

LIFE MAP ACTIVITY (DEVELOPED BY MARCELLA RUNNELL HALL)

Purpose: To begin or continue thinking about your individual life's journey and how that impacts who you are today. **Materials:** one sheet of paper (will be distributed in class) pens/pencils, markers, photos, magazine clippings (on your own). **Directions:** Starting from the day you were born, leading up to this moment as you are now a student, you will chart your journey using the concept of a Life Map.

A *Life Map* is a visual representation of your socialization process as it relates to your individual experiences.

You may use pictures, words, blurbs, or symbols, to create your map. You should be thinking about your life's journey in relationship to the specific social identities we are focusing on this semester. For example, you might want to think about how your physical or mental ability has impacted your life or your experience in your family. This includes debilitating/chronic illness. You might also think about how your gender identity has impacted your life's experience. For example, what gender expectations were placed on you growing up? Were you encouraged to play sports? Date a particular type of person? Express yourself in a particular way? In terms of race and/or sexual orientation, how did being social identities impact you in school? friendships? sports teams? dating relationships? interactions with your family?

If you are having trouble thinking about significant events you might try using some of these questions to jump start your process. Think about a time ...

- When your identities made a difference to you or to someone else.
- When you felt uncomfortable being your race, gender, sexual orientation, or ability.
- When you were treated well because of your race, gender, sexual orientation, or ability.
- When you were mistreated because of your race, gender, sexual orientation, or ability.
- When you were laughed at because of your race, gender, sexual orientation, or ability.
- When you felt good about your race, gender, sexual orientation, or ability.
- When you noticed a representation of your race, gender, sexual orientation, or ability in the media. What messages did you receive from the incidents described above?
- Which messages were positive? Negative?

How have your behaviors changed in response to any of these messages?