

# Handouts for Check Your Privileges!

## Quotes

A set of example quotes can be found below. Make sure to add quotes that are important for your national context and to represent different kinds of privileges respective to 'race', class, gender, age, sexuality, (dis)ability, etc. Print out each quote on a sheet of paper and put them all up on the wall or on the floor for people to read and look at.

'Who can see their political interests represented in the national agendas? Who can see their relatives portrayed in the media? Who can see their history included in educational programmes? Who owns what? Who lives where? Who is protected and who is not?' (Grada Kilomba, *Plantation Memories*, S. 42 ff.; Portuguese author, psychologist and artist)

'In this country American means white. Everybody else has to hyphenate.' (Toni Morrison, US-American novelist and Nobel Laureate)

'Slavery is not African History. Slavery interrupted African History.' (Mutabaruka, Jamaican musician and poet)

'We teach girls to shrink themselves, to make themselves smaller. We say to girls, you can have ambition, but not too much. You should aim to be successful, but not too successful. Otherwise, you would threaten the man. Because I am female, I am expected to aspire to marriage. I am expected to make my life choices always keeping in mind that marriage is the most important. [...] We raise girls to see each other as competitors not for jobs or accomplishments, which I think can be a good thing, but for the attention of men. We teach girls that they cannot be sexual beings in the way that boys are.' (Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *We Should All Be Feminists*; Nigerian writer)

'Racism should never have happened and so you don't get a cookie for reducing it.' (Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah*; Nigerian writer)

'One sure test of social privilege is how much anger you get to express without the threat of expulsion, arrest, or social exclusion.' (Laurie Penny, *Unspeakable Things: Sex, Lies and Revolution*)

'Disability is a matter of perception. If you can do just one thing well, you're needed by someone.' (Martina Navratilova, Czech-American tennis player)

'You have to understand, no one puts their children in a boat, unless the water is safer than the land.' (Warsan Shire, British-Somali poet)



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'A people that values its privileges above its principles soon loses both.' (Dwight D. Eisenhower, 34th president of the United States)

'White privilege is the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements benefits and choices bestowed on people solely because they are white. Generally white people who experience such privilege do so without being conscious of it.' (Peggy McIntosh, US- American feminist and anti-racism activist)

'Privilege does not know that you are hurting others, and not listening when they tell you.' (Dashanne Stokes, US-American activist)

'Rejecting your gay or transgender child won't make them straight. It will only mean you will lose them.' (Christina Engela, Inanna Rising: Women Forged in Fire; South-African writer)

'The function, the very serious function of racism is distraction. It keeps you from doing your work. It keeps you explaining, over and over again, your reason for being. Somebody says you have no language and you spend twenty years proving that you do. Somebody says your head is not shaped properly so you have scientists working on the fact that it is. Somebody says you have no art, so you dredge that up. Somebody says you have no kingdoms, so you dredge that up. None of this is necessary. There will always be one more thing.' (Toni Morrison, US-American novelist and Nobel Laureate)

