



The Evolution of Rights

I find it interesting that many people believe they have a right to demand “rights” — such as jobs, welfare, and healthcare — in the United States even if they are present here illegally. Disregarding for now the rightness or wrongness of their claim of rights, I begin to wonder, “Where will their rights end?” If the only real claim that people have to being entitled to stuff, stuff that must be paid for by other people who are forced by government to “donate” cash to the cause, is that they reside in the country (again, illegally) and that it’s unfair for them to go without something that others have, then doesn’t it seem that there ought to be many more rights?



Why not a right to a new car or truck? After all, it is just *not fair* that some people’s transportation can get them to work more reliably and more cushily than others’. And just as it’s not fair that some women can’t have children, and so they are “entitled” to in vitro fertilization, shouldn’t it be fair to include breast augmentation, nose jobs, tummy tucks, and teeth caps as rights — because it is surely *not fair* that some people obtain more attractive mates and better job opportunities solely based on their looks? (Studies repeatedly show that attractive people are more apt to get job offers than ugly people.) Of course, since there only is just so much money in the world and there are apparently many fewer handsome people than homely ones — I’ve noticed this in spades since I got LASIK done and can see, especially when I look in the mirror — maybe it would be easier and more cost effective to give homely people the right to require svelte people to be uglified, to level the playing field. I’ve already got my own personal list of candidates prepared!

Think about this: If you can demand things *from others* against their will in the name of fairness, isn’t it logical that you can also demand that things be done *to others* in the name of fairness?

Sound ludicrous? It is already being done to a degree. To extend a right to a college education to blacks and Hispanics who didn’t study adequately in high school, preference is given to them on college applications over others who have studied harder and scored better — including minority-class Asians, who are often displaced from college roles, along with whites. Supposedly this qualifies as fair because Hispanics and blacks come from repressed cultures and have suffered extreme psychological distress that makes them unable to compete — as if Asians, especially the Chinese, and whites, especially the Irish, weren’t also repressed in America at one time or another. So the question really should not be, “Do modern ‘rights’ allow us to do things to others?” but, “What rights can I exercise against others?”



Written by [Kurt Williamsen](#) on May 28, 2010

The answer to the second question seems to be: "Anything politicians will let me get away with in the name of fairness." For instance, if people have a right to enter this country illegally and take jobs either off the books (so they don't pay taxes) or take jobs at very low wages (and afford to live in America by not paying for any form of insurance and by receiving welfare), those people's "rights" inevitably lead to U.S. workers losing their jobs and causing immense emotional and physical suffering for U.S. residents. And illegal immigrants' right to healthcare, which is often obtained by going to emergency rooms that are required under U.S. law to treat them and then skipping out on the bill by lying about their names and addresses, means that hospitals and hospital emergency rooms have gone out of business from unreimbursed care, leading to delayed care and even death for Americans.



Under the new version of rights being touted nowadays, rights for some are allowed to lead to others' deaths — even if only indirectly — and that just doesn't seem "right." U.S. law used to essentially say that your rights ended when your actions hurt another person, either physically or monetarily: It was said that one's right to punch ended where another person's nose began. The minute we moved away from that conception of rights — in the name of fairness — we became inherently unfair because the only way we can provide for these new rights is through harming others, demanding from them their goods, services, and talents.

As writer Brian Farmer has said, "All legitimate rights have one thing in common: they are rights to *action*, not to goods and services from other people. Legitimate rights impose no obligations on other people, except for the obligation to leave you alone.... If your desire for something imposes a duty on other people to satisfy you, then their right to liberty is violated, and the right to pursue their happiness is hindered. Your right to happiness at their expense means that they become, in effect, your slaves."

Add to the unfairness of taking one's property or time the fact that there are now no definable boundaries on the suffering that one group of people can impose on another — in the name of "rights" and with the help of government — and we can virtually depend on the political guillotine eventually descending upon us.



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