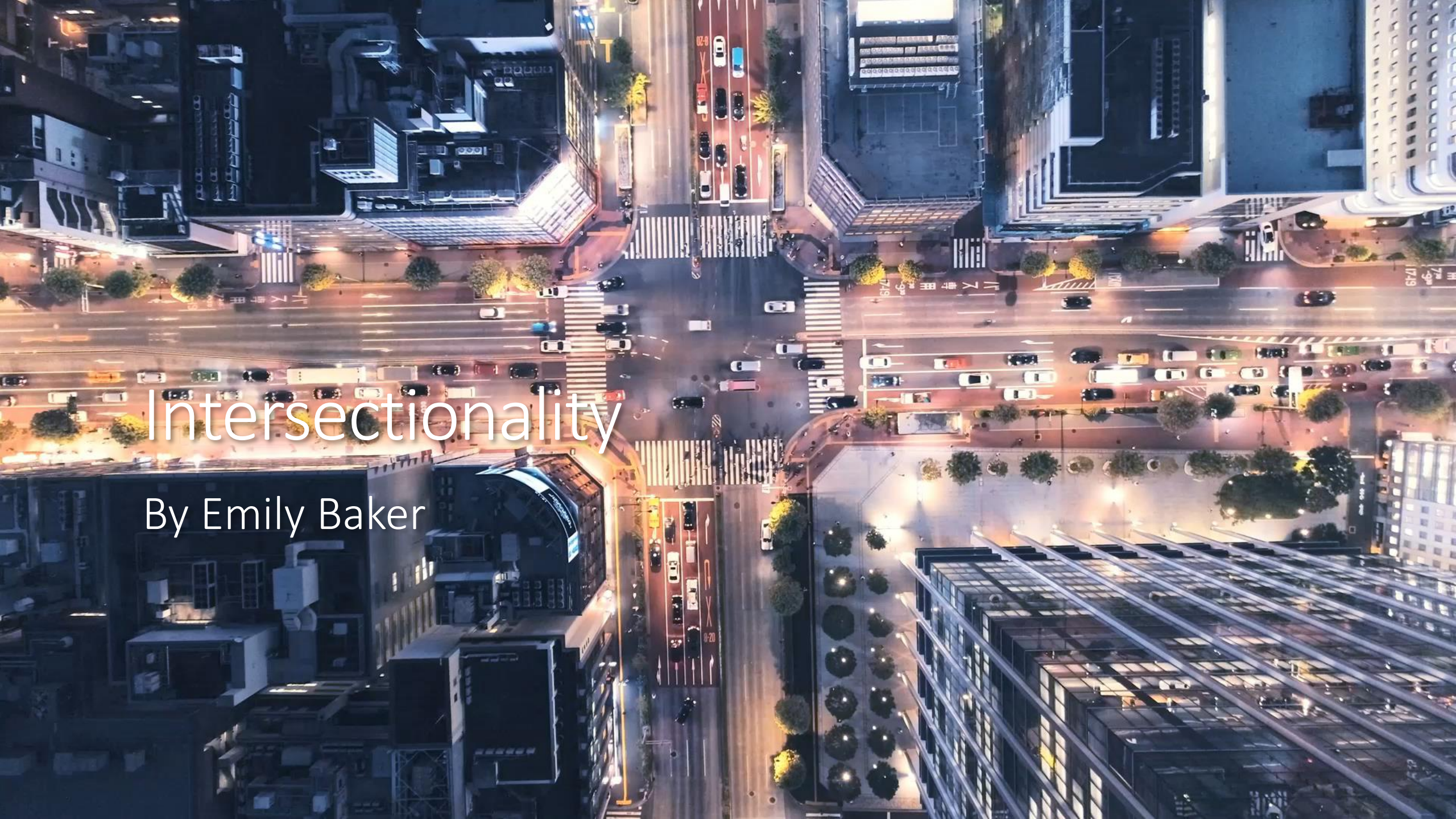


An aerial, top-down view of a busy city intersection at night. The scene is illuminated by streetlights and the lights of cars and buildings. Multiple lanes of traffic are visible, with cars moving in different directions. Pedestrian crossings with white zebra stripes are marked on the roads. Tall buildings with lit windows surround the intersection, creating a dense urban environment. The overall color palette is dominated by the warm yellows and oranges of the streetlights and the cool blues and greys of the night sky and building facades.

Intersectionality

By Emily Baker

Introduction

Exploring intersectionality with two case studies.

Intersectionality will be defined.

The characteristics that can intersect will be highlighted.

Equality Act (2010) and its relation to intersectionality.

Gender and disability – women with autism.

Gender and 'race' – wage gap experienced by Black women.

What is Intersectionality?

Coined in 1989 by Kimberle Crenshaw (de Vries, 2015; Simien, 2007; Hankivsky, 2022).

Promoted by Black feminist activists such as Collins (2000), Glenn (2002) and Valdes (1997).

The intersection of different characteristics – one cannot be considered without the other (Collins, 2000; Weldon, 2008).

Oppression of a Black woman does not equal the oppression of a white woman plus the oppression of a Black man (Simien, 2007; Weldon, 2008).

More research should be done (Simien, 2007).

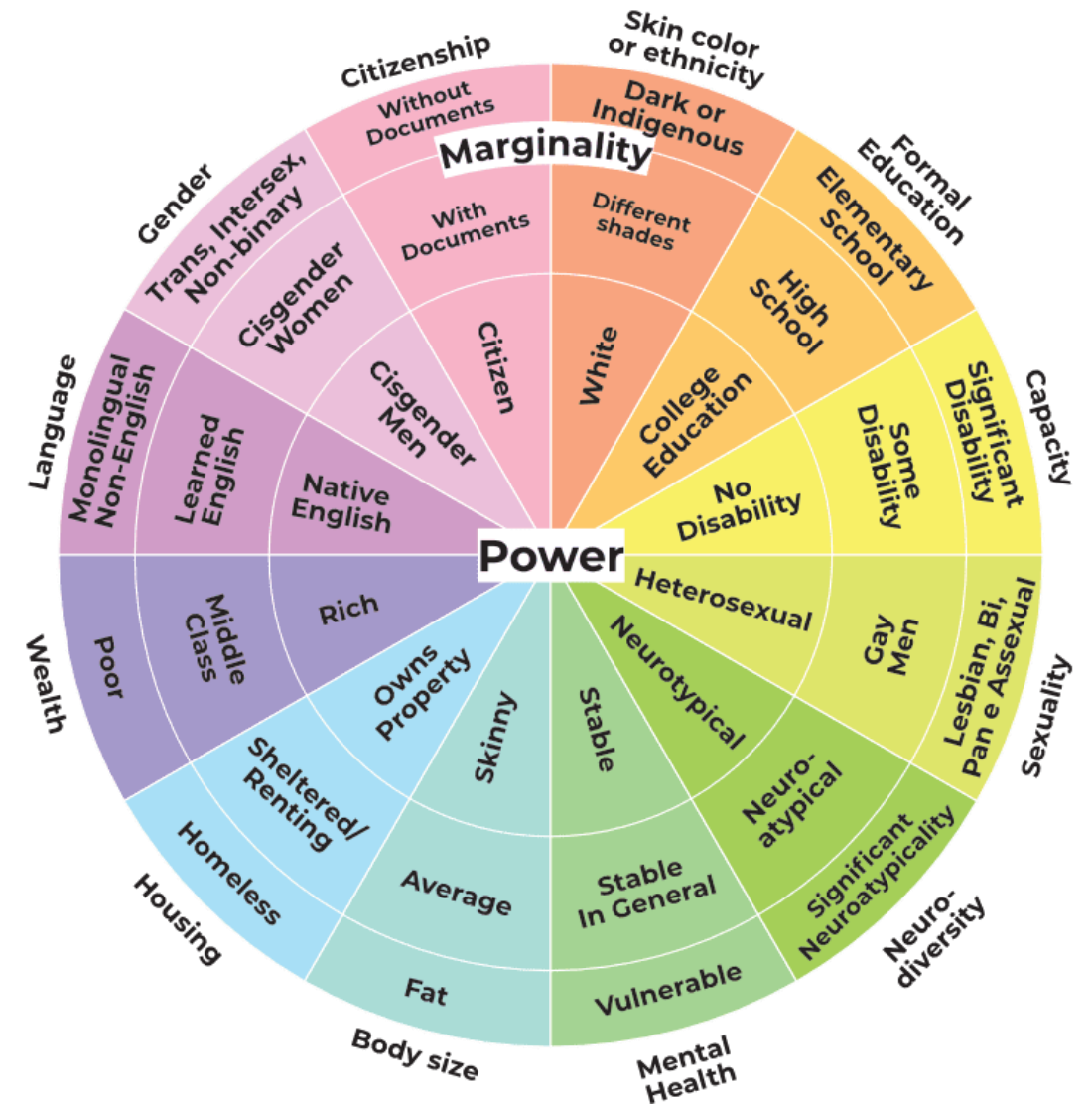
People can experience privilege and oppression simultaneously (Hankivsky, 2022; Collins, 1990).

What Happens when Intersectionality is Ignored?

A tendency to only examine the most privileged members of a social group (Weldon, 2008).

It can be difficult to understand the privileges and oppression some groups of people face (ibid.).

Monism – social groups can be adequately understood in isolation (ibid.).



(WeFlow, 2023, np)

What Characteristics Could Intersect?



Race, gender, class, disability, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, culture and age (Burnham, 2001; Simien, 2007; Hankivsky, 2022; de Vries, 2015).

(CRIAW, 2009, p. 9)

Equality Act (2010)

The *Equality Act* (2010) replaces the *Race Relations Act* (1976) and the *Disability Discrimination Act* (1995) (*Equality Act*, 2010).

Condenses legislation (ibid.).

The Act prohibits discrimination against people based on their characteristics (ibid.).

It requires employers to make reasonable adjustments (ibid.).

Some employers must publish data about the gender pay gap in their organisation (ibid.).

In This Presentation...

1. Sex – this Act refers to men and women (no reference to non-binary people).
2. Disability – ‘a physical or mental impairment... has a has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on [the person’s] ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.
3. ‘Race’ – ‘includes colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin’.

(Equality Act, 2010, Sections 6, 9 and 11)

Case Study 1:

Autistic Women and Diagnosis

What is Autism?

A lifelong condition – social/communication difficulties and restrictive or repetitive interests and behaviours (Hull and Mandy, 2017).

May struggle or exhibit different types of empathy and may not like overwhelming noise or other sensory input (NHS, 2022).

1/3 have an intellectual disability and 1-2% of the population have ASD (Hull and Mandy, 2017).

Not a disease and different for everyone who has it (NHS, 2022).

Meltdowns or shutdowns (National Autistic Society, 2024).

The Diagnosis of Autistic Women

More men than women are diagnosed with ASD, at a ratio of about 3:1 (Lockwood Estrin *et al.*, 2021).

Women are more likely to be diagnosed later in life than men (Zener, 2019; Lockwood Estrin *et al.*, 2021; Sandland, 2018).

Even when women have the same severity of symptoms as men, they are still less likely to be diagnosed with ASD, and may need to have more severe symptoms than men to get a diagnosis (Geelhand *et al.*, 2019; Russell *et al.*, 2011; Hull and Mandy, 2017).

Differences in Presentation

Fewer repetitive and ritualistic behaviours, and may be more likely to internalise their emotions, so less prone to meltdowns (Hutson and Hutson, 2023; Hull and Mandy, 2017).

They may be better at theory of mind tasks (Holt *et. al.*, 2014).

They may have intense interests that are more socially acceptable, so may be more likely to not be diagnosed for this reason (Hutson and Hutson, 2023).

They may have closer and more intense friendships (Harrop *et. al.*, 2016; Sedgewick *et. al.*, 2015).

Girls with autism may be more likely to play with peers than boys, meaning that they may be less likely to be picked up for a diagnostic assessment (Dean *et. al.*, 2017).

Misdiagnosis

The diagnostic framework for autism was created with a sample of mainly male participants (Dell Osso and Carpita, 2023; Hull and Mandy, 2017; Tierney et. al., 2016).

Women does not have an intellectual impairment – may mean that the women is more likely to be misdiagnosed with another disorder (Dell Osso, Dalle Luche and Maj, 2016; Dell Osso, Lorenzi and Carpita, 2021).

Anorexia nervosa – because of their intense interest in food and dieting and their sensory dislike of certain food (Carpita, Muti, Cremone, Fagiolini and Dell’Osso, 2020).

Social anxiety disorder – due to their anxiety in social situations, and a oversight of their other symptoms of ASD (Dell Osso, Lorenzi and Carpita, 2021; Dell Osso, Abelli and Pini, 2015).

BPD – as some of the symptoms overlap such as reduced empathy, difficulties with emotion regulation and strong reactions to certain stimuli (Dell Osso and Carpita., 2023).

What is Masking?

Ability to hide or change their autistic traits, to appear more neurotypical (Piterman, 2022).

Women with autism may mask their autistic traits (Dean *et. al.*, 2017; Lai *et. al.*, 2017; Hutson and Hutson, 2023; Burns and Tierney, 2023).

Masking may include making eye-contact and hiding interests (Pearson and Rose, 2021).

Changing the way a person dresses (Piterman, 2022).

Route learning patterns of communication (Tierney *et. al.*, 2016).

May avoid stimming and may stay quiet in conversations (Sandland, 2018).

Why Might Autistic Women Mask?

More aware of their social deficits and the need for them to socially integrate (Dell Osso, Lorenzi and Carpita, 2021).

Scolded for autistic traits in childhood (Piterman, 2022).

Stigma – avoiding negative feedback (Pearson and Rose, 2021; Sandland, 2018).

Desire for friendship (Tierney *et. al.*, 2016).

Tierney *et. al.* (2016) – boys with autism withdraw, whereas girls with autism still pursue friendships.

So may develop an ability to understand what their peers expect from them through pattern recognition (Hutson and Hutson, 2023).

Consequences of Masking

This masking may lead to mental health issues, autistic burnout and suicidality (Lai *et al.*, 2017; Dell Osso, Lorenzi and Carpita, 2021; Pearson and Rose, 2021; Tierney *et al.*, 2016; Piterman, 2022).

Autistic burnout – reduction in functioning and overstimulation (Raymaker, 2022).

Overanalysing – not sleeping and lower self-esteem (Sandland, 2018).

Sense of self (Attwood, 2007).

Masking may explain why women are more likely to be diagnosed later in life (Tierney *et al.*, 2016).

Case Study 2:

Black Women and the Wage Gap

Black Women and the Wage Gap

Black women earn significantly less than their white male counterparts (Bleiweis *et al.*, 2021).

Only 62 cent, for every dollar a white man earns (Hares, 2020).

Over a 40-year career, Black women lose an average of \$964,00 due to the wage gap (Tucker, 2021).

All levels of education attainment (AAUW, 2020; National Women's Law Center, 2023).

Even when in the same job (Brynin and Guveli, 2012).

Why does the Wage Gap Exist?

Completed education outside of the UK (Liversage, 2009).

Occupational segregation (Bleiweis *et. al.*, 2021; National Women's Law Center, 2023).

Caring responsibilities (Bleiweis *et. al.*, 2021; Brynin and Guveli, 2012).

Bias/discrimination (CIPD, 2022).

What are the Consequences of the Wage Gap?

Less likely to build savings and survive economic crises (Bleiweis *et. al.*, 2021).

Trapped in abusive relationships (Walton, 2020).

Needing to move jobs more frequently (Greyson and Baker, 2022).

Social reproduction of poverty (Brynin and Guveli, 2012).

Mental health issues such as depression and anxiety (Greyson and Baker, 2022).

What Could Be Done to Reduce the Wage Gap?

Put an end to unpaid internships (Greyson and Baker, 2022).

Raise awareness and increase training around the wage gap (Government Equalities Office, 2019).

Promotion of flexible working hours (CIPD, 2017).

Mandatory reporting of wage gap by all organisations (Greyson and Baker, 2022).

Encouraging transparency of rates of pay and publishing formulas used to calculate rate of pay (CIPD, 2017).

Create networking time within office hours that all employees are welcome to attend (Government Equalities Office, 2019).

Use name-blind recruiting (Government Equalities Office, 2019).

Promoting high quality childcare and elderly care (CIPD, 2019).

Marxism and the Wage Gap

Marxism = bourgeoisie and proletariat (Haralambos and Holborn, 2008).

Bourgeoisie profit through wage theft (Giddens and Sutton, 2017).

By paying certain groups less than others, the capitalist system can produce infighting between certain groups (Wright, 1992).

This fragments the workforce and means that they are less likely to organise collectively to overthrow the system itself (Lapides, 2002).

Furthermore, by underpaying certain workers, there is more money available for profit extraction (Wright, 1992).

Conclusion

Oppression is caused by the intersection of different characteristics.

Without intersectionality only privileged groups are researched.

Research into dual identities.

The Equality Act replaces – sex, disability, ‘race’ or other factors.

ASD – communication, empathy and sensory input.

Women are more likely to be diagnosed later than men.

Women with ASD may be misdiagnosed – anorexia, social anxiety or BPD.

Conclusion

Women may mask their autistic traits – socially connection but negative consequences.

Black women earn statistically less than white men.

Occupational segregation, caring responsibilities and racism/sexism.

Poverty and less able to withstand economic crises, having to move jobs and may lead to mental health issues.

Many factors may help reduce this gap.

Marxist perspective – to pit workers against each other and improve profits.

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