

Faculty of Design

2019

## Feminist design: Methodologies for equity and inclusion

Place, Ali

---

### Suggested citation:

Place, Ali (2019) Feminist design: Methodologies for equity and inclusion. In: Relating Systems Thinking and Design (RSD8) 2019 Symposium, Oct 13-15 2019, Chicago, USA. Available at <http://openresearch.ocadu.ca/id/eprint/3261/>

*Open Research is a publicly accessible, curated repository for the preservation and dissemination of scholarly and creative output of the OCAD University community. Material in Open Research is open access and made available via the consent of the author and/or rights holder on a non-exclusive basis.*

*The OCAD University Library is committed to accessibility as outlined in the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) and the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#) and is working to improve accessibility of the Open Research Repository collection. If you require an accessible version of a repository item contact us at [repository@ocadu.ca](mailto:repository@ocadu.ca).*

# feminist design

methodologies for equity and inclusion

---

## **Ali Place**

Assistant Professor of Graphic Design  
University of Arkansas  
aplace@uark.edu

Oct 19, 2019

Related Systems Thinking and Design Symposium  
IIT Institute of Design, Chicago, IL



☒

☐

☐

Territories Languages Treaties

Search your address, or toggle switches above to add shapes. Click around! [Think critically about this map](#)

3137 South Federal Street, Chicago

✕

Territories

▾

Languages

▾

Treaties

▾

You are on the land of:

- Peoria
- Bodéwadmīkiwen (Potawatomi)
- Miami
- Očeti Šakówinj (Sioux)

Miami  
Bodéwadmīkiwen (Potawatomi)  
Peoria

Export Map

☒ Colors

☒ Labels

+

▬

▲





**Dr. Adrienne Keene** ✓

@NativeApprops

Just a reminder: the system in what is currently known as the US isn't "broken." It was designed by male white supremacist slaveowners on stolen Indigenous land to protect their interests. It's working as it was designed.

1:27 PM · 06 Oct 18

design culture is entrenched in  
**patriarchal structures**  
of privilege and oppression.

**traditional design methodologies  
fail us in designing for  
marginalized communities.**

# methodology

## epistemology

a theory about **knowledge**,  
about who can know what and  
under what circumstances  
knowledge can be developed

## method

a **technique** for gathering  
and analyzing information

## methodology

researcher's **choices** of how to use  
methods, founded on either explicit or, more  
often, unexamined **assumptions** about  
what knowledge is and how knowing is best  
accomplished.

**methodology is the terrain where  
philosophy and action meet.**

**feminism** is a conceptual framework for examining and dismantling oppressive systems and social power structures in order to achieve equity for marginalized communities.



**feminist design** is a methodology for designing interventions that subvert the dominant culture or narrative and center the experiences of marginalized groups, while aiming to dismantle systemic oppression of those groups.

**feminist systems** subvert the status quo  
and reverse oppression by targeting individual  
experiences of discrimination and redistributing  
power to achieve equitable outcomes.

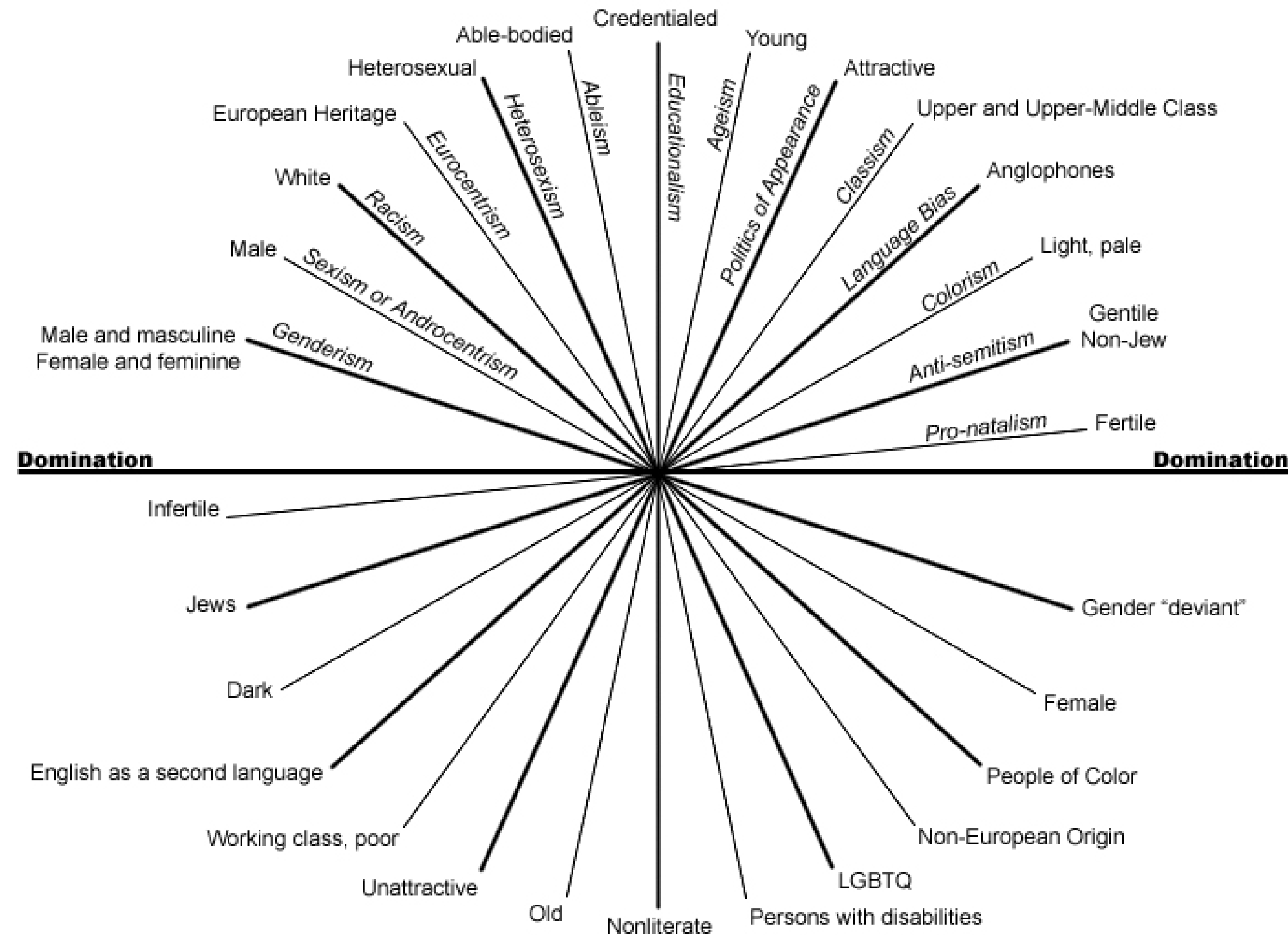
redistribute  
power

# feminist systems

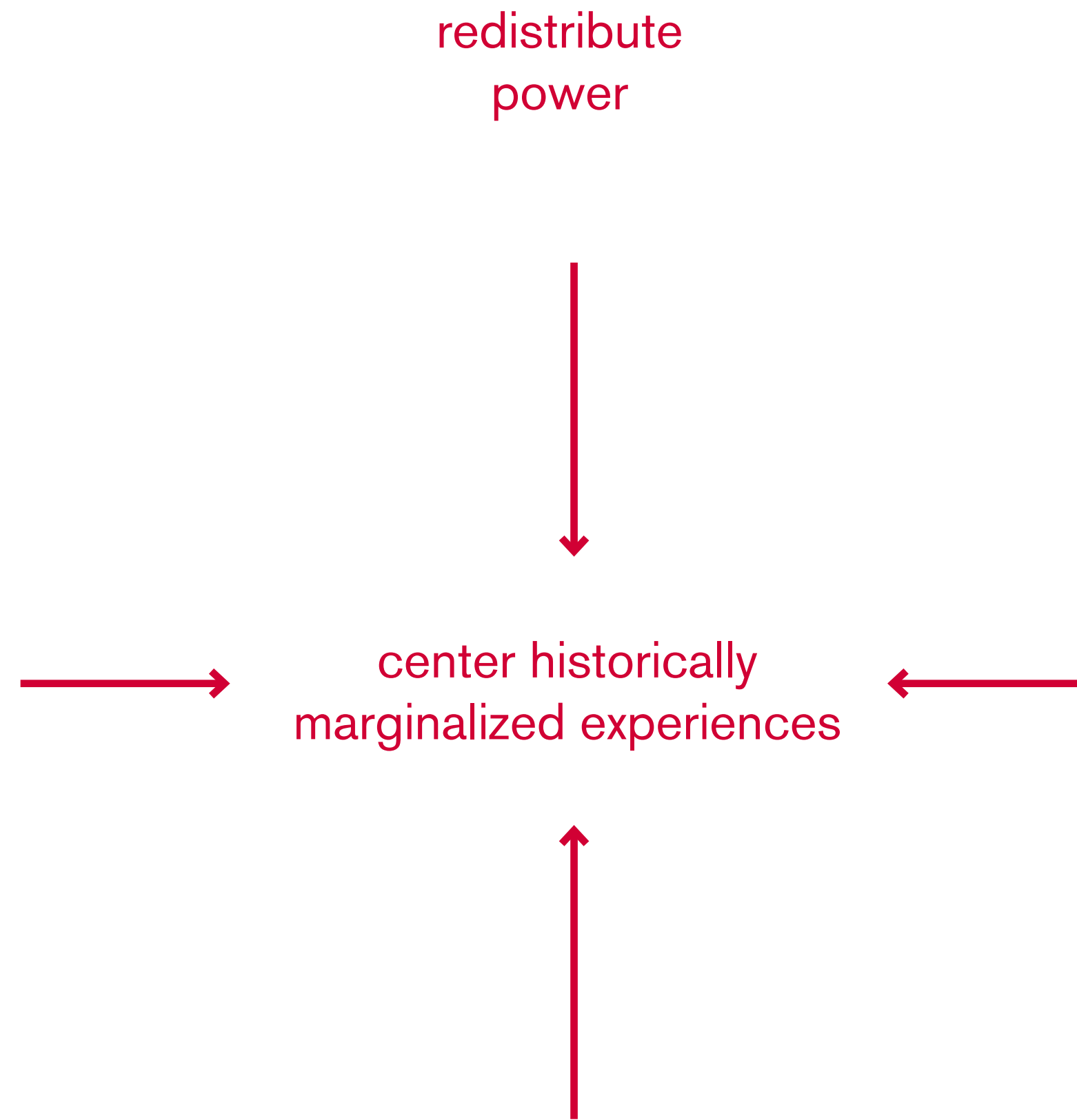


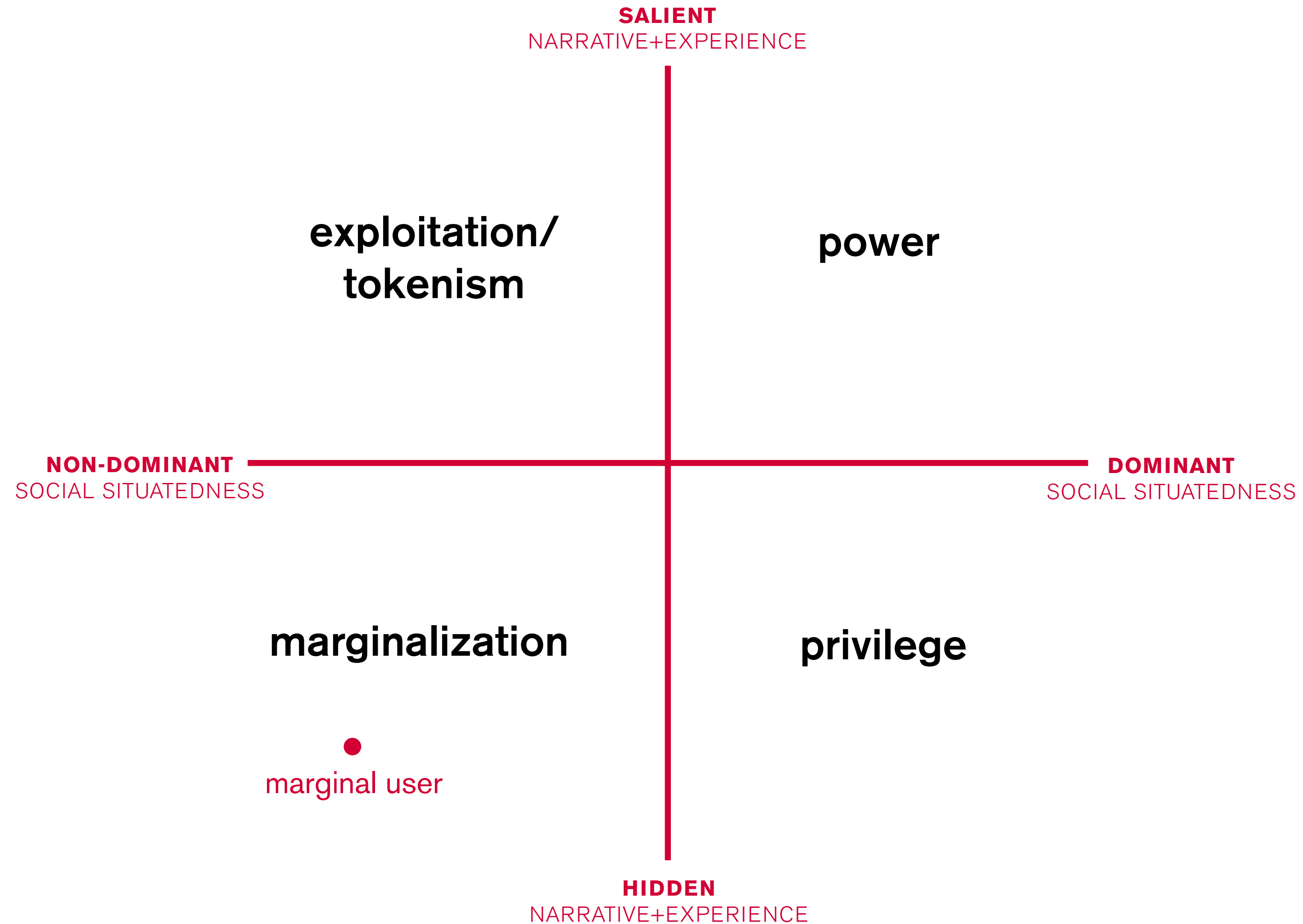
# Intersecting Axes of Privilege, Domination, and Opression

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.



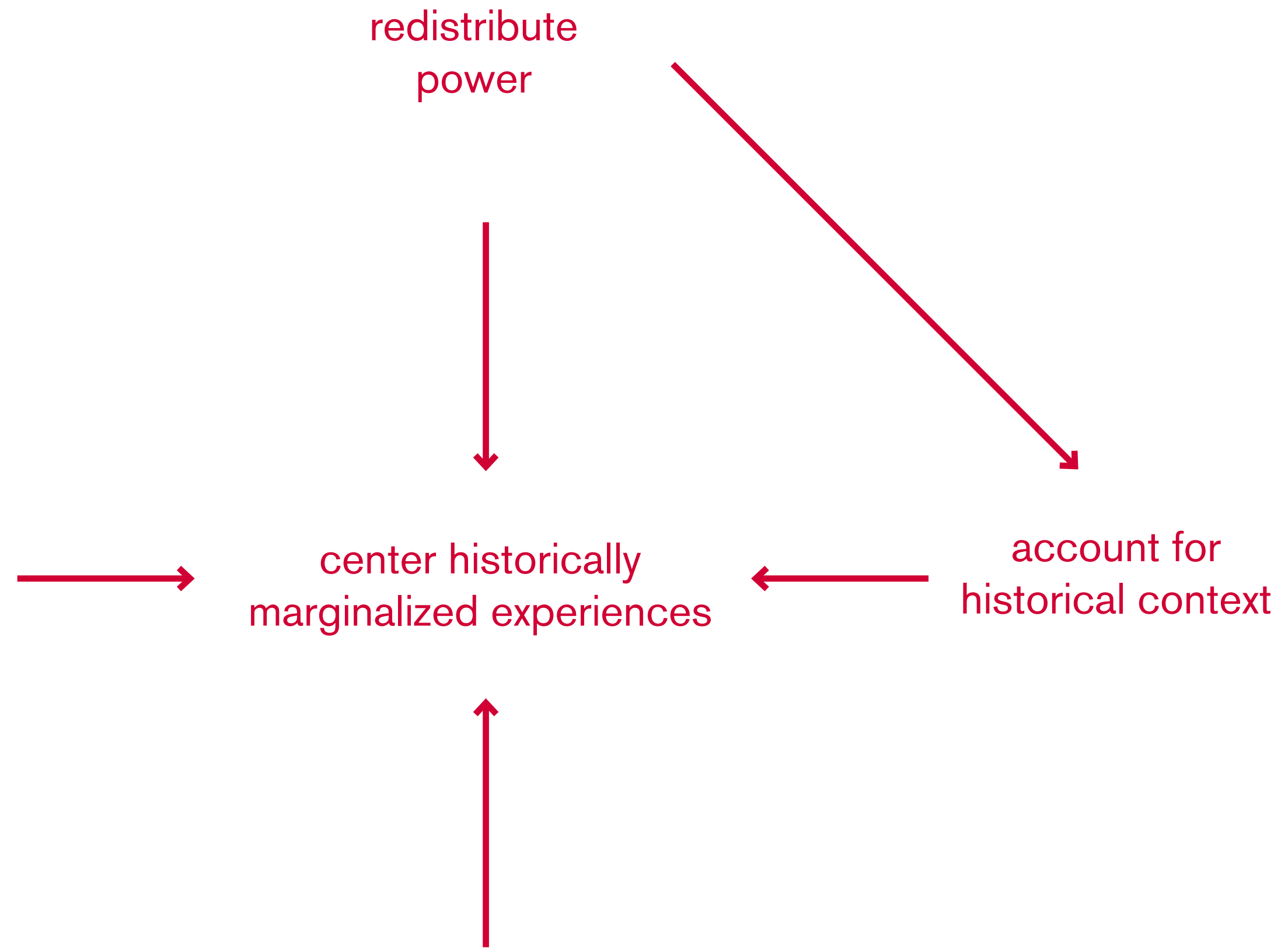
# feminist systems



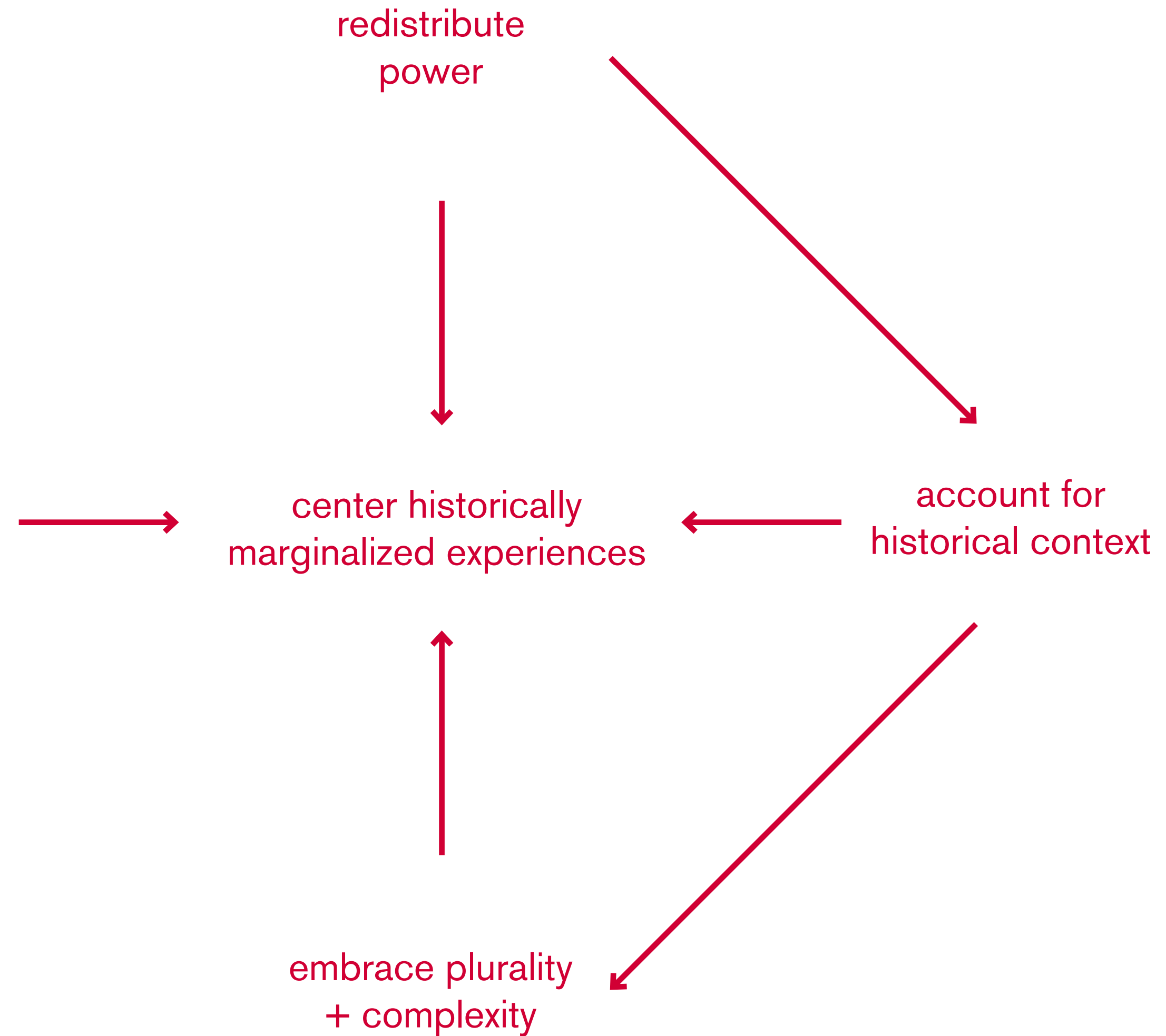




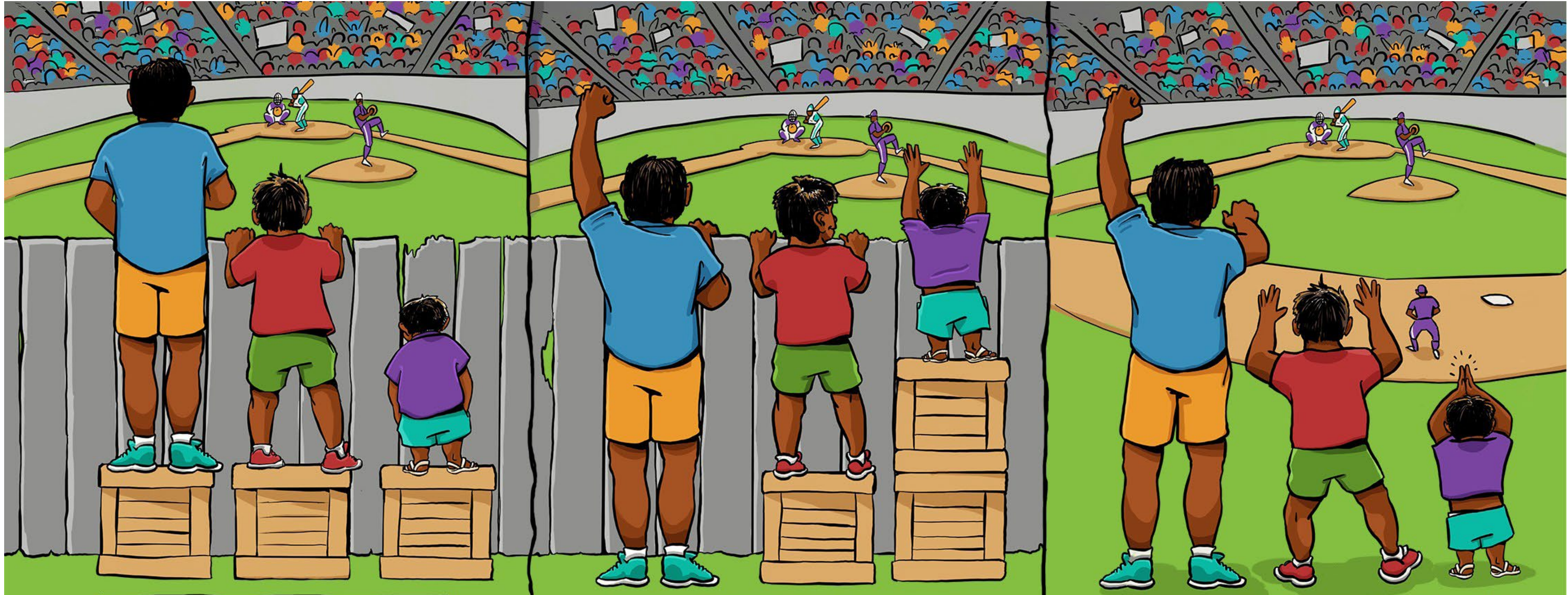
# feminist systems



# feminist systems







### **EQUALITY**

everyone gets the same resources

### **EQUITY**

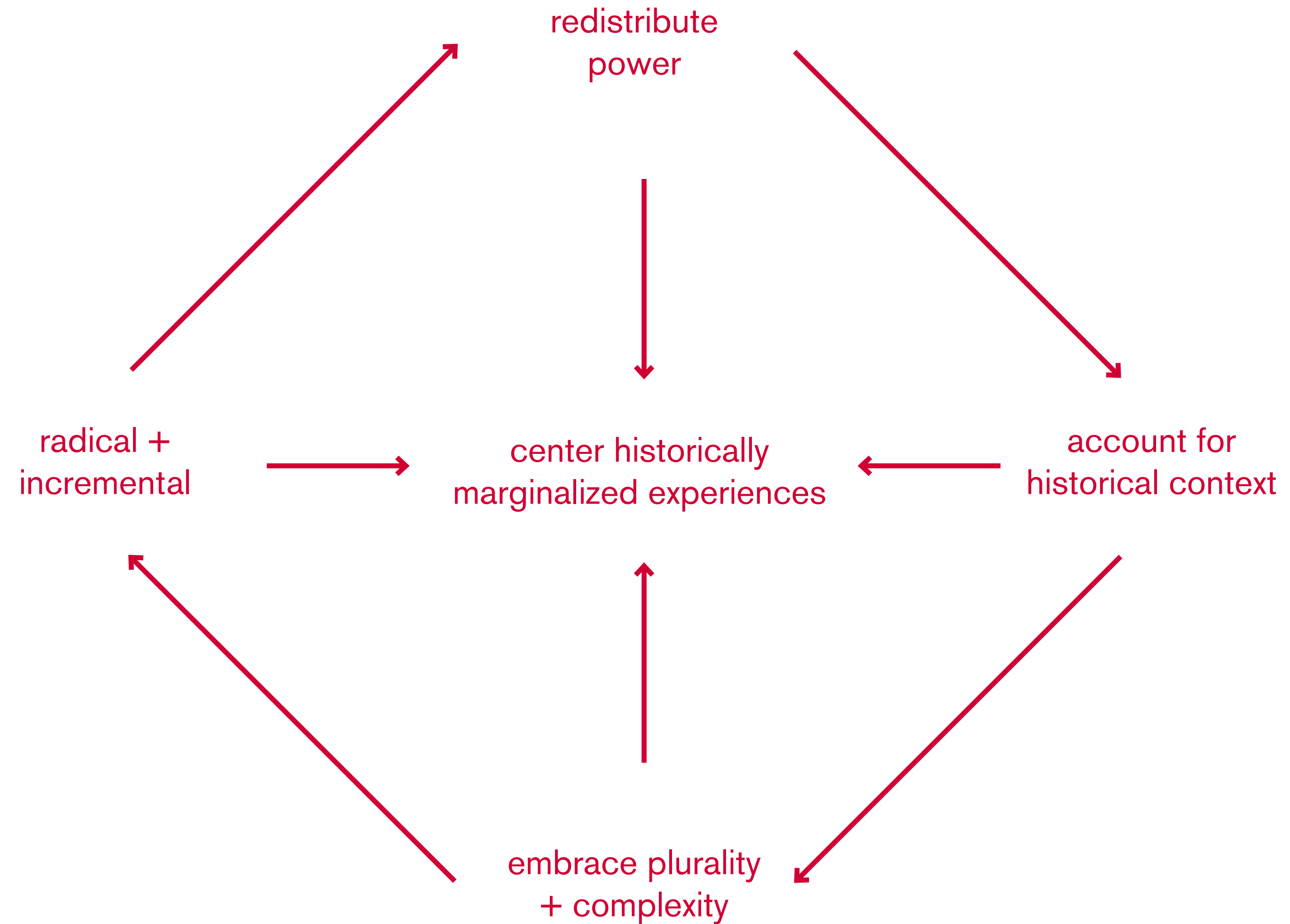
everyone gets the same opportunities

### **LIBERATION**

the systemic barrier is removed

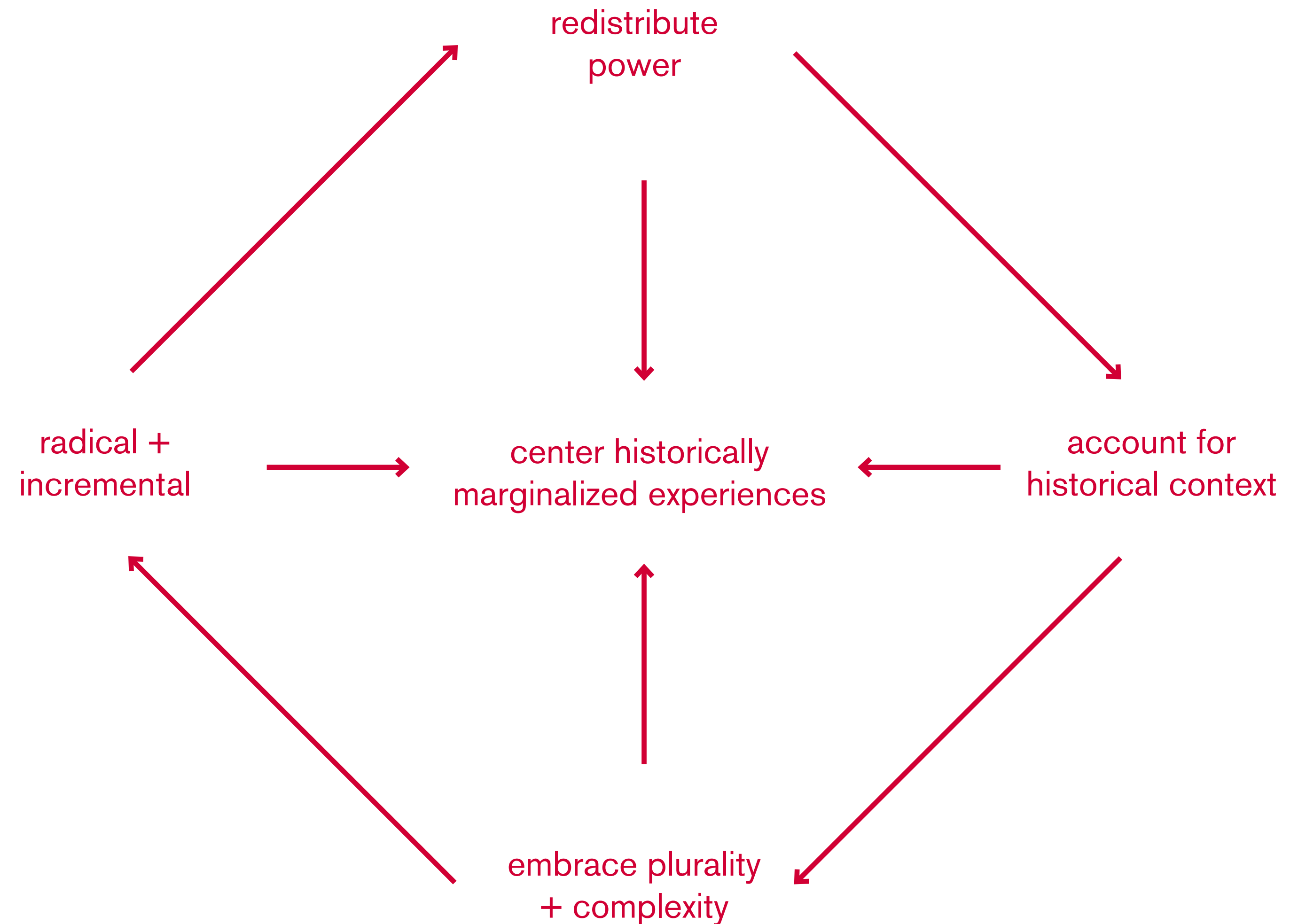


# feminist systems



# feminist systems

## PARENTAL LEAVE



ACTIVITY GROUP

systems, but make it **feminist**.



ACTIVITY GROUP

what would the following systems look like  
if they were **feminist**?

HEALTHCARE

CREDIT REPORTS/SCORES

HIGHER EDUCATION

INSURANCE

THE INTERNET

SOCIAL MEDIA

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

TAXES

SOCIAL SECURITY

ELECTIONS/VOTING

“No one way works. It will take all of us shoving at the thing from all sides to take it down.”

—**DIANE DI PRIMA**

*REVOLUTIONARY LETTERS, 1971*

// THANK YOU //

**Ali Place**

Assistant Professor of Graphic Design

University of Arkansas

*[aplace@uark.edu](mailto:aplace@uark.edu)*