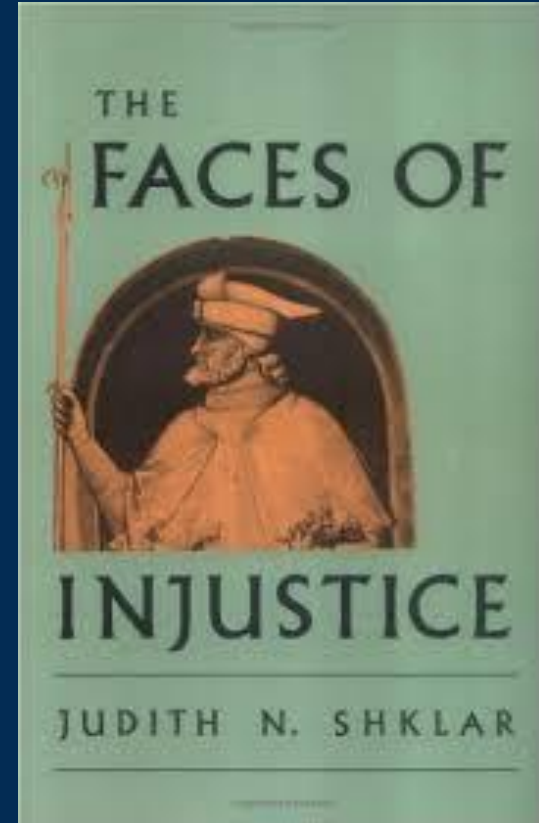




Towards a radical victimology: a brief genealogy of victim policy in the Netherlands

Antony Pemberton

A radical in disguise



How is injustice normally seen?

Injustice is a lack of justice

Injustice is one pole of a dimension with justice

Justice is the countervailing force against injustice

Undoing injustice and doing justice are inseparable

Justice as counterforce against injustice is
unquestionably the right thing to do

Shklar on injustice

Injustice is emotional, embodied.

Injustice is particular, idiosyncratic, rooted in a particular context

Coming to terms with injustice involves sense-making, and this occurs in narrative

The experience of injustice is intimately connected to our identity

Our continuity over time and with our wider social context

Experiencing injustice in victimisation presents a *narrative rupture* in our life stories

Shklar on injustice (cont.)

Reaction to injustice similarly storied and idiosyncratic

The reaction is part of the victimisation narrative

Involves *radical* choices

Where our principles end, our values collide,
possibility of changing the situation

The importance of imagination, creativity,
surprise, context-dependence

See the phenomenon of revenge, but also of
forgiveness

Injustice and justice

Justice emphasizes universality, rationality, rules, abstraction, adherence to transcendental values of truth and reason

Focus on 'well-oiled' social functioning

Doing justice is not the same as undoing injustice

Two dimensions, often overlapping, sometimes conflicting

Injustice came first: justice is built as a reaction to the desire to undo injustice, but also as a means to contain it

The political nature of injustice

The experience of injustice is not only radical at the personal level

But at the political as well:

Those who believe themselves to be at the receiving end of social evils have a distinctive perspective and a detailed or thick view of social evils that political theories ignore at their peril

A radical victimology

But the importance of the particular, the idiosyncratic, the narrative, the subjective, the context-dependent, the importance of radical choices at personal and political level

Speaks against a social science that is solely focused on abstraction, generalization, rules, objectivity

Nobody is raped, beaten, oppressed, or murdered in abstract: the essence of experiencing this first-hand lies in the impossibility of escaping into abstraction.

Victim policy in the Netherlands

Shorn of radical potential, but...

1. *Victim policy as response to an amoral practical/health issue*

Supported by epistemic social science, without moral or radical challenges

2. *Victim policy as a morality policy*

Overtly moral, victimology in the key of the 'criminology of the other'

Not too visible in policy yet, but beware of the underlying social forces

But what then?

3. Victim policy *as phronesis*

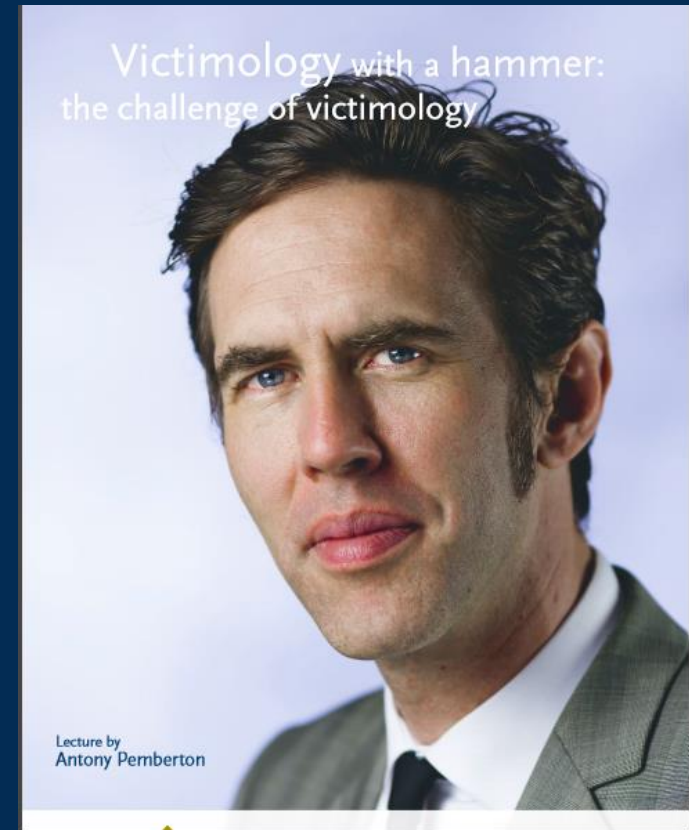
Instead of epistemic social science, the concept of *practical wisdom* in political and social judgements,

Including an explicit consideration of the moral questions involved, and the role of power.

Thank you for your attention

Want more?

https://pure.uvt.nl/portal/files/9026843/150760_oratie_Pemberton_def.pdf



Thank you for your attention

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