

Distributive justice concepts

a distribution:

1. When we want to morally evaluate a distribution, we ask whether it is just or unjust (or how just/unjust it is). Why do we ask this, rather than whether the distribution is morally wrong or permissible?

The initial argument

- a. All distributions of jobs which are partly based on race, gender, or social class are unjust.
 - b. In the United States, distributions of [white collar] jobs are [almost] always based partly on race, gender, or social class.
 - c. Thus, distributions of [white collar] jobs in the United States are [almost] always unjust.
2. Think about the hiring practices discussed in the reading, in which gender and social class made a difference to whether people were hired. How did people in these firms try to justify their hiring practices?

A second argument (focusing on gender for a moment)

- i. In the United States, typical distributions of household labor [or] among members of heterosexual couples are unjust.
- ii. Typical distributions of household labor in heterosexual households affect [white collar] hiring of women in general.
- iii. If distribution x is unjust, and distribution y is based on distribution x, then y is unjust, even if distribution y “makes sense” in isolation.
- iv. Thus, the distribution of [white collar] jobs to women in the United States is unjust.

3. Give evidence to support claim (iii) above.
4. Are there counterexamples to claim (iii)?
5. How should claim (iii) be amended, given answers to 3 and 4? What does this revised claim say about how gender affects hiring the United States?
6. Can one make parallel arguments (parallel to (i) through (iv)) about hiring that factors in race or social class in the United States?