**How do we measure whether life is fair or not?**

**Does it depend on whose perspective you’re considering?**

-When something happens to YOU versus SOMEONE ELSE

Consider this situation:

In Europe, a woman was near death from cancer. One drug might save her, a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The druggist was charging $2,000, ten times what the drug cost him to make. The sick woman’s husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said, “No.” The husband got desperate and broke into the man’s store to steal the drug for his wife.

Should the husband have stolen the drug? Why?

Is the husband’s act of stealing the drug fair? Why?

Is the druggist being fair? Why?

Is the society fair? Why?

Now consider this situation:

In 1842, a ship struck an iceberg and more than 30 survivors were crowded into a lifeboat intended to hold 7. As a storm threatened, it became obvious that the lifeboat would have to be lightened if anyone were to survive. The captain reasoned that the right thing to do in this situation was to force some individuals to go over the side and drown. Such an action, he reasoned, was not unjust to those thrown overboard, for they would have drowned anyway. If he did nothing, however, he would be responsible for the deaths of those whom he could have saved. Some people opposed the captain's decision. They claimed that if nothing were done and everyone died as a result, no one would be responsible for these deaths. On the other hand, if the captain attempted to save some, he could do so only by killing others and their deaths would be his responsibility; this would be worse than doing nothing and letting all die. The captain rejected this reasoning. Since the only possibility for rescue required great efforts of rowing, the captain decided that the weakest would have to be sacrificed. In this situation it would be absurd, he thought, to decide by drawing lots who should be thrown overboard. As it turned out, after days of hard rowing, the survivors were rescued and the captain was tried for his action.

Should the **captain** have thrown some individuals over the side? Why?

Was the captain being fair? Why?

Imagine you are the **survivor**. Was the situation fair?

Imagine you are a person about to get thrown overboard. Is the situation fair?

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Source:

<http://www.conneautschools.org/userfiles/1169/Classes/17189/Kohlbergs%20Moral%20Dev%20stages.pdf>