Introduction

Though people may not be familiar with the term, the concept of social justice is something that is almost intuitively understood by most. Indeed, understanding fundamental fairness in the treatment of other human beings is an inherent characteristic of any civilized society. Throughout history, as civilizations have evolved, nearly every generation has witnessed the fight for some type of social injustice; women’s rights, African Americans’ rights, and LGBTQ rights are three of the most prominent examples from the last century, when social justice began to emerge within American political and legal philosophy. The term “social justice” was first coined around 1840 and was first used among Catholic clergy who sought to provide aid to the poor. During the mid-1800s, this term was used in secular writings as well.

Social justice in its early days focused on poverty and equal distribution of resources. In discussing the emergence of social justice, it may be best to first provide some type of synopsis of what we mean when we use the term social justice. In doing so, we will rely on the work of Harvey, who proposes that there are four competing theories of justice, each of which ranks in importance along a defined hierarchy. These four theories of justice serve as a fundamental basis to the development of social justice. They include the positive law perspective, the utilitarian perspective, the social contract perspective, and the natural rights perspective.

Harvey’s view of positive law contends that justice is simply when we continue to uphold the law that currently exists. These laws are those that have been generated by governments through law-making bodies or persons and that take the shape and form of that which suits the ruling class and/or those with social power. The utilitarian perspective is one wherein justice is seen as that which results in the greatest good for the greatest number and, based on this rationale, distinguishes between good laws and bad laws. Harvey’s social contract perspective can be historically connected to the work of Rousseau and John Rawls, who contended that justice is based on a non-codified but implicit contract between citizens of a given society. While more will be mentioned later in this chapter regarding Rawls’s work, it is sufficient to say that the incentive for this contract involved the mutual benefit for all persons included and served to protect their rights, which were considered universal, permanent, and unchanging, even when and/or if these rights ran counter to the utilitarian notion of the “greatest good” of society. Lastly, the natural law or natural rights perspective holds that rights are not dependent on the laws or customs of a given government and that, despite what those with power might contend, supersede power created through force by existing regimes. An example of natural
rights might be those listed in the Declaration of Independence as the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. In contemporary times, many people equate human rights with social justice.

Today, the term social justice refers broadly to more concentrated approaches to the moral treatment of citizens, as well as reciprocal relationships within a community. Social justice implies that members of a community have roles and responsibilities to each other to create an equal distribution of advantages and disadvantages among members of the community. The key theories of social justice include utilitarianism, libertarianism, egalitarianism, and virtue-based approaches. In this chapter, we will first provide an overview of each theory; we will discuss them in depth later in this chapter, showing interconnections between each of these theories with social facets and areas of study to include criminology, government operations, and social change in the modern world.

A Theoretical Breakdown and Overview

The utilitarian approach to social justice is the idea that the benefit of a great number of people is more important than the benefit of an individual. Jeremy Bentham, one of the first theorists of utilitarianism, designed a calculation for determining the value of pleasure versus pain; he posited that pleasure minus pain equals utility. Bentham also noted the importance of the number of people who benefit from an act versus those who consequently suffer. John Stuart Mill continued to develop the work of Jeremy Bentham; he faced much criticism for stating that happiness was the only desire of most people. Mill believed there should be less of a division among owners and workers. He believed that all people have the right to basic needs as well as social welfare. Critics of utilitarianism point out that it conflicts with common-sense approaches to morality. The common-sense approach to morality maintains that the suffering of all individuals is equally important, regardless of how many people may benefit from the sacrifice of one. Karl Marx criticized Bentham's version of utilitarianism by pointing out that different people desire different things from life. Theorists of utilitarianism continue to develop the work of Bentham and Mills, but the results are accused of being too simplistic to explain complex human behavior.

The egalitarian approach to social justice holds that all people are equal and, therefore, deserve the same opportunities. Egalitarianism is the idea that no group of people is dominant or treated differently in ability or opportunity. Evidence hints that prehistoric societies were egalitarian; each person in a society had a specific role and was treated equally. Egalitarianism encompasses the causes of all specific groups who have fought for social justice; a true egalitarian will be supportive of equal rights for all rather than for some. One potential issue with this approach to social justice is that the focus is too dispersed, with the lack of focus leading to no progress toward equality. Criticisms of classic egalitarianism have branched off and relabeled themselves as more specific forms. New egalitarianism is an emerging view that raises the question of how different groups of people will be able to live together in the same community. Luck egalitarianism points out that luck cannot be eliminated from the equation of behavior versus consequence.

The libertarian approach to social justice concentrates on greater individual freedom and less governmental power. Libertarians believe that people should be able to regulate their own lives and behavior so long as another person is not gravely injured. Robert Nozick favored a libertarian view that protected property rights. Nozick believed that humans have no ethical obligation to help others. This approach ignores the necessity of altruism to the survival of humans. The libertarian approach to social justice also leads to those who have wealth and property having access to more resources, more power, and more education than the poor do. One problem with a libertarian approach is that some individuals may knowingly oppress other individuals to foster their own wealth or success; less governmental power means fewer policies to regulate this type of behavior.

John Rawls was an influential American philosopher who published A Theory of Justice in 1971. His book addressed freedom and equality, which he saw as competing forces. Rawls's goal was to
showcase freedom and equality as one cause, and he coined the term “justice as fairness” to explain his position. In his book, Rawls discusses two principles of justice. The liberty principle states that all citizens should have equal basic liberties, such as the freedom of expression. Like Nozick, Rawls addresses the right to personal property, but his description includes moral capacity rather than simply focusing on a given right to own something. Rawls’s second principle, fair equality of opportunity, addresses opportunity for a meaningful life. Rawls believed that people have a right to have a chance to live a meaningful life, therefore affording them the right to equal opportunities as those with similar abilities and qualifications. Rawls suggested that his principles of justice were applicable to societal institutions as a basic structure model for the distribution of social justice. Critics of Rawls’s work claimed that his theory, which he contrasted with utilitarianism, lacked utility; critics pointed out that Rawls’s principles of justice favored the least advantaged rather than the greater number of citizens. 7

Virtue-based approaches to social justice rely on an individual’s virtues and character traits to predict their actions toward others; this approach says that character traits are stable and consistent. Society recognizes the virtue of kindness and associates it with certain behaviors. A virtue-based approach would assume that if a person possesses the virtue of kindness, he or she would behave in a certain way toward others. A virtue-based approach to social justice expects that a person deemed kind by society would behave in the expected manner toward all other people. One criticism of this theory is that many people said to possess the virtue of kindness by their peers do not in fact behave kindly toward groups of people who are different from themselves. Another criticism of a virtue-based approach is that virtues and traits are fluid, developing over time and circumstance. Virtue is also relative to the culture in question. 8

Morality is another principle relative to culture and era. A moral system includes rules about acceptable behavior that are decided upon by a majority of a society. Social cooperation is necessary for a society to function as a collective entity in enforcing decided rules. Morality is somewhat fluid, changing as society changes, giving way for constant reevaluation of systems. 9 Opotow explored the concept of moral exclusion as related to perhaps the most famous instance of social injustice, the Holocaust. 10 Most of the world experienced shock and disbelief that such heinous acts could be imposed upon another human. The Jewish people were stripped of their rights over time and deemed inferior by leaders. This progression led to much of the general public adjusting to the idea that Jewish people were inferior and therefore not deserving of the same moral treatment as other citizens.

Opotow defines moral exclusion as acts that occur against those who are considered outside the bounds of moral values. Moral exclusion ranges from discrimination to genocide. A person or group may be considered outside the bounds of social justice in one region but not another. She also discusses the Holocaust in terms of moral exclusion as a process that built over time within the social climate of the era. She points out that since the end of the Holocaust, rules and regulations that were more morally inclusive have been established but continue to be challenged. 11

A more modern-day version of moral exclusion would be that encountered with the War on Terror. Opotow identified problems with the use of torture against suspects of terrorism, such as that which occurred in Abu Ghraib (U.S. POW prison in Iraq) and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (where Al Qaeda detainees were kept by the U.S. government). While the labeling of this as moral exclusion may be correct, these were single albeit important occasions. However, we would like to assert that the larger social justice problem was the way that the War on Terror was insidiously equated to a war on Islam. While the assertion that there was a war on Islam was most strongly suggested and supported in the Islamic states themselves, there were many people in the United States who, not truly educated on international politics, mistakenly considered the War on Terror to be a war against Islam itself. 12 During this time, informal pejoratives against Muslims and Middle Easterners were common, as were various forms of racial profiling. 13 Further, this profiling and public anger sometimes manifested itself against persons who appeared to be Middle Eastern but were, in fact, Latino, Sikh, or Indian in descent. This was so true that U.S. media eventually were compelled to provide messages to dispel this idea.
However, it was not until the Obama administration inherited the presidency that this line of thought was truly eradicated, though even his countering of these negative public sentiments fell under the scrutiny of public concern.

One last more-or-less modern example would be the moral exclusion of the same-sex population in the United States. Traditionally, up until the last decade or so, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) population was systematically discriminated against throughout the United States. Indeed, laws that targeted this population were prevalent, and the LGBT population was excluded from basic fundamental freedoms (such as the ability to publicly and officially marry) as well as opportunities (the ability to join the military), where questionable laws and policies, such as “don’t ask, don’t tell,” gave contradictory and ambiguous messages. Ultimately, due to social pressure and changing public sentiments, states have repealed discriminatory laws and the federal government has officially granted rights to the LGBT population that have traditionally only been afforded to the heterosexual population, such as the right to marry, which was established in the landslide Supreme Court case of *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015).14

Robinson addresses ideals of social justice in relation to the criminal justice system. He asserts that most citizens would not agree with many practices of criminal justice if educated about them; he discusses the “veil of ignorance” that is present in society, despite claims of the importance of social justice.15 Robinson calls for a reform of the criminal justice system to better align it with the ideals of social justice.16 This mirrors many of the tenets presented by Jeffrey Reiman and Paul Leighton in their book titled *The Rich Get Richer and the Poor Get Prison*, where they show disparities in treatment against the poor and/or politically weak that exist at every stage of the criminal justice system.17 The final outcome of these disparities are that prison consists largely of individuals who are poor, lack education, and tend to be minorities.

Prosocial behavior promotes survival and plays a role in social justice. Altruism is the concern for or willingness to help others; altruistic societies tend to be more successful. Reciprocal altruism involves helping others with the hope that the behavior will be reciprocated in the future. Perhaps humans only fight for social justice in order to promote their own agenda, survival through cooperation. Altruism is also an important survival mechanism for humans. Cooperation with other humans is often the means to the end, survival.18

Another biological aspect of human behavior that promotes prosocial behavior and influences social justice is empathy. Cognitive empathy is the ability to imagine another person’s perspective, while affective empathy is the ability to show appropriate emotion and affect in reaction to the pain of another person.19 Decety and Yoder suggest that cognitive empathy is a motivating force in seeking social justice. That is, if a person has the capacity to see things from a perspective other than their own, they are likely more inclined to fight for social justice.20 Naturally, the opposite is true as well. Those who are self-centered and calloused will not feel any motivation to counter an unjust circumstance for others and will, more likely, become roused for activity only when an issue impacts them, specifically.

This last point is one of concern and also one that social justice advocates will find ripe for work within today’s society. Indeed, research during the early to mid-2000s and beyond has found that people in general, and youth in particular, throughout the United States have higher rates of narcissism,21 lower rates of empathy,22 and are more socially isolated than they were 20 or 30 years ago.23 These findings are important as they may explain social circumstances that are more frequently caught on media recordings. For instance, shootings of unarmed citizens by police officers have been in the news media during the past four or five years much more frequently. In turn, the ambushing and shooting of police officers around the nation has also generated substantial concern. These occurrences get widespread public attention and have an impact on citizen perceptions of police, crime, and justice.

Whether the lack of empathy, narcissism, or social isolation is a cause to these incidents is not necessarily clear. However, such characteristics clearly are consistent with the mindset. Also, when considering offenders who are in prison, there has been very clear and consistent research showing
that those with antisocial personality characteristics tend to also suffer from empathy deficits. These are also among the most chronic offenders, being recidivists with long-term longitudinal criminal careers. According to Postick, the following three key points regarding the importance of empathy can be made about criminal behavior, citizen views on punishment of criminals, and police-community relations:

1. Empathetic people are less likely to engage in delinquency or crime. But those who have trouble perceiving how others feel, and have difficulty sharing those feelings, are more likely to engage in wrongful acts—everything from minor juvenile delinquency to the most serious of violent crimes.

2. Empathy affects how people think about crime and punishment in complex ways. People capable of empathy tend to support tough punishments for crime, but at the same time they are less likely to call for the harshest punishments, such as the death penalty.

3. Empathy and perceptions of empathy help to shape the interactions of police and members of the communities they are assigned to protect. Research on citizen interactions with the police has consistently indicated that the way officers behave determines how they are evaluated by people with whom they interact.

From the comments above and from findings by a wide array of researchers and writers, it is clear that offenders are in need of empathy-building exercises and treatment programs rather than simply being given harsh punishments. Likewise, it is also clear that society is receptive to the notions of offender rehabilitation, if done correctly. Lastly, police-community relations are greatly enhanced when police employ standard community policing approaches in a manner that is sincere and consistent. Thus, it would appear that as social justice is a mechanism to assist those who are in a one-down position by convincing those in a one-up position of the benefit of facilitating such social elevation, those in power and those who are politically active will need to be empathetic to their plight. Such would be the case regardless of the particular group who is aggrieved, victimized, or discriminated against. Thus, social empathy should be viewed as a complimentary characteristic to any social justice initiative. We now turn our attention to social justice and its relationship with critical criminology. In each example that will be provided by Arrigo and other researchers, we ask that the basic tenets and theoretical perspectives of social justice be kept in mind. In all of the following examples, the need for societal levels of empathy should be self-evident to the reader.

Social Justice and Critical Criminology

Without any doubt, there is an intuitive connection between social justice and critical criminology. Perhaps part of the reason for this is that, at the base of it, both social justice and critical criminology have some of their origins in the socialistic thinking of Karl Marx. It is our contention that this common link in origin makes social justice and critical criminology naturally complementary to one another. As such, many authors associated with critical criminological perspectives proposed a model of social justice that was integrated with critical criminology perspectives.

Arrigo notes that in the case of critical criminologists, a perceived struggle persists between the citizen and society and, in the process, an “emancipatory conflict” ensues, displaying that people are not simply the result of structural social forces around them (i.e., the economy, the media, the educational system) but they are also partners in the shaping of their identity. Therefore, for critical criminologists, the real expression of social justice is the struggle to be human. For critical criminologists, the sense of autonomy is precisely what leads to social justice for all. Thus, social justice transcends simple redistribution of economic resources. It includes one’s ability to establish a social identity. This is important because some researchers contend that social justice is centered primarily on economic
equality. Though this is, of course, an important aspect of equality, the concept of equality entails a number of other facets and dimensions to existence, as well. This then is precisely the point that critical criminologists make, extending the thoughts and tenets beyond mere economic equality.

Radical criminologists, on the other hand, base their perspectives on crime and law in the belief that capitalist societies define crime through a process whereby the wealthy use their power and influence to have laws enacted that will serve their own desires and will keep the working class under control. In order that social justice may be achieved, it would be necessary to overthrow capitalist forms of government and to replace them with social systems of government. In social systems, class and economic disparities are eliminated so as to maintain a sense of egalitarian balance. 32

Similarly, social conflict theories share the radical criminologists’ view that crime is defined by laws enacted by powerful groups who engage in social control of the population so as to prevent challenges to their values and interests. 33 However, social conflict criminologists contend that these types of powerful groups exist in all large and modernized societies and that they all tend to utilize the lawmaking process to further their own social interests while thwarting the goals of other competitive groups. Thus, numerous groups work in tandem and independently to further their own vested interests, sometimes in league with one another through processes of shifting alliances and allegiances until mutual interests are disbanded. In such cases, perceptions of social justice may be quite varied, depending on the particular power group considered.

Another interesting group within the critical criminology arena that has a definite vested interest in social justice are the socialist feminists. For socialist feminists, the economic conditions help to reinforce a position of servitude among women. At the heart of their angst is the gendered nature of money acquisition and opportunities in the world of work. In the process, the interests of women are given secondary thought and consideration. Further still, these criminologists point toward the patriarchal aspects of modern society as well as the historic patriarchy of past society, wherein women were considered the property of men. For this group, social justice consists of removing the glass ceiling that limits women and ensuring equality of economic and political power between men and women.

The last group of critical criminologists that we will consider are the peacemaking criminologists. Peacemaking examines global acts of violence and victimization and advocates for providing awareness of more peaceful and productive processes. Indeed, this is likely to be considered the primary activity of peacemaking criminologists. According to Arrigo, educating for peace is an affirmative effort to restore and reinvigorate humane, dignified, and meaningful relationships between offenders and victims, between countries at war, and so forth. 34

Each of the prior groups of critical criminology have, as an underlying theme, a party who is either in a one-down position or has been aggrieved. As we noted in our opening introduction, social justice seeks to address some type of injustice. In most cases, these injustices have been economic. However, the injustices that fall under the umbrella of social justice concerns now include victimization through economic exploitation, political maneuverings, lawmaking, physical force, and other forms of coercion, entrapment, or harm done to people who are, in most cases, at a disadvantage and struggle to gain relief from their mistreatment. It is for this reason that critical criminology has been showcased in this chapter—to connect the various aspects of social justice with a variety of potential hindrances to developing equity and equality in a variety of spheres of human existence, all within the perspective of a criminal justice or criminology orientation.

**The Big Lesson: Should We Reprioritize Our Wealth?**

During the late 1990s, military spending from the prior Cold War era had reached an all-time high. During this same period, much less emphasis was placed on help for the poverty stricken. One author, Dorothy Van Soest, conducted an analysis from a social justice perspective of the dichotomy between military spending and public aid assistance. 35 Van Soest noted that, in most respects, the meaning of
social justice is in the eye of the beholder. Nevertheless, some citizens may perceive that military defense is for the common good and is the function of government due to the rights of citizens to be protected. On the other hand, others view the lack of funding for those persons who are in most need to be an injustice. They seek to balance this allocation of resources so as to relieve misery and suffering. Van Soest provided an analysis of three conceptions of justice that support providing enhanced funding to persons in need within the United States. These three perspectives are the libertarian perspective, the utilitarian perspective, and the egalitarian perspective.  

The libertarian perspective, according to Van Soest, “strongly opposes welfare rights, any coercive mechanism by the state to get some citizens to aid others, and all attempts to impose any” intended pattern of economic distribution throughout society. Within the libertarian perspective are three primary human rights that the government is obligated to protect. These are paraphrased from Van Soest’s work, as follows:

1. Every person has a right to life. Any attempt to take away that life and/or to injure that person is a violation of the potential victim’s human rights.
2. Every person has the right to liberty, meaning that every person has the right to live their life as a personal choice, so long as it is not at the expense of another person’s human rights.
3. Everyone has the right to property, presuming that the property is legally acquired, and the right to dispose of it as he or she pleases, so long as the disposal of property does not present a risk to the welfare of the public.

Naturally, as one has likely guessed, these rights are reflected in the United States Constitution. Thus, libertarians would disapprove of state-run programs to assist disadvantaged youth and families, programs for the homeless, and most other forms of social aid for the needy. At the same time, libertarians are staunch supporters of the notion that everyone has the right to life, liberty, and property, so long as they are self-reliant and independent in these pursuits.

For classic utilitarians, the main idea is that “society is rightly ordered and just when its major institutions are arranged in such a way as to achieve the greatest net balance of satisfaction summed over all the individuals belonging to it.” Because of this underlying tenet, utilitarianism has been used as a basis to reallocate wealth and it has even served as a basis for unequal wealth distribution, benefits, and opportunities; in both cases being touted for the good of the whole.

While the utilitarian approach seems to have a certain quantitative appeal, it still ignores that the determination of the “common good” is very subjective and quite open to interpretation. We will provide more discussion on this later, but for the moment, it is sufficient to simply note that the common good would seem to be a matter of perspective, with the definition of the common good depending on your own particular position within a given society. If you work on Wall Street, your version of the common good is likely to be much different from those working in Harlem. The two locations in New York are substantially different from one another.

Likewise, the common good is subjective in terms of worldviews of military and crime-fighting priorities. Indeed, if the common good becomes an emphasis on military campaigns (the Cold War, the War on Terror) or crime campaigns (the War on Drugs, the War on Crime) that emphasize staunch responses, then the common good becomes what is achieved using the barrel of a gun and becomes a reality of “us against them.” However, if we redefine the common good as a healthy, educated, and productive population, the utilitarian approach is expressed more in terms of access to medicine, access to education, and adequate access to employment. The two worldviews are substantially different from one another.

The last perspective of justice that we will discuss in this section is the egalitarian perspective. This theoretical approach counters the idea that society can be correctly ordered whenever it is based on social and/or economic inequalities. This goes back to our earlier discussion of John Rawls, who
argued against the utilitarian notion that hardships experienced by a few could, somehow, be justified or offset by the greater common good experienced by the majority. However, Rawls believed that the distribution of income and wealth did not need to be equal, so long as it was to the advantage of everyone. This is a bit off-center from a pure egalitarian perspective, in which the main idea is that the only inequalities that are morally presentable are those that work to the utmost and absolute advantage of those who are the worst-off and most poor in our society. 40

To make it clear, egalitarian theory provides the most clear and direct argument for social justice by simply staging that the redistribution of wealth and opportunities in society is a moral obligation. As Van Soest states, “egalitarians would express that the unmet needs that should be redressed first are those of the least well off people, beginning with restoration of the programs for poor people that have been disproportionately cut.” 41 This is an important distinction, because it claims that those with the least should come first and those with the most should come last. Not only does this have an almost biblical ring to it, there is an inherent condemnation of capitalism as well, mirroring more a Marxist view wherein the poor (the proletariat) will eventually overcome the rich (the bourgeoisie).

Conclusion: The Underlying Message

Throughout this chapter, several perspectives of social justice have been presented and have demonstrated a variety of means by which social justice is important for the welfare of a society, in general, and how it applies to the fields of criminology, law enforcement, and penology, specifically. Going further, it is clear that the definition of social justice varies among cultures and regions. It goes without saying that cultural norms can influence the definition of social justice in a specific region of the world. For every new social justice theory, criticisms emerge. Even within the United States, the definition of social justice differs slightly among various groups of people. Approaches to social justice may also be relative to an individual’s motives or to current social problems.

Justice itself is important; social justice is important because it allows for equality in property, power, opportunity, health, and education. While no single approach to social justice may be the shining example, each theoretical approach has some value in determining societal structure. What should be clear to the reader is that, in one way or another, social justice is about seeking fundamental fairness in a society so that all participants of that society share in and benefit from the protections and opportunities of that society. The specific definition of fairness, however, serves as a major challenge to being assured that justice is achieved.

In addition, the membership of a given community or society must have an adequate level of care or concern so as to translate into action. This is, to a large extent, required for the “social contract” between members of a society to be successful. Otherwise, there could be no mutual trust among members that other members will follow through on their own commitments in kind. A society without basic empathy becomes a group of self-absorbed individuals who shirk such responsibilities, thereby causing the implicitly understood social contract to unravel and fall apart.

Further, when addressing criminal justice issues, critical criminologists have made it clear that there are disparities in offender treatment. The means by which crime occurs are considered important, as are the means by which punishment is meted out. The importance is not just for the offender, but it is also important for the welfare of society. A heavy-handed and reactionary approach is, ironically, simply likely to make the crime problem worse. Thus, social justice approaches to all aspects of the criminal justice system (the police, the courts, and corrections) should be a theme that is not driven by economics but is instead driven by long-term strategies to eliminate the benefit of criminal behavior and provide prosocial opportunities for communities at risk.

Lastly, as we noted before, social justice is perhaps most appropriately expressed through better access to healthcare, education, and work opportunities in the United States, not additional squad cars, tough-on-crime legislation, or bigger prison facilities. The first approach is the mark of a successful
civilization; the second is the approach of one that is failing. Thus, preventative agendas to crime are part and parcel to social justice. The more affluent, the more educated, and the better treated a population is, the less that criminal activity appears as a viable option in society.

To be clear, we do understand that regardless of what is done, some crime will likely exist no matter how “just” society becomes. Random crime that is irrational, impulsive, or due to mental illness will not be completely eradicated, but we assert that in a peace-oriented society where compassion, empathy, and social connection are emphasized, honored, and rewarded, even this type of crime can be reduced. There are examples of these types of society around the world, so this is not “pie-in-the-sky” thinking, as many critics would naturally claim. Rather, nations like Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan, and Sweden all have much lower crime rates than the United States and, at the same time, have higher life expectancy rates, are rated in the top 20 for educational systems, and have Human Development Index (HDI) scores that are either superior to or very close to the HDI of the United States; all are in the top 20 compared to the global community. Thus, it can be done.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Identify and discuss the main tenets of the libertarian approach.
2. Explain how decisions are made from a utilitarian perspective.
3. Who was John Rawls and why was he important?
4. What common bond do both social justice and critical criminology share?
5. Should social justice focus primarily on equal economic distribution or should it be more encompassing, as the authors seem to imply? Explain your answer.

**Notes**


32. Ibid.


36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., p. 713.

38. Ibid., p. 715

39. Ibid.

