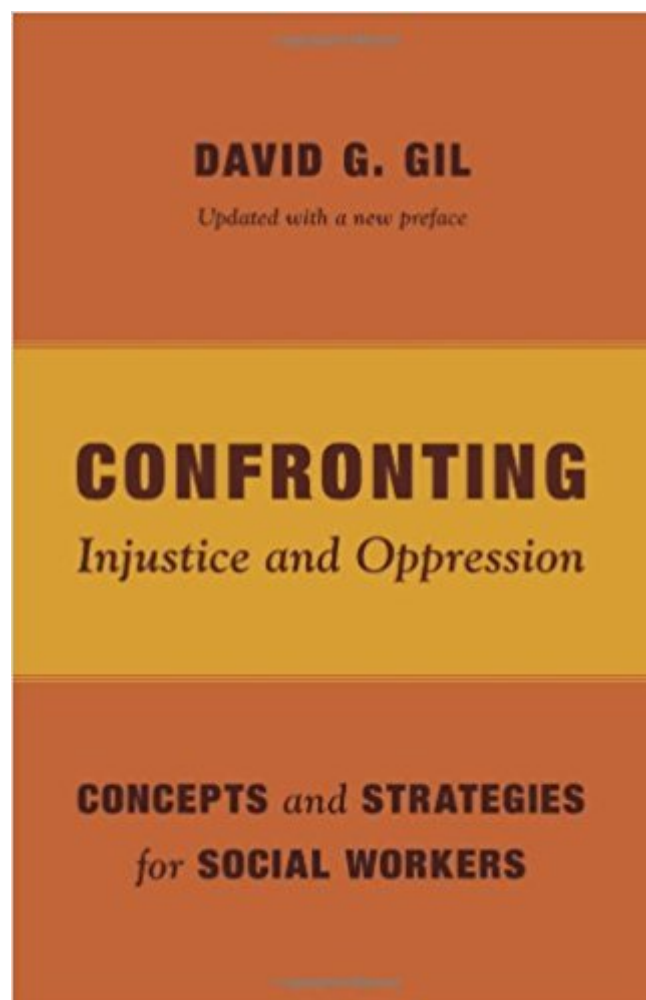




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# Confronting Injustice And Oppression: Concepts And Strategies For Social Workers (Foundations Of Social Work Knowledge Series)





## Synopsis

More urgent than ever, David G. Gil's guiding text gives social workers the knowledge and confidence they need to change unjust realities. Clarifying the meaning, sources, and dynamics of injustice, exploitation, and oppression and certifying the place of the social worker in combating these conditions, Gil promotes social-change strategies rooted in the nonviolent philosophies of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr.. He shares suggestions for transition policies intended to alleviate poverty, unemployment, and discrimination and examines modes of radical social work practice compatible with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and President Roosevelt's proposed "Economic Bill of Rights." For this updated edition, Gil considers the factors driving two crucial developments since his volume's initial publication: the Middle East's Arab Spring and the U.S. Occupy Wall Street movement.

## Book Information

Series: Foundations of Social Work Knowledge Series

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: Columbia University Press; Updated with a new preface edition (July 16, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0231163991

ISBN-13: 978-0231163996

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 0.6 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #136,485 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #29 in [Books > Business & Money > Job Hunting & Careers > Volunteer Work](#) #120 in [Books > Law > Constitutional Law > Human Rights](#) #187 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Public Affairs & Policy > Social Policy](#)

## Customer Reviews

An excellent theoretical framework for implementing policies and strategies to overcome the degrading conditions of injustice and oppression. -- Brian Henrie, Arizona State University --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Gil sounds the call to embrace the core values of radical social work: equality, liberty, cooperation, and affirmation of community in pursuit of individual and social development. --This text refers to an

alternate Paperback edition.

Straightforward, thoughtful, challenging, and cautionary. This book confirms the need for equality in education and the entire social fabric of American life. A must-read for educators, policy makers, social services providers, and persons involved in improving the lives of ordinary people.

Thought this book was passionate and well written. (Pretty to the left though)

David Gil writes beautifully on oppression in American society in a slim volume that should make a nice contribution to an academic course on oppression or simply for individuals who want to ponder American society and the kind of victim-blaming that seems ingrained in our Puritan heritage.

my friends and family loved them. I am pleased with the purchase while got a bargain I don't know what the words to evaluate the product, everything is so perfect. Just worth every penny, buy it! You Excellent product. FAST Shipping! Awesome! I wish I had another one. Excellent super duty case

Gil, working within the worldview of Paulo Freire (see *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*), presents theories, policies, and practices for social workers who wish to change more than the immediate ills affecting their clients. Social workers who wish to make an impact on the root causes of social disadvantages, termed "radical social workers" by Gil, are encouraged to embrace foundational assumptions that are, at a minimum, highly debatable. For example, Gil postulates that human societies that existed prior to settlement into agricultural communities were egalitarian, cooperative, and harmonious. These hypothetical cultures are presented as free of domination, individualistic competition, and disregard for the dignity of others. Gil continues describing this "return to the native" utopia as one in which all work was voluntary and inherently self-motivated. The produce associated with community effort was apparently distributed equally in accordance to need. Frankly, Gil's "historical" analysis is not convincing. The human proclivity to dominance and competitive interaction is most likely genetically innate since it is evidenced in our closest evolutionary cousins, the other Great Apes. In fact, the ascendancy of *Homo Sapiens* over *Neanderthal* may be best explained by the former's greater aggressiveness. Another foundational thought that appears throughout Gil's work is the assumption that capitalism is inherently flawed. The surplus that results from the infusion of capital into the mechanisms of production becomes, in Gil's analysis, the root cause of social stratification and oppressive social structures. While Gil stops short of condemning

private ownership of property, the reader cannot be faulted for considering this a logical conclusion consistent with his overarching premise. It is hard to imagine how anyone can condemn capitalism since the fall of the Berlin wall. Since that time, every country previously denouncing private ownership and free markets has modified their position. China has embraced capitalism since re-acquiring Hong Kong and found significant growth of a new middle class even in provincial regions. Eastern Europe has forsaken communism, and there are free farmers' markets in Moscow. Castro's Cuba may be the single anti-capitalist nation left, and one cannot help wondering how much Castro's survival depends on the ready emigration of social dissidents to the United States. Is there anything of value in this book? Surprisingly, there is much to commend it. Gil correctly emphasizes the structural obstacles to the elimination of poverty and oppression. He is probably correct in stressing employment-related issues as the most crucial element of structural problems. He warns social workers that helping can become nothing more than another act of oppression. He challenges social workers to confront the structural causes impeding the progress of their clients. He advocates (along with Friere above and Charles Taylor in *The Ethics of Authenticity*) a commitment to dialogical processes to raise critical awareness, and he advises social workers on how to build a support system strong enough to withstand the opposition change advocates will inevitably encounter. I can recommend this book as an exercise in critical analysis, as an introduction to a left-wing social work perspective, and as a challenge to agency-centered social work agendas. I cannot recommend this book as a pragmatic guide to revise contemporary social work policy or practice.

I had to read the book for my Social Justice class. The book is extremely well written. The writing style is basically difficult to read and understand. The material is excellent, but it is written at too high of a level for normal people. I think there are other social work texts that are easier to read and understand. If you are very academically inclined, it is fine. For most of us normal people, I would say it is a bit too much to read. I would go to the library and read before class and was sure to put me to sleep. The academic material is excellent though and offers a challenge to understand it.

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