

# Deconstructing Privilege Activity

## Purpose

The Deconstructing Privilege activity is an in-class activity designed to allow students the opportunity to apply an anti-oppressive and intersectional framework to understand others' lived experiences as well as their own. Specifically, students are able to get kinaesthetically involved and explore how privilege operates on various societal levels and the resulting barriers that individuals encounter. The activity is linked explicitly to course content and gives students the opportunity to deepen their understanding of privilege and oppression.

## Overview

Students can engage in this activity in groups determined by the instructor or they may do this individually if it is a smaller group of students. Each group receives a fictional individual and accompanying biography that lists the social identities and lived experiences related to their character. Each group then receives \$200 of privilege dollars to start the game. Next, twenty different statements regarding various systems of privilege are dictated, one at a time. For each statement that does NOT apply to the group's character, they are required to pay \$10 to the Bank of Social Injustice. The group with the most money at the end wins this fictional activity.

## Context

Krasna developed this in-class activity to provide an opportunity to apply course content and use Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) while introducing students to an intersectional framework. Krasna uses the activity in small face-to-face classes, but can be adapted to various subject matters and class sizes.

## Impact

Students enjoy this activity and gain a better understanding of privilege and systems of oppression through engaging in the activity and a detailed debrief at the end of the activity. Students are asked to reflect on the following questions: What is the purpose of the game? What is the symbolism of money? How can you relate this game to privilege and the implications of privilege in larger society? Students are able to see how privilege operates in a safe(r) space and by using fictional characters, instances of feeling vulnerable or triggered are greatly reduced compared to other privilege activities.