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Social, Racial, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Building Social Work Practice Skills
Second Edition

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CHAPTER 1

SETTING THE STAGE FOR JUSTICE-DRIVEN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. As social work professionals, we must confront our own biases about ___ in order to best serve our clients.
   a. race and ethnicity
   b. gender
   c. economic class
   *d. all of the above

   Rationale: Social workers must understand that perceptions affect actions; as such, we need to create awareness of any biases we may have.

2. The Council on Social Work Education requires all social work curriculum to:
   a. teach how to handle stressful situations and accept the client in crisis mode.
   b. state that Jane Addams was the founder of all social work.
   c. ensure students know how to give good advice to clients.
   *d. educate to advance human rights along with social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

   Rationale: CSWE has nine competencies required of all accredited social work education, which include advancing human rights and social, racial, economic, and environmental justice.

3. The United Nations (UN) describes social justice as:
   a. an equal distribution of wealth and opportunities across one country.
   b. everyone having equal economic, social, and political rights in a nation.
   c. all the citizens in one country getting the exact same treatment as others.
   *d. grounded on a framework that comprises the sociological, political, and cultural aspects of a specific locale.

   Rationale: The UN describes social justice as relative to the context of locale, as well as universal. Social justice is essential in all countries and locations yet may look different from one to another.

4. Economic justice can also be known as:
   a. employment opportunities.
   b. living wage.
   c. use of relative poverty rather than absolute.
   *d. distributive justice.

   Rationale: Other choices are reflective of aspects of economic justice rather than terminology.

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5. What are threats to justice-informed social work practice?
   *a. Paternalism, power, and authority
   b. Cultural humility
   c. Empowering the client to be the expert
   d. a and c

   Rationale: Both cultural humility and client empowerment are integral components of social work practice. However, paternalism, power, and authority can negatively affect relationships with clients and outcomes as well.

6. The United Nations' perspective of justice includes:
   a. each person deserves equal opportunities.
   b. each person has access to equal opportunities.
   *c. each person should have the opportunity to earn the resources sufficient to meet their needs.
   d. each person should have the same opportunities as everyone else.

   Rationale: This answer really parses out equal opportunities—which the UN does not espouse—versus the ability to have opportunities for self-sufficiency.

7. Which type of justice believes that there should be access to employment that provides an adequate and appropriate income for an expected standard of living?
   a. Racial
   *b. Economic
   c. Social
   d. Environmental

   Rationale: Adequate income is a hallmark of economic justice.

8. A holistic approach in social work means:
   *a. we must look beyond the individual to understand social and environmental factors.
   b. we must ensure there are no gaps in services.
   c. we must let the client determine what is needed.
   d. we must use strengths in guiding the client in facilitating change.

   Rationale: The ability to have a holistic approach is a hallmark of social work practice; this means that individuals are affected by other factors—relationships, communities, and systems like education. As a result, we look beyond the individual to understand the larger impact. Other choices are correct aspects of social work practice but are not representative of a holistic approach.

9. Which type of justice relates to the policies and practices that disproportionately affect the poor?
   a. Social
   *b. Economic
   c. Environmental
   d. Racial

   Rationale: The policies and practices that disproportionately affect the poor are reflective of economic justice.

10. We subsidize the minimum wage with:
    a. a living wage.
    *b. Medicaid, SNAP, and housing assistance.
    c. student loans.
    d. all of the above.

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Rationale: Student loans are not exclusive resources for the impoverished, and the living wage is used in lieu of the minimum wage.

11. Sometimes social workers think we know what is best, regardless of what our clients think. Which of the following terms is interpreting the client's needs from the social worker's perspective?
    a. Condescension
    b. Patronizing
    *c. Paternalism
    d. Authority

    Rationale: Paternalism is a threat to justice because it's from the advocate's perspective rather than the client's.

12. Social justice is a core professional value for social work.

    True

    Rationale: Social justice is one of six core professional social work values.

13. The social worker can be a barrier to change.

    True

    Rationale: Social worker biases and failure to involve the client in facilitating change are examples of ways in which social workers can negatively affect outcomes.

14. Distributive justice seeks to spread wealth across the population rather than being held by a small portion of the population.

    True

    Rationale: This is the fundamental principle of distributive justice.

15. Gaps in assets are an important part of economic justice, not just gaps in wealth.

    True

    Rationale: Generational poverty is often linked to a lack of assets (housing, transportation, and so on).

16. Pollution and environmental degradation affect all socioeconomic statuses fairly similarly.

    False

    Rationale: Impoverished communities are much more likely to experience or be exposed to pollution and environmental degradation.

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CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL UNDERPINNINGS OF JUSTICE-DRIVEN PRACTICE

SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION

1. What are some contemporary examples not given in the chapter of how cultural imperialism shows up in social work practice?

   Potential answers: There are countless ways to answer this question, but answers should clearly illustrate an understanding of the concept of cultural imperialism and how it differs from other forms of oppression like violence, marginalization, and so on. Cultural imperialism is defined as the way dominant groups and their narratives create a sense of otherness and minimize value by rendering oppressed groups invisible, exotic, or deviant.

   For instance:

   - Agencies failing to provide forms, services, and more for clients who are not English speakers
   - Dominance of the 12-step model in substance misuse treatment
   - Underrepresentation of non-Western healing approaches, like communal medicine, herbal treatment, and so on

MULTIPLE CHOICE AND TRUE/FALSE QUESTIONS

1. According to Young, which of the following is not one of the five ways that oppression manifests itself?
   a. Powerlessness
   b. Marginalization
   *c. Provocation
   d. Exploitation

   Rationale: This is a simple right or wrong answer. The "five faces of oppression" according to Young are exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence.

2. Creating a nonhierarchical, collaborative relationship with our clients would be an approach to just practice informed by all the following theories except:
   a. antioppressive theories.
   b. feminist theories.
   c. person-centered theory.
   *d. critical race theory.

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Rationale: Critical race theory is helpful to look at more macro and systemic issues. Answers a, b, and c all speak to more individual-level interactions and, when discussed in the text, mention approaching relationships from an equity, egalitarian, or collaborative posture.

3. The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to an individual or group, which is regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage, is called what?
   a. Interfunctionality
   *b. Intersectionality
   c. Intercategorical
   d. Interlocking

   Rationale: This is a definitional question. Intersectionality is a key concept in the chapter; the other choices are similar terms (inter-) but are not key terms in the chapter.

4. Which of the following is not true of how person-centered theory contributes to a justice orientation to practice?
   *a. Person-centered theory has applicability to engaging in just practice from a macro perspective.
   b. Person-centered theory would guide us to approach relationships in a collaborative way.
   c. Person-centered theory would prioritize the personal agency of our clients.
   d. Person-centered theory suggests that clients should be viewed as experts on their own lives.

   Rationale: Answers B, C, and D are clearly part of the description of person-centered theory in the chapter. Although person-centered theory (originally called client-centered theory) has applicability to politics, international conflict, and so on, choice A is not the best answer.

5. When older workers get laid off from their jobs and are deemed to be less productive (and therefore less valuable) and are unable to find new jobs, this is an example of which type of oppression?
   a. Cultural imperialism
   *b. Marginalization
   c. Powerlessness
   d. Exploitation

   Rationale: Older workers being viewed as less productive is an example of marginalization, as this illustrates their being consigned to a lower social standing or excluded from the workforce based on age.

6. Which of the following statements is not true about the concept of intersectionality?
   a. The experience of oppression is individualized based on each person's context and situation.
   b. Intersectionality is experienced politically.
   *c. Oppression experienced because of our race is perceived as more harmful than oppression resulting from gender, sexual orientation, and so on.
   d. No person has a single, easily stated unified identity.

   Rationale: Choice C is both incorrect (one type of oppression is not more inherently harmful than another) and does not connect with the concept of intersectionality. The other choices are aspects of intersectionality as a concept and relate to the chapter's discussion on intersectionality.

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7. A divorced single parent struggles to find stable, affordable housing in a high-cost area while simultaneously facing limited job prospects and childcare options. This is an example of which "face" of oppression?
   a. Cultural imperialism
   b. Marginalization
   *c. Powerlessness
   d. Exploitation

   Rationale: Powerlessness is defined as the inability to make decisions or influence one's own life. The example given here of a single parent in a cycle of inability to secure housing, childcare, and employment because of job market constraints, limited access to housing, and more illustrates powerlessness.

8. When a social worker interprets someone in crisis as violent or dangerous rather than as someone experiencing frustration or fear during a crisis, this is an example of:
   a. explicit bias.
   b. defamation.
   *c. implicit bias.
   d. ignorance

   Rationale: By definition, implicit bias is a result of internalized beliefs regarding others that unconsciously shape our interactions, our behaviors, and our perceptions of others. This example of a social worker interpreting a client's behavior clearly illustrates implicit bias.

9. Which of the following is not a reason to examine and acknowledge our biases?
   a. Biases can reinforce stereotypes that allow perpetuation of injustice and oppression.
   *b. Biases maintain the status quo in our relationships.
   c. Biases allow us to be complicit in oppression.
   d. Biases that are unexamined cannot be challenged.

   Rationale: Choices A, C, and D are all undesirable outcomes of not examining and acknowledging our biases. Maintaining the status quo in relationships is not desirable, especially if our relationships are ones that involve the unexamined exertion of power over another and other factors.

10. Which of the following is a central tenet of critical race theory?
    *a. Racism is pervasive and ordinary.
    b. Racism is best considered an individual-level act.
    c. Racism is unusual and not a typical part of everyday life.
    d. Racism is most evident in our legal structures.

    Rationale: The language of choice A (pervasive and ordinary) comes directly from the text. Choices B and C are opposite of CRT's key tenets, and choice D is clearly not the best answer, given that racism is embedded in all the structures we engage in and not one more so than others.

11. Colorism, or a prejudice against individuals with a dark skin tone, is an example of cultural imperialism.
    *a. True
    b. False

12. Critical race theory posits that racism is an individual or interpersonal act.
    a. True
    *b. False

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13. Theories are value laden and biased.
    *a. True
    b. False

14. More than half of people have experienced at least one trauma event in their lives.
    *a. True
    b. False

15. The tenets of critical race theory conflict with the person-in-environment perspective.
    a. True
    *b. False

    Rationale: True/false questions draw directly from chapter content and represent foundational ideas about theoretical framing for antioppressive practice.

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CHAPTER 3

FRAMING SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS CONTEXT

MULTIPLE CHOICE AND TRUE/FALSE QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following is not applicable to human rights?
   a. Human rights address rights to culture, nationality, safety, income, and so on.
   *b. Human rights are aspirational and set a standard that cannot be enforced.
   c. Human rights provide a foundation for an existence in dignity.
   d. Human rights form a foundation for social work practice.

   Rationale: The other choices are all correct. Human rights are not seen as aspirational; rather, they are intended to be standards of living for all.

2. Which of the following is not a human right?
   a. Right to nationality
   b Right to an appropriate and adequate standard of living
   c. Right to health
   *d. All of the above are human rights.

   Rationale: All of these are deemed human rights.

3. Which of the following was not instrumental in creating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?
   *a. The Bible
   b. The Cyrus Cylinder
   c. The Magna Carta
   d. The U.S. Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights

   Rationale: The Bible was not referenced or used to develop the UDHR.

4. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights shifted the focus from being equal before the law to:
   a. equal access to citizenship.
   *b. equal protection of the law.
   c. equal access to opportunities.
   d. equal economic access and standards of living.

   Rationale: This was a pivotal shift for human rights to ensure equal protection of the law. Neither human rights advocates nor the UDHR promote "equal" access or opportunities, as those differ by locale.

5. What type of rights are human rights?
   *a. Legal rights that states and countries are obligated to uphold.
   b. All rights are human rights.
   c. Those related to individual safety unless they threaten society's right to safety.
   d. All of the above are true of human rights.

   Rationale: When a country ratifies a human rights declaration, those are legal rights of their citizens.

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