Social Justice and Pedagogy

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Social justice, predicated on the expansion of human rights, is by definition a critical and intellectual enterprise. Social critique, made possible by social justice paradigms, provides the basis for social action and social change and leads ultimately to the enhancement of social democracies. Such critical intellectual enterprises require that people constantly reevaluate not only their social institutions but also the terms they use to describe their very existence. Such reevaluation is best accomplished within the crucible of the academy.

Men may live in a community without loving each other but unless they have confidence in each other's willingness to do justice, their mutual life cannot hold together.

H. F. Ward, 1920

We live in troubled times. War and social unrest, terror and retribution, homophobia and sexual abuse, racism and xenophobia, and distrust and paranoia seem to abound. How we interpret, relate to, and indeed conceptualize these complex issues all too often seems to be determined by which side of the social divide we find ourselves. Although certainly not unique in social memory, current situations (perceptual or real) nevertheless pose unique problems for us, as we appear to go from crisis to crisis. Historically, I would suggest that the issues have remained basically the same while the characters and situations have changed. The pedagogical issues, at the risk of being overly simplistic, can be reduced to a conflict between the rights and duties of the state and other social institutions and the rights and duties of the individual and groups. Democracy is a constant tug of war between these two sets of issues. To some extent, democracy represents a paradoxical irony of the difference between freedom and equality. Democracy is a paradox in that two entities are operational opposites. That is to say that if we assume a basic equality of starting positions, as soon as we exercise the freedom of choice, this equilibrium is disturbed. Ironically, democratic theory presumes that we act as free agents, but practically it is understood that rarely is individual action unencumbered by systems of inequality: racial, sexual, gendered, social, economic, or political. Thus, one cannot be free as long as access to optimal development of capabilities is artificially restricted as a result of systems of racialization, sexualization, genderization, socialization, classification, or politicization. Of obvious importance are the acknowledgements that

rarely are individuals treated as individuals but as members of groups: religious, social, class, racial, ethnic, gender, and political. Given the histories of discrimination, exploitation, imperialism, sexism, heterosexism, nationalism, ethnocentrism, and racism, the tug of war becomes significantly more complex and conflictual and is exacerbated by anxiety and paranoia on all sides. The complex world in which we live is evidenced in recent terrorist attacks in the United Kingdom, Egypt, and the United States. Complexity and conflict are also evident in the growing frustration in Iraq regarding the struggle to form a new government that will include the United States and other outside influences along with the Kurds, Sunnis, and Moslems. Also testament to the difficult world in which we live is the conflict in Rwanda between the Hutus and the Tutsis; in Afghanistan; and in Russia, among the Chechens in the Georgian provinces. If we are to pursue a more just world, every action and consequent reaction must be filtered through our respective lens with the hope of providing understanding and guidance and of preventing an escalation of conflict, violence, and the repetition of "tragic" mistakes.

Framing the Discussion for Social Justice

Recently, the world stood in shock as bombs went off in Egypt and the United Kingdom. The tragedy of the bombings in the United Kingdom was compounded by a tragic accident that occurred when a bombing suspect and, as it turned out, an innocent man was shot eight times (seven to the head) for, it appears, failing to stop when ordered to do so by police. In this incident there were at least two victims, the police and Jean Charles de Menezes. The difference is that the police will live to contemplate their actions and Jean Charles will not. There are some who believe that such mistakes, as in war, are collateral damage—that in the course of fighting for our freedom, there must be some innocent victims who just are in the wrong place at the wrong time. This same logic dismisses any calls to mourn such lives lost while calling for unqualified support of our police and other leaders.[1] To these statements, my response is that within a democracy, we can ill afford to give our police or our politicians a blank check. Democracy does require us to ask the difficult questions, to challenge the system, and to deny the complacency that accepts such tragedies as business as usual. There must be those who cry out for the lives snuffed out long before their time. Failure to speak out, to challenge injustice, surely increases the likelihood that more such tragedies will follow. Our very system of government dictates that any and all such actions and resulting tragedies be fully aired, that those who represent us (with the legal right to use deadly force) be apprised of our deep concerns, and that they be constantly scrutinized by their publics. For it is of such actions and challenges that democracies are made free.

Although dialogues about justice provide a measure of immediate relief, we cannot rely on dialogues to provide a resolution to all problems. Individual discussions

of singular events, as with individual responses to atrocities, acts of terror, revenge, and/or retribution avail us little. Similarly, calls for individual solutions, remedial programs, and policies too narrowly focused—for example, targeted strikes, minority rights, or more ambitious remedial efforts—although providing the appearance of improvement, may actually impede solutions and progress, thus aggravating the situation. Revenge, retribution, reactions, or reactionary policies and programs produce little more then Band-Aids at best and, more often then not, provide only illusionary relief. All of these situations present us with social calls for action and not reaction. The form of action, however, must be solution oriented, practical, and perceived as just by all sides. I believe that such action is implied in the concept of social justice. This article will outline a few ways in which the concept of social justice may be (or has been) envisioned and how it relates to specific situations of conflict and will conclude with specific pedagogical examples of its application within the academe.

Social Justice: Conceptual Clarity

Justice, although frequently cited in both sociological literature and social life, holds many meanings to many different individuals. Justice in its colloquial sense is embodied in the phrase *suum cuique*, or "one receiving their [*sic*] just due" (Tsanoff, 1956, p. 12). Although vague, this definition has served as the model for what we may call legal justice or, more aptly, justice under the law. Some have referred to this form of justice as procedural justice (or the guarantee of basic fairness in operational, bureaucratic, administrative, or judicial outcomes and/or rewards). Interactional justice, on the other hand, may be understood as referring to the fairness in interpersonal treatments. Alternatively, we can talk about a form of distributive justice wherein one receives fairness in social, political, and economic outcomes (see, e.g., Younts & Mueller, 2001). All of these justice projects may be subsumed under the larger, more inclusive designation of *social justice*.

Many presume that social justice, and its projects, operates from the basis of merit and not benefit. What this presumption conflates is what may be the a priori conditions that must be met for social justice to be effective. The difference between these a priori conditions and the operation of social justice projects is often ignored. Still more often, those arguing against rights that are asserted under a justice principle do so under the guise that what is being sought is not merited or somehow is unearned. A critical determinant regarding calls for justice, therefore, is to demonstrate that what is indeed being sought is expected, earned, or merited (see, e.g., Nielsen, 1983). When we walk down this road, however, we find our conversations typically and quickly reduced to issues of deservedness; hence we talk about "the deserving poor" or "the truly disadvantaged." Implicit in both of these constructs is the existence of a subgroup of the poor or disadvantaged who are "deserving" and thus "really" merit our attention. The problem with such constructs is that they

trivialize any conversation regarding justice. We, in such a process, are reduced to arguing definitions, which deny reality or basic social justice theory. I would argue that we must adopt a set of baseline principles, or a priori assumptions, regarding justice.[2] Such baseline principles will begin, much like Jefferson's Declaration of Independence, with a set of "inalienable rights."[3] These immutable, and by implication noncontrovertible, rights establish the basic condition in which all humans begin their social existence. By definition, this beginning assumes the basis of equality that is universally and globally expected.[4] Without such universal a priori rights, we simply cannot begin a conversation regarding justice.[5] Absent these a priori rights, we can conclude that the basic conditions for social justice are absent.[6]

When rights—civil or human, political or economic, sexual or racial—are asserted, they, following Rawls (1985), derive from social systems where free and equal participants cooperate and where "fairness" is optimized. Thus, any thing or situation that violates one's freedom or ability to be equal or that produces a lack of "fairness" may be deemed to be unjust. Unfortunately, when calls for justice are made, few distinguish which aspects of justice have been violated—whether violations of the presumptions of justice or those that derive from principles of justice. Failure to make these distinctions leads to confusion as to what extent progress has been made, if at all. For example, during the 1960s, when African Americans contested segregation, racialized distributive systems, and racial inequality and women contested sexual and gender discrimination, sexual abuse, and a gendered segregation and distributive system, both groups based their claims for justice on violations of the a priori assumptions associated with social justice. Alternatively, more recent calls for reparations by the descendants of slaves or calls for elimination of the glass ceiling by women are clearly based on the basic fairness principle associated with social justice. Clearly, distinguishing between which types of social justice projects—those based on violations of a priori assumptions and those based on violations of understood principles of social justice—is vital if successful policy and remedies are to be identified.

Regardless of source, for social justice to be effective, it must operate from a structural or, more aptly, an institutional basis. Hence when we speak of social justice, following Rawls (1985), we make direct reference to institutions as normative structures, which mediate justice (Rawls as interpreted by Nielsen, 1983). Furthermore, the global nature of capitalism, the global reach of imperialism, and the resultant global systems of inequality require that social justice projects be equally global (Nielsen, 1983).

Applications of a Social Justice Paradigm

At this point it may be instructive to interpret two different but related occurrences that demonstrate the utility of a social justice paradigm. Spousal abuse and

police brutality, superficially, may appear to be totally unrelated; there is, however, a social justice link that reveals their similarity. By looking at them through the lens of social justice, we will more clearly understand not only the situational context but also potential remedies.

It was not that long ago that spousal abuse was tolerated by police and society and in some cases was upheld by the courts and by law. There were those who even believed that spousal abuse was a condition provided for and expected as part of the marriage contract. Such expectations are not limited to the United States but exist in many societies where we find male hegemonic structures. As noted by Claudia García-Moreno (1999),

> Domestic violence against women is supported and/or re-enforced by gender norms and values that put women in a subordinate position to men. This cuts across all social classes, religion and education levels. While there are still variations by race, class, geography or region that need to be explained, unequal gender relations has been identified by feminists and other scholars as a cornerstone of domestic and sexual violence against women. The specific cultural context plays an important role in defining the mechanisms through which gender inequality and other factors affect violence. (Section 5a, para. 1)

Alternatively, an estimated 10 million children work in slavelike conditions around the globe. Within these countries—many located in Latin America, Asia, and Africa—children are brutalized, sexualized, and often forced to work in the cruelest of conditions (CBS News, 2004). Of interest is that when the laws changed as a consequence of our growing awareness of the discrimination and pain suffered by women and children, so also may our attitudes of acceptance.

The American Medical Association estimates that more than 4 million women are victims of severe assaults by boyfriends and husbands each year. About 1 in 4 women is likely to be abused by a partner in her lifetime (Glazer, 1993). Although this statistic is still unacceptably high, it yet represents progress in that just 20 years earlier, the figure was closer to 2 in 4 women who were likely to be abused by their partner across their lifetime.

Now, the case of police may be similar. Many may accept the stress and difficulty facing police in crisis situations and may justify the use of deadly force as a necessary evil. These same persons may excuse the occasional innocent victim who dies, arguing that "we are doing the best that we can." To which the cry for justice is heard— "Can't we teach them not to kill innocent persons?" To which we respond, "Yes, of course they can be trained not to kill innocent persons." What we must understand, however, is that training must include screening and continuous training located in the context of both institutional responsibility (and organizational culture) and individual responsibility. Often we ignore the fatigue, stress, and pressure under which police and other such authority figures function. Research documents that

there exists within organizational culture among many police a form of machismo that denies the need for rest, counseling, and stress management (see, e.g., Skolnick & Fyfe, 1993). Such cultural responses increase the likelihood that police under intense pressure will not get the form and type of help that they need. Also, even when there are in place institutional mechanisms to provide for such, the police culture (operating outside of the official institutional structure) serves to negate or diminish their usefulness. Specifically, police with "mental" problems are perceived as less fit, less capable, and less responsible than the typical officer. The problem from an organizational development perspective is to effect changes in the police culture operant from within the institution.

Second, often police perceived to have problems are given difficult, "dirty," or less desirable assignments as a means of punishment. Therefore, we sometimes have cops with problems (mental, disciplinary, attitudinal) being assigned in the very situations or communities where they will act inappropriately. This also happens in educational institutions where the worst teachers are placed in the most challenging schools, typically the most culturally diverse or with the heaviest concentration of problem students. Alternatively, the more seasoned and better cops (or teachers) are rewarded by being placed in more positive situations or communities.

We can also talk about the constant need for reassessment, training, and counseling. Obviously, we must be sure that we put the best of our police in the worst (sometimes) situations. Also, we must ensure that police are constantly apprised of the real consequences of their actions. When a doctor or any other professional causes damage through their inaction or misaction, they are subject to lawsuits. Unfortunately, the community buffers such lawsuits when the miscreant is a police or other public official. But clearly there are ways in which the community, organizations and institutions, individuals, and we as trained observers can and must respond.

We must also question individual responsibility. To what extent should those who have been shot and/or wounded by police be held accountable for their actions? Why is it that they refused to obey what many would interpret as a lawful command? Some researchers have pointed to, for example, the willful disobedience of such commands as a direct causal agent in the escalation of violence. Furthermore, it should be understood that some individuals purposefully push the situation to the point where officials use deadly force. Such instances, being defined as "suicide by cop," demonstrate the dilemmas faced by police in such situations (Lindsay and Lester, 2004). Individual responsibility, culpability, and duties cannot be ignored in any situation. Again, looking at spousal abuse as an example, women who refuse to be victims account for the significant decline in abuse statistics. Enabling behavior, where victims may be perceived by the abuser as actually participating in their own victimization because of low self-esteem, lack of response, or apparent acceptance, only fuels abusive behavior (Goetting, 1999).

Pedagogical Implications of a Social Justice Paradigm

At this point, we can identify some pedagogical implications of a social justice paradigm. Specifically, the question we are concerned with is, Are there specific changes that will result if we reorient our teaching (and by implication, research, methodologies, and policies) to one informed by social justice? I believe the answer is yes. Let us recast the previous discussion regarding social justice and in the process present some critical insights that specifically relate to pedagogy. From this discussion it is clear that the social justice paradigm must include (a) construction of ideal types to which and by which the reality of current social structures or situations may be compared; (b) contextualization of situations where social members interact as equal and free participants under rules of fairness; and (c) assessment of the degree to which justice is achieved and what types of policies, measures, and/or remedies need to be implemented to achieve a just social system. The construction of social justice paradigms as ideal types can most aptly be accomplished by establishing what Rawls (1985) termed "the conditions of social justice" and defined to be the presumptions necessary to achieve just social institutions. It is obvious that this process will require a considerable amount of time to explore and is intended to be accomplished during the span of a course or sequence of courses. We can, nevertheless, outline what this would look like by highlighting the pedagogical implications of a social justice paradigm. For heuristic purposes, we have chosen to treat the situation of the minority in the American context. It will become immediately apparent, within the confines of a social justice paradigm, that even concepts must be redefined and reconfigured. As indicated above, we take as our presumptions for a just society those identified by the United Nations' (1948) Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[7]

The Social Justice Context

Social justice, predicated on the expansion of human rights, is by definition a critical and intellectual enterprise. Social critique, made possible by social justice paradigms, provides the basis for social action and social change and leads ultimately to the enhancement of social democracies. Such critical intellectual enterprises require that we constantly reevaluate not only our social institutions but also the terms we use to describe our very existence. Such reevaluation is best accomplished within the crucible of the academy.

When I speak of the social justice context, I do so from a pedagogical, and not philosophical, context. For my purposes, this social justice context is defined by the U.S. experience historically, socially, and politically. Within this context, we have for more than 100 years discussed various groups as being marginalized and socially isolated and hence having been assigned minority status: women in general, Blacks,

Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans (and the cast of characters is indeed large; we could include all non-White males). Such groups have in varying degrees been limited in their ability to achieve upward mobility, societal rewards, and privileges. Put simply, they, as groups, have in varying degrees tended to be underrepresented in high-status, powerful, prestigious situations. Within the U.S. context, these groups have collectively and individually, publicly and privately, experienced institutional discrimination now typically sanctioned and enforced by judicial, executive, and legislative bodies.

Social justice paradigms begin with the presumption that individuals and/or groups interact from the basis of equality and freedom. When we speak of marginality, social isolation, and minority status, invariably we use as our measure of centrality a presumed fixed reference point. This reference point is typically a group that we define or label as the dominant group. Such conversations in sociology, regarding the center and periphery, typically can be traced to the early work of the Chicago School and more specifically the work of Robert E. Parks (1950) and the theories of Edward Shills (1975). Although only scant mention is made of these sociologists today, their lasting impact on the discourse cannot be ignored. Neither can we afford to ignore the implicit racialization of the dialogue that is accompanied within these perspectives. These perspectives are at the core of what has become known as race relations.

From a social justice paradigm, I would argue that such terms and the resultant disciplinarian dialogues regarding race relations are basically flawed. Put simply, at the core of race relations is the notion that marginality, social isolation, and minority status can somehow be transformed, translated, or transcended. What are essential definitional, theoretical, and conceptual flaws become reinterpreted as inter- and intragroup dynamics, conflict, and praxis. Such perspectives imply that at the minimum, marginal groups must transform their culture (i.e., culture of poverty) or, at the extreme, transform the culture of the majority (i.e., sensitivity training). Close to 100 years of this type of reasoning has produced little more than discourse(s) into the mundane. Even more simply, the issue is not race relations but oppressive, exploitative systems that racialized certain population groups while privileging others. These theoretical and conceptual flaws leading to mistaken policy, remedies, and solutions continue to produce confusion, obfuscation, and reification.

Centering the Margins[8]

Centering the margins is more than definitional fiats, which merely lead to either intellectual retrenchment by those reluctant to give up their cherished terms or concepts or grandiose claims of victory by those whose only victories are in the realm of where ideological paper tigers rule the day. Centering the margins is here conceived as a practical way in which formerly marginalized groups may redefine their struggle by viewing themselves at center of their cultural universe.

At the core of this process is a structural shift in the social system itself. Being marginalized means having less access to the rewards, privileges, and status enhancements as available to those more central to the system. For example, because racialized non-elites are also marginalized, there is a greater likelihood that they will attend schools that are deficient and live in neighborhoods that have more taverns, prisons, and waste dumps than universities, factories, and parks. Consider a real war on poverty, where the poor are not perceived as being marginal to the interests of our nation. If we fought the war on poverty the same way that we fought the war in Iraq, then we could declare victory. Instead, the so-called war on poverty is deemed to be associated with marginalized groups whose interests are not at the core of our society's priorities.

What we are arguing here is a perspective that recognizes not one but multiple overlapping cultural centers. Legitimacy and self-actualization would thus derive from placement in multiple spheres of cultural identity. And rather than prioritizing one at the expense of others, we recognize a sort of dynamic mosaic where all centers are equally viable, vibrant, and accepted. Thus, this process recognizes value in the cultural center through which and in which the respective members abide while encouraging active participation in the multiple spheres where they exist.

The problem with a majority–minority type conversation is that it presupposes that a particular group dominates the center. As pointed out by Hood (1995), to use the dominant standard "outside culture as a reference" to the particular culture denies not only inner self but also agency. As pointed out by South African freedom fighter Steven Biko (1986), "The most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed" (p. 29). A social justice paradigm, rejecting the positivist ideal of objectivity, explicitly argues from the subjective, value-laden position of the insider. Thus Hood asserts that

> Justice for all . . . means that justice should respect the value system of the particular subculture or society within which the action is seen as just or unjust. (Thou shall not violate the "prime directive" of imposing one's value judgments on a subculture or society different from one's own.) (Hood, 1995, p. 3)

A social justice paradigm would allow us to question the repeated low numbers obtained by minorities in such things as achievement[9] and IQ tests, promotions and tenure decisions, corporate boards, and deliberative committees. Such a paradigm would lead to the rejection of any notion that these low numbers across several generations has anything to do with individual effort and begin to identify institutions and their agents as the source of lack. A social justice paradigm would insist that effort plus talent should be rewarded with success, access, and admission. Absent such rewards, we must determine the system to be lacking justice.

Looking at this practically, we can discuss how it would work on, say, a standard achievement exam or IQ test. We know how to construct racially biased exams. We have a long history and large body of research in so doing. Although some would

have us spend even more resources at attempts to design racially neutral exams, perhaps our efforts could be more rewarding if placed in other directions. I once had a professor who freely provided past exams to his class. When asked, he stated he did not have to control the questions but control the answers. Seeing our puzzled look, he continued, "Each year, by changing the content of the class, the course material, I essentially changed the answers." In our case, it is not an issue of essentially changing the answers, but of changing the environment in which education takes place, changing the content of our curriculum, and changing our attitudes regarding difference. So it's not as simple as changing the names from Jim, Jane, and John to that of Manual, Aisha, Keisha, and Tamika[10] but to change the importance of culture, identity, and location in how we teach, what we teach, and how we include others in the canon. That is to say that mathematics still results in the teaching of addition, subtraction, and division, but the examples, problems, and so on should reflect the racial, economic, and cultural diversity of the consumers (i.e., the students and their parents). Alternatively, what constitutes "the classics," great philosophies, and worldviews should include more than "dead White men." The shifting of the margins would insist on a curriculum that was as diverse as the student population while still stressing the importance of critical thinking skills, mathematics, chemistry, and so on. It should be noted that we are not calling for some kind of "Ebonics," other forms of essentialism, or politically correct terminology. Rather, we are arguing that the process of centering the margins can result in the normalization of the racialized non-elites. Thus, by centering the margins, as implied by Rawls (1985), we measure the reach and quality of justice by the standard of that available not to the affluent but to those who lack affluence.

If indeed we cannot destroy the master's house with the master's tools, then it stands to reason that we must refuse to continue to build the master's house, which continuously distorts and denies the reality of the racial other. Thus, centering the margins can be seen as a social justice project aimed at confronting the hegemonic structures that define who is legitimate, valued, and thus central to the society (Omi & Winant, 1994). What I mean by this is to assert the centrality of Blacks, Hispanics, homosexuals, Asians, and so on. This means that we recognize that rather than a single center, there are multiple, overlapping centers from which and to which we can define legitimacy, normalcy, and reality. This is more than definitional fiats but actually serves to deconstruct one of the power bases of racial hegemonies.

Words, as important as they are, must not be the sum total of any antihegemonic movement. All too often, it seems that every so many years, this sort of navel gazing merely results in the renaming of particular groups or the reexamination of the "crises." Real progress is more than words and more than laws, policies, and programs. Real progress can come about only with the very real investment to address the systematic disinvestment and divestment in communities and institutions serving heretofore excluded groups. More simply, systemic problems can be handled only at the structural level. Only by centering the margins (i.e., redefining society in such a way that all groups are examined from the basis of their centrality) can we

effectively deracialize the dialogue. Finally, only through the process of centering the margins and deracializing the dialogue can we continue the development of social justice and began the process of transforming American culture in such ways that race truly declines in significance. Centering the margins alone will not overcome centuries of oppression and exploitation. Social problems plague racially marginalized, socially isolated, and economically disempowered communities created by the racial state (Massey & Denton, 1993).[11]

Notes

1. As a Vietnam veteran and a person who grew up in a cop family (both my father and brother are cops), I am nevertheless someone who has been racially profiled and someone who tenses up when police direct attention to me. I have watched, in the past 10 years, 15 Black males shot under questionable circumstances by police in Cincinnati. The U.S. Justice Department ruled that the police violated their own policy in a number of these shootings, and the city has spent millions to settle damage claims, as evidence indicated that in many of these cases the police acted rashly. Consequently, I do not approach these issues as a disinterested party.

2. Although these are my distinctions, it is my contention that they follow closely that which has been elaborated on in traditional philosophy theses. Here, for the sake of presentation, I am purposely avoiding jargon, but philosophically, these a priori assumptions are what Hume (1910/1993) refers to as "logical presuppositions" that relate the circumstances of justice to the concept of justice. Hence, we can speak of two types of justice projects: those that derive from (a) violations of these presuppositions that lead to justice claims and (b) violations of the actual concept of justice. (See Hubin, 1979, for a discussion of these distinctions.) Rawls (1985) identifies a set of what may be called prerequisites for justice as being "fundamental respects . . . between what may be called the Reasonable and the Rational, the priority of right, and the role of the conception of the persons as free and equal, and capable of autonomy, and so on" (p. 93). Alternative constructions pointing out justice as reciprocal or subject oriented also capture these distinctions. But again, even though such discussions would be promising, they take us too far from our current concerns. (For a discussion of these from a Rawlsian perspective, see Buchanan, 1990.)

3. It is no small wonder that feminists have long acknowledged these while realizing that their position fell far short of these noble ideals. Virhen Abigail Adams, wife of John Adams, begged her husband in 1776 to "remember the Ladies." While the future president's remarks are not recorded, we can surmise that they were dismissive in that her retort was "I cannot say that I think you very generous to the Ladies, for whilst you are proclaiming peace and good will to Men, Emancipating all Nations, you insist upon retaining an absolute power over wives" (as cited in O'Connor, 2000-2001, pp. 29-30). Justice Sandra Day O'Connor (2000-2001) explains that protection against sex discrimination was an awkward attempt by Congressman Smith to prevent the antidiscrimination laws from being enacted. He relied on a presumption that his fellow legislators would not vote to extend protection to women and thus would vote against the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

4. I am aware that some thinkers, following Rawls's (1985) pronouncements, would limit these claims to constitutional democracies. To the extent that I believe they should be universal and global, it therefore reflects my own (and perhaps many others') bias. See note 5 below.

5. Although there are many examples that may be identified, I prefer the United Nations' (1948) Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) as constituting the basis of any a priori assumptions to which and on which any system of social justice must by definition rest (Bell, 1999). This model offers a narrower list to include "prohibitions against slavery, genocide, murder, torture, prolonged arbitrary detention, and systematic racial discrimination" (Bell, 1999, p. 851). The obvious limitations of this list are apparent when one notes that women, children, rape, sexual abuse and discrimination, and livable (or minimum) wages are totally ignored. As pointed out by Henkin (1989), although the "universality" of these rights has

been generally accepted by most nations, we can identify country-specific forms of noncompliance. These typically relate to those who object to provisions such as "freedom of expression, religious and ethnic equality, and the equality of women" (Henkin, 1989, p. 15). Even if we can get past the multitude of conceptual ambiguities, conflicts, and uncertainties, the UDHR yet may be a goal rather than a realizable state of affairs. (A classic statement of these problems is found in an article by McKeon, 1948.) Given these problems, I understand that my choice of UDHR reflects personal biases. Although I hope to visit this bias in the near future, for now I accept and acknowledge this criticism without prejudice.

6. Cox (1951) clearly makes this position as he argues that

in 1948 the Republican Party's platform declared that the individual's "right to complete justice without regard to race, creed, or color, is a fundamental American principle." . . . Civil rights are the attributes of "citizens," and particularly of citizens of the modern state. (p. 354)

7. As this "declaration" has been argued for more than 50 years, and as in principle (see note above) it has been accepted by most countries, I see no need to continue this argument here. More to the point, these are being introduced here for their heuristic value for the purposes of elucidating how a social justice paradigm would influence our pedagogy; it is important that we identify a set of presumptions that have at least been generally agreed to, in principle, by the majority of the modern world. Only through such tacit agreement can any conversation regarding the conditions to which and under which social justice may be conceived be conducted. Again, I understand that there are a multitude of directions we could take. I have chosen this one.

8. Centering the margins is but one of several antihegemonic movements that can be identified. As time and space limits a fuller analysis of these movements, please see my "A Simple Typology of Racial Hegemonies" (Coates, 2006) and "Racial Hegemony, Globalization, Social Justice and Anti-Hegemonic Movements" (Coates, 2007).

9. Although examples are legion, a recent court challenge to racial test bias resulted in a Texas court's justifying racial bias by asserting that high-stakes tests serve to motivate poorly performing racial nonelites (see FairTest, 1999-2000).

10. Presently, ethnically sounding names carry a stigma. Thus by centering the margins, normalizing minority status, such stigma may indeed be reduced.

11. There are those who might argue, Why not just do away with all such categories; won't that solve the problem? Unfortunately, although we recognize that racial and ethnic categories are socially constructed, their political, social, economic, and medical manifestations are quite real. Even sophisticated medical researchers associated with the human genome group recognize the importance of maintaining racial and ethnic categories, even while they stress a nonhierarchical clustering of such groups for research and treatment. See, for example, Mountain and Risch (2004).

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