

Second Philosophy

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Title	Natural Justice
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INTRODUCTION

A discussion to explore how possible the idea of Natural Justice is. And if it is, in how it could be possible.

There are a few possibilities:

1) There is something in the nature of existence and/or the universe that dictates there shall be justice in the universe, speaking in terms of a Form of Justice.

This might derive from the Form of Truth, or derive from the totality of existence itself or involve a supreme being and their benevolent (or not) omnipresence dictating the nature of the universe. Thereby an unjust act would be one that contradicts or impedes this natural justice.

2) There is something in the nature of existence and/or the universe that dictates there shall be justice in the universe, non-theistically.

If it could be shown that our notion of justice is pre-contained our understanding of the universe; perhaps that all notions of justice derive from acts being in accordance with the laws of physics, so thereby we say that the unjust acts are contradictory to the nature of the universe in how the notion of justice has been derived from it.

3) There is something in the nature of the human as a rational being that dictates there shall be justice in the universe.

That there is something fundamental to rational thinking that is inalienable to just thinking. Now by that we would say that to think rationally is to also at the same time think justly; that the two are inseparable. So thereby we say that the unjust act is the irrational one.

4) There is a quality of the human being that is an innate sense of what is just and what is unjust.

If it could be shown that this sense was the same in each human we might say that as the human is hardwired to detect justice, that then has a bearing on all human behaviour, that while the human being exists, justice can exist in the universe. The unjust act would thereby be committed by a human whose sense of what is just is impaired in some way.

5) There is something in the nature of animal, indeed all of life that dictates there shall be justice in the universe.

That all notions of justice derive from the very nature of life itself. Granted, this may be a very unusual notion of justice, where the fittest are granted more than the weakest and that that would be Justice as than condition is fundamental to all life.

The unjust act would be committed on the assumption that justice as defined here was incorrect, and might even go further and attempt an alternate definition of Justice and also attempt to implement that new notion of Justice. Thereby this would be unjust where it contradicted the natural justice present and contained in all life.

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6) *Natural Justice is not possible being that the universe has no design or purpose. Therefore all notions of Justice are artificed entirely by human beings.*

This is not to say that this act of artificed Justice is to become part of the universe, but that it exists as a notion purely between groups of humans. Thereby the unjust act is one that contradicts whatever notions of Justice held by that particular group of humans.

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DISCUSSION:

A discussion to explore how possible the idea of Natural Justice is. And if it is, in how it could be possible. The plan tonight is to introduce each possibility one at a time from 1) to 6). We might take a bit longer depending on how each section goes, but I'll play that by ear to try and allow people to say as much or as little about each number in turn. Afterward, we'll have a brief circle round to find out which number each of us supports most.

Ok then, here we go...

Shingles: There are a few possibilities:

1) There is something in the nature of existence and/or the universe that dictates there shall be justice in the universe, speaking in terms of a Form of Justice. This might derive from the Form of Truth, or derive from the totality of existence itself or involve a supreme being and their benevolent (or not) omnipresence dictating the nature of the universe.

So, the floor is open onto possibility 1

Visual: there is a lot of injustice in the world so this mystical originator of justice isn't doing a great job

Simulat: That one seems pretty unlikely to me Shingles - why should it be a property of the universe what we think is good and bad?

Reaser: why should there be a justice?

Shingles: but surely if we feel there is injustice then justice also can be felt, Visual

Tor: All is for the best in the best of all possible worlds!

Visual: LOL Tor

Shingles: are you talking about the perfection of the universe, Tor?

Je4ss: Simulat - perhaps, one way of looking at that is - we are part of the universe, and so any property that affects the universe (I guess, things like, gravity) - affects everything in it. Justice could be like that

Reaser: ok

Tor: No, Leibniz et al

Wichard: Justice is an abstract human construction.

Shingles: thank you, Tor

Tor: Can we define justice?

Patrick: A book I read recently on primate social behavior pointed out that when the alpha male had repeatedly harassed one of the juveniles, that the whole group normally submissive to him, chase him a way for a while giving the juvenile a respite

Wichard: Justice involves the balancing of individual human wants and needs against the resources and affinities of the community

Simulat: Jess - but what's good and bad varies with perspective - say somebody does harm to me, and that that harm in the long run causes things to be better, and then long after that things are bad again

Shingles: but this sense of Justice we seem to possess, is it not from some Higher Nature that we are able to sense Justice and Injustice, Wichard?

Wichard: I don't see any need to bring a "higher Nature" into the discussion.

Je4ss: Simulat - yet, somehow, we do at least have a common understanding of what we mean when we use the word 'justice' - how does this come about, if not from some innate property of 'the way things are'?

Patrick: Is justice simplify the self interest of a group sold to the community

Shingles: But are there not many ways in which what I hold to be good is very similar to what you hold to be good, Simulat?

Tor: Well ethics are just customs

Shingles: But if it is, where is it instilled from? is it from a Natural Order such as an ultimate Entity, Patrick?

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Reaser: it was interesting that natural laws such as gravity were pointed out , but much justice seems to be about ownership a very human invention

Visual: why do you suggest that Shingles?

Wichard: I think our sense of justice develops as a part of our moral/ethical schemes with experience and interaction with peers and others.

Simulat: yes - I'm just trying to indicate that what happens to us has no meaning in a universal sense - so good and bad cannot have meaning in a universal sense

Visual: Why look outside of ourselves for something so human?

Shingles: It may be meaningful in our own human Universe, Sim

Patrick: My primate example would indicate that is organic a part of our DNA

Shingles: because perhaps its origins can be found externally or internally by the condition that all of us share the human condition, Visual

Je4ss: Okay, to Simulat and Wichard - possible reason to bring higher nature into the discussion is as follows. We all have some sense of 'justice', which is similar to one another's, even if we differ on the cultural specifics. One way to explain universal understanding of things like 'justice' is to that the shared understanding comes from something we all share. Just like we do not look at gravity, and argue that each person is their own instance of gravity, but rather there is a gravitational force that affects everything - we could look at justice in the same way.

Simulat: What do you mean by human universe Shingles?

Reaser: well that could be defence the chimps may think if he kills that one then will it be me next

Shingles: the universe as humans know it

Tor: Why can't justice be naturalistic? Something that has evolved to help us survive and pass on our genes etc?

Patrick: What is justice does not seem to be universally accepted

Shingles: interesting Tor, but if there were a Higher Order then this too would apply

Wichard: Each person has some understanding of gravity; it isn't universal, even if gravity can be defined within a mathematical model of the universe

Visual: I suppose it doesn't sound mysterious Tor

Simulat: OK Shingles - but it seems to me that even within human experience everything becomes pretty meaningless in the long run

Visual: Simulat?

Je4ss: Tor - good point, that seems to point to justice not being 'universal' as such, but rather, only perhaps, universal to humans.

Shingles: unless all humans are fundamentally connected of course, Simulat

Tor: Occam's razor suggests we ignore the higher entity.

Visual: we are fundamentally connected in a sense

Visual: we have a common ancestor

Shingles: but then this debate is asking possibilities. Tor :)

Simulat: And Jess - I agree that we do seem to have a common sense of justice - but it seems to me to come from the structure of our brains, not from a higher Nature

Wichard: Our experiences of gravity are built up over time and the abstract conceptualization functions for us pragmatically even if we don't do the science and mathematics, but I see moral development as different

Patrick: Even if people do not understand gravity if follows the same rules for all, can that be said of justice

Je4ss: Tor - Occam's razor is a theory which suggests we ignore any explanation that is not necessary - but perhaps some sort of universal explanation is necessary...

Shingles: I think there is a commonality in our understanding of it Patrick

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Shingles: ok, Possibility 2

There is something in the nature of existence and/or the universe that dictates there shall be justice in the universe, non-theistically.

If it could be shown that our notion of justice is pre-contained our understanding of the universe; perhaps that all notions of justice derive from acts being in accordance with the laws of physics ... so thereby we say that the unjust acts are contradictory to the nature of the universe in how the notion of justice has been derived from it.

Visual: laws of physics?

Je4ss: Nice Shingles - this seems to be where we are going with Sim's 'there is something in the way our brains are'

Simulat: In what Sense are we connected Visual?

Tor: No Occam suggests we accept the simplest explanation Je

Visual: common ancestor Simulat

Je4ss: Simulat - can you say what you mean by the 'structure of our brains'? Do you just mean the human brain, or the animal brain, or...?

Reaser: well it seems to me that less powerful animals get eaten by more powerful, yet bacteria are overall the winners

Shingles: He does, but in reducing it down so readily, are we not impeding further revelations that might require meditation on them, Tor?

Je4ss: Tor - apologies, thanks for clarifying that :)

Patrick: We know that not all brains demonstrate conscience so that weakens that argument.

Je4ss: Reaser - so perhaps bacteria are the most powerful animals...

Simulat: There are animals who have a moral sense because of the structure of their brains Jess - but I guess there aren't many animals that can actually choose what to do

Reaser: that is my thought and it does not need justice , just opportunity

Tor: I'm a scientist so all I think is provisional. I just try to keep things simple.

Wichard: So would you posit that justice is something like equilibrium or entropy, Shingles?

Simulat: but I don't think the laws of physics have much to do with justice

Shingles: So does this Moral Sense get posited upon objects, being perceived by beings with a Moral Sense, Sim?

Wichard: Simulat, they could be associated through metaphor.

Patrick: sociopaths, demonstrate little to no empathy while others are empathic to a fault.

Shingles: because I'm curious to see if it's possible, Wichard

Tor: Has anyone read about the 'Prisoner's Dilemma'

Patrick: yes

Shingles: I have indeed

Reaser: no

Patrick: is that simplest equation for justice

Re: Does this question positing justice as a force of nature that makes things come out justly. Isn't there justice in the universe when human beings act justly?

Simulat: Shingles - it seems to me that we are endowed with structures that interpret situations in a moral way much as we have structures that interpret streams of sounds or letters

Tor: That suggests that virtue can arise out of nature

Shingles: but how does Justice deal with the sociopaths, Patrick?

Shingles: Very good, Re :)

Marya: Justice certainly seems to go along with more complex social animals - one part of that society (call it X) does something that negatively impacts that society - that society then exacts 'revenge' upon X in order to prevent further negative impact. Not that this is what we see in everyday life - but that, I think, is the 'natural' concept of it.

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Je4ss: Here's a thought. We might want to say that natural justice is possible, even does exist - but not start with the individual human brain as a beginning for that. Instead, we might want to point to simply 'the way humans are' as a starting. So, the universe is 'naturally' so that humans are social beings. By virtue of being social being, we develop ways to live together. Those ways differ from culture to culture, but all involve justice of some kind, because that is what it is to be human - to be communal.

Visual: that makes sense to me

Patrick: Sim, are these streams inherent regardless of environment, culture, and economic conditions?

Tor: and me

Wichard: Natural justice: me hungry, me stronger than Craig, me eat Craig

Visual: what's that got to do with justice, Wichard?

Reaser: so then do you view it as a control system je4ss?

Shingles: Yes, I agree with Je4ss that we must look at ALL humans or ALL animals here, approaching the notion of Justice from a perspectivist angle is necessarily difficult

Simulat: no Patrick. We have built in interpreters, but we have to learn a language before they work, and we have to learn a particular moral code before our moral interpreters work

Wichard: Visual: It's primitive egocentric justice -- I apply force to get food so I survive. My continued existence is just.

Shingles: but if Jason finds out you have eaten Craig, will Jason punish you, Wichard?

Patrick: Is just a driving force in humans are a response to the conditions in which he/she finds him/herself

Visual: in what sense of "just" does that come out as just?

Patrick: justice

Simulat: And Jess - that is certainly based on nature - but its not at all like gravity which is the same for everyone

Re: Isn't the term "justice" an abstract noun? Like love hate kindness etc. If we ask is their love in the universe we are just asking if humans or other beings can love. If we ask is there justice in the universe, aren't we just asking if humans can be just?

Wichard: Eating Craig is just if there is on social groups to control my eating of Craig.

Tor: fear comes in as well as a motivation

Je4ss: that entire viewpoint reduces humans to complex 'sense data interpreting machines' which makes a lot of assumptions - not least, about 'what does it mean to be human', 'why does justice matter' - among others.

Humans are more than that!

Shingles: I might suggest that while Gravity is felt by all, it is felt differently by all (some people are heavier or carry their weight better or are stronger) The same condition might apply to Justice if it is a part of existence, Simulat

Wichard: I think that justice requires groups of individuals in a community acting with the rights and privileges thereunto appertaining. Me eating Craig can be viewed as just or unjust.

Marya: it might be considered just, if you share it with the group Wichard :)

Je4ss: Wichard - but, you would NOT eat Craig, would you?

Shingles: ok Possibility 3

There is something in the nature of the human as a rational being that dictates there shall be justice in the universe. That there is something fundamental to rational thinking that is inalienable to just thinking. Now by that we would say that to think rationally is to also at the same time think justly; that the two are inseparable.

Tor: Most peoples sense of justice concerns only human interactions. When you introduce other species things get really interesting

Shingles: So thereby we say that the unjust act is the irrational one.

Patrick: Baked or barbequed :)

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Simulat: I wouldn't say 'reduces' Jess - but I do think its true that humans are sense data interpreting machines - wonderful machines - but we do have to interpret data before we can do anything

Wichard: Yes, so if I'm hunting and I find a tasty Craig and kill him/it for food for the community then I have acted justly when sharing the food to the starving community

Shingles: Is it simply that? That the rational act is the Just act?

Je4ss: Ah, now, we have to say what we mean by rational. And too often 'rational', has equalled LOGICAL. But I say that emotion is also a type of rationality...and to be unjust, certainly goes against our emotional reason... (Hence why Craig would not be eaten)

Wichard: I prefer Craig roasted with a little garlic and a wine sauce and potatoes.

Tor: My gut feeling is that virtue/justice etc is hard wired in to us and does not need rationality although rationality will always play a part

Shingles: perhaps we could say instead that emotion is a type of RATIONALE, Je4ss

Patrick: The problem with 3 for me is that what is rational to me is not rational to al-Qaida

Simulat: This possibility depends a lot on what you consider rational to mean Shingles - I'd say that being rational is acting in a way that gets you what you want given the information you have - in humans we can be rational about our rationality

Shingles: so, by that the hardwired Justice will trickle down an necessarily make all our subsequent thinking subscribed to Justice, Tor?

Je4ss: Shingles, what is the difference between rationale and rationality?

Patrick: Rationality seems to be culturally dictated in real life.

Wichard: Let me pose another dilemma: Your people believe that the God X must be propitiated using human blood or they will die of starvation. Will you kill someone else's child to propitiate God X?

Shingles: rationality is loaded with inferences to only thinking, whereas the term Rationale is loose enough to allow INTUITIVE perception, Je4ss

Tor: maybe what we think of as justice is predetermined?

Simulat: a rationale is the reason something happens maybe Jess?

Wichard: Is it "just" to kill someone's child to propitiate God X?

Simulat: Dennett talks of free floating rationales - like the reason a leopard has spots is a free floating rationale

Reaser: well this was an old one and I think old cultures gradually substituted scapegoats for people

Shingles: could you elaborate as to what a 'free floating rationale' is, please, Sim?

Reaser: to see if the gods minded

Je4ss: Wichard - that would depend on the individual people, the culture, how strong this belief was, what their other beliefs were, what their beliefs on death and killing were - and so on.

Shingles: too many uncertain variables :)

Wichard: So justice must not be an absolute, it has many cultural and contextual subordinations.

Shingles: Interesting, interesting response Wichard, why MUST it not be absolute?

Simulat: well - the rationale for spots is that they act as camouflage - and the camouflage helps the leopard survive - so there is a reason it has spots, but its nobody's reason - its something that evolution produced - so its free floating

Wichard: Because it has many different conceptions based on culture and contexts.

Shingles: Yes, then perhaps Justice is a Free Floating Rationale then, Sim

Je4ss: Simulat - nice example...'it is nobody's reason'...I like that

Shingles: is there not any commonality between all of those cultures and contexts, Wichard?

Simulat: I'd say it was Shingles

Wichard: So we recognize justice by using some rational processes that look something like equilibrium or entropy.

Simulat: There is a reason we have a moral sense, but it's not a reason that we created

Marya: It could well be free floating - but, as I mentioned earlier, it does seem to be part of a social animal system of mutual defence. It is conducive to group survival...

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Shingles: Time for the next Possibility - 4

There is a quality of the human being that is an innate sense of what is just and what is unjust. If it could be shown that this sense was the same in each human we might say that as the human is hardwired to detect justice, that then has a bearing on all human behaviour, that while the human being exists, justice can exist in the universe. The unjust act would thereby be committed by a human whose sense of what is just is impaired in some way.

Je4ss: Hmmm, I don't want to steer too far away from the topic, but there's an important question we haven't addressed yet - though I think it was asked before. That is, what IS justice? Do we just mean morality, or ethics? When I hear justice, I hear the righting of a wrong - like a legal system. Sorry, I know a bit off topic, but also important...otherwise we may be crossing wires when we use the word....

Simulat: This one is close to my view Shingles

Visual: Shingles: I think it is important to distinguish between the sense of justice or the ability to recognise just/unjust acts and the ability to act in just / unjust ways

Wichard: Shingles, there probably are some similarities, but why would that lead to a concept of justice that is the same? We're in one setting and working on our mental constructs for justice so we must push the envelope as wide as possible.

Je4ss: Even if we have a loose, agreed on definition, during this discussion....it doesn't have to be too fixed

Re: If a person can't know what is just or unjust how can he be held responsible for an unjust act?

Shingles: But let us not see that as then that this Justice would be absolute, defined this way. It may even be an evolutionary appendix by now, Marya

Reaser: do criminals view their punishment as just I wonder?

Simulat: Jess - it seems that one of the foundations of justice is trust - that we need to trust each other and it is unjust to act in a way that is not trustworthy

Visual: Interesting question Reaser

Wichard: And justice doesn't have to be an abstract universal that exists independently in the universe

Reaser: thanks Visual

Simulat: right Wichard

Re: A person who unwittingly acts unjust may be responsible for knowing what is just. So he is responsible for being ignorant.

Tor: Justice seems to be part of the philosophy of politics so its normative.

Shingles: but if so, why then do we share a sense of what is just and unjust, I think there is this independent quality of Justice, its just that its not dependant on humans existing, but instead dependant on WHICH humans exist, Wichard

Visual: If someone is a landlord and they rent a room out and then on finding out that the tenant has a job with a high wage they raise the rent have they acted unjustly? If a hardware store raises the price of shovels during a blizzard have they acted unjustly?

Shingles: breach of contract would most definitely be unjust

Simulat: if we all act the same way to violations of trust, how is that so different than the fact that we all have two hands?

Wichard: Shingles, we've been raised and indoctrinated by a cultural group into thinking in certain ways.

Shingles: unavoidably, yes, Wichard

Visual: I mention those examples because the Psychologist Hauser used them and found that the majority of subjects he tested found them unjust

Shingles: because we do not all act the same way to violations of trust, Sim

Wichard: It's difficult to get beyond that group, but the positing of a virtue identified in one culture need not be a virtue in another.

Tor: If we have natural justice do we need to have natural law as well?

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Marya: Shingles, you asked why we share a sense of what is just and unjust - it seems quite logical to me that this is a development 'from' that evolutionary social animal inclination to 'deal with' what is perceived to be harmful to the group.

Shingles: I'd say that it's a biased experiment, Visual

Visual: why Shingles?

Re: One quality of justice that is easy to recognize is that it applies equally to all so when people make exceptions (say for their friends or family) the inequality is easy to spot. This takes no intuition just common sense.

Reaser: is there anyone here who has never done anything they think to be wrong I wonder

Simulat: I've been influenced by Hauser's book the Moral Mind Visual

Thoth: what do you mean 'independent quality', Shingles? Largely, our sense of justice is based on the cultures we grow up in; if some things seem 'common' from culture to culture, there are likely pretty clear reasons for that other than some 'quality' outside of social contexts.

Shingles: it places the subjects only to be empathetic to the tenant, not the landlord, Visual

Shingles: I don't think that we would be able, Reaser

Visual: Simulat, this is from moral minds :)

Reaser: yet we have escaped punishment so far Shingles :-)

Shingles: what other reasons might we find, Thoth?

Simulat: Yes - I recognized it Visual :-)

Thoth: Shingles, first explain to me what you mean by 'independent quality' please? ;o)

Shingles: that there is a quality that is the same regardless of which human it is in, Thoth - like having skin

Reaser: would anyone after this meeting go to the local police station and confess I wonder? If not, why do we have a double set of standards?

Thoth: that is inherent in...what? People? Or the concept?

Shingles: I can't diversify those two so completely, I think that we cannot know people, but we may know how we conceive them to be, Thoth

Thoth: well... let's take the idea of 'fairness'. Humans are social animals, but we are also predatory and territorial.

Shingles: nice leading into Possibility 5, Thoth :)

There is something in the nature of animal, indeed all of life, that dictates there shall be justice in the universe. That all notions of justice derive from the very nature of life itself.

Shingles: Granted, this may be a very unusual notion of justice, where the fittest are granted more than the weakest and that that would be Justice as than condition is fundamental to all life.

Reaser: survival benefit perhaps?

Shingles: The unjust act would be committed on the assumption that justice as defined here was incorrect, and might even go further and attempt an alternate definition of Justice and also attempt to implement that new notion of Justice.

Thoth: it's clear that those two things can cause conflicts unless the natural tendencies are mitigated somehow. So... you don't kill me, I don't kill you. You don't take what's 'mine', and I don't take what's yours... basically, a social contract – one that enables us to live and work together; and it evolves/grows from there...

Marya: yes, exactly Thoth

Je4ss: I think that there can be justice contained in the notion of life that does NOT equal 'the strong survive and the weak do not', but rather, an awareness of the interconnection of life where LOVE is the basis for justice.

Shingles: That is certainly a desirable prospect. How might we go about showing that that is the case, Je4ss?

Visual: I don't see anyone offering evidence for the idea that justice is based on the fittest having more than the weakest

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Thoth: getting more complex as society grows and evolves.

Je4ss: and that we humans can get to a state of awareness where we see and experience the full interconnection of this life (called by some a mystical experience), or cultivate such an awareness (what the Buddhists call compassion) through certain practices

Je4ss: Shingles - have you experienced such a thing? A compassion, love, what have you, for others - be they less or more fortunate than yourself, be they human or animal?

Shingles: but once we enter into those possibilities, do we not begin to speak of Justice as an abstract again, Je4ss?

Visual: If the majority of people thought that it was just for the strong to take from the weak that would be a start but where is the empirical evidence for this?

Shingles: I don't think a human could live socially without having experienced that, Je4ss

Je4ss: There's a good quote from the Dali Lama - "If you want to understand love, start with children and animals - they're easier".

Je4ss: Shingles - then why do I need to show the evidence?

Shingles: what is it about love that invokes Justice, Je4ss?

Patrick: In colonies, packs, and prides the alpha animal always eats his fill and then shares the rest according to a pecking order...is this justice

Visual: I like that quote Je4ss

Re: thinks that justice only applies to humans because only we conceptualize.

Wichard: Wait: love and justice are different.

Marya: I don't think we need to bring in anything mystical at all - the more complex an organism, the more complex that organism's understanding of the world will be

Shingles: How might one say it is unjust, Patrick?

Wichard: Justice seems to require moral development on the part of the individual and the community; love doesn't

Marya: for example - revenge and justice ... I 'think' seem to come from the same motivation

Je4ss: According to the Buddhist viewpoint, which I use not because it's the 'right' one, but because it's a useful perspective: rules are only needed when one is not in this higher state of awareness. So, justice could be a progression Shingles - we need rules when we aren't acting with love towards others, to stop us being hurtful to them and ourselves. However as we get into that state, we become more 'in the moment', and naturally we simply do 'what is right'.

Re: Justice does not apply to animals because they act by "instinct" and do not have to choose via conceptual thinking.

Shingles: so Justice exists as a notion occurring parallel to a living being's operational understanding of its environment. And as such is as mutable and inconstant as its surroundings, Marya?

Patrick: I would not label but it fits the explanation of justice we are presently discussing

Shingles: This optimism is very endearing, Je4ss

Je4ss: Wichard - I wasn't trying to say they (love and justice) are the same - rather that I can conceive of a natural justice, by virtue of being human - which does not equal the strong survive and the weak do not.

Wichard: Kohlberg documents a developmental stage paradigm in moral development that goes from fear of punishment to ethical rules.

Reaser: but the weak do survive

Marya: I think justice exists as a notion yes, and that notion is developed from a group survival instinct - it is not necessary to bring anything mystical into it in order to understand it, from my perspective

Je4ss: Shingles - optimism? You make it sound like I am looking 'on the bright side' of human nature. Whereas many cultures, religions, teachings even advocate and talk extensively about how to 'be' in this way/

Shingles: So by redistributing resources from the powerful and possessed to the less powerful and dispossessed, we enact Justice, Patrick?

Re: Only humans who must guide their actions by principles can be just or unjust. Justice implies treating others according to good or bad principles. Animals can't use principles at all.

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Patrick: I agree with Marya

Je4ss: Marya - I wasn't saying that love or this awareness IS mystical, rather that, that is what some people CALL it. I don't find it mystical, I find it natural :)

Reaser: no we give our species a better chance of survival

Marya: Sure Jess - just trying to answer Shingles' question :)

Je4ss: Ah, thank you Marya :)

Visual: Love is evil. It is always selective

Reaser: why, Visual?

Shingles: I might say as well, is there not something mystical in the most intimate of romantic attachments? - put simply, wouldn't that show the mystical experience to be well-rooted in common living, Marya?

Patrick: However, I do believe science offers some evidence that justice as a survival mechanism is hardwired into humans

Visual: It is selective and opposed to fairness and impartiality

Je4ss: Visual - what I am talking about is not selective; rather it is a way of being that loves all and loves alike.

Visual: That is not possible

Patrick: I believe environment, culture and need shape it

Reaser: but it can bring out the best in us

Marya: I guess I don't understand what you mean by that Shingles - any chance of explaining that a bit?

Je4ss: However, Visual, we could say that attraction, or relationships, or friendships - are selective. But that doesn't have to be all there is to love.

Visual: Attraction like Attention is Selective

Visual: it has to be, otherwise it wouldn't function

Shingles: That in our most intimate moments with a Life Partner, when the love-making is at its affectionate peak in the course of the relationship, doesn't it feel almost transporting, Marya?

Reaser: well maybe then there is a natural law to what we find attractive it may be a drive

Simulat: I'm reading now that the feeling of transport is a drug rush

Je4ss: Actually, Shingles, I was reading an interesting article a few days ago about mystical experiences that people have had during love making - where the love has become so strong, that it has 'exploded out' in a sense. to not focus on self or other, rather that all has become part of the great 'I AM', a universal love with no differentiation.

Shingles: very good, Sim

Simulat: your brain gets flooded with hormones when you come

Visual: That sounds very ego enhancing

Shingles: like some mystical journeys in culture involve hallucinogenic, Sim

Marya: The only thing I can think of at this point Shingles, is that maybe we call things 'mystical/spiritual' because we do not entirely understand the mechanisms involved.

Visual: You have an orgasm and declare that you have just loved the world

Simulat: yes Shingles

Visual: I will have to try that sometime

Je4ss: Visual - sort of, but it is more than just an orgasm

Marya: lol Visual

Visual: ;0)

Second Philosophy

Shingles: all right, let's consider possibility 6

Natural Justice is not possible being that the universe has no design or purpose. Therefore all notions of Justice are artificed entirely by human beings. This is not to say that this act of artificed Justice is to become part of the universe, but that it exists as a notion purely between groups of humans. Thereby the unjust act is one that contradicts whatever notions of Justice held by that particular group of humans.

Reaser: that seems more realistic

Simulat: This one works mostly - except that it doesn't recognize that we get our sense of justice from evolution and instead says we create it from scratch

Simulat: but that is never done; not even the particular moral codes of different communities are invented by the community; they evolve in the community

Visual: okay Shingles - I get the overall picture being that there is no commonalities between communities yes?

Reaser: but a bit scary, because then we are all alone in this universe

Shingles: I thought I had maintained that there are, but if you think there is not... well we differ there, Visual

Shingles: never alone, we have our peer humans with us, Reaser

Visual: No I think there are commonalities so long as the level of description is general enough

Shingles: slippery

Reaser: I meant as a species

Je4ss: Reaser - alone? No, we have each other :)

Re: Justice means getting along with your group?

Reaser: see above

Wichard: Shingles, so was this a large modus ponens argument wherein you've found a contradiction at each point and conclude that natural justice is not possible?

Reaser: :-)

Shingles: I hope it means something further, Re

Visual: would we be able to understand others notion of "justice" if it were totally opposed to our own?

Shingles: I have simply tried to offer certain possibilities, it us up to the participants and indeed myself as to which possibility they hold to be the most accurate, Wichard

Je4ss: Wichard - what does modus ponens mean?

Shingles: and I haven't concluded as yet that is not possible, Wichard ;)

Wichard: modus ponens (sp?) is an argument where you assume the opposite of what you want to prove and show how that leads to contradictions

Simulat: I think we do Visual - for instance there are some sorts of Muslims who have a sense of justice that is abhorrent to me - but I don't doubt that it is there sense of justice - and I also don't doubt that I can't let them spread it here

Wichard: The most important example is the Pythagorean proof of the irrationality of the square root of 2.

Simulat: I'm thinking of things like stoning a woman who was raped because she had sex outside of wedlock

Re: To be more than arbitrary hopes and dreams, For me Justice needs to be based on universal truths --for me -- on human nature.

Shingles: spot on, I think, Re

Visual: ok Simulat

Shingles: we should examine what is the commonality in all examples of human nature therefore, Re & all

Visual: I am not sure there is wide support for such acts as acts of justice as opposed to rules imposed by fanatics in order to maintain control

Wichard: Ohhh dearie me! Those universal truths raise their ugly heads again after such a lovely discussion.

Simulat: That study is being done Shingles, and the results are surprising

Shingles: who is undertaking it, Sim?

Visual: but it's hard to say (for me) - I would like to see them

Re: LOL Wichard

Second Philosophy

Simulat: it turns out that trust is more fundamental than "thou shalt not kill"

Simulat: people like Marc Hauser that Visual and I mentioned earlier

Wichard: But the "thou shalt not kill" is a bad translation; it should be "thou shalt not murder"

Re: I think that human nature is the collection of characteristics that all -- or almost all -- humans possess.

Reaser: er translations vary with time

Wichard: Go study the earliest Hebrew versions.

Shingles: ok, we will go round in a circle and find out who favours which number –

I'll remind everyone what the possibilities were:

- 1) There is something in the nature of existence and/or the universe that dictates there shall be justice in the universe, speaking in terms of a Form of Justice.
- 2) There is something in the nature of existence and/or the universe that dictates there shall be justice in the universe, non-theistically.
- 3) There is something in the nature of the human as a rational being that dictates there shall be justice in the universe.
- 4) There is a quality of the human being that is an innate sense of what is just and what is unjust.
- 5) There is something in the nature of animal, indeed all of life that dictates there shall be justice in the universe.
- 6) Natural Justice is not possible being that the universe has no design or purpose. Therefore all notions of Justice are artificed entirely by human beings.

Shingles: we'll go clockwise, Visual, which number is it for you?

Visual: erm none of them really

Wichard: A vote!

Shingles: ok

Visual: Or should I go Buddhist and say all of them?

Reaser: which ones the Dead Sea scrolls?

Shingles: Wichard, your preference?

Wichard: #6, obviously

Shingles: thank you

Shingles: Je4ss, which do you choose?

Je4ss: all of them; I think they're all aspects of the same

Visual: :-)

Shingles: Marya, your view?

Marya: I would be part of 6 combined with the evolutionary concepts I mentioned previously

Shingles: ahuh

Shingles: Sim?

Simulat: 4 and 5 but also with the addition of the evolutionary concepts and also with quibbles :-)

Shingles: of course, I accept all quibbles

Shingles: Reaser?

Reaser: unfortunately 6

Shingles: aw

Shingles: ok, Tor is away, so... Patrick?

Tor: 4 and 6

Shingles: Re, what is your choice?

Patrick: 4 or 5

Re: doesn't like any of the options. He thinks that justice or injustice are attributes of human actions and that human interactions are just or unjust depending upon whether they are compatible with the requirements of human survival.

Second Philosophy

Shingles: that's also fine

Shingles: Tor, which of the possibilities did you agree with most?

Tor: 4

Shingles: ok, now me. I will say #2

Shingles: and I'm surprised nobody else has selected anything before #4

Patrick: I definitely think there is some genetic predisposition to strategies that will allow the weak and the strong coexist

Je4ss: Shingles: I selected all of them, so I did select the ones before 4

Shingles: right, this concludes the formal talk, but everyone is welcome to continue as long as they would like to

