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Social Justice and the Future of Higher Education Kinesiology

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Abstract

28 **Abstract**
29 This article presents a rationale for the infusion of social justice into kinesiology programs for
30 the purpose of reducing inequities in society. Specifically, the current climate for social justice is
31 considered and discussed using examples from a university inspired service-learning initiative,
32 law, and politics. Of note are the following areas of discussion, 1) differentiation between social
33 diversity and social justice, 2) public pedagogy as a means by which to inspire service action, 3)
34 the creation of climates for speech and application of social justice, 4) modeling and
35 socialization for equity, and 5) the Neoliberal threat to inclusiveness. The paper concludes with
36 suggestions for practice, research, and training to implore kinesiology programs to position
37 movement as an issue of justice.

38 **Keywords:** service action, physical justice, neoliberalism, biopower, public pedagogy,
39 community engagement

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INTRODUCTION

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There is little doubt that our global society is in the midst of changes that demand examination of our current world view. As noted in the introduction, the charge of this special issue was to make bold suppositions and recommendations regarding the future of the field. In thinking about the future, I argue in this paper that kinesiology must take the lead in expanding the scope of diversity and more so, social justice in existing programs to address societal problems that we are equipped to positively influence. In this age of supercomplexity (Block & Estes, 2011), where scholars are faced with a host of complex obstacles, it is vital for our survival as a discipline that we consider all possibilities.

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Before proceeding with suggestions, I will provide my perceptions. Adams (2013) and I are in agreement that *social diversity* and *social justice* are two terms that are closely related, but not interchangeable. Social diversity differentiates based on social characteristics such as race, gender, sexuality, class and others. These differences are reflected in a groups' traditions, language, style of dress, cultural practices, religious beliefs, and rituals (p. 1). The appreciation for social diversity is a necessary task but not broad enough in understanding inequalities that margined groups face. It is easier to discourse on social diversity than social justice, because oppression and inequality leave little room for maneuverability. With this in mind, social justice for the sake of kinesiology will be of foremost discussion in this paper, with diversity presented as a supporting concept.

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Social justice in today's society

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Earnest Boyer in his seminal work *Scholarship Reconsidered* (1990), provided a foundation for the inclusion of social justice, suggesting that higher education institutions had a unique opportunity to solve pressing social, civic, and ethical problems. Since his proclamation,

78 a host of institutional mission statements have been revised to reflect a focus on inclusion,
79 diversity, and equity. Yet, these statements often fall short in addressing how social justice is
80 interconnected in a larger scale (Winkle-Wagner & Locks, 2014).

81 Why this would be the case is not that difficult to imagine. Institutions are reflections of
82 the society that they are in, and I feel our society, has a passive aversion to discussing social
83 justice. Discussing justice acknowledges that there are ills in our society that cloud our dreams of
84 a better world. However, I will not be too critical in my remarks. I am reminded by Furlong and
85 Cartmel (2009) that social justice is not a term widely used by the public, nor does one definition
86 truly encompass its intended meaning.

87 Essentially, social justice espouses that all individuals and groups should have access to
88 an equitable, respectful, and just society. Originating in Italy during the 1840's, social justice has
89 become formalized as political and educational treatise in higher education largely through the
90 work of John Rawls. In *A Theory of Justice* (1971), Rawls discourses on the complexities
91 associated with ensuring liberty and equity for the disadvantaged in a society that still caters to
92 those afforded power and privilege by birthright.

93 Universities currently have conflicting purposes that clash with the promotion of equity.
94 Traditionalists view the university as a community of scholars who pursue knowledge for its own
95 sake. Others view the priorities of the university and the system of higher education as a means
96 to prepare students for privileged positions separate from the general public. Given the
97 increasing focus on funding in recent years, it has been suggested that higher education only
98 serves to provide a world-class research capacity for enhancing global competition.

99 The latter observation is representative of a utilitarian mindset implying that the "end
100 justifies the means". It rewards hegemonic practices, networks, codes, and ways of thinking that

101 that do not take into account the experiences and circumstances of underrepresented populations.
102 Complicating the matter are those who believe in the “intent of equality”, but fail to comprehend
103 why initiatives should include a focus on marginalized and disadvantaged groups to make equity
104 for all a reality. All of these actions impact the kinesiology discipline.

105 With the current scope of social justice in higher education outlined, the discussion will
106 turn to possible recommendations for the future. Four will be of particular focus: conceiving
107 pedagogy outside the walls towards service action in communities, creating spaces within
108 programs for the discussion of inequity and diversity, the need for modeling and socialization,
109 and the impact of practice, research, and training.

110 **Reframing pedagogy towards service action**

111 In considering whether social justice can be infused in kinesiology, current programs
112 should engage in deliberate efforts that moves students “out from the walls” of higher education
113 classrooms. This action I believe will help future professionals better construct new meanings for
114 their work while imagining solutions to on-going problems.

115 Dewey (1916) in *Democracy and Education*, mentions the distinctive roles of “spectator”
116 and “participant”. While a spectator is “like a man (sic) in a prison cell watching the rain out of
117 the window” (146), a participant is like a man who has planned a picnic and must consider how,
118 since he cannot influence the weather, he will adapt his plans in light of the rain. The participant
119 is engaged in “life activities,” as opposed to the spectator who is removed from those activities,
120 unable to appreciate how meaning is constructed as “self and world are engaged with each other
121 in a developing situation”. (p.148).

122 If we apply Dewey’s position in the context of today’s society, then it is agreed that
123 future professionals can no longer serve as vessels to be filled with knowledge in university

124 classrooms. Sites where kinesiology is represented with potential environments for researchers to
125 gain knowledge and construct meaning are many. Henry Giroux (2004) feels that in the modern
126 age, politics, commercialization, and public consumption has redefined what pedagogy means
127 and where it is realized. Thus, pedagogy is also a public entity that is not limited to institutions of
128 schooling, but is found in sites where ‘identities are shaped, desires mobilized, and experiences
129 take on form and meaning’. (p.2).

130 This public pedagogy as Giroux notes, exists in a world where new technologies are
131 produced, refined, and replaced swiftly. No social institution has refuge from the concept of
132 public pedagogy, whether it is institutionalized education, sport and entertainment media, cable
133 television networks, churches, or advertising. Given that we are in the midst of The Information
134 Age, the impact of technology on acculturation, learning, the creation of knowledge, and
135 ultimately the consumption of this knowledge for use in society is apparent. Therefore,
136 kinesiology must equip themselves to understand these changes. Kinesiology must also
137 participate in engagements of consequence to strategically combat issues in our communities.

138 I spent a good portion of my early career in Indianapolis, Indiana working in the
139 Department of Kinesiology at Indiana University Purdue University, Indianapolis (IUPUI).
140 IUPUI positions service-learning and civic engagement as essential pieces that are integral to its
141 identity as public institution. Upon arrival, it was imperative for me to quickly learn the history
142 of the communities around the university. I uncovered that the university had a complex
143 relationship with the surrounding primarily African American community, who largely felt that
144 they had been victimized by decades of systematic racism through dubious policies.

145 In short, the characterization of Black communities in downtown Indianapolis as
146 “impoverished slums” in the latter part of the 1920’s paved the way for a host of “slum

147 clearance” projects financed by federal funding from the 1950s’ through the 1980’s (Mullins,
148 2006). Despite the contributions of transcendent African Americans such as Madame C.J.
149 Walker (business), Wes Montgomery (music) and Oscar Robertson (sports), neighborhood
150 displacement of blacks, couched as urban renewal, made it possible for the establishment of
151 IUPUI.

152 Recognizing that a large contingent of African Americans viewed the university in a
153 negative fashion, IUPUI administration in the 2000’s developed community initiatives to extend
154 civic engagement through service-learning. Given the litany of public institutions who prosper
155 from eminent domain policies, the mere acknowledgement from IUPUI of their prior neglect was
156 revolutionary, setting the stage for other universities to follow suit. Departments across campus
157 began to consider better ways to involve themselves through “public work” (Boyte, 2011), a
158 concept that solicits citizens not only serve as deliberators and decision makers about the world,
159 but as co-creators of the type of society that they want to live in.

160 The idea of public work spurred the creation of many programs across the university.
161 Physically Active Residential Communities and Schools (PARCS) was conceptualized by Dr.
162 NiCole Keith and created in 2004 as a community-based exercise program to provide inner-city
163 community residents in Indianapolis with exercise opportunities in order to help combat health
164 disparities. It is a multidisciplinary effort engaging academics, professionals, and students in the
165 fields of exercise science, fitness studies, nursing, education, sociology, and medicine (deGroot,
166 Alexander, Keith & Culp, 2015). Every discipline involved in the program has a distinct role in
167 promoting the outcomes of PARCS.

168 For instance, exercise science undergraduate majors under the supervision of trained
169 faculty, provide fitness assessments, personal training, group exercise, instruction, and social

170 support for those involved in the program. Future physical educators help to run before and after-
171 school comprehensive school physical activity (CSPAP) programs that have a health component.

172 Majors involved in this work receive academic credit, are challenged to lead, work with
173 diverse groups, and discourse on solutions to removing barriers to exercise participation in the
174 midst of rapidly changing environments. As far as research, these sites provide opportunities for
175 scholars to collect data and guide graduate education to help answer questions.

176 As previously mentioned, one of the core goals of the program seeks to involve adults
177 and youth from low resourced communities in consistent exercise. In particular for the African
178 American community, this focus is impactful. Similar to most urban locales in the United States,
179 African Americans in Indianapolis experience higher rates of poverty, lower educational status,
180 and poor living and working conditions. This often results in chronic disease such as
181 hypertension and obesity, disproportionate alcohol and tobacco usage, substance abuse, physical
182 inactivity, depression, poor diet, and a host of other anxieties which may or may not be
183 appropriately identified.

184 Initially, sites in the Indianapolis Public School system were used as fitness centers, with
185 interdisciplinary grants, carefully vetted corporate partners, and public donations contributing to
186 the refurbishment of existing weight rooms and gymnasiums. Schools in close proximity to
187 residents were chosen as exercise sites and made affordable for families, helping to eliminate
188 common barriers to sustained exercise involvement. Recently, sites have included shared usage
189 in churches, parks, and have been integral to the creation of other recreational facilities. These
190 facilities, sponsored by local organizations and staffed in part by university students, promote
191 exercise and teach skills related to healthy eating, personal finance and sustainability.

192 With the revitalization of the downtown area underway, the foundation of an
193 infrastructure for physical activity that can contribute to an enhanced quality of life for residents
194 in Indianapolis is in place. This description of the PARCS program, the context of why it was
195 created, and where it takes place outside of the walls of academia, underscores why kinesiology
196 professions must consider public pedagogy as we move toward the future. Lawson’s (2015) call
197 for action-oriented and outcomes-focused kinesiology that is interdisciplinary and beneficial for
198 historically marginalized populations and sub-groups who lack voice and agency is timely. It is a
199 rationale that implores us to think intentionally and act strategically to incorporate social justice
200 in our future work.

201 Further, program designs that go beyond mere task oriented civic engagement and service
202 learning projects, present a grand opportunity for *service action*. Service action should engage
203 future professionals in transformative outcomes. It should be on-going and build on the previous
204 work from others. Further, service action engages the community in the creation of a sustainable
205 infrastructure where health enhancing practices can be realized. I am of the opinion that service
206 action provides an avenue whereby the kinesiology profession can demonstrate social justice
207 infused stewardship and leave a memorable legacy for future generations.

208 **Creating spaces for social justice and diversity**

209 In 2008, Alison Richard, the first female Vice-chancellor of the University of Cambridge,
210 made remarks regarding higher education’s role in promoting social justice and mobility. In
211 responding to comments by government representatives who in her words were “meddling” by
212 advocating for more elite institutions to take more state school pupils, Richard noted:

213 “Universities exist to educate and lead research, not to be ‘engines’ for promoting
214 social justice”... We try to reach out to the best students, whatever their

215 background"... promoting social mobility is not our core mission. Our core mission
216 is to provide an outstanding education within a research setting ... family poverty,
217 misplaced ideas about 'not fitting' in and poor advice from schools should not be
218 barriers to applying for top universities ... the quality of what we provide and our
219 capacity to attract talent are both at risk". (Harris, 2008).

220 Richards' comments were immediately countered by Secretary of State for Innovation,
221 Universities and Skills, John Denham. In his rebuttal, Denham challenged institutions of higher
222 learning to play a greater role in the promotion of an equitable society:

223 "Education is the most powerful tool we have in achieving social justice. From that
224 recognition, the responsibility arises – not to lower standards – but to seek out,
225 support and nurture talent, wherever it exists. 'It must allow the most talented and
226 hard-working of our young people to achieve their full potential, irrespective of what
227 kind of social background they came from, or the school they went to. This does not
228 mean imposing admissions policies on universities. But it does mean universities
229 recognising their full responsibilities in helping to seek out and develop the best of
230 talents, wherever they are in our society". (Harris, 2008).

231 This exchange between Richards' and Denham further illuminates the conflict that I
232 believe is detrimental to the long term success of institutions of higher learning: leadership
233 that is focused on product generation and upholding prestige, instead of including more
234 altruistic strategies to help marginalized and disadvantaged groups have access to the same
235 type of education.

236 In this particular case, the issue of note pertains to social class in the United
237 Kingdom. But thoughts on the dismissal of justice and equity as necessary components for

238 institutions of higher learning has persisted for decades in the United States. Largely, these
239 ideas have, influenced by anti-democratic positions (e.g. Dinesh D’Souza, William
240 Bennett) and suspicious agendas which imply that non-Whites have predisposed
241 intellectual deficiencies and are culturally deprived (e.g. The Bell Curve).

242 Even those who are appointed to interpret the law have been seduced by
243 opportunities to question the need for equity and diversity in higher education. In late
244 2015, Chief Justice John Roberts in deliberation during *Fisher v. Texas*, a case involving
245 affirmative action, questioned the significance of minority student perspectives in a
246 physics class. Roberts’ perception of the sciences as subjects that are unambiguous in
247 nature and not influenced by diversity led to a host of comments defending the need for
248 minorities in science. One of the more notable ones came from Philip Phillips, a well-
249 regarded African American professor of physics:

250 “The most important thing in physics is ideas. Ideas come from people having
251 different perspectives. Lots of people who come into physics can solve problems in a
252 textbook. They want research to be cut-and-dried. Those who want ordinary don’t
253 last long. Those who do original thinking have done so in other aspects of their lives.
254 They already were confronted with differences early in life rather than floating
255 through it.” (Garcia, 2015).

256 The comments made by Richards and Roberts are troubling for two reasons. First,
257 their observations reflect a narrow worldview devoid of possibilities. Second (and in my
258 opinion worse), these comments demonstrate how those who make decisions, or “the
259 powerbrokers”, can frame thinking that sets a tone for how social justice and diversity
260 initiatives are perceived by the public and in educational institutions. Undoubtedly, race

261 and class are not the only areas where justice is needed, but the examples above provide
262 context for the next section.

263 **Modeling and socialization for social action**

264 Future efforts in kinesiology must acknowledge the role of modeling and
265 socialization as a means of recruiting faculty who could provide insight on issues of
266 justice. This task has enormous ramifications for underrepresented groups. While
267 individuals choose graduate studies for various reasons (i.e. career advancement, desire to
268 learn, financial mobility), recent evidence suggests that underrepresented groups enroll in
269 advanced study as a means to solve problems and contribute back to society.

270 Still, as Hodge, Brooks, and Harrison Jr (2013) note, initial perceptions of climate
271 matter. Educational researchers have investigated university departments since the 1980's,
272 repeatedly identifying factors such as the campus environment, institutional type, and
273 organizational characteristics as essential pieces that affect outcomes for students
274 considering graduate education. What is often not discussed is the importance of faculty
275 mentors who are committed to help solve inequities. This aspect is an underrated reason
276 that may influence underrepresented groups' admission into higher education (DiGiacinto,
277 2014).

278 Three professors influenced my entry into the professoriate. One woman of color,
279 who recruited me to graduate studies and later became my primary mentor, was overt in
280 teaching the promotion of justice, gender equity, and the importance of multiculturalism in
281 schools. Another, a white male, was less overt, but equally effective infused examples of
282 coaches engaged in equitable practices as a springboard to discussing justice and ethics.
283 The last professor, an African American male, was influential towards the end of my

284 doctoral preparation, providing me the opportunity to teach a class on Sport in the Black
285 Culture. Each of these individuals played a significant role in helping me to envision and
286 refine my areas of scholarship related to social justice and diversity.

287 The aforementioned narrative highlights the importance of positive relationship
288 building between graduate students and faculty as crucial elements of the socialization
289 process. Particularly for students of color and underrepresented groups, the interactions
290 that occur with faculty advisors and mentors are vital for two reasons: 1) they help reframe
291 negative institutional messages that undermine success and 2) they create dialogues where
292 opinions, ideas, and perspectives are shared that contribute to the creation of climates for
293 equity and justice.

294 To the latter point, critical discourse and problem solving on issues of justice and
295 difference will need to be part of activities that we continue into the future. I am of the
296 mind that kinesiology programs could work to improve these efforts through intergroup
297 dialogue, a practice that fosters learning and building mutual understanding among people
298 from different backgrounds (Zúñiga, 2007). These dialogues are structured and facilitated
299 so that participants can examine groups' histories and conflicts, while strategizing ways to
300 strengthen individual and collective capacities for social action.

301 When used in conjunction with peer relationships fostered early in a graduate
302 program, intergroup dialogue has the potential to be a powerful tool that could aid in
303 promoting interdisciplinary collaborations that I feel are necessary to the sustainment of
304 kinesiology over the next few decades. The final section of this article will outline how
305 social justice can be configured in kinesiology departments and discuss possibilities for the
306 future.

Centering social justice in the kinesiology sciences

In his 2014 Dudley A. Sargent Lecture, Samuel Hodge stated that kinesiology is in need of an ideological repositioning that is equity-oriented and inclusive. According to Hodge, the historical, narrow view of thinking of people based solely on race-based categories, should be replaced with a more comprehensive analysis of “the human condition, character, context, and circumstances” (p.173). In contrasting the integration model with the social model, Hodge stressed the importance of inclusion over mere integration so that all can benefit in social institutions:

The philosophy of inclusion is that of valuing diversity and creating equity of opportunities for all. In other words, the philosophy and moral slant of inclusion is that we are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers. The notion, as stated in the U.S. Declaration of Independence, that “all men are created equal” is a fallacy. Equality as viewed under the integration model calls for sameness. This is an unrealistic and for many Americans, undesirable goal. More appropriately, and more realistically, inclusion advocates equity of opportunities. (p. 173).

Hodge’s transformative statement provides a template for conceptualizing social justice in kinesiology. The prescriptions to follow do not focus on arguments about whether change occurs at the macro (structural) level or the micro (individual) level. Rather, they imply that emancipatory social change requires dialogue and action between each of these levels (McArthur, 2010).

Neoliberalism and the threat to inclusion

If we commit our kinesiology programs to a social justice focus, then we must acknowledge Neoliberalism as a threat to inclusive approaches. Preston and Aslett (2014)

330 along with Giroux (2010) mention that the university's place as a public institution,
331 committed to the creation and recreation of knowledge for the public good, is being lost
332 due to the current standardized and entrepreneurial approach to education. The effect on
333 departments of kinesiology can be seen in large class sizes, standardized testing, increased
334 pre-certification requirements for graduation, the lack of resources, and reductions of
335 faculty lines.

336 The uncritical acceptance of market values as fundamental to social progress,
337 promotes managerialism, and economic rationality as best practices for any organizational
338 setting (Preston & Aslett, 2014). This model threatens the autonomy and creativity of
339 faculty and has little room for transformative or critical endeavors. As a result, students are
340 now seen as 'entrepreneurial learners' instead of critical thinkers who have potential
341 contributions to the public that may go unrealized (Beckman, Copper, & Hill, 2009).

342 My personal experiences, observations, and conversations with various faculty over
343 the past decade would lend additional credence to the existing state of university
344 kinesiology departments. Faculty meetings and retreats that used to center on philosophy
345 of teaching and research have now been dominated by discussions of student retention,
346 budgets, and capital improvement projects. The strategic management book of the month,
347 may well be the new icon of the Neoliberal approach to university planning. For those who
348 wish to engage in a social justice focus, this reality must be understood, but it should not
349 limit possibilities.

350 **Future directions for practice, research and training**

351 **Implications for Practice**

352 Including social justice as part of the future in kinesiology should involve stronger
353 collaborations with those who are involved in multiple areas with the promotion of equity.
354 For example, initial collaborative partnerships might be created among groups that protect
355 individual rights and liberties, which could be found at the local, state, national and
356 international level. Partnerships could also those involve those in social work, psychology,
357 mental health, public health, along with school and family counseling. Effecting systematic
358 change involves the efforts of many and is multi-faceted across race, age, gender, sexual
359 orientation, disability, religion, and socioeconomic status. To this end, we must use the
360 expertise of community advocates, government, attorneys, educators and health care
361 professionals.

362 Social justice work requires that we are removed from the ivory tower and engaged
363 with the spirit of people and the struggles that they may face. When food and exercise
364 deserts exist in the neighborhood next to us, it is a problem. When community
365 development projects demolish recreational facilities and remove historical references to
366 the senior populations that live in them, it is a problem. When established sports franchises
367 leave cities and damage the economics and psyche of local communities and stakeholders,
368 it is a problem. When universities cannot implement research and innovative strategies that
369 contributes to a higher quality of life for people, it is a problem.

370 The PARCS program discussed earlier is one example of a project that took time to
371 envision. It involved multiple stakeholders and has been lauded by the American College
372 for Sports Medicine (ACSM) as a model university and community based partnership in
373 kinesiology. Alliances such as these enhance the strengths and competencies of families,
374 communities, organizations and the larger society (Yates & Masten, 2004). If constructed

375 responsibly, initiatives between these entities and kinesiology departments have the
376 potential to be mutually beneficial. Essentially, kinesiology departments should connect
377 and provide a service to the community, and these services should extend to health care
378 systems, educational systems, businesses, and non-profit organizations (Lowrie &
379 Robinson, 2013).

380 **Implications for Research**

381 For years, research has reflected a positivist world view that sees science as a
382 disconnected entity from life, and the researcher as an objective person in a world of
383 isolated objects. Mind and reality are divided, while knowledge is not connected to power
384 (Hawkins, 2014). However, Reason and Bradbury (2006) argue that positivist approaches
385 to research have outlived its usefulness, imploring that the current defining world view is
386 participatory and consists of relationships that are “systemic, holistic, relational, feminine
387 and experiential”.(p.5).

388 If kinesiology research is to be transformative, I believe it must work to further
389 examine movement (and barriers to movement) as an issue of justice. This attention to
390 *physical justice*, as I term it here encompasses an understanding that the fundamental right
391 for an individual to move is threatened by a host of intentional environmental, political,
392 and social actions. Physical justice recognizes the impact of *biopower* (Foucault, 1976).
393 Biopower focuses on the practices of modern nation states and their regulation of their
394 subjects through "an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the
395 subjugations of bodies and the control of populations”. (p.140). The next example aims to
396 provide an example for the previous definitions.

397 Due to the work of many over the past few decades, the public has finally begun to
398 consider the link between movement, self-efficacy, and learning. However, in many urban
399 schools, physical education and time for exercise has declined precipitously in part because
400 of an overemphasis on testing and the lack of facilities. If it is postulated that exercise
401 increases learning and thus cognition and leads to more academic options for students via
402 increases in test scores because of exercise, then why is exercise being withheld from these
403 students? Who is making these decisions? Are these schools demographically different
404 than others? Why are students not empowered to have more avenues available to them that
405 may positively impact their future mobility in society?

406 I took the risk of providing that example and the resulting questions with the
407 intention of spurring thinking about issues that may currently exist. Urban schools
408 provided the subject matter here, but there are other populations that need our expertise.
409 Senior citizens are the fastest growing population in the world and the majority have
410 intentions on being functionally able for the rest of their lives. Girls, in some areas of the
411 world are in environments where culture and justice converge to have their physical bodies
412 attacked while their mental fortitude is broken as they are treated as property (e.g. female
413 genital mutilation).

414 The application of this research lends itself to qualitative and quantitative
415 approaches. Social constructivist research paradigms that are qualitative in nature, can gain
416 insight into the experience of participants to discover new theories or perspectives. Critical
417 research paradigms that could be quantitative or qualitative, could evaluate specific
418 interventions to gain data necessary to refine programs and report outcomes to decision
419 makers. Irrespective of approach, existing kinesiology programs would be well served to

420 have faculty with multiple expertise who appreciate the value in each method. Lowrie and
421 Robinson (2013) implore kinesiology departments “to be prepared to address research
422 questions that align with the health and performance needs of our society along with
423 working with diverse and inclusive populations (p.178).

424 **Implications for Training**

425 In 2013, *Kinesiology Review* in a Special Theme on Diversity in Kinesiology,
426 engaged multiple scholars in suggesting ways by which programs can be shaped for the
427 future. Kinesiology departments in the future must continue to recruit members from
428 underrepresented groups so that ideas on how to solve inequities can be considered from
429 multiple perspectives. Intentional efforts towards a culture of inclusion and full
430 participation provide a means to transform existing practices and to create policies that
431 cultivate sustainable and successful practices (Lowrie & Robinson, 2013).

432 As universities are reorganizing departments, it could be appropriate at this
433 juncture to consider current program offerings and determine if they should be added,
434 modified or expanded with another discipline. For departments that are inclined to consider
435 a larger social justice focus, examples of possible courses include organization and systems
436 change, social advocacy, public health intervention, program evaluation, policy, and
437 community development (Hage & Kenny, 2009). Along with literature that is field
438 specific, students need to be presented with knowledge about power disparities within and
439 across marginalized groups and how the distribution of power can be altered (Kenny &
440 Hage, 2009).

441 This understanding of power disparities and group marginalization must be
442 structured so that the culture of graduate school classrooms are more integrative in thought

443 (Rabow et. al. 1999). Faculty have a role in this. To paraphrase Osei-Kofi, Shahjahan and
444 Patton (2010) academics must have the foresight to introduce new paradigms of thought
445 from areas such as women’s studies, ethnic studies, media studies, economics, statistics,
446 and political science.

447 Students in social justice preparation are challenged with others to exploring their
448 own and others’ racial and cultural stereotypes, biases and areas of privilege. When led by
449 faculty who respect this approach, students learn to critically analyze inequality that they
450 witness while taking into account their own experiences. This “conscientization” and
451 dialogue between student and teacher emphasizes reflection and action upon the world to
452 transform it and is relevant irrespective of the subject being studied (Freire, 1993). As
453 Block (2016) mentions, society needs university graduates who can organize thoughts
454 skillfully through writing and fact identification, so that they can make compelling
455 arguments in a civil fashion.

456 Lowrie and Robinson (2013) reminds us that there are additional steps to take in
457 training. Inclusiveness is not merely introducing or increasing enrollment and staff
458 demographic representation, concepts of inclusion, or expanding curriculum to be diversity
459 inclusive. It requires institutions “to change their thinking and the thought processes, the
460 talk *and* the construction of the lexicon; the walk *and* the practice of ambulation or the
461 alternative for movement and action; the policies *and* the policies that shape governance;
462 the governance that both addresses the issues and includes the voices of others” (p..178).

463 For institutions and our programs to change, we must develop “liberatory
464 consciousness”. To paraphrase Barbara Love (2013), many members of society who
465 benefit from oppression as well as those who are placed at a disadvantage want to work for

466 social change and justice. Yet they continue to participate in actions that preserve existing
467 systems of inequity. This occurs because humans are socialized with habits and ways of
468 thinking that cause resistance to change. In Love's view, a liberatory consciousness
469 enables individuals to develop agency in exploring their values, attitudes, and responses to
470 situations they face. In incorporating a justice mindset in kinesiology, I feel that attention
471 to this concept and its development has value.

472 **Conclusion**

473 To end, it is acknowledged that there are sure to be critics of the social justice focus
474 I feel kinesiology should engage in. For some, the concept remains a "buzz word", the
475 political risk is too great, the scope of the work is too broad, and how it will be assessed
476 and rewarded for career advancement is unclear. But as I remind us, paradigm shifts in any
477 discipline carry with it many unknowns and kinesiology historically has been able to adjust
478 to the changing times.

479 Irrespective of what path we choose, diversity and social justice issues will
480 continue to matter, because they proliferate and reflect an imperfect society. As much as
481 we might want to "wish" issues of inequity and justice away, there is no progress that can
482 be made without vigilance. Higher education is one of the few public spheres where
483 knowledge, values, and learning can be incorporated to assist the public in meaningful and
484 transformative ways. Therefore, involving approaches from kinesiology to solve inequities
485 in our society is not only a noble effort, but a necessary one that we have capacity for.

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