnic group, who is included in the visual presentation of groups/institutions but not truly welcome to participate in making important decisions or lead.
- People of my race, who I can identify with, appear frequently in respected leadership roles in in the institution(s) where I work/study.
- People of my race, who I can identify with, are generally represented as protagonists in media and popular culture.
- People of my race, who I can identify with, directly control the narratives of our local and general culture.
- Other _____

Citizenship Privilege

- If I apply for a job, I do not have to worry about what to write under "Social Security Number."
- I know that I will be paid at least minimum wage at a job and that labor laws will protect me.
- If I am mistreated or a crime is committed against me, I have some hope of being able to access legal recourse.
- Most of the time I am able to surround myself with people who share a common or collective history, who speak the same language that I do, and who understand my culture.

- I am not worried on a daily basis about being “discovered” and deported along with, or away from my family; I don’t have to worry that a small misstep could lead to my deportation, even if I currently have legal papers to be in the U.S.
- I can go into any bank and set up a checking account without fear of discrimination, thus knowing my money is safer than on my person or elsewhere.
- If a police officer pulls me over, I can be sure I haven’t been singled out because of my perceived immigration status.
- I can be reasonably sure that if I need legal or medical advice, my citizenship status will not be a consideration.
- I can vote in any election on policies or for people who will make laws affecting my way of life and my community.
- I may consider running for political office to serve my community.
- I, or a member of my family, can apply for scholarship aid to the institutions of higher education that are supported by my family’s tax dollars.
- No one ever tells me to speak a particular language or to get out of ‘their’ country.
- I do not have to worry that my citizenship status will make people around me uncomfortable.
- People of my citizenship status, who I can identify with, appear frequently in respected leadership roles in in the institution(s) where I work/study.
- People of my citizenship status, who I can identify with, are generally represented as protagonists in media and popular culture.
- People of my citizenship status, who I can identify with, directly control the narratives of our local and general culture.
- Other _____

Cisgender Privilege

- I can use public facilities like restrooms and locker rooms without fear of verbal abuse, assault, or arrest.
- People know what to call me and how to refer to me without asking.
- I do not have to worry that my gender expression will make people around me uncomfortable.
- Strangers don’t ask me what my genitals look like and how I have sex.
- My validity as a man/woman/human is not based on how much surgery I’ve had or how well I “pass” as a particular gender.
- I have the ability to walk through the world and generally blend-in, not being constantly stared or gawked at, whispered about, pointed at, or laughed at because of my gender expression.
- Acquaintances use the name I provide, and don’t insist on calling me by my “real name” [birth name].
- I can reasonably assume that my ability to work, rent an apartment, or secure a loan will not be denied on the basis of my gender identity/expression.
- I can flirt, engage in courtship, or form a relationship and not fear that my biological status may be cause for rejection or attack, nor will it cause my partner to question their sexual orientation.
- If I end up in the emergency room, I do not have to worry that my gender will keep me from receiving appropriate treatment, or that all of my medical issues will be seen as a result of my gender.

- My identity is not considered a mental pathology (“gender identity disorder” in the DSM IV) by the psychological and medical establishment.
- I will not be placed in a sex-segregated detention center, holding facility, jail or prison that is incongruent with my identity.
- I am not required to undergo an extensive psychological evaluation in order to receive basic medical care.
- When I do receive health care, professionals know how to provide me with needed treatments and respect.
- If a crime is committed against me, my gender expression will not be used as a justification (“gay panic”) nor as a reason not to punish the perpetrators.
- I can easily find role models and mentors to emulate who share my identity.
- Hollywood depicts people of my gender in films and television, and representations are more nuanced than having my identity be either the focus of a dramatic storyline or the punchline for a joke.
- I can assume that everyone I encounter will understand my identity, and not think I’m confused or hell-bound when I reveal it to them.
- I am able to purchase clothes, shoes, and other products that I like without being refused service/mocked by staff, questioned about my genitals, or having to order special or custom made sizes.
- Official documents like my certificate and driver’s license show the name I go by and the gender I identify as.
- No stranger checking my identification or driver’s license will ever question me because I do not fit gender expression they have assigned to me.
- I can reasonably assume that I will not be denied services at a hospital, bank, or other institution because the staff does not believe the gender marker on my ID card to match my gender identity or because they simply do not like me.
- My gender is an option on legal forms.
- No one will disagree with my stated gender or accuse me of lying.
- I do not fear interactions with police or security officers due to my gender identity.
- I am able to go to new places knowing there will be bathrooms there I can use and people there who will respect me.
- I don’t have to convince my family, friends, and coworkers of my true gender, earn their love and respect all over again, or constantly remind them to use proper gender pronouns and my name.
- I know that I can date someone and that they aren’t just looking to satisfy a curiosity or kink pertaining to my gender identity.
- People of my gender identity, who I can identify with, appear frequently in respected leadership roles in in the institution(s) where I work/study.
- People of my gender identity, who I can identify with, are generally represented as protagonists in media and popular culture.
- People of my gender identity, who I can identify with, directly control the narratives of our local and general culture.
- Other _____

Sexuality Privilege

- I will have immediate access to my loved one in case of accident or emergency.
 - I will receive public recognition and support for an intimate relationship (e.g., congratulations for an engagement).
 - I may express affection in most social situations and not expect hostile or violent reactions from others.
 - I can openly live with my partner.
 - I do not have to choose between the stress of experiencing homophobic microaggressions from professors/supervisors/colleagues and the stress of confronting these folks about these issues.
 - When a relationship ends from death or separation, I will receive support from others.
 - When my partner dies, I will receive paid leave to grieve.
 - Neighbors, colleagues, and good friends will find me socially acceptable.
 - Books, movies and TV shows illustrate mostly people who have sexuality like mine in friendships, partnerships and parenthood.
 - I have access to real live healthy role models of my sexual orientation and accurate media images of people with whom I can identify.
 - I can assume I am around others of my sexuality most of the time, and I do not have to worry about being the only one of my sexuality in a class, on a job, or in a social situation.
 - I will not be fired from my job for my sexuality.
 - I can talk openly about my relationship, vacations, and family planning.
 - I can easily find a neighborhood in which residents will accept my household.
 - If I raise, adopt, or teach children, no one will assume that I will molest them or somehow force them into my sexuality.
 - If I work in a field not traditionally dominated by members of my gender, it will not be presumed a reflection of my sexuality.
 - Strangers don't ask me how I have sex.
 - Clinical professors have never told me that as a clinician, it is acceptable to discriminate against people like me because of our sexuality.
 - When I do receive health care, professionals know how to provide me with needed treatments and respect.
 - I can love, act, speak, and dress as I choose without being treated as a representative of my sexuality or being prosecuted for breaking the law.
 - I have access to basic civil rights that will not be denied or outlawed because some people disapprove of my sexuality.
 - I will not be mistreated by the police or victimized by the criminal justice system because of my sexuality.
 - I have never had to conceal or reveal my sexuality to the people around me.
 - People of my sexuality, who I can identify with, appear frequently in respected leadership roles in the institution(s) where I work/study.
 - People of my sexuality, who I can identify with, are generally represented as protagonists in media and popular culture.
 - People of my sexuality, who I can identify with, directly control the narratives of our local and general culture.
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Male/Masculine Privilege

- I can expect that women and nonbinary people will care for and listen to me more than I care for or listen to them.
- I can take breaks from engaging about gender power when I want to.
- When I speak up, my opinions are heard and respected equally with others'.
- When I don't clean up after myself in a public or institutional space, I can expect that someone else will clean up after me.
- When I am told about our national heritage or about 'civilization', I am shown that people of my gender made it what it is.
- I can expect to receive promotions as frequently and be paid the same amount as my equally qualified colleagues.
- I can expect to receive credit for my own ideas.
- I can express frustration, passion, assertiveness, etc. without being called a 'bitch' or other negative epithet, someone attributing my ideas to 'my time of the month', or being similarly dismissed.
- I do not have to choose between the stress of experiencing gender microaggressions from professors/supervisors/colleagues and the stress of confronting these folks about these issues.
- I can mess something up without it being seen as an indictment of my entire gender.
- People don't attribute my successes and positions simply to my gender; my personal merits are never called into question.
- I can enter public and institutional spaces without being catcalled, sexually harassed, assaulted, or raped, or having anxiety or traumatic reactions related to fear of or symptoms of these experiences.
- I know that people will take my physical and emotional pain seriously, and not dismiss it or question my reliability if I report it.
- At work, I don't often have to worry about harassment from customers, coworkers, or bosses.
- I feel comfortable going somewhere alone or going on a date with someone new; I don't have to fear violence.
- I know that people will believe me when I report a crime against me.
- People of my gender are not regularly forced into sexual submission or unwanted pregnancy.
- I don't have to worry about people perceiving me as sexual because of my clothes or body.
- People do not often make unsolicited comments about or evaluations of my body.
- I am not expected to spend a great deal of time and money on my appearance, and I am not shamed when I choose not to spend my time and money on my appearance.
- I will not be shamed for normal changes in my appearance due to the passage of time or changes in my weight.
- The decision to hire me will not be based on assumptions about whether or not I might choose to have a family.
- If I do have a family, I will not be expected to prioritize my family over my career at all times.
- People do not call my personal and family life into question in context of my career.
- I do not often have to fear sexual violence.
- I do not have to learn about who in my institution(s) commits serial sexual violence against women in order to keep myself safe.

- People of my gender, who I can identify with, appear frequently in respected leadership roles in in the institution(s) where I work/study.
 - People of my gender, who I can identify with, are generally represented as protagonists in media and popular culture.
 - People of my gender, who I can identify with, directly control the narratives of our local and general culture.
 - Other _____
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Ability Privilege

- I can go to new places knowing that I will be able to move through the space.
- When I feel unwell or unable to do something, people do not often say that I'm faking it or tell me to just suck it up.
- Language and slang are not predicated on the assumption that I am bad because of my conditions and abilities (i.e. 'retarded', 'lame', 'stupid', 'crazy', 'psycho', 'crippled', 'blind' meaning ignorant, etc.)
- I will not be rejected when applying for health insurance due to physical or cognitive disability or mental illness.
- I do not have to worry about making the people around me uncomfortable because of my disability.
- People do not treat me like a child by crouching down to me, using a 'baby voice', or offering unsolicited help for trivial tasks.
- I can excel in challenging situations without other people being surprised by my success.
- My success is not presented as a guilt trip for others who do not have my disability ("If she can do it despite her disability, what's your excuse?")
- People believe that my ailments actually exist, even if they can't see them.
- I see people with my physical and cognitive disabilities and/or mental illnesses in media and popular culture presented accurately and positively.
- I can assume that people will be willing and able to communicate with me; they will understand my body language and social cues, etc.
- If I have a medical problem, I don't have to worry that doctors will dismiss it as part of a pre-existing ability-related condition.
- There are not scientific efforts to eradicate people with my DNA.
- People do not pity me or call my quality of life into question.
- I do not expect isolation rooms, restraints, and psychotropic drugs forced upon me during my educational and medical experiences.
- People who have power over my education will not decide that I need to be removed from classes with my peers and/or taught an entirely different set of non-academic 'skills'.
- I can go to any class, job, or website and assume that the materials presented to me will be understandable.
- If I need an accommodation (such as an interpreter, extra time for a text, or an extension), I will receive it.
- People don't think I'm lazy or stupid when I need to try something again.

- I am able to enter new situations without fear of debilitating anxiety, embarrassment, harassment, or violence.
- No one assumes that any partner attracted to me must be a predator or pedophile, even though I am an adult.
- I am never told that I should not have children lest I pass on the genes that cause my neurological type.
- People do not assume that living in the same household as me is inherently “tragic” or “devastating,” or that my family, friends and partner will need a support group to deal with living with me.
- If I am unhappy, people do not assume my unhappiness is a character trait; my emotions are acknowledged and respected rather than dismissed.
- People with my disability, who I can identify with, appear frequently in respected leadership roles in in the institution(s) where I work/study.
- People with my disability, who I can identify with, are generally represented as protagonists in media and popular culture.
- People with my disability, who I can identify with, directly control the narratives of our local and general culture.
- Other _____

Linguistic Privilege

- People do not make assumptions about my intelligence based on my language ability.
- I can go anywhere and assume that I will be able to understand the things around me and communicate with the people around me.
- People do not talk to me like a child or otherwise treat me like a child; they do not speak too loudly and slowly to me.
- I do not have to worry about making people uncomfortable because of my native language, accent, or skill level in their native language.
- People will usually be willing to repeat and restate things for me.
- I do not have to worry that I will be chosen last for housing and jobs because of my language use.
- If I speak multiple languages, people view it as a unique talent rather than a detriment.
- Customers, coworkers, bosses, professors, and peers are not likely to give me negative performance reviews or assessments due to my language use.
- People do not mock my or my family’s accent, dialect, and/or language.
- People do not fetishize my or my family’s accent, dialect, and/or language.
- People do not ask to learn bad words in my language or share the few words they do know in my language.
- I speak my native language because it is part of my family’s heritage, not because it was forced onto my ancestors by others.
- People do not view me as an invader or threat due to my native language or dialect.
- People might not correct me when I make a minor ‘mistake’ in grammar or pronunciation.
- People don’t assume they can understand my entire culture based on my native language or dialect.

- I can readily find people and media around me that can communicate with me in my native language or dialect.
 - People who speak my first language, who I can identify with, appear frequently in respected leadership roles in in the institution(s) where I work/study.
 - People who speak my first language, who I can identify with, are generally represented as protagonists in media and popular culture.
 - People who speak my first language, who I can identify with, directly control the narratives of our local and general culture.
 - Other _____
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Clinical, Structural, and Administrative Privilege

- I have tenure or the prospect of tenure.
- I can determine whether accommodations will be made for other people's emotional pain.
- I have an official title which affords me advantages, prestige or respect.
- My position and/or my field often impresses or intimidates others.
- My field positions me to interpret others' behavior in ways they don't understand.
- I believe I have greater insight about others' behavior than they have about themselves.
- I have spaces I can go at work to be alone where no one will intrude without my permission.
- I can call others into private meetings or conferences with me on a whim.
- Others do not frequently question my authority, level of judgment, or insight.
- I often have more information about others than they have about me.
- I work in a hierarchical structure with others who work underneath me or for me.
- I control others' access to necessities.
- I am in a position to control others' access to care, benefits, privileges, rewards, or awards.
- I am in a position to sanction or punish others.
- I can control the pace and content of discussions I enter.
- I can delegate work I don't want to do to others.
- Those at the bottom of the hierarchy I work in (inpatients, employees) have a quality of life that I would never tolerate.
- I can prioritize my own comfort over others' wellbeing when I need to.
- I can regularly stop working when I go home for the evening or the weekend, and I can take long vacations without repercussions.
- I get credit for the work I do from others around me, and no one above me takes credit for my work, or makes me do additional, unpaid, uncredited work outside of my role.
- My career is not dependent on the goodwill of one specific mentor or boss.
- I can avoid and deflect from topics that make me uncomfortable, even when this occurs at the expense of others' wellbeing.
- I can present my own work and my own interpretations without fear that others will criticize my perspective.
- I can forget about others' perspectives when presenting my own.

- I don't often consider how my actions or presentation might be hurtful, because I feel my role entitles me to act any way I please.
- I expect members of the communities most directly affected by oppression to educate me about oppressions, instead of taking ownership of my own learning process, as I would in a discipline I respect.
- I view equity and diversity as adjunctive or secondary issues in the training of clinicians.
- People in positions like mine, and not like my patients or employees, are generally represented as protagonists in media and popular culture.
- People in positions like mine, and not like my patients or employees, directly control the narratives of our local and general culture.
- Other _____
