

# Note for the paper “Disagreement Behind the Veil of Ignorance”

Son To

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*Contribution:* A kind of moral disagreement that survives Rawlsian veil of ignorance: **disinterested** disagreement.

## 1 Moral Disagreement and Self-Interest

Sen’s flute problem (Sen, 2009): A, B and C argues over a flute: A makes it, only B can play it, and C deserves it since A and B has many other toys and he has none.

A: libertarianism, B: utilitarianism and C: egalitarianism.

### My opinion

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Human’s nature is fickle and interest-dependent; they only care for what they want to hear. This is a very well-known fact that does not need big research (Babcock and Loewenstein, 1997, 1995) to begin with because this is very superfluous and totally waste of time. Simply playing video games like Metal Gear Solid or Mafia series will make you realize this without reading the research papers.

**Opinion ends here.**

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*Rawlsian veil of ignorance:* Before the social contract is imposed on, except for basic scientific facts, none has any idea what the correct positions are.  $\Rightarrow$  change the problem of interested disagreement to disinterested disagreement.

Interested disagreement: disagreement that participants have a stake in, unequal footing.

Disinterested disagreement: No stakes, equal footing.

### My opinion

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The argument that if Original Position, unless it is stipulated to not only remove agents’ interests, but also **force agents to conform to a particular categorization scheme for the (political) world**, leaves open the

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possibility of agents finding themselves in a state of meta-disagreement.<sup>1</sup> This is a *very bad* assumption because

- If agents were forced to conform with the world, there would probably be no disagreement to begin with.
- However, if agents were to disagree with the conformity, there would probably NO CONSENSUS AT ALL to begin with; Hence, further analysis of disinterested disagreement is useless at this point (therefore, the mutual respect using Lehrer-Wagner model in section 5 is a big piece of garbage.)

**Opinion ends here.**

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## 2 Modeling Disagreement: Nash bargaining

This is how the paper resolved interested disagreement using Nash bargaining solution concepts for Sen's flute problem: The one has more bargaining powers is the one who will obtain the flute.

### **My opinion**

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The solution concepts for Nash bargaining problem is, without a doubt, beautiful. However, the question: Is the implementation of this solution successful in real life situation? Unless the bargaining occurs under professional business, it may be really hard to believe that this is possible due to human stubbornness and social views on what should be the correct distribution. Even if there would be an institution that induces the Nash bargaining solution to solve the problem, it would be really hard to measure the disagreement point  $d$  for each individual  $\Rightarrow$  hard to measure the bargaining power.

**Opinion ends here.**

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## 3 Modeling Disagreement: Consensus through Mutual Respect

Disinterested disagreement are to be reached consensus through Lehrer-Wagner model, with the assumptions,

- $w_{ij} \neq 0$  for at least one  $j \neq i$ . Hence, if the individual aggressively believe that his principles is correct with 100%, the model is doomed! Is it hard to find such individuals in real-life situation? Piece of cake! (Linus Torvalds, Steve Jobs, ... etc.)
- No formation of subgroups is allowed.

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<sup>1</sup>the last line of page 4 and opening line of page 5.

**My opinion**

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This is by far, the most damning section that makes me angry. Compared to the elegant solution made by Nash in the interested disagreement, this “consensus” does not say anything except for the sake of having reached a consensus. And then the rational ground, the implausibility of assumption,...<sup>2</sup> are seemingly for the sake of the theory itself rather than the practical aspects of life.

This paper is really not my taste ... REALLY NOT!

In term of intellectual masturbation, this paper scores 4/5, but in term of usefulness, this paper is 1/5.

**Opinion ends here.**

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<sup>2</sup> line 9 from the bottom of page 12.