

A NOTE ON PERFECT PROCEDURAL JUSTICE

The Rawlsian theory of justice is a perfect procedural theory of justice: it relies on the idea that there is a mechanism capable of producing an outcome judged as fair by rational individuals located in an original position. This idea justifies the crucial role played by the notion of reflexive equilibrium: to wit, the possibility of recognizing ex-post the fairness of a distribution obtained out of a perfect procedural distributive mechanism.

We will claim that this analysis disregards the relevance of envy both as a psychological and normative factor. We will argue that the normative role of envy is more important at the moment of assessing a distribution already implemented (ex-post) than at the moment of making a choice for a future distribution (ex ante). We will provide both empirical and theoretical arguments supporting this claim.