

LECTURE / DISCUSSION / DEBATE
EQUALITY AND JUSTICE

Terms and concepts to know:

Formal equality

Equality before the law

Equal access

Equality of opportunity

Radical anti-equalitarianism

Liberal egalitarianism (Rawls)

Marxist egalitarianism (Marx)

Moral equality

Equal liberty

Material equality

Equality of outcome

'Welfarist' vs. 'resourcist' equality

Libertarian egalitarianism (Nozick)

Distributive justice

Study and discussion questions:

1. Do freedom and equality have to be in conflict? Can they be reconciled? If so, how are they?
2. Is equality of opportunity desirable? Why or why not?
3. According to the authors of *Queer (In)Justice*, "...there's a huge contradiction when a campaign seeks to achieve these only by reassuring the mainstream of compliance and not by challenging a society toward transformative ends." In your opinion what does the author mean by this and do you agree that it can weaken the movement for systemic change?
4. If you are as well off as you could possibly be, can you have any grounds for objecting that other people are better off than you?
5. Should the state reward men and women for bringing up children, and doing housework?
6. Discussions of democracy do not usually address the worksite. Why does Bernard think it is important to include workplace relations of power when we consider the foundations of democracy? Analyze her statement that "[u]nionists cannot leave politics alone, because politics will not leave unions alone."
7. According to Hochschild, what are the key tenets of success in the American Dream, and in what ways might the American definition of success be considered narrow?
8. Describe Jack Smith's thesis examining the plight of the 'middle class'. Is it time to abandon this language and declare ourselves 'working class'?

Readings:

Hoffman and Graham: Chapters 3 and 4 and WEB.

Video:

True Justice: Bryan Stevenson's Fight for Equality.