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# Determinism and the Antiquated Deontology of the Social Sciences

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## Abstract

This article shows how the social sciences, particularly human geography, rejected hard determinism by the mid-twentieth century largely on the deontological basis that it is irreconcilable with social justice, yet this rejection came just before a burst of creative development in consequentialist theories of social justice that problematize a facile rejection of determinism on moral grounds, a development that has seldom been recognized in the social sciences. Thus many current social science and human geography views on determinism and social justice are antiquated, ignoring numerous common and well-respected arguments within philosophy that hard determinism can be reconciled with a just society. We support this argument by briefly tracing the parallel development of stances on determinism in the social sciences and the deontological-consequentialist debate in philosophy. The purpose of the article is to resituate social science and human geography debates on determinism and social justice within a modern ethical framework.

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