

# Toward A Better Understanding of Epicurean Justice And Injustice (With Examples of "Just" and "Unjust")

Post by "Cassius" of March 22, 2021 at 7:44 AM

## [Quote from Don](#)

..... law/custom/contract to execute homosexuals is not just because it certainly doesn't benefit both parties.

You may be right to disagree with my first suggestion. Maybe the issue is that to be unjust, the agreement has to start out beneficial and satisfactory to both, but then circumstances changed, and it is the attempt to enforce the old arrangement is injustice. But then it seems to me that it is hard to distinguish that situation from "unwilling to agree" which is a situation of "neither just nor unjust."

It is possible that it would be a good idea to start a new discussion under one of the "justice" subforums. As I recall over the years very infrequently have any of us engaged in long discussions over the last ten PDs, but it would be HIGHLY beneficial to do so.

Regardless, it seems to me that we have to compare 32 to 37 and 38 to triangulate on this issue:

## Quote

32. For all living things which have not been able to make compacts not to harm one another, or be harmed, **nothing ever is either just or unjust**; and likewise, too, for all tribes of men which have been unable, or unwilling, to make compacts not to harm or be harmed.

37. Among actions which are sanctioned as just by law, that which is proved, on examination, to be of advantage, in the requirements of men's dealings with one another, has the guarantee of justice, whether it is the same for all or not. But if a man makes a law, and it does not turn out to lead to advantage in men's dealings with each other, **then it no longer has the essential nature of justice**. And even if the advantage in the matter of justice shifts from one side to the other, but for a while accords with the general concept, it is nonetheless just for that period, in the eyes of those who do not confound themselves with empty sounds, but look to the actual facts.

38. Where, provided the circumstances have not been altered, actions which were considered just have been shown not to accord with the general concept, in actual

practice, then they are not just. But where, when circumstances have changed, the same actions which were sanctioned as just no longer lead to advantage, they were just at the time, when they were of advantage for the dealings of fellow-citizens with one another, **but subsequently they are no longer just, when no longer of advantage.**

PERHAPS my suggestion should be reworded as:

*Epicurus might say that "justice" means "an agreement (contract?) that brings pleasure to all parties to the contract." If so, then injustice might refer **to the attempt to enforce an old** "agreement (contract? social relationship?) that does NOT bring pleasure to all parties in that relationship.*

But that is only an interim thought - we need to continue to discuss.