

Lecture 19 Reading Questions

“Justice & the Social Ethos”

Reading:

“The Basic Structure Objection.”

Chapter 3 in “Rescuing Justice and Equality” by G.A. Cohen

- (1) What does Cohen mean when he claims that “the personal is political”?
- (2) According to Cohen, the “incentives argument” for inequality involves a distorted application of the difference principle. Why?
- (3) What is the justification for making the basic structure of society the “primary subject of justice”? Does this justification warrant the claim that *only* a society’s basic structure can be just or unjust?
- (4) Can a society be more or less just depending on the (lawful) career choices people make? Can a society be more or less just depending on the (lawful) marital practices people adopt? Can a society be more or less just depending on the attitudes that parents adopt towards male and female children?

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