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# PEGASUS

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE CAUX ROUND TABLE FOR MORAL CAPITALISM  
NETWORK LOOKING AT BUSINESS ABOVE THE CLUTTER AND CONFETTI



# *Pegasus*

Introduction by Michael Hartoonian	Page 2
College Sports and the Demise of the Academy by Richard D. Van Scotter	Page 3
Lost in Translation: What Do We Mean by Justice? by Michael Hartoonian	Page 8
Various Cartoons	Page 12

# Introduction

Today's realities might best be discussed in the light of our understanding of justice. The concept has been rendered almost meaningless with attempts to turn a virtue like justice into contextual political slogans. We are at the point today where public servants and even leaders of institutions of higher learning cannot distinguish among questions of morality, politics and administration, believing that justice is social justice and not realizing the redundancy therein. A similar confusion is witnessed with notions of restorative or distributive justice. Are these simply ways of refusing to deal with the truth of justice? That truth will never be revealed if we continue to make horrendous categorical mistakes about the nature of virtue, from manners to morality. Here, we will take a closer look at justice, as well as its implications for social harmony, accountability and true wealth creation.

Richard Van Scotter has us think about this unhealthy condition through the lens of college football. College football in America is an example of a mad run from any moral sense and purpose to activities of greed and loss of identity. A similar argument can be made regarding professional sports of all kinds around the world. Whatever athletic competition may have once meant, any hint of nobility is gone and we are left with an empty soul.

Given this is the last issue of the year, we thought we'd lighten the mood a bit by also including some cartoons for your viewing pleasure.

Lastly, we want to give you a "heads-up" to an upcoming, special issue of *Pegasus* that will address the breathtaking news about dysphoria spreading like a virus across America. To this point, we will implicitly ask: what has caused this dis-ease and is there anything to be done? Have we lost our courage and leadership to imagine a world that embraces Plato's trilogy of courage, prudence and justice? Have we become so myopic that we have simply given up on others and ourselves?

This special issue will feature a compilation of charts, graphs and polling results documenting stressful developments emerging over the last 20 plus years among Americans in their culture, society, economy and politics. These data permit us to consider and ponder connections between causes and effects in the growth and decline of American social, institutional and human capital. Assets and human capital will be the focus of our January issue.

*Michael Hartoonian*  
*Associate Editor*  
*Pegasus*

# College Sports and the Demise of the Academy

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*The moral link between the economy and our culture has been broken*

**Richard D. Van Scotter**

Texas A&M University is paying its head football coach Jimbo Fisher roughly \$77 million to go away, after a losing 2022 season, reports USA Today Sports. Should you be puzzled, the coach's birth name is John James. The family reportedly had too many "Jims," which hardly explains the conundrum. It's probably a southern thing.

Beginning in 2010, Jimbo had been a successful head coach at Florida State University, even winning a national championship. In 2018, he was lured away by the Texas land-grant school.

The coach was awarded a ten-year contract worth \$75 million. In 2021, Texas A&M extended his contract for four years through 2031, at an annual salary of over \$9 million. Then, the hammer came down after a losing effort in 2022 and lackluster performance this year. Fisher was fired in the middle of the 2023 season. For this decision, the university will pay the ex-coach an inane bounty.

Jimbo is not the highest paid big-time football coach. It may be no surprise that Alabama's Nick Saban tops the list at \$11.4 million annually, while five other head coaches exceed \$10 million. Jimbo was only 7<sup>th</sup> on this list. The Southeast Conference (SEC), another shocker, leads the big spending, with six schools in the top 10. All pay head coaches nine million dollars plus annually.

These coaches are public employees and their paydays speak loudly about the priorities of American society and nature of our culture. In a recent tally, sports coaches are the highest paid public employees in 40 states. This is comprised of 27 football coaches, 13 basketball coaches and 1 hockey coach. The leftover ten include five college presidents, medical school administrators and a law school dean.

*Television's New Bonanza.* Where is this money generated? Ultimately, the source is you and I who willfully spend time tuned into the surfeit of college football games that adorn our television screens, nearly every day of the week, as well as all day and night on Saturdays. Our viewing, in turn, creates an abundance of advertising revenue.

Football is not alone in this pursuit. Basketball is the other major revenue college sport that, we are told, makes it possible for "minor sports" to exist. I personally find women's volleyball to be a cascade of action, excitement and athleticism. Its revenue flow, however, is minimal for the primary reason that the "flow of game" is sacrosanct and commercials would be disruptive.

The same can be said for soccer, where persistent game stoppage, for marketing, is not tolerated. Such is not so, particularly for football, where interruptions extend a 60-minute game on average to 3 hours and 22 minutes. Aside from penalties and injuries, most of this is product advertising.

Men's college basketball coaches' salaries are not far behind football's, with Kentucky's John Calipari's \$8.1 million in 2023 topping the list. Women's salaries are not nearly as eye-popping, with 11 coaches earning over \$1 million annually, but they are increasing rapidly.

The argument and justification for such profligacy is that this goldmine funds the many other intercollegiate sports on our university and college campuses. This is uniquely American in that competitive school athletes in other countries engage in club sports. The effect on their campus lives is marginal and the academic community minimal. In the U.S., sporting contests too often are disruptive. The more colleges and high school students attend to games, the more it impedes academics.

College athletes are beginning to share in the bounty through what's referred to as name, image and likeness. They, too, can earn money now from endorsements, sponsorships and commercial opportunities. This seems only fair in that they are "players" on the stage fundamentally responsible for bringing dollars to the schools and sporting enterprises. But it can be disruptive to team morale and players enticed to transfer schools.

Such is particularly the case at our mega-universities that have been transformed into entertainment centers resembling more the Mall of America than citadels of learning. Although much campus life is built around entertaining the clientele, intercollegiate sports is the centerpiece. And it is costly to families and regular students, adding to the growing expense of higher education.



I'm reminded of an aspect of this counterproductive atmosphere related to me by a friend and doctoral candidate in the veterinary medicine school of a land-grant school in the SEC. It happens, he explained, when attempting to do laboratory work during a football game that electricity is sucked to the stadium.

*The Controlling Leverage of (Television) the Media.* When I was young, yes that was decades ago, high school football contests were sacrosanct on Friday nights, college football reserved for Saturday afternoon and professional games on Sundays. The college games, green and grassy, as they were, started at 1:30 p.m. for virtually all schools across the nation.

The expansion of television has found a willing audience in our so-called institutions of higher learning, who saw a “cash cow” at the end of their gridiron and hardcourt rainbows. Division I football games now are conducted on weeknights and throughout Saturdays, from early in the morning to well into the evening. In fact, early gameday programs, designed to captivate fans, rotate among major universities and begin prior to the wall-to-wall coverage on Saturday morning.

The length of seasons, particularly for the big revenue sports, have expanded over the years with cable television. The National Collegiate Athletic Association’s (NCAA) men’s and women’s basketball tournament involves 68 teams each year over several weeks adding sizable travel expenses for participating schools, as well as taking time away from classes for the athletes. All this deeply enriches the NCAA.

The extended football season, elaborate playoff calendar and convoluted bowl schedule, in the pursuit of the almighty legal tender, make for extravagant entertainment.

Once upon a time, the New Year’s Day bowl games respected tradition and showcased excellence, but no longer.

The Rose Bowl, “granddaddy of all,” dates to 1902, highlighted by a classic Rose parade. During the 1930s, four more joined: Orange, Sugar, Sun and Cotton, with the Citrus or Tangerine Bowl added in 1946. All were played in balmy weather, to full houses.



Then, television took command and the numbers metastasized like cancer. The 2023-24 bowl schedule/playoff season kicks off on December 16, with 43 games ending January 8. Over these 23 days, some games are played in lousy weather, many before embarrassingly small crowds and most with corporate names.

The labels are telling – Lockheed Martin Armed Forces Bowl, Root Claim Boca Raton Bowl, Guaranteed Rate Bowl, TaxAct Texas Bowl, Pop

Tart Bowl, Direct TV Holiday Bowl and the Barstool Sports Arizona Bowl.

The list goes on and is entertaining, but its message is clear: the taint of commercialism has superseded the sweetness of fruit and flowers.

All this is yet another example of our once rich *culture* regressing primarily into an *economy*.

*Innocence Lost.* College fans are waking up and beginning to understand the corrupting effect of television, particularly on football and basketball, that “trickle down” to so-called minor sports’ programs. This came “home to roost” when the universities of Oklahoma and Texas left the Big 12 conference to join the SEC beginning in 2024, creating a 16-team super conference that is destined to grow larger. With it comes mega-TV money for its member schools.

Predictably, the Big Ten Conference followed, adding the University of Southern California (USC) and UCLA, who abandoned the Pac 12 to form another 16-team super conference. Follow the money!

Shortly thereafter, the universities of Oregon and Washington saw which way the winds blow and succumbed to the appeal of green currency. The PAC 12 was unraveling! It was Colorado’s turn next to abandon the conference and follow the money. In short order, Utah, Arizona and Arizona State also high-tailed it to the Big 12 conference.

For now, the Oregon State Beavers and Washington State Cougars are left with nowhere to go.

The expanded Big Ten has television and recruiting markets coast-to-coast. The conference signed media rights’ deals with FOX, NBC and CBS that will bring in more than \$7 billion over the next seven years. The new contract will push the Big Ten beyond the SEC in terms of revenue.



It won’t stop here. More conference consolidations and realignments will follow, attempting to seize TV money. The losers, in one respect, are devoted fans, who find their cherished revelries diminished. Ironically, it is what they wanted and deserve in craving more and more televised games, chased by advertising dollars.

Those of us tuned into the games are enablers. Even if you are one who walks away from the seductive big screen for three or more minutes during the commercials, it doesn’t matter. The networks have won. It’s all about clicks!

*The Damage is Extensive and Deep.* The money may be forthcoming, but athletes in so-called minor sports – women’s swimming, softball, track & field, lacrosse, ice hockey, cross-country and, yes, wrestling, along with the myriad of men’s sports, are now obliged to travel across the country for contests that had been confined to regional travel. This, for example,

involved an expedient, timely bus trip from Madison to Iowa City or Bloomington to East Lansing.

Extensive travel is disruptive to and taxing on athletes' academic and personal lives, not to mention that of family and friends who want to follow their games. I say athletes because the term "student-athlete" is a distortion of reality and corruption of the truth. It is hyperbole manufactured by the NCAA and university administrators attempting to disguise what is debasing the academy.

The answer to this challenge is to become a radical in the sense of going to the root of the issue. For our universities and colleges, it means devolving to Division III sports programs, where demands on students are circumscribed and athletic scholarships eliminated.

I hold no illusions that downsizing will take place. We have increasingly become a profligate, entertainment-drenched society, beholden to the god of greed. It is said that the NFL is America's national religion with, I add, our colleges and universities serving at its altar.

Still, there is the potential, if not probability, for change.

*Precedence for Reform.* In the late 1930s, University of Chicago President Robert Maynard Hutchins decided that big-time college football and the university's commitment to academics was incompatible. The university abolished its football program in 1939. This was no trivial matter. Chicago had belonged to the Big Ten conference since its inception in 1899, had a formidable record over early decades and sported the first Heisman Trophy winner in 1936 with halfback Jay Berwanger.

Football returned to the University of Chicago in 1963 as a club sport, which was upgraded to varsity status in 1969. The Maroons began competing in Division III in 1973. Today, they are a member of the Midwest Conference, competing with such schools as Beloit, Coe, Grinnell, Knox, Lake Forest, Lawrence and Ripon.

The university has hardly suffered maintaining alumni support over the years and is one of our nation's finest universities. In our current era, however, many university presidents are subservient to the head football or basketball coach, who don't owe, but have controlling interests in the institution. Precious few resilient presidents exist, with most morphing into fundraisers and feckless figure heads.

To paraphrase lyrics of song writers Simon and Garfunkel, "Where have you gone Robert Hutchins?"

"A nation turns its lonely eyes to you."

*Richard D. Van Scotter is a cultural critic and writer living in Longmont, Colorado. He was a Division III athlete at Beloit College.*



# Lost in Translation

## *What Do We Mean by Justice?*

Michael Hartoonian



***“Curiouser and curiouser.”***  
-Alice...in wonderland

As with Alice, we find ourselves in strange circumstances today, all of our own making, where concepts that should underpin civilization have morphed into slogans rendering humankind intellectually impotent and morally broken.

### **Introduction**

The world is dangerous and chaotic. Always was and always will be. Thus, today, as in times past, we find ourselves at war with one another in so many ways that it would be tedious to count them. We all think that God is on our side, knowing full well that religion, formal and informal, has been the main rationale for war from the time one group of people started thinking they were better than another group of people. It may be a truism to say that we need something in which to believe. It may also be true that when it comes to beliefs today, the issue is that we are confronted with insurmountable opportunities.

In this essay, we will look at justice, its meaning and how the term is used and misused. To anyone who has paid attention, the need to amend justice’s meaning is not hard to understand. From Sophocles’ Antigone and her disobedience of the laws of King Creon, to the struggles for women’s rights to civil rights, the law has often been at odds with justice. These unethical and immoral laws and attending behaviors have led honorable people to modify justice. But altering a fundamental precept of civilization without a deep understanding of its meaning and purpose, can also lead a people away from justice.

Let’s start with a symbol. One of the most recognizable representations of justice is derived most directly from the Greek Themis and the Roman Justicia, both goddesses of “the just way.” The symbol is a woman dressed in a toga or wrapped in philosophy. There is a snake under her foot, representing evil and she is blindfolded, owning no deference to outside influences. In one hand, she holds a scale, depicting fairness and truth and in the other, a sword, making it clear that justice is powerful in its administration of sanctions against corruption of any kind. Justice claims two important prerequisites – consequences and responsibility. These two concepts give justice its dynamic and historic significance.

## Freedom of Will and One's Inner Law

In our daily lives, justice seems to be about power. In trials, even for the prosecution of war crimes, one must always be aware of power and not be confused by the ethical character of those holding power. Power does not necessarily correlate with the right or the good because the good or just society is defined in the ethical make-up of the individuals therein and the moral reservoir of that society. For justice to happen, individuals must practice reason, be governed by ethics and have the freedom of conscience to express, create and sustain the ideals of prudence, harmony and balance, writ large. For example, if an individual's wife is raped, the husband will, perhaps should, simply want to kill the rapist. But a just society can do better. In a just land, society will prosecute the crime, absent any preference toward power. However, that society must be made-up of ethical individuals – at least some proportion of people must be ethical and understand that justice, power and politics are different concepts, with different etymologies and different applications.

## A Deep Confusion



Given the moral weakness of people, particularly of those in power, we have come to believe that there should be many modifications to the concept of justice – restorative, distributive, procedural, social and so forth. We must be careful here because these categories of justice can diminish reason and justice itself.

Over time, we have certainly seen changes in the meaning of words and changes in words themselves. But that does not mean that you or any ideology can make a word mean whatever you want it to mean. There are fundamental concepts that transcend time and culture, suggesting more sustainable meanings for human motive values. I would have you consider truth, citizen, aesthetics, ethics, courage, trust and justice.

Thus, when you use a concept like “social” justice, are you saying that justice is, essentially and necessarily, not social and therefore, we must tell people that it is social? This is like asking if morality is possible within a set of one. Morality is social, necessarily. Perhaps the word “social” is simply a political marker, suggesting that justice can be modified to mean anything that a political group wants it to mean? These word games are dangerous to justice, but let's go further. What about the “just war?” What about justice and the randomness of geography and family?

Some have argued, like Thoreau, that each person must be their own judge and through education/learning, develop a conscience of responsibility. Such a conscience would be capable of self-governance. On the other hand, Plato argued that justice was a group or

community issue and in its execution, needed both individual consciences and because of human nature, a dynamic set of norms and expectations. Webster says that justice is the quality of right relations. That is, justice is social reason and rightful behavior. Out of this, we might conclude that justice is the condition where (each) members of society (should) perform their duties to each other and because of those performed duties, enjoy their rights. Or to put it more bluntly, law must be aligned with morality and justice is its measure of quality. Along with beauty and truth, justice is the measure of our humanity.

Around the world, there are those among us who want to modify the concept of justice to fit their own desires, absent considerations of the larger community. These attempts are political at best and more often, they are the bizarre belief that the practice of injustice by the powerful few can be comfortable and profitable. This kind of thinking confuses and pushes many people from justice. Justice is justice. It does not need to be modified. It's like saying: "That's very unique." No, it's just unique. In like manner, the addition of "social" to justice adds nothing, unless you believe that context justifies everything.

## **The Way of Justice**

Justice, unlike other disciplines of the human mind, like economics or physics, is a disclosure concept. Disclosure concepts are not descriptive miniatures, neither are they picture enlargements. Disclosure points to mystery, to the need to live as best we can with uncertainties.

Disclosure concepts make extensive use of narrative modes of explanation and rely upon metaphoric language for extensional potential. These concepts see no intrinsic value in reductionism or in the simple-minded notion that if something is non-quantifiable, it doesn't exist. Most of all, the disclosure argues for the need, in any method that deals with people, to provide insight into ourselves.

When the application of justice is made to civil or criminal crimes, dereliction of duty or even war, it becomes necessary to employ the disclosure. While empiricism is often applied to the law (for example, see Justice Louis Brandeis and his use of data), justice is something more than the law. It is, with an apology to Voltaire, a construct of how humans can overcome their baser instincts. The way of justice is, for the most part, based on history (precedents). But justice is more than precedents. It is the whole of history, seen through the prism of individual stories of applied ethics and social morality. The German poet and scientist, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, suggested the standard of justice when he said: "If a man does not have 5,000 years at his disposal, he lives from hand to mouth."



Goethe understood, as all who study the histories of people, that we have always lived and still live in cycles of violence. The purpose of justice is to break that cycle. We have not been very successful, perhaps the reason being that we do not take the necessary deep dive into history and into ourselves – individually and collectively.

Some have made the claim that the arc of history is bending toward ethics (see M. Shermer and others) and doing so because of science. Except for the very few, I see no arc bending toward ethics. I see most people trying to escape freedom, personal responsibility and embrace comfort.

Today, we have at our service trend data (think AI), historical context, reason, ethics and Goethe's 5,000 years, if you will. Justice means understanding time horizons reflected in morality. From Ukraine to Gaza; from national politics (the failure to embrace the idea of public trust), to the gross ignorance of the world's leaders and people regarding real wealth and happiness, we have fashioned a world unfriendly to justice.

## Conclusion

At the beginning and in the end, for both the individual and society, the essence of justice is to see life with sensitive eyes that behold the fulness of what it means to be a moral human being.

*Michael Hartoonian is Associate Editor of Pegasus.*



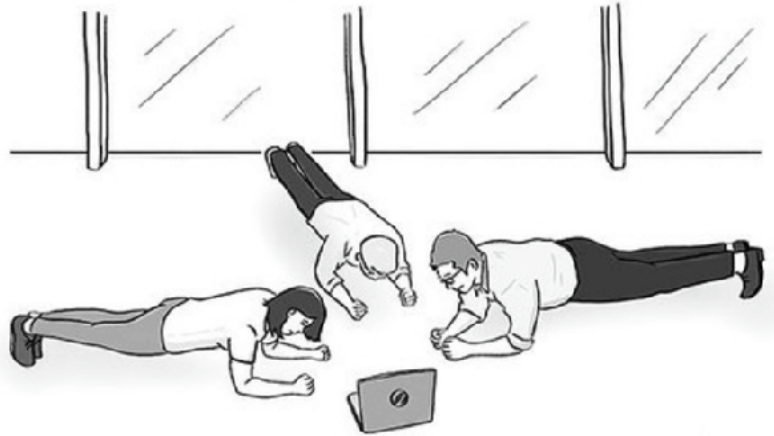


WINTER  
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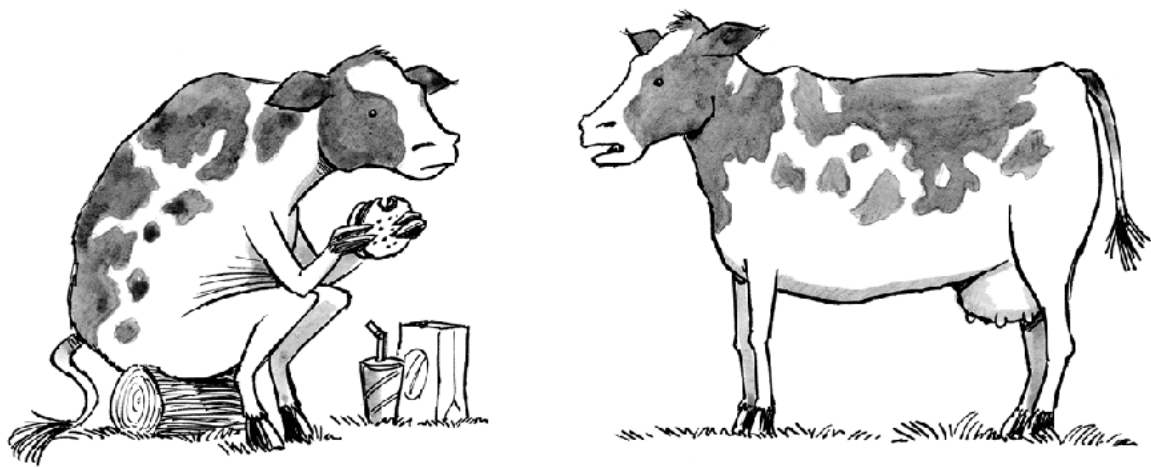
SUMMER  
JACKET

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IN SPRING, WHEN  
IT IS SUNNY BUT NOT  
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## HOW TO RUN SHORT & EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

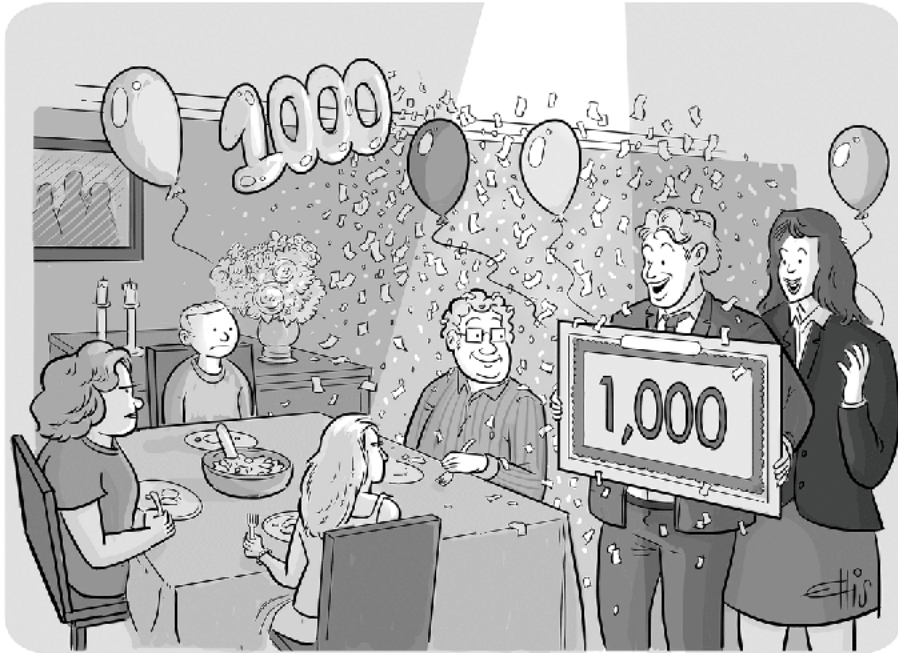


SAM LAU



JOEDATOR

*"I don't care if it's plant-based, you're creeping everyone out."*



*"Congratulations! You've told the same joke one thousand times!"*

PROUD OF HERSELF FOR "NEVER OWNING A TV," EMILY WATCHES EIGHT EPISODES OF A MEDIOCRE TV SHOW ON HER LAPTOP WHILE IN BED.





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