

Kimberlé Crenshaw is a law professor at Columbia Law School, who teaches courses focusing on race and law. In terms of how she challenges the status quo, her achievements alone speak for themselves. In a world where women of color, especially black women, deal with everything from all sides, seeing women like Crenshaw thrive in her field due to her hard work and knowledge is inspiring to watch. Sometimes what it takes to stand up against the narrow, cookie-cutter status quo is for people to live their best lives as the best version of themselves, as living can be rebellion in itself. In a world that has so many barriers in place against disenfranchised voices, Crenshaw is exemplary of the many black women who challenges the status quo.

Crenshaw has quite an impressive resume that has impacted many people, and even using the word impressive is an understatement. A seven-hundred word limit is certainly not enough to address the entirety of Crenshaw's work, so focus on Crenshaw's most influential work on coining the term Intersectionality in 1989 for a paper. "Intersectionality" is defined as "The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage; a theoretical approach based on such a premise" (Oxford Dictionary). While the idea itself is not new, Crenshaw was right about naming a problem in order to see it and then consider possible solutions as she said in her *Ted Talk* called "The Urgency of Intersectionality." She applies the theory through her account of the Degraffenreid vs. General Motors case, where Emma Degraffenreid, a Black women, claimed a local car manufacturing plant didn't hire her due to being a black woman. Degraffenreid's case was dismissed by the judge because the employer hired women who were white and black men. Crenshaw's analogy using intersection roads is another great way to understand Intersectionality. In her *Ted Talk* Crenshaw says, "because Emma was black and female, she was positioned precisely where the roads overlapped, experiencing the simultaneous impact of the company's gender and race traffic" (The Urgency of Intersectionality). This case is an example of the discrimination people of multiple identities face, and how the legal system often fails to recognize those struggles. Crenshaw's work with Intersectionality is an important contribution to society due to how it has impacted different civil rights movements through incorporating a more inclusive form of activism, rather than picking and choosing who benefits from it. Her work also feeds into some other achievements in her life, such as influencing the draft for the Southern African Constitution equality clause, finding the African American Policy Forum that focuses on advancing equality for all kinds of people, and so much more. Kimberlé Crenshaw's career and influence is admirable to say the least.

To be perfectly honest, I've known about Intersectionality for awhile. It's just a shame I didn't know about Crenshaw and her contributions to it. After finding out she is one of the most noteworthy champions of Intersectionality, I knew I had to write about her. The more I learned about Crenshaw and her work, the more inspired she inspired me. One of the ways Crenshaw influences me is because she's a thoughtful and articulate speaker. She provides language where people can understand complex, but necessary terms because she knows a firm grasp on the topic

can allow its potential to grow as something to truly be implemented. This can be seen in how she uses real life scenarios and comparisons that can be digestible. Kimberlé Crenshaw especially inspires me in her willingness to fight for everyone, not just those within the Black community. Those who are able to speak for themselves while supporting others are truly some remarkable people, and she is definitely one of them. Kimberlé Crenshaw inspires me, as a non-black person of color, to want to continue educating myself on what matters, the past and how it affects our present, and to become someone who can stand with others as well as those within my own communities.

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