

# Dr. Frans de Waal, Primatologist

Post by "Cassius" of March 2, 2023 at 2:06 AM

Might as well throw in a comment:

My current view is close to the way Joshua describes Steve's position:

That an "anticipation" of justice is closer to a snapshot in which the observer is noticing only that two or more individuals are acting in relationship so as to effect each other in some way that we are not evaluating (at that anticipatory level) but which our minds automatically pull forward out of the background as a significant relationship.

At this level the mind isn't evaluating it as pleasing or displeasing or just or unjust, but simply as a significant relationship.

I would say that it is the rational mind which decides to call the relationship "just" or "unjust" and that that decision takes into account the faculty of pleasure and pain which heavily influences which of the two we decide to label it (with the label / choice of words applied by the rational mind).

So I would say that the function of anticipations in relationship to justice (or to divinity or to any other abstract idea) would be that it picks out of the background of otherwise apparently chaotic data some relationship that we otherwise would not recognize as significant at all.

And therefore I would say that higher animals are born with somewhat the same ability as humans to detect relationships and feel pleasure and pain about them, with the main difference that their minds do not process the relationships into words.

So I would say that 32 implies that higher animals do have the ability to form agreements among themselves that we would call just and unjust while lower animals (or like men, those that simply choose not to) do not fall with a label of just or unjust.

That would make "justice" a category of relationships in which anticipations give us a power of recognition while "just" and "unjust" are evaluations of particular situations made in the mind after input from pleasure/pain. Same would go with "divinity" as a category of relationships while "blessed" and "incorruptible" are evaluations.

The category would be the pattern which anticipations allows us to recognize while the stage of having evaluated its desirability or nondesirability would mean that the mind has weighed in and factored in pleasure and pain.

If "justice" is a virtue - as I think it is - then I think we have to consider that like any other virtue sometimes we might choose to be "unjust" in order to arrive at greater pleasure or less pain

later. And if we did so we would probably consider our action to be just.

So the final labelling of just and unjust seems to me necessarily something that involves rational processing rather than something at the automatic level. But that the entire question presents itself to us as an issue only because we have a faculty of observing anticipations within the category of "justice."

That makes anticipations a faculty of categorization or pattern recognition as we have been describing, without which we would not even be discussing a particular "issue" in the first place.