

persists today.

Some authors claim that the origin of the term goes back to Sojourner Truth, who, even without explicitly mentioning it in a speech given in 1851, was already protesting against the cross-effects of being a woman, black and a former slave in the USA.

The use of the term became more widespread and was consolidated in 1989, with the participation of Kimberlé Crenshaw at the University of Chicago Legal Forum (Crenshaw (2002), and Crenshaw (1989)). For her presentation to the Forum, the black American author and jurist analyzed speeches contained in sentences from a lawsuit filed by a group of black women against General Motors.

Court decisions seemed to ignore the legitimacy or even the existence of a specific category of black women. Part of the decisions issued denied the existence of prejudice in the selection of workers, alleging that there were black men hired by the company. Another party also denied it, but claimed there were already women - even though they were all white.

Because they presented themselves as women and black people in that context, they treated them as if they were not subject to rights. They would only be so as women or as black people (Crenshaw (1989), p. 144). They were not considered in hiring, nor did they have a voice to complain.

Unitary discourses like this, produced about anti-racist and feminist movements, failed to encompass the complexity of multiple identity compositions. This was not just due to a lack of political will. It was also due to the influence of a way of thinking about discrimination along separate and mutually exclusive axes (either gender or race).

Such limitation implied a descriptive and normative social vision that reinforced the status quo (Crenshaw (1989), pp. 166–167) by highlighting, within the discriminated groups, elements and traits more linked to dominant groups.

Thus, black men were black and women were white women - the stratum of black women remained invisible (Crenshaw (1989), pp. 142–143). Black women were, therefore, in a zone of conceptual blackout not covered by the usual tools for combating inequality of opportunities. Crenshaw (1989)() proposed the perspective of 'intersectionality', then:

1. initially, to account for the experience of black women, (p.139)
2. to create a new analytical structure disconnected from the structures already established from the perspective of groups dominant (p.140);
3. to overcome the conceptual limitation of single-axis analyses, such as those that only recognize race or sex as a factor of discrimination (p.149);
4. with a view to expanding the scope of demands and the search for rights beyond the group of black women, in order to encompass the representation of other social strata that are multiply disadvantaged (p.145);