

According to Rawls, a just society is one that one would choose to belong to if one knew nothing as to what one's position in that society might be and if one knew nothing as to one's gender, ethnicity, or level of ability. Such a society would be a squalid bureaucratic wasteland, similar to the Soviet Union, and its entire structure would be a weapon for the mediocre to hold back the gifted, with the result that people as a whole, including the mediocre, were prevented from flourishing. There is obviously a sense in which the social contract described by Rawls is "fair", but there is no meaningful sense in which the resulting society would be just. Moreover, since a Rawlsian society would quickly degenerate into a condition of bureaucratic tyranny, in which everybody oppressed everybody, it would be irrelevant that its inception occurred in a "fair" way. Several vigorous attempts to create and run societies along Rawlsian lines have been implemented, and they all failed utterly, showing how wrong Rawls' analysis is. What follows is a paper that I wrote a month ago proving these points.