

*Narrow Bridge Games and their Rescue of Rational Constraints in Moral Contractualism*

**Abstract:**

Contractualism is a normative theory of ethics that posits that what an individual *ought* or *ought not do* arises from an antecedent (or prior) moral agreement, deliberation, or acknowledgement. The nature of this agreement, as in its conditions, such as the nature of the persons involved, the circumstances of the agreeing process, and the constraints on the process should produce the resulting deliberative and normative morality. In this paper I will explore the “constraint critique” of contractualism. First I will explore the necessary tenets of contractualism and why any constraints are necessary. Second, I will explain why contractualist agreements cannot *necessarily* possess ‘moral constraints’ where otherwise such constraints would lead to an infinite moral regress. For any ethical theory is incoherent if any moral entities exist prior to the process that purportedly is the genesis of all morality. Finally, I will explain that irrespective of ‘moral constraints’ a contractualist agreement is still tenable while possessing ‘non-moral’ *rational* constraints. Using contemporary ethical analysis, game theory, and discussions from famed moral philosopher David Gauthier I will argue that rational constraints are necessary to encourage, incentivize, and confine an agreement between competing agents in a “natural” condition of scarcity and competition. Thus the “constraint critique” is not a tenable argument against contractualism whereas the theory allows for *rational constraints*.

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Contractualism is a normative theory of ethics that posits that what an individual *ought* or *ought not* do arises from an antecedent moral agreement, deliberation, or acknowledgement. The nature of this agreement, as in its conditions, such as the nature of the persons involved, the circumstances of the agreeing process, and the constraints on the agreement process produce the resulting deliberative and normative morality.<sup>1</sup> In this paper I will explore the “constraint” critique of contractualism. First I will explore the necessary tenets of contractualism and why any constraints are necessary. Second, I will explain why contractualist agreements cannot *necessarily* possess ‘moral constraints’ where otherwise such constraints would lead to an infinite moral regress. Any ethical theory is incoherent if any moral entities exist prior to the process that purportedly is the genesis of all morality. Finally, I will explain that irrespective of ‘moral constraints’ a contractualist agreement is still tenable while possessing ‘non-moral’ *rational* constraints. Using contemporary ethical analysis in game theory in conjunction with famed moral philosopher David Gauthier I will argue that rational constraints are necessary to encourage, incentivize, and confine an agreement between competing agents in a “natural” condition of scarcity and competition. Thus the “constraint critique” is not a tenable argument against contractualism whereas the theory allows for *rational constraints*.

Contractualism doesn’t necessarily espouse a literal agreement that would take place in some smoke filled room but rather entails hypothetical agents, hypothetical agreements, and hypothetical realms. Contractualists would have us picture agents engaging in some variably deliberative process to the “end of establishing standards (not practices) in light of which they

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<sup>1</sup> I will conflate agreement, agreeing, agreement process, deliberative process and deliberation from this point forward. They will all refer to the same process that is required of contractualism. I will pivot between word choice to reduce redundancy at the expense of some temporary confusion.

may assess their practices and institutions and thus enable themselves to attempt reform where necessary.”<sup>2</sup> To consolidate Norman Care’s construction of contractualism:

- 1) When persons are of a certain nature (P),
- 2) and their circumstances are of a certain kind (C),
- 3) and they accept (or have imposed on them) a certain deliberating-procedure (D-M),
- 4) these persons will acknowledge, i.e., moral principles of a certain type, e.g., (J1) and (J2).<sup>3</sup>

Understandably, the burden of a tenable contractualist theory from the likes of T.M. Scanlon, John Rawls, or even Thomas Hobbes requires us to first answer a further antecedent question. While moral standards or principles are the intended result of this deliberative agreement it remains essential to first analyze how the “persons in question structure their deliberations”<sup>4</sup> to begin with (As indicated by D-M above). The antecedent nature of contractualism is haunted by a further antecedent.

John Rawls describes this ‘haunting’ antecedent tenet of contractualism (D-M) as “expressing the constraints of morality.” Other contractualists in contention here like Scanlon, Hobbes, or Gauthier refer to these expressive constraints amongst others as deliberative-procedures, conditions, and just generally ‘constraints.’ All contractualists have some *kind* of constraint on the deliberative or agreeing process. If the constraints are both antecedent and also necessary to the deliberative process then they remain a preliminary lynchpin to any contractualist position. Any condition that is both antecedent and necessary for an object or event is burdened by this same lynchpin status. Critics of the contractualist position could refute the “constraint” problem two-fold: 1) Functionally indict the ability of agents to ever agree on

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<sup>2</sup> Care, Norman S. "Contractualism and Moral Criticism." *The Review of Metaphysics* (1969): 87

<sup>3</sup> Ibid 2., p 86

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

“constraints” or 2) Indict the content and nature of constraints as ethically inconsistent or untenable. The former refutation inevitably invites discussion on the feasibility of hypothetical agreement processes and ideal agents at all. This argument tends to quickly devolve into conversations of social science, sociology, and social psychology over concerns of ethics and metaethics. Like more reasonable critics I choose to explore the latter refutation.

Lauded moral realist Russ Shafer-Landau (RSL) and ethicist Norman S. Care chose to engage a specific damning argument against these antecedent and necessary constraints that are ‘moral’ in nature. I will succinctly reconstruct this argument between the two of them. In particular, RSL and Care attack the ‘moral’ constraints of Scanlon and Rawls. Cynthia Stark labels the contractualist theories of Scanlon and Rawls as “morally constrained” because these constraints are derived from some proscribed “moral-motivation” or value-judgment.<sup>5</sup> For example, Scanlon places ‘constraints’ on hypothetical agents by attributing an “explicit moral motivation” to the “choosers and specifies under conditions [of agreement where this should] preclude coercion.”<sup>6</sup> Scanlon equally posits that the conditions to the agreeing process and the reasoning internal to process must be based in values of mutual recognition.

If the real “reason-giving force” of contractualist moralities thus can be “traced” from the value of mutual recognition “then processes of motivating reflection that exclude this distinctive value and feature instead such specific moral categories as fairness, danger, harm, and cruelty look like forms of false consciousness.”<sup>7</sup> Contractualist morality can “applaud” constraints that condemn or condone such aforementioned values “but in doing so it starts to resemble those unstable and artificially compartmentalized forms of indirect consequentialism.” If Scanlon is

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<sup>5</sup> Stark, Cynthia. "Hypothetical consent and justification." *The Journal of philosophy* 97, no. 6 (2000): 314

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Wallace, R. Jay. "Scanlon's Contractualism." *Ethics* 112, no. 3 (2002): 456

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espousing constraints that maximize “mutual recognition” and minimize coercion then Scanlon is constructing a value-judgment. Scanlon is necessarily implying that an individual *ought* not be coercive in an agreement process and *ought* mutually recognize others in the same deliberative process that intends to derive or create moral standards and principles. Scanlon’s constraints are explicitly moral in nature. Scanlon is a shadow of Rawls’ own moral constraints.

Rawlsian “moral constraints” rely heavily on positing a “moral motivation” of equality and fairness. Rawls’ constraints follow:

- 1) The standards any one of them proposes for mutual acceptance by all be thought of as applicable to all, including the proposer.
- 2) The standards be accepted by all as binding forever (and hence on their children as well as themselves).
- 3) That the standards be proposed from behind a "veil of ignorance" respecting the proposer's personal needs, interests, social station, etc.<sup>8</sup>

While Rawls is referring in constraints (1) and (2) to the proceeding deliberative reasoning more than the initial constraints of the process both (1) and (2) place some determinable constraint of equality and fairness. (1) constrains the agreement by requiring all agents to universalize and generalize their future proposals. (2) constrains the agreement by requiring agents to offer unconditional and infinitely-binding moral standards and principles. (3) explicitly and clearly constrains the agreement process to blind fairness. The agreement is constrained through the placement of the now infamous “veil of ignorance.” Rawls is positing value judgments on how *ought* the agreements and their consequent moral standards be made. The agreement process *ought* be universal, general, unconditional, binding, equal, and fair.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid 3

These moral constraints should produce moral agreements and eventually moral standards that are also universal, general, binding, equal, and fair. Evidently Rawls and Scanlon impose explicit value judgment in their ‘moral constraints.’ RSL strongly argues that if contractualists “import moral constraints” then “they effectively abandon [contractualism]” because the existence of “moral constraints that are conceptually and explanatorily prior [or antecedent] to the agents doing the construction” means that the offered ‘moral constraints’ are not the products of deliberation, agreement, or construction.<sup>9</sup>

The prior “moral motivations” or value-judgments that maintain moral constraints for both Rawls and Scanlon suggest “there would be moral facts or reasons that obtain independently of [contractualist] functions.”<sup>10</sup> If moral facts, moral standards, or value-judgments can be derived independent of contractualist functions then morality cannot be solely contingent on contractualist functions. The argument follows:

P1: Contractualism constructs moral standards and principles from a deliberative process with particular persons, circumstances, and constraints.

P2: Contractualism supposes the presence of certain moral constraints in the antecedent of time (T).

P3: Moral constraints require justification via value-judgments, moral standards, “moral motivations” or moral principles. (Mutual recognition, fairness, equality).

C1: There are value-judgments, moral standards, or moral principles that are antecedent to the deliberative process.

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<sup>9</sup> Shafer-Landau, Russ. "Moral realism: A defence." (2003): 42

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

C2: Value judgments, moral standards, and moral principles cannot be contingent on a deliberative process.

Contractualism is perceivably “limited when viewed as a normative theory” of ethics “insofar as it cannot itself specify what are the constraints of morality or provide an account of their acceptance or possession” when they are dependent on prior value-judgments, “moral motivations,” moral standards or moral principles.<sup>11</sup> Norman S. Care writes poignantly that the “central idea of contractualism is lost” when:

*...[T]he move from antecedent conditions to acceptance of principles is logically automatic in this way, and the antecedent conditions themselves include the presence of moral constraints, then (T) becomes an elaborate device for expressing views about the nature of morality that are logically prior to it. The theory itself thus becomes uninformative with respect to the nature of morality and the justification of moral criticisms of practices and institutions.<sup>12</sup>*

By virtue of constraining the agreement process to a deliberation that is fair, equal, or mutually recognizing Scanlon and Rawls concede that there are some logically prior moralities to their moral agreements and their respective processes. At this point even if Scanlon and Rawls conceded that there was some prior *agreement to agree* on the morality of the ‘moral constraints’ (absurd as it sounds) then this would create an infinite moral regress. There would need be an infinite number of moral agreements to satisfy both preceding and proceeding constraints. Even the simple semantic phrasing of Scanlon and Rawls that suggests that the moral agreement process require ‘moral constraints’ is itself necessarily an infinite regress. If morality is the product of the process then it cannot be used as a constraining tool to the same process.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid 2., p. 97

<sup>12</sup> Ibid 2., p. 101



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Contractualists must abandon ‘moral constraints.’ At the point contractualists abandon ‘moral constraints’ it is necessary to probe the possibility of ‘non-moral constraints.’ Despite staunch and quick dismissal of contractaulism RSL does concede that there *could* be a workable non-moral constraint but that the existing contractualists have left him unconvinced on that front.<sup>13</sup> At this stage ‘non-moral’ constraints are not logically precluded from a possible deliberative and agreeing process.

Contractualists Thomas Hobbes and David Gauthier do not include moral standards, moral elements, or “moral-motivations” in their idealizations of deliberative constraints. Cynthia Stark labels Hobbes and Gauthier agreements as “morally unconstrained” but this is a misstep.<sup>14</sup> While Hobbes and Gauthier propose a deliberative process that is technically “morally unconstrained” it would be more apt to suggest the agreement possesses ‘non-moral constraints.’ Gauthier argues *qua* Hobbes that there are in fact tenable rational constraints on moral agreements. These rational constraints exist as such that the constraints are not derived from any prior moralities but a rational necessity that facilitates the agreement itself.

To examine how rational constraints can and are part of a moral agreement process I will an example from the classics. In Book XII of the Iliad, Achilles calls for a heroic chariot race to honor the death of Patroclus. As the race intensifies the ever-glistening Antilochus, one of five entrants, attempts to overtake Menelaus. A “narrow” bridge or place had formed in the track where only a single chariot could functionally pass. As Menelaus approached the bridge Antilochus raced up to his side. Menelaus called out: “Antilochus, thou art driving recklessly...rein in thy horses! Here is the way straitened, but presently it will be wider for passing; lest haply thou work harm to us both by fouling my car.” Antilochus forges on causing

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid 9

<sup>14</sup> Ibid 5,. p. 315

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Menelaus, who was originally in front of him, to pull back and in the resulting events take third to Antilochus's disputed second place.<sup>15</sup> Moral theorist Malcolm Murray characterizes a competitive event like this as the Narrow Bridge Game.<sup>16</sup> The Narrow Bridge Game assumes an abstracted scenario where two chariots or two cars both approach a narrow space. How ought the two chariots or two cars proceed? How can we even begin to decide an appropriate outcome for the Narrow Bridge Game without an appropriate process?

Only one chariot can pass or disaster will ensue when both chariots simultaneously enter. If neither chariot passes each other then both will ostensibly lose. Both can't speed and both can't wait. The Narrow Bridge Game necessarily requires a choice or competitive allocation between one chariot over another. Maybe one chariot will have to wait and one will have to speed ahead. A seemingly non-arbitrary and objective solution could first in and first out. Time in this case could be an intuitively objective measuring stick. Despite reaching the Narrow Bridge second Antilochus dangerously cut off Menelaus. No matter the eventual agreed outcome, like first in and first out, the decision and resulting behavior of the chariots would require a previous agreement on behalf of the two or all racers.

The race serves as a theoretical representation of the agreement process and its fruition to moral deliberative. A contractualist argument for establishing what *ought* one do or *ought not* do is based on an agreement between rational individuals in constant competition like the Narrow Bridge. Hobbes argues that this "rational bargain" has to occur to deter, diminish, and squelch the "natural condition of War"<sup>17</sup> or what I will call simply here as competition. There is a "natural condition" of competition. The "natural condition" of War or competition is derived from an

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<sup>15</sup> Gagarin, Michael. "Antilochus' Strategy: The Chariot Race in Iliad 23." *Classical Philology* 78, no. 1 (1983): 35-39

<sup>16</sup> Murray, Malcolm, ed. *The moral wager: evolution and contract*. Vol. 108. Springer, 2007: p. 117

<sup>17</sup> Gauthier, David P. *Morals by agreement*. Oxford University Press, 1986: p.114

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existing inherent scarcity. Imagine scarcity in context of the bridge. In relation to the space on the bridge and the placement of the racers there is a fixed and finite resource that is accessible by a group of racers. That resource receives the status “scarc” at the point in which full possession of that resource can only be possessed by one agent. 1<sup>st</sup> place can only be fully possessed by one chariot. The space on the bridge can only be fully possessed by one chariot. There is a fixed space and finite placement ability between 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> etc. This is natural to the race and the Narrow Bridge. Generalizing the Narrow Bridge would suggest that agents always perceive others in some “least potential” of competition “for the goods that he needs for survival or for well-being.”<sup>18</sup>

This “natural” and endemic problem of competition instills a preference whereas an individual might prefer to dominate preemptively so as to gain early in this battle or race of scarcity. In a system conditioned by both scarcity and competition an agent would most likely prefer to dominate regardless of a zero-sum game. In a zero-sum game all agents would prefer to dominate. This preference is necessarily instilled in all agents who are facing a scarce resource amongst other agents. Coupling a preference to dominate and ‘win’ the competition of scarcity would correspondingly lead to a “natural condition” of “War” if not at least a propensity for escalation to violence. Preemption on all parties, asymmetry amongst competing agents, and any level of human error could reasonably and inevitably lead and trigger more severe forms of escalation and violence. To mitigate this “natural condition of War” and competition Hobbes argues that some “Article of Peace” or moral agreement must be made. “Articles of Peace” are our constrained agreements that avoid or mitigate “War” and escalation from competition. “Articles of Peace” are constrained agreements that avoid Narrow Bridge crashes. The

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid

antecedent question that haunted Rawls and Scanlon persists for Gauthier and Hobbes. What is the genesis and nature of (what I will label) *rational* constraints on the “Articles of Peace?” Rational constraints on “Articles of Peace” are literally intended ensure ‘Peace’. Rational constraints ensure that the literally agreeing and agreement process in the “Articles of Peace” will take place to begin with. In a “natural condition” of War and competition amongst possibly zero-sum game agents why would any person consent to constrain themselves to such a process of ‘Peace’?

Moral agreements are ultimately derived from what David Gauthier posits as those agreements that are “fully voluntary” and *ex ante* (before the event).<sup>19</sup> The choice cannot be a parametric choice. Meaning if there are other agents involved, or in the case of the Iliad other chariots in competition, the choice does not and cannot revolve around the single interests of one agent. Individual (A) doesn’t exclusively dictate the rules to the deliberative process that would in some means resolve the competitive scarcity over the proverbial resource be it food, money, or how to pass in the space of the Narrow Bridge. The choice shifts from parametric to universal strategic constraint so that the agent’s “behavior” is “but one variable among others” and thus “his choice must be responsive to the expectations of other’s choices, while their choices are similarly responsive to their expectations [I.e. *ex ante*].”<sup>20</sup>

This voluntary and *ex ante* agreement would require cooperation or other voluntary cooperative parties. In this sense K. Baier writes “the very *raison d’être* of a morality is to yield reasons which overrule the reasons of self-interest in those cases when everyone's following self-interest would be harmful to everyone.”<sup>21</sup> Yielding to others in a competitive scarce state requires acknowledgment of voluntary, *ex ante*, and cooperative agreement constraints. If the

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid 16, p. 9

<sup>20</sup> Ibid 16, p. 21

<sup>21</sup> K. Baier, *The Moral Point of View: A Rational Basis of Ethics* (Ithaca, NY, 1958): 309

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agreement process was not constrained to the voluntary and *ex ante* then other agents could not be expected to do the same. For example, if Antilochus was compelled to enter the agreement or did not consent to certain *ex ante* constraints in agreeing to the division of Narrow Bridge space prior to the pass then Menelaus would not expect any norm or moral standard to hold him to.

Menelaus would not expect Antilochus or any other competitor to agree to a proper or *normative* chariot maneuver at the bridge whereas in the original agreement process some of the competitors were coerced, did not agree to any or *ex ante* constraints, or there was no agreement to begin with. If there had been no constraints or no agreement at all then Antilochus would have preferred domination and maximized his own optimal outcome regardless of the other racers and agents. Menelaus could safely assume Antilochus would always cut ahead at the bridge whereas no constrained agreement or no agreement at all had occurred. Given this possible scenario of domination and the remaining scarcity of the space at the bridge Menelaus could likely predict that Antilochus would dangerously cut ahead. To which he did in the Iliad. Given plausible racing scenarios Menelaus could 1) pull back to minimize harm potential to both parties (To which he did in the Iliad) or 2) take advantage of the danger now present and maximize the harm potential to the opposing racer. *Rational* constraints prevent Narrow Bridge crashes. In the original story Menelaus had assumed in his strategic choice that Antilochus would willingly and preemptively let the first driver at the Narrow Bridge into the fixed space. Menelaus was too was expected to allow the first driver be it himself or any other chariot. The expectation of first in and first out most likely came from an unspoken agreement between racers that entailed regardless of each respective racer's intent to win that all drivers would be willing to let safety supersede speed at certain points.

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Menelaus is a 'rational' agent in this case because he assumingly internalized and affirmed the constraint to his own optimal outcomes in the effort to promote mutual benefit and safety to himself. If however, all agents engage in the Narrow Bridge Game like Antilochus then from this point out there is no reason to enter the agreement process whatsoever. Pulling on tenets of mutually assured destruction and game theory, *rational* constraints are mechanisms and means to assure that the "Articles of Peace" take place to begin with. Otherwise Narrow Bridges Games have no meaning or order in relation to their competing chariots. This is not to suggest a normative moral telos that desires 'Peace.' The "Articles of Peace" cannot be expected to occur if there are not *rational* constraints that incentivize the joining of the 'Peace' process itself.

This antecedent *rational* constraint is bound of course in rational faculties. Gauthier and Hobbes would have that '*I ought* constrain my optimal choices in an agreeing process and that '*I ought*' equally allow others to participate in process by constraining my own time. That *I* applies to all agreeing agents. A *rational* constraint on an agreement might require all agents to consent to some minimization of their optimal choices in the agreeing process. A *rational* constraint on an agreement might require all agents to consent to abdication of time for personal advocacy that would ensure equal time for all. These constraints are not necessary to the process because of some "moral motivation" that compels that process but because said constraints on myself AND others would incentivize individuals in a possibly zero-sum "natural condition" of War to engage in the agreeing process. This use of *ought* is no different than positing that "*I ought* turn on the car to pull out of the drive way." In this fashion the *ought* becomes at most a logically conditional tool that espouses no normative morality. The counterfactual facing these agents, an unconstrained and unagreeing world of 'War', is a world of preemptive dominating engagement

(look to Antilochus) where ‘might is right’ would most likely prevail and duly crush weaker competitors.

That counterfactual world is not morally ‘bad’ or ‘wrong’. To concede that the counterfactual world is not “preferable” would indict the analysis above. This is a problem that could potentially plague Hobbes and Gauthier. In Gauthier and Hobbes’ “natural” rhetorical dichotomy there may seem an antecedent moral presumption that ‘Peace’ is preferable to ‘War.’ If *rational* constraints were placed on agreeing processes to avoid the horrors of ‘War’ and conversely maximize the blessings of ‘Peace’ then this constraint justification would be no better than ‘moral constraints’ founded in some utilitarian framework. To save “rational” constraints from these antecedent moral presumptions Gauthier and Hobbes would need to successfully argue that there is a “non-moral” reason to prefer ‘Peace’ over ‘War’. The plausible argument and resulting answer against this problem of “non-moral” reasons relies on the descriptive elements of Gauthier and Hobbes’ contractualism: <sup>22</sup>

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P1: Scarcity is an inherent condition of a co-occupied world.<sup>23</sup>

P2: Societal occupants are rational beings.

P3: Scarcity demands competition between rational beings.<sup>24</sup>

C1: There are scarcity-competitions in a co-occupied world.

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<sup>22</sup> This descriptive argument does not rely on empirically verifiable observations that would be required of a sociologist or social psychologist. Game theory in similar fashion assumes specific and self-evident parameters while predicting abstract behavior *based and internal* to those original parameters.

<sup>23</sup> (P1) A fixed set of resources are “inherently” scarce at the point of 2+ persons

<sup>24</sup> (P3) Antilochus and Menelaus faced a “scarce” space being that of the bridge. Rational beings know that full and equal access of a scarce resource is mutually exclusive. The “scarce” source now must be divided in some way or given to one agent as a whole. No matter the structure of the competition, competition results nonetheless.

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P4: Asymmetrical scarcity-competitions are plausible and possible.

P5: By definition, asymmetrical competition favors scarcity victories for a few over many.<sup>25</sup>

C2: Asymmetrical scarcity-competitions do not benefit a majority of ‘competitors.’

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P7: Asymmetrical scarcity-competitions are *more* plausible and *more* possible in a society *necessarily* lacking morality.<sup>26</sup>

C3: At the point asymmetrical scarcity-competitions are more possible and that statistically they favor a few chanced competitors, a rational competitor *ought* at least prefer symmetrical competition or ‘peace’ful resolution.<sup>27</sup>

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The “natural” condition of ‘War’ is contingent on scarcity-competition and the perceptions of the competitors *qua* competitors. To absolve the sins of chanced asymmetrical force and the resulting escalation there need be ‘Peace’ agreements. A rational individual *ought* prefer ‘Peace’ agreements and thus ‘Peace’ so as to maximize their potential competitive status. Maximizing potential competitive status requires *rational* constraints. The counterfactual or alternative permits or increases the possibility of a world in which asymmetrical forces would *probably* or *be likely* to undermine a given random competitor’s competitive status. I *ought*

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<sup>25</sup>(P5) If a competition is asymmetrical then there would be some monopoly of force or violence favoring a few that would disproportionately receive scarce resources due to their monopoly.

<sup>26</sup> (P7) Remember that prior to the contractualist agreement there are no morals and most likely no rules or laws (Assuming one legal theory there is a non-separability between morality and the law). Pure chance suggests that some individuals will have stronger physical or mental faculties. Arbitrarily the competition would favor ‘might is right’ seeing as there are no legal or moral ways to resolving competing co-occupants.

<sup>27</sup> (C2, P7)



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prefer 'Peace' over 'War' because I am a *rational competitor*. As a *rational competitor* in competition with other rational competitors *I ought* make 'Peace' agreements that would facilitate 'Peace' and mitigate 'War.' I am a *rational competitor* and *ought* place constraints on the agreeing parties, including myself, so as to ensure that others will participate in the 'Peace' agreement.

An agent or chariot racer may be *rational* in the constraints of a moral agreement at the point in which they accept and expect others to constrain their optimal choices while simultaneously constraining their own optimal choice matrix. Regardless if the constraints look like the ones above or in some similar form these constraints are justified in rational faculties and not in the depths of infinite moral regress. Constraints on agreeing processes are not justified by value-judgments, "moral motivations," or moral standards but must be derived from a *rational* pursuit. In natural scarcity-competitions agents would otherwise not participate in a 'Peace' agreement unless there were *rational* constraints on all agents involved. *Rational* constraints facilitate and incentivize the agreement process to which creates moral agreement and consequently prevents Narrow Bridge crashes. Contractualism allows for tenable and non-moral *rational* constraints.