A world without stereotypes, prejudgments, and dishonoring ethical values would mean a world without injustice. But that is the world we live in and social injustice could include any social problem, you name it. Can we ever come to a compromise or will we forever continue to butt heads? With that being said, I have come to gain a fraction of understanding of three distinct social justice issues that presently the word suffers from. Stem cell research has always been a topic of interest because I want to go into medicine someday and if it becomes legal in the United States to conduct procedures using stem cells, imagine all the possibilities of innovations that can present themselves to benefit healthcare. Mental illness is not a joke in our country, countless numbers of people suffer from it and those who don’t may fail to see the severity of it sometimes. Mental illness also requires healthcare and research that may one day come to light in order to change the lives of those who suffer from it. Lastly, identity theft seems to be the leading social justice issue as it seems to be getting out of hand. Where does it stem from? How afraid should we be about people accessing our personal information? All the questions I ask myself and more.

Swift advances in all forms of stem cell research have raised the hopes of patients that they may one day receive new stem cell-based treatments to relieve their disabilities or even cure them of their disease. The path to extensive medical interpretation of stem cells is likely to be long and tense with challenges. In the age of global science, questions arise regarding ethical legal and social issues in stem cell research and therapy. Stem cell research is a significant attribute to biomedical research with the potential to offer options for devastating diseases and injury but also proving to be something of a political, ethical, social and legal problem; creating challenges for the medical field. Because stem cells are cells that have the potential both for self-renewal and to differentiate into specialized cell types, “stem cell researchers hope that it might be possible to use stem cells, or specialized cell types differentiated from them, to repair organs and tissues damaged by injury or by the deteriorating or autoimmune diseases including Parkinson’s disease, multiple sclerosis and type 1 diabetes” (5). From all the research gathered, it is evident that stem cells are valuable to the world and may pose as ultimately, one of, if not the only greatest use of technology in this day in age. But the question now becomes, how much of stem cell research can be utilized before ethical problems arise? We may never know however, countries outside of the United States have made strides towards putting stem cell procedures to the test.

Sources derived from this particular topic seek to draw attention to some of the challenges posed by conflicting moral values in an era of global scientific effort as well as providing primary ethical and regulatory effects to stem cell research. The moral status of an embryo comes into question and the concept of personhood draw the line of opposing the practice of stem cell research. This begins the social justice issue before delving into deeper rooted issues involved. Nonetheless, stem cell research offers therapies for some of the worst diseases suffered by humans which is great; it may even increase the longevity of human life. If and when stem cell therapies become a reality, there is more issues to be faced in the future that must be taken care of in order to have successful outcomes.

People suffering from mental illness and other mental health problems are among the most stigmatized, discriminated against, disregarded, disadvantaged and defenseless members of society. Associating a particular circumstance, quality, or person with the title of disgrace or shame is rendering a stigma. In 2015 it is still apparent that a great deal more needs to be done to improve the moral standing of and to achieve social justice for the mentally ill. People looking from the outside in can’t help but cling some mental illness as a stigma and something needs to be done about it. Those who seek to differentiate the mental illness stigma as a problem of public health or social justice, make it apparent that “framing mental illness stigma as a social justice issue reminds us that people with mental illness are just that --- people” (363). My honest opinion is that unless the stigma attached to people with mental illness is reversed their rights will continue to be violated, invalidated, and ignored thus, making this a social justice issue.  This should bring awareness to people that there should be no stigma attached to those who suffer from mental illness.

The social injustice of branding mental illness puts a damper on the lives of those who are affected by it. It brings disadvantages to those who suffer from mental illness in that people who are prejudice towards those that are mentally ill may cause inability to get a job or suitable housing to basically live a normal life that they yearn for. Their self-esteem may also be deteriorated because the question of self-efficacy plays a role in the stigma. “One study found that disease explanations for mental illness reduced blame but also provoked harsher behavior toward an individual with mental illness” in that societies acknowledge presumptions about mental illness are more likely to negatively judge people suffering from the mental illness (Mehta & Farina 1997). It can be said that many people with serious mental illness are challenged twice as much as a normal individual in a society. First, they struggle with the symptoms and disabilities that result from the disease-causing mental illness. Secondly, they are challenged by the stereotypes and prejudice that result from misconceptions about mental illness. As a result of both challenges, the opportunities that define a quality lifestyle is taken away from them. “Studies suggest that the majority of citizens in the United States and many Western European nations have stigmatized attitudes about mental illness” where people who are prejudiced, endorse negative stereotypes towards mental illness (Corrigan & Watson 12). Common stereotypes placed upon the mentally ill include being feared and, therefore, they must be kept out of communities, they are too irresponsible to make life decisions on their own and they are childlike and need to be cared for by others. All in all, this social injustice should not be taken lightly and people should seek to be well educated when it comes to a mental illness before labeling a person.

The injustice of identity theft is seemingly increasing in the last few years in that company data has been breached making employees now victims of identity theft. “In the United States, as many as 12 million Americans are victims of identity theft per year” (1). Coming across information regarding to identity theft led me to articles pertaining to taking the right steps towards not becoming a victim of this crime. I, however have never experienced identity so I have no idea how must it feel. But my mother can tell from experience as someone was able to access her credit card information and did not hesitate to max out the money she thought was safe in her bank account.

Researching this topic led me to believe that identity theft is more of a crime and not so much of a social justice issue therefore, I will not pursue the matter any further. What I’ve taken out of learning about it is common ways in which people do this malicious act, what to do if you so happen to become a victim or identity theft or identity fraud, and not giving people what they want---your personal information.

Every injustice our society encounters crosses the line between what is known as right and what is wrong. With the exception of stem cell research, identity theft and identity fraud and mental illness with a stigma attached to it only can be seen as being on the wrong side of the spectrum of society. Therefore, I will gather further research on expanding on stem cell research. Yes, it is wrong for ethical purposes but it brings good to the world. The problem is utilizing it to benefit the health of those in need and not exploiting it for personal gain. Because stem cell research is such a wide-ranging topic that delves into question of other issues such as religion, I plan to focus on one aspect of stem cell research as a social justice issue. If need be, I can always include another factor.

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