

5/4/04 Student Lecture Notes

The Politics of Inclusion and the Politics of Difference

· Student presentations.

Different ways of understanding relationship between freedom and equality

· Freedom opposed to equality (libertarian view)

- Role for government in assuring basic liberties (e.g., security).
- Formal equality of opportunity.
- Limited role for government.
- Redistributive taxation on a par with forced labor.
- Libertarian politicians and thinkers: B. Goldwater, M. Friedman, and R. Nozick.

· Freedom and equality are not opposing values but the realization of freedom requires equality (egalitarian liberal view):

- Government ensures equal basic liberties.
- Also, fair equality of opportunity and concern for the worst off – focus is not just on formal rights and liberties but also attention to the conditions necessary to realize or exercise liberties.
- Greater role for government: as LBJ put it, “...it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates.” (LBJ’s commencement address at Howard University: “To Fulfill These Rights”)
- Egalitarian liberal politicians and thinkers: LBJ in his rhetoric, Rawls’s *Theory of Justice*

- Ways to argue for greater social and political inclusion of historically and presently disadvantaged groups: stress equality or difference? For example, in arguing for rights for women, stress their moral superiority, as some difference feminists do, or stress the ways in which they, too, are human beings, i.e. what they share with men.

· Can be an egalitarian without advocating that all should be the same (‘equality is not sameness’). Can be an egalitarian and permit (even value) differences. The concern for many egalitarians is not to permit racial, ethnic, or gender differences to translate into social or economic disadvantages.

· Legacy of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954)

- Legacy is disputed:
 - o Some argue that legacy is the ideal of color blindness (e.g., Clarence Thomas) – 14th Amendment is interpreted as prohibiting any use of racial classifications; on this reading affirmative action is prohibited.

- Others argue that legacy is the ideal of anti-subordination (e.g. Thurgood Marshall) – differential treatment based on race is justifiable in that it serves to combat subordination of members of racial minority groups
- This debate b/w the anti-subordination reading and color blindness reading of the 14th Amendment doesn't answer the question of whether racial or ethnic diversity itself is valuable
- Debate between group-differentiated treatment of different races v. same treatment of different races has analogue in debates among feminists: difference feminists v. strict egalitarian feminists