

John Rawls' A Theory of Justice

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John Rawls' A Theory of Justice holds that a rational, mutually disinterested individual in the Original Position and given the task of establishing societal rules to maximise their own happiness throughout life, is liable to choose as their principles of justice a) guaranteed fundamental liberties and b) the nullification of social and economic disparities by universal equality of opportunities, which are to be of greatest benefit to the least advantaged members of society , . Rawls' system of societal creation has both strengths and weaknesses, but is ultimately sound.

One strength is the inherent compulsion to look after the interests of the entire society through the Veil of Ignorance. One is unable to look after the interests of a single particular ethnic, political or social grouping because of uncertainty regarding which groups they will belong to within society, so they grant all individuals "freedom of thought, [religion], personal and political liberties" . This establishes a precedent of equality for all and ensures a fair standard of living. One might argue that behind the Veil of Ignorance, society will be able to develop such fundamental rights and equalities naturally. Considering that modern society can be seen to have developed laws and cultural rules without the Veil of ignorance, it stands to reason that Rawls' suggested principles are unnecessary. Looking at gender inequality, German Arianism and their sharp declines

suggests that society is self-correcting – particularly if the society in question exists in the modern era where international pressure for the maintenance of fundamental liberties, equality of opportunity and support for the disadvantaged is exercised. The representative behind the Veil of Ignorance...

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...interested, so it is unreasonable in practicality to assume such altruism on their behalf.

To conclude, Rawls' strengths lie in his focus on the individual, protection of liberties, and equal opportunity which supports a healthy society. The criticisms of his theory include a question as to what is best for society as a whole, dismissal of beneficial inequalities and the potential for society to develop its own code of ethics as it has in reality. These criticisms, however, do not stand up to careful examination, and it is my opinion that [John Rawls](#)' principles are in good standing.

Works Cited

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