A Theory of Justice - John Rawls

**Review Questions:**

1. Carefully explain Rawl’s conception of the original position.

The original position of Rawl’s is its main feature which is the veil of ignorance. This is to ensure that no one in the society have an advantage and disadvantage in the decisions of principles made by the outcome.

1. State and Explain Rawl’s first principle of Justice.

The first principle of Justice states that each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others. With this principle, citizens have the basic liberties for example freedom of speech, assembly, freedom of personal property and the like.

1. State and Explain the second principle. Which principle has priority such that it cannot be sacrificed?

The second principle states that social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both reasonably expected to be to everyone’s advantage and attached to positions and offices open to all. The two principles should be arranged in their own perspective order. This means that a departure from the institutions of equal liberty required by the first principle cannot be justified by greater and economic advantage.

Discussion Questions:

1. On the first principle, each person has an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty as long as this does not interfere with a similar liberty for others. What does this allow people to do? Does it mean, for example, that people have right to engage in homosexual activities as long as they don’t interfere with others? Can people produce and view pornography if it does not restrict anyone’s freedom? Are people allowed to take drugs in the privacy of their homes?

Although people can do all of those, I think they must practice equality. They must not take advantage of doing it.

1. Is it possible for free and rational persons in the original position to agree upon different principles than give by Rawls? For example, why wouldn’t they agree to an equal distribution of wealth and income rather than an unequal distribution? That is, why wouldn’t they adopt socialism rather than capitalism? Isn’t socialism just as rational as capitalism?

I think yes, it is possible for free and rational persons.