

# **Equality or Equity - where's the justice?**

# Game Plan

- What do we understand by equality and equity?
- The extremes
- Some fundamental philosophical principles
- Critical Social Justice
- Subversion, Anarchy, Totalitarianism

# Equality

- What is “Equality” and is it “just”?
  - Construed by liberals as:
    - Equality of opportunity, equality before the law, no prejudice, no discrimination
    - Freedom to work for a better life, for family, community or nation
    - Distinguish *being prevented* from *being incapable*
  - Construed by socialists as economic equality for all
    - Never realised - leads to totalitarianism
    - Worse - “from each according to his ability, to each according to his need”
  - Equal Opportunity regardless of ability or wealth

# Equity

- What is “Equity” and would that be “just”?
  - Advocated by Critical Social Justice as requiring equality of outcomes.
  - That means : equal outcomes for identity groups, not individuals
  - But: measured by “standpoint epistemology” - the “lived experience” of “oppressed” identities
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# Some Philosophical Fundamentals in CSJ

- Postmodern scepticism
  - No objective truth
  - Language - meaningless?
  - Logic - paralogic
  - Episteme - power knowledge
- Post-colonialism
  - “Western Culture” devised for the oppression of Eastern colonies
  - Hence reject: rationality, western epistemology
- Critical Social Justice promotes:
  - Other epistemologies (cultural relativism),
  - subjective rather than objective
  - of the oppressed rather than the oppressor (standpoint epistemology)

# Signs of Divergence

- Epistemology is culturally relative - none better (but western worst)
- Anecdotal/subjective evidence for inequity
  - - lived experience/standpoint epistemology
- Lack of investigation of causes of disparity
- Proposed remedies are not rational/evidence based

# What is Rationality?

- *Instrumental* Rationality:
  - The adoption of means to an end which are likely to realise that end; which one has good reason to believe will achieve the desired end
- *Epistemic* Rationality:
  - The acceptance as true of just those propositions for which one has good grounds, or good reason to believe true.
- These two are related, epistemic rationality probably is generally instrumental, a true belief system helps one to choose means which will realise our ends.
- Evolution yields rational results (by and large):
  - Life forms (or genes) well adapted to survive and proliferate
  - Language facilitates sharing of knowledge - over distance and time