THE MEANING OF FAIRNESS - EMORY - PHILLIPPE ROCHAT = 10/18/12

STAFF: "ONLY NON-ACADEMIC" > 31 YEARS, NOBEL, 26 BOOKS, NO TENURE - FAIR?

MISS JULIA QUOTE = AN UNCHANGING PRINCIPLE IS FAIRNESS

EFFORT TO INSURE FAIRNESS IN U.S. BEGAN WITH DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE (1776), BILL OF RIGHTS (1791), & UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (1949)


CHILDREN: "THAT'S NOT FAIR!" EVEN OTHER PRIMATES CAN DISCERN

AMOS CONDEMned ISRAEL FOR INEQUITY BETWEEN WEAK & POWERFUL

EARLIER, IN LEVITICUS 19:15 = SUBLTETY = "DO NOT PERVERT JUSTICE BY SHOWING PARTIALITY TO THE POOR OR FAVORITISM TO THE GREAT, BUT JUDGE YOUR NEIGHBOR FAIRLY"

JESUS DEFINED "NEIGHBOR" BY THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN, BUT AMBIGUITY OF FAIRNESS IN WORKERS HIRED AT DIFFERENT TIMES

HISTORICAL DEFINITIONS VARY WIDELY, CHOICE BETWEEN EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY & EQUALITY OF OUTCOME = BUT A GENERAL CONSENSUS: A MINIMUM REQUIREMENT IS EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY =

GOOGLE RE ME & FAIR: AS PRESIDENT RE MEDICAID: "MANY THINGS IN LIFE ARE NOT FAIR, BUT GOVERNMENTS CAN'T MAKE OPPORTUNITIES EXACTLY EQUAL, ESPECIALLY WHEN A MORAL FACTOR IS INVOLVED."

ELECTED OFFICIALS & SUPREME COURT JUSTICES SHAPE LAWS, BUT USUALLY BY COMPROMISING CONFLICTING INTERESTS

I COULD DECIDE UNILATERALLY BETWEEN TAIWAN & CHINA

COMPROMISE NEEDED:: EGYPT V.ISRAEL, RHODESIA APARTHEID

DECISIONS TRANSIENT: WE RAISED THE MINIMUM WAGE, TIED IT TO THE INFLATION RATE, BUT THIS WAS LATER REPEALED BY REAGAN

"TALKING PEACE" PRINCIPLES = FAIRNESS IS CRUCIAL IN PRIVATE & PUBLIC LIFE; A CHALLENGE TO ALL OF US TO DEFINE AND PROMOTE IT

HUMAN NATURE TO EXALT OURSELVES > BLACKS, WOMEN, GAYS, HISPANICS EASY FOR POWERFUL TO RATIONALIZE, JUSTIFY DISCRIMINATION
IN DEMOCRACIES, BASIC TEST IS RIGHT TO VOTE = GEORGIA V. U.S. = DEMOCRATS & REPUBLICANS OPPOSE REGISTRATION = CHINA VILLAGES

2000 SPEECHES, "MOST SERIOUS CHALLENGE" = GROWING DISPARITY BETWEEN RICH & POOR
SOME STATISTICS, UNDER BOTH PARTIES: IN U.S. SINCE 1980: % INCOME TO TOP 1% DOUBLED = TO TOP .01% QUINTUPLED

TOP INCOME TAX RATE CUT IN 1/2, LOOPHOLES, LOW CAPITAL GAINS TAX

PORTION OF FEDERAL SOCIAL SPENDING TO THE POOREST 20% HAS DROPPED BY 35% = NOW MORE TO THE TOP 5TH THAN THE BOTTOM 5TH, = MORTGAGE DEDUCTIONS/PENSIONS/MEDICARE TO RICH OLDER PEOPLE

4X AS MUCH ON SUBSIDIZING HOUSING FOR THE RICHEST 20% THAN FOR THE POOREST 20%

INCOME INEQUALITY -> OPPORTUNITY INEQUALITY = NOW U.S. IS ONE OF HIGHEST IN "INEQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY" = U.S. SOCIAL MOBILITY (IMPROVING ECONOMIC STATUS) IS LOWER THAN IN EUROPE

AMERICA IS ONE OF ONLY 3 OECD COUNTRIES THAT SPENDS LESS ON EDUCATION OF POOR THAN THE RICH = HS GRADUATION RATES HAVE STOPPED CLIMBING FOR 1ST TIME SINCE 1890
PROBLEM IS COST OF EDUCATION. SINCE 1980 ANNUAL TUITION IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES AS % OF FAMILY INCOME: 4% -> OVER 10%; FOR PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES, INCREASE OF 150%

2012 ELECTION, NYT COLUMNIST: "A CLASH OF FAIRNESS DOCTRINES"

BASIC POLITICAL EQUALITY IS UNDERMINED SINCE CITIZENS UNITED = THE WEALTHY NOW HAVE A GREATER OPPORTUNITY TO INFLUENCE WHO THE CANDIDATES ARE, HOW THEY ARE PRESENTED TO THE PUBLIC, AND ULTIMATELY TO SHAPE DECISION-MAKING AFTER THE ELECTIONS

BOTH POLITICAL PARTIES = YESTERDAY NYT: 93% OF MOST RECENT RECOVERY TO TOP 1%, SLOWING OVERALL ECONOMIC GROWTH

HOPE CONFERENCE RESULTS WILL BE WIDELY REPORTED, NOT JUST FOR ACADEMIC INTEREST BUT AS INCENTIVE FOR MORE FAIRNESS IN AMERICA
Are the behaviors manifested by the Capuchins responses to real or perceived unfairness? Is this, inequity aversion, to use De Waal's and Brosnan's phrase about fairness and equity or is it about envy? And perhaps, as enticingly suggested by them, is it about social control? (My language not their's.)

So let us ask of this situation the questions we asked of the earlier ones.

Clearly there appears to be procedural fairness. The monkey offered a token and got a food item. Rules were applied consistently. No one was tricked or subjected to random changes in the situation.

Normative/substantive fairness also seemed to be met. Arguably in each situation each Capuchin got what was due her. She got what she was owed. Or did she?

An intriguing question, since there was no preceding negotiation, stating that if you give me a token I will give you a piece of cucumber, yet, those Capuchins receiving cucumbers arguably had accepted what a lawyer would call a contract, there was an offer, acceptance, and consideration. (I am assuming competent parties.) The one element that may be at issue is whether there was indeed a meeting of the minds, however, one could argue that the repeated practice of the monkeys accepting cucumbers in exchange for the tokens implies such.

Arguably then that absent observation of another Capuchin receiving a grape in exchange, the one's receiving the cucumber perceived that they were getting what they were due.

This changes, however, when they perceived that another monkey was receiving a "higher" reward for the same effort. From an outsider's perspective the Capuchin's refusal to exchange the token for a cucumber, after realizing that another Capuchin was getting a
grape, is irrational. After all is not something better than nothing? And while it may have been a negotiating behavior, “Hey, maybe if I say no this time, she will give me a grape next time.” The failure of that technique may indeed have made the Capuchin walk away, to go on strike, to use the phrase of De Waal and Brosnan. Or, perhaps more precisely to refuse to accept the offered contract.

But what are we to make of the refusals to eat the cucumber slices once they are obtained? The Capuchin already made the effort, done the work. The cucumber was her due, her payment. What is rational about refusing a good one already has obtained? And why the anger? This was not merely refusals, but apparently from the various reports on this and related experiments, the monkeys who were given the cucumbers became angry and exhibited that anger in various ways.

The two areas where unfairness seems most clear are contextual and relative.

Fortune (or perhaps a random number generator) determined whether one got grapes or cucumbers.

_Dollar Bill Game_


You make an offer on how to divide $1. If the other person accepts then this is how the $1 is divided. If the offer is rejected then both get nothing.

How would you divide the $1? Strategic reasoning predicts that you will offer at most one cent to the other, since he gets nothing if he refuses. The evidence is that most offers of