

Understanding Privilege

Definition: Kyriarchy is a social system or set of connecting social systems built around domination, oppression, and marginalization. **Kyriarchy** (from Greek meaning rule by lord) is an **interlocking** set of cultural, economic, and legal rules and systems that work to keep multiple groups **oppressed** for the benefit of a ruling group or **class**. **Axes of oppression** all contribute to creating a sociological landscape of hierarchical **levels of privilege**.

Examine the Kyriarchy diagram below, and reflect on your **privileges** related to race, gender, sexuality, religion, class, citizenship, physical abilities, and body type?

Intersecting Axes of Privilege, Domination, and Oppression

Adapted from Kathryn Pauly Morgan, "Describing the Emperor's New Clothes: Three Myths of Educational (In)Equality,"
The Gender Question in Education: Theory, Pedagogy & Politics, Ann Diller et al., Boulder, CO: Westview, 1996.

