

Psychology and Social Justice

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As an implied principle, social justice cannot be an explicit principle for psychology. All science and intellectual endeavor (including, eg, great literature - which is 'psychology' itself and an implied impetus for social understanding and change -) is about doing something, and something better, in an obviously difficult, uncertain, and imperfect life.

Psychology is inextricably about human welfare. As it happens, for thinkers and for psychologists past and present, human welfare is advanced by social justice - including social justice among individuals and peers in the course of daily and ordinary routines of interpersonal existence. It can be argued convincingly that unfairness, inequity, and injustice are at the core of human dilemma, limits to progress, and rage.

Social justice as an endeavor is sociopolitical, - a kind of activity that might lend itself to be studied by psychology in fact. Also for example, effectively implied Marxist, socialist, or capitalist elements of personal persuasion integral to concepts of "social justice" are identifications additional to being a psychologist. In sum, psychology cannot be about social justice, even while it may well be for so cial justice. There is a danger that social justice could be confused with psychology - the raw science of what it is to be alive, including to exist in highly inequitable circumstances wherever we find ourselves in life and no matter at what interpersonal level.

Were psychology to unify around social justice, the professional field would be skewed further astray from its divisions in philosophy, science, and hard core perspective that continue to erode the discipline and cloud the identification of scholarship and practice. Psychology has sweeping problems to demonstrate depth, breadth, scope, and its own characterization.

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