

# Justice, Tolerance and Information: an Unstable Triangle



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**INTRODUCTION**

**FRAMEWORK: POLITICS IN HYPERHISTORY**

**NORMS AS AGENTS**

**THE DESIGN OF NORMS**

**JUSTICE AND TOLERANCE**

**JUSTICE, TOLERANCE,  
AND INFORMATION**

# FRAMEWORK: POLITICS IN HYPERHISTORY



Bob is inside.  
He is violently forced to move outside.



Alice is outside.  
She is violently forced to move inside.

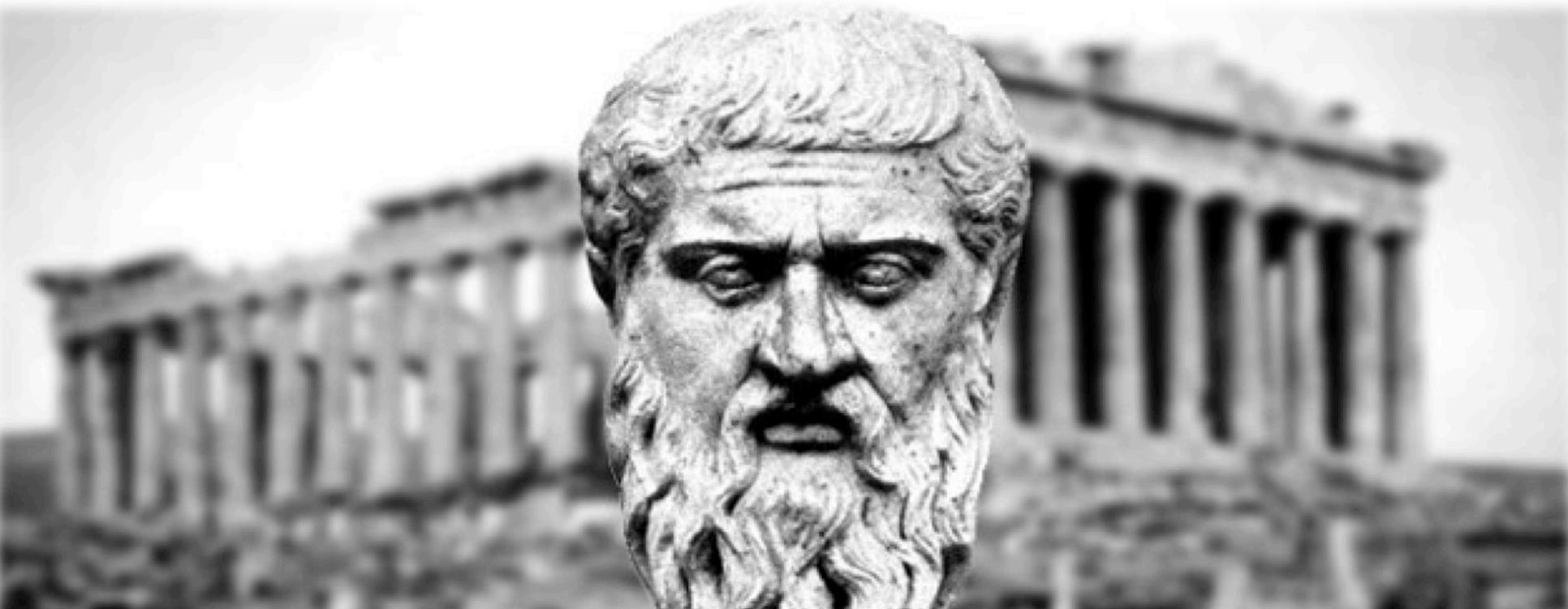
The **violent forcing** is called **ἀναγκάζοι**

## **Ἀνάγκη**

- 1) force, constraint, necessity (Homer)
- 2) actual force, violence, torture (Herodotus)
- 3) bodily pain, anguish, distress (Sophocles).

# FRAMEWORK: POLITICS IN HYPERHISTORY

[...] **compelled ἀναγκάζοιτο** to stand up suddenly and turn his head around and walk and to lift up his eyes to the light, and in doing all this felt pain and, because of the dazzle and glitter of the light, was unable to discern the objects whose shadows he formerly saw. Plato, *Republic*, 7.515c



# FRAMEWORK: POLITICS IN HYPERHISTORY



Then the master told his servant, “Go out to the roads and country lanes and **compel ἀνάγκασον** them to come in, so that my house will be full”.  
*Luke 14:23*  
New International Version.

# FRAMEWORK: POLITICS IN HYPERHISTORY

*Prehistory*

History

Hyperhistory



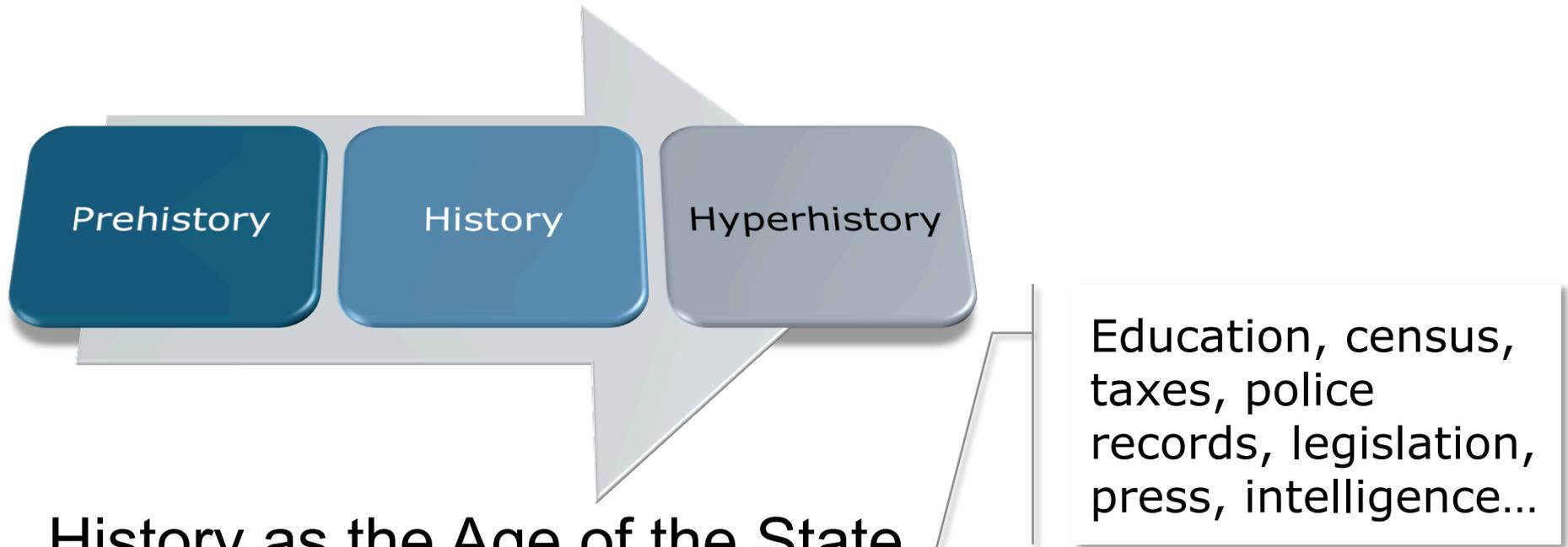
❑ No ICTs

❑ Individual and social well-being connected with ICT

❑ Individual and social well-being dependent on ICT



# FRAMEWORK: POLITICS IN HYPERHISTORY



History as the Age of the State.

The State as *the* Information Agent.

Hyperhistory as the Age of Multiagent Systems (MASs).

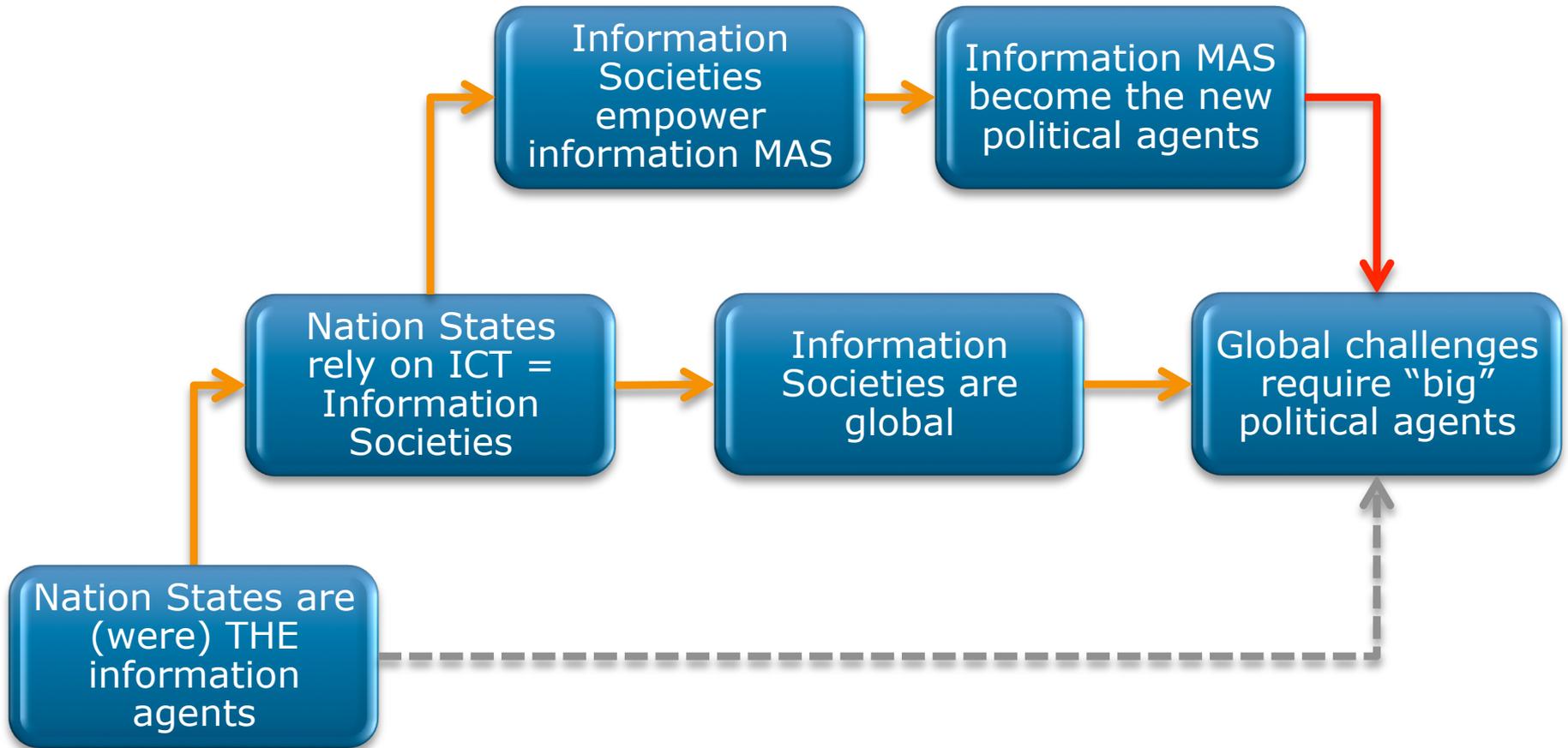
MASs, no longer the State, as *the* Information Agent.

# FRAMEWORK: POLITICS IN HYPERHISTORY

**The Peace of Westphalia (1648).**  
End of the Thirty Years' War and the Eighty Years' War. New system of political order in Europe: sovereign states (physical and legal space overlap) governed by sovereigns, who control the physical force.

**No post-Westphalian order yet.**  
Uncertainty about MAS' interactions and conflicts. Wide phenomenon: empowering of non-State organisations (corporations, NGOs), and the economic vs. social control of politics (Occupy movement).

# FRAMEWORK: POLITICS IN HYPERHISTORY



# FRAMEWORK: POLITICS IN HYPERHISTORY

**States become Information Societies which empower a variety of new MASs which transform centralised Government into distributed Governance.**



# FRAMEWORK: POLITICS IN HYPERHISTORY



No “end of history” but hyperhistory: modern politics based on Sovereign States (Westphalian system) and Universal Human Rights (Enlightenment) is insufficient.



# FRAMEWORK: POLITICS IN HYPERHISTORY



In hyperhistory, the political problem becomes: how can we design the right MASs (including Sovereign States but not only them)?



MASs are constituted by rules/norms.

MASs are constituted by norms.

How can we design the right norms as agents constituting the MAS required to deal with the global problems facing information societies today?

# NORMS AS AGENTS

MASs are constituted by rules/norms.

How can we design the right norms as agents constituting the MAS required to deal with the global problems facing the information society today?

Norms as teleological agents, have a structure designed (neither discovered nor invented) according to requirements, specified on the basis of available resources and desired functions, in view of an ultimate **purpose**.

Pragmatic function (action-shaping communication):  
norms regulate social behaviour in order to

## Norms

- ✓ resolve conflicts
- ✓ improve co-existence
- ✓ help coordination, collaboration, and fair competition

Historically, three ultimate purposes of a system of norms as an agent:

**Norms**

- ☑ peaceful society
- ☑ tolerant society
- ☑ just society
- ☑ free society

# JUSTICE AND TOLERANCE

Tolerance    Peace    Liberty    Justice

**Locke**  $T \rightarrow P$

adding together  
consequents of the  
same antecedent

**Mill**  $T \rightarrow L$

$(T \rightarrow L \wedge P)$

**Rawls:**  $(\neg T \rightarrow \neg J)$

contraposition true  
only if original  
implication true

# JUSTICE AND TOLERANCE

$$(J \rightarrow T) \wedge (T \rightarrow L \wedge P)$$

- What is the relation between **T** and **J**?
- Does one deliver the other, or are both **T** and **J** necessary in order to deliver **L** and **P**?
- Can **T** be delivered? (Paradox of Tolerance)
- When **J** seems to deliver **T**, is it because the concept of **J** is so wide as to include **T** already? (delivery as mere unpacking).
- What can deliver **J**?

# JUSTICE AND TOLERANCE

**Tolerance** is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought. A theory however elegant and economical must be rejected or revised if it is untrue; likewise laws and institutions no matter how efficient and well-arranged must be reformed or abolished if they are **intolerant**. Each person possesses an inviolability founded on **tolerance** that even the welfare of society as a whole cannot override. For this reason **tolerance** denies that the loss of freedom for some is made right by a greater good shared by others. It does not allow that the sacrifices imposed on a few are outweighed by the larger sum of advantages enjoyed by many. Therefore in a **tolerant** society the liberties of equal citizenship are taken as settled; the rights secured by **tolerance** are not subject to political bargaining or to the calculus of social interests. The only thing that permits us to acquiescence in an erroneous theory is the lack of a better one; analogously, an **intolerance** is just only when it is necessary to avoid an even greater **intolerance**. Being first virtues of human activities, truth and **tolerance** are uncompromising.

# JUSTICE AND TOLERANCE

**Justice** is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought. A theory however elegant and economical must be rejected or revised if it is untrue; likewise laws and institutions no matter how efficient and well-arranged must be reformed or abolished if they are **unjust**. Each person possesses an inviolability founded on **justice** that even the welfare of society cannot override. For this reason **justice** does not admit of a calculus of freedom for some is made right by the loss of freedom for others. It does not allow that the good shared by others is outweighed by the good imposed on a few are outweighed by the sum of advantages enjoyed by many. The liberties of equal citizenship are not to be settled; the rights secured by **justice** are not subject to political bargaining or to the calculus of social interests. The only thing that permits us to acquiescence in an erroneous theory is the lack of a better one; analogously, an **injustice** is **tolerable** only when it is necessary to avoid an even greater injustice. Being first virtues of human activities, truth and **justice** are uncompromising.

**Rawls (1999), A Theory of Justice, pp. 3-4**

# JUSTICE, TOLERANCE, AND INFORMATION

$$(U \rightarrow J) \wedge (J \rightarrow T) \wedge (T \rightarrow L \wedge P)$$

Veil of **ignorance**. Principles of justice for the basic structure of society are to be chosen by representative parties deprived of information

about the talents, the social status of the parties. Misnamed: in information theory this is called uncertainty.

... no one knows his place in society, his class position or social status; nor does he know his fortune in the distribution of natural assets and abilities, his intelligence and strength, and the like.

Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, p. 118.

## **Tolerance:**

- 1) **A is informed** about P's actions
- 2) A disapproves P's actions
- 3) A can stop P's actions
- 4) A does not stop P's actions.

## **The Political Paradox of Information**

**Justice = action without information**

**Tolerance = information without action**

Increasing Information does not necessarily increase and is likely to decrease Justice and Tolerance.

This is the political value of uncertainty.

# JUSTICE, TOLERANCE, AND INFORMATION

$$(U \longrightarrow J) \wedge (J \longrightarrow T) \wedge (T \longrightarrow L \wedge P)$$

- What is **U**?
- Can **U** be delivered?
- If **U** cannot be delivered, what's the solution?

# JUSTICE, TOLERANCE, AND INFORMATION

1) things that she knows, e.g., there is a monster hiding (she is afraid).

information

2) things that she knows that she does not know, e.g., where the monster is hiding (she is looking for it).

insipience

3) things that she is not quite sure she knows, e.g., whether her weapons are sufficiently powerful to kill the monster (she wants more).

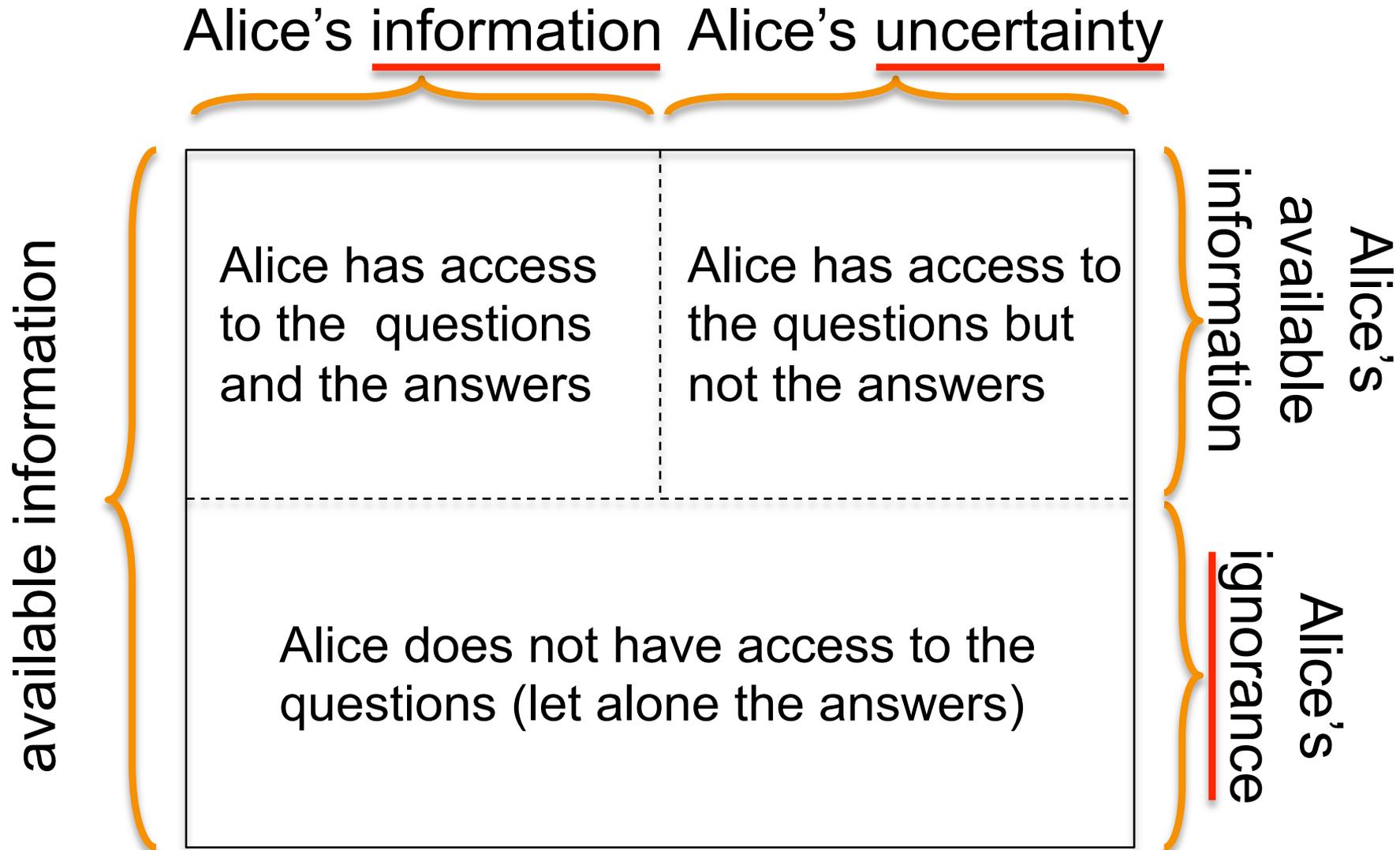


uncertainty

4) things that she does not even know that she does not know, e.g., there is a magic sword that can kill the monster (she may fail).

ignorance

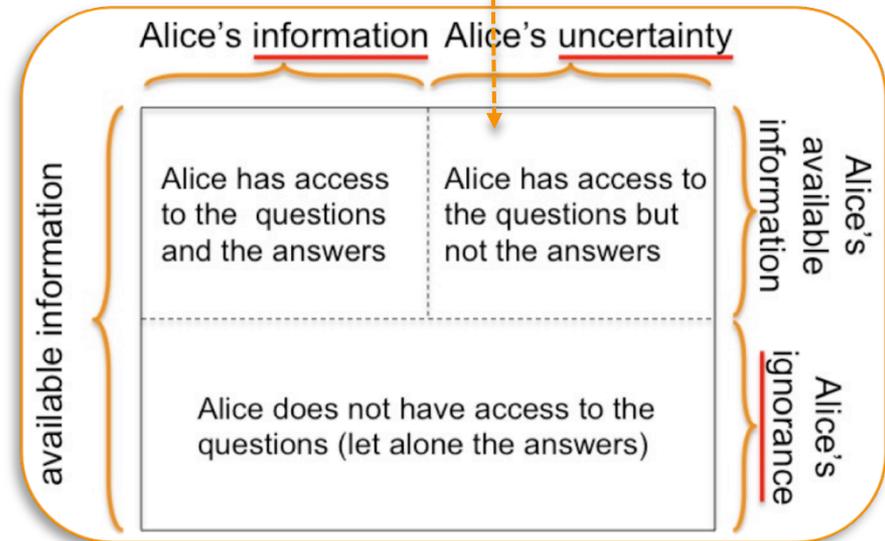
# JUSTICE, TOLERANCE, AND INFORMATION



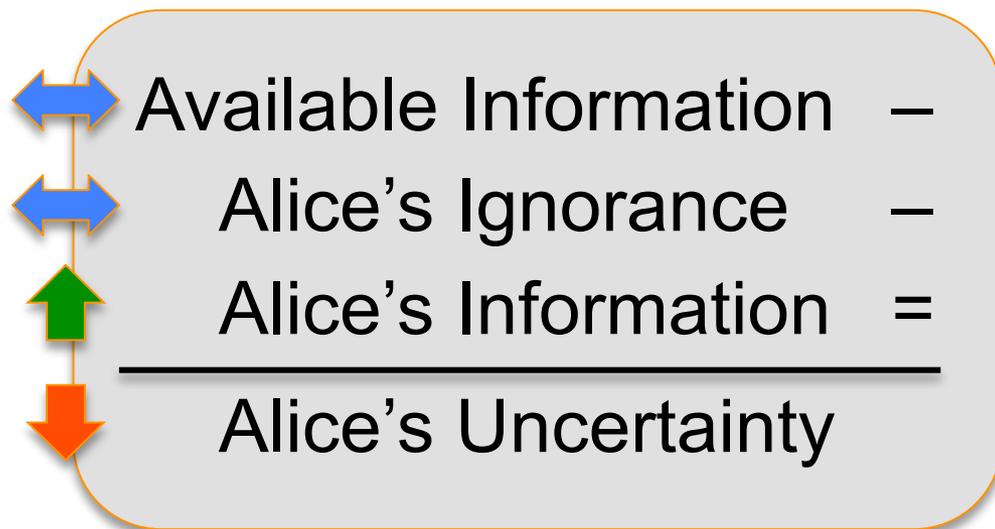
# JUSTICE, TOLERANCE, AND INFORMATION

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{Available Information} \\ - \\ \text{Alice's Ignorance} \\ = \\ \text{Alice's Information} \\ \hline \text{Alice's Uncertainty} \end{array}$$

For Alice:  
Uncertainty =  
information available –  
information accessible



# JUSTICE, TOLERANCE, AND INFORMATION



$$(U \longrightarrow J) \wedge (J \longrightarrow T) \wedge (T \longrightarrow L \wedge P)$$

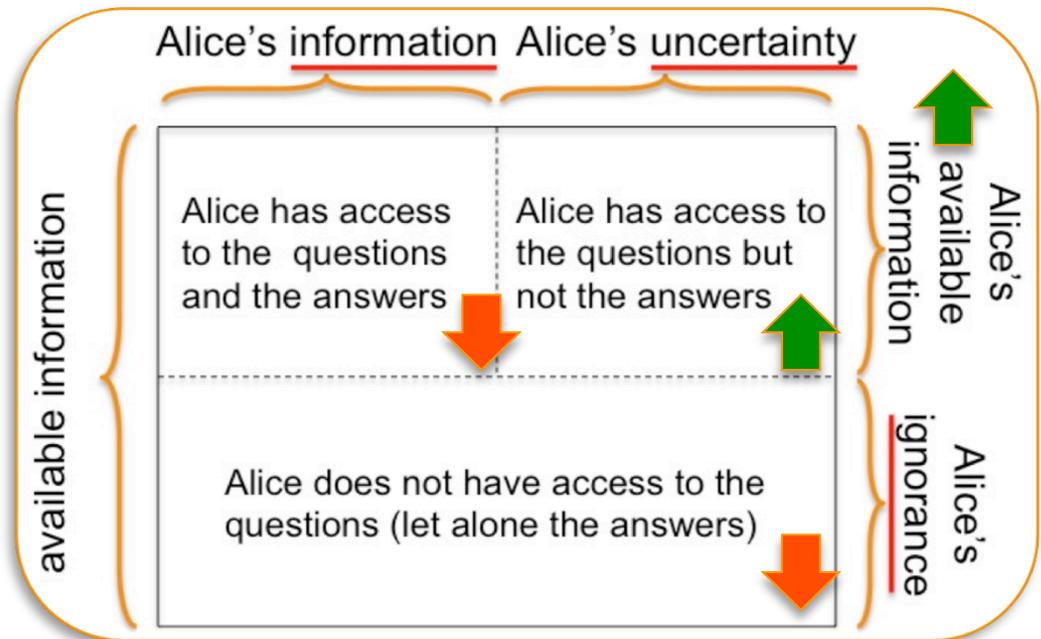
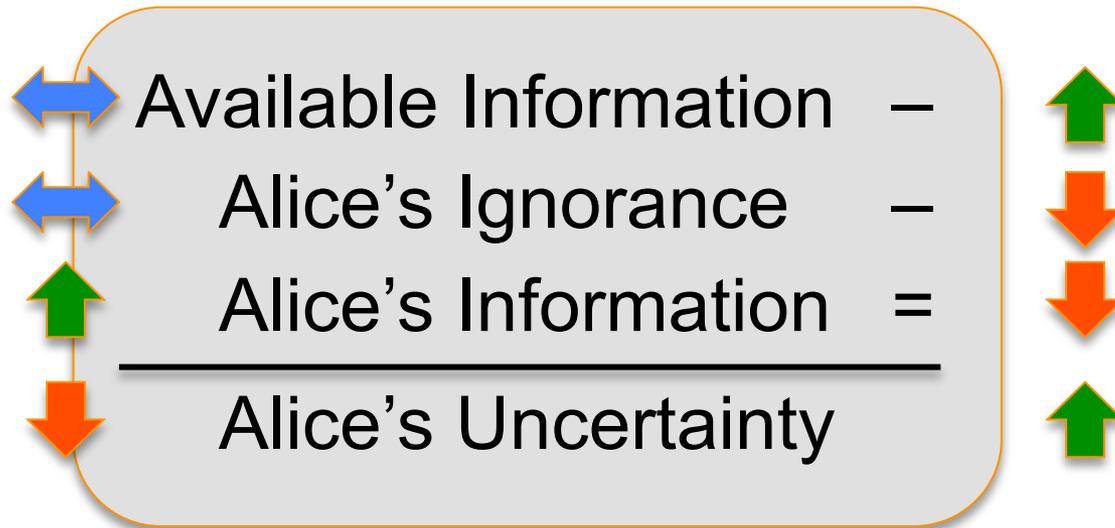
Hypothesis: a global decrease in uncertainty leads to a global decrease in tolerance.

Put simply: more information more intolerance.

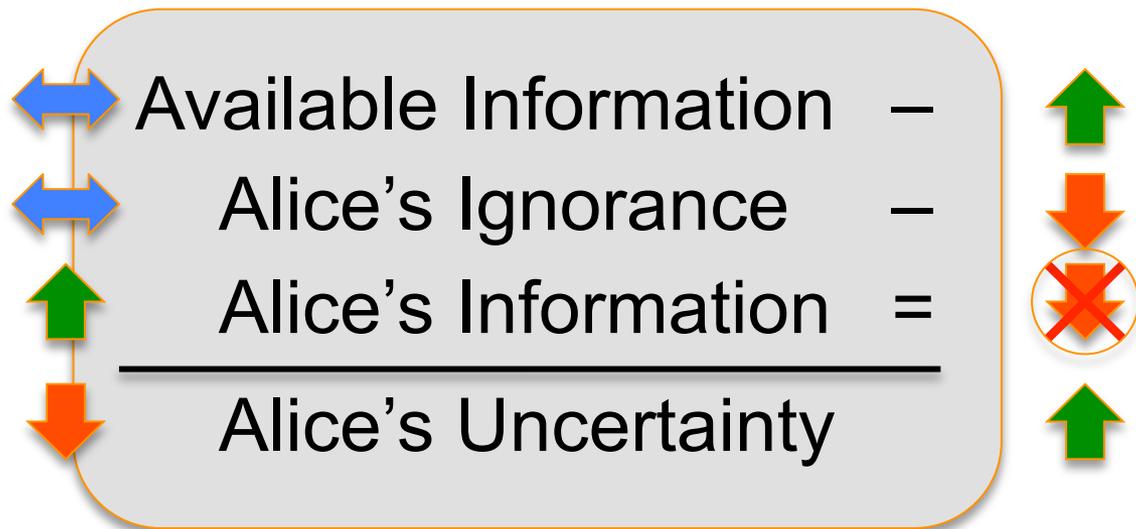
Pew Research Center's  
Forum on Religion & Public  
Life (2012).

More restrictions on  
religion, between mid-2009  
and mid-2010, in each of  
the five major regions of  
the world – including in the  
Americas and sub-Saharan  
Africa, where overall  
restrictions previously had  
been declining.

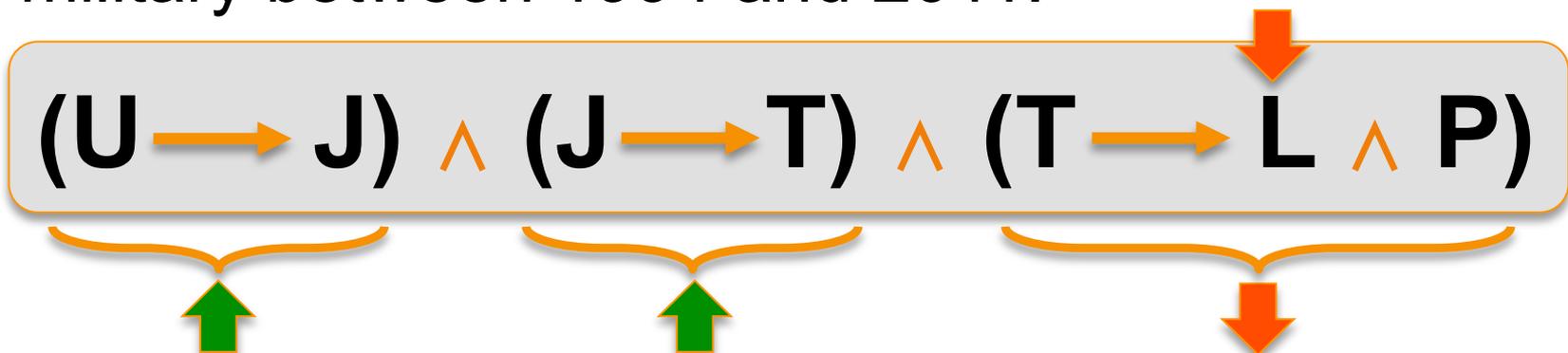
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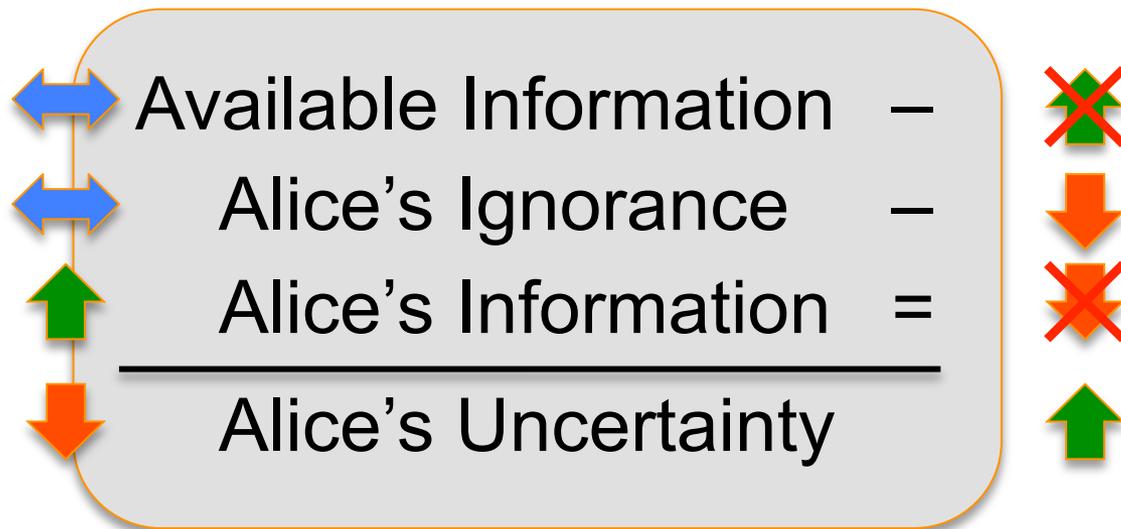
# JUSTICE, TOLERANCE, AND INFORMATION



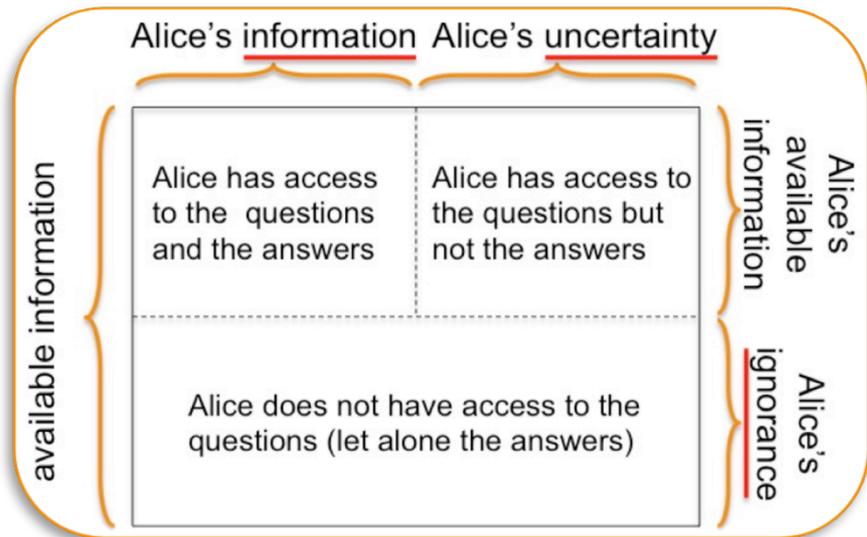
"Don't ask, don't tell" (DADT) was the official United States policy on gays serving in the military between 1994 and 2011.



# JUSTICE, TOLERANCE, AND INFORMATION



Available (relevant) information must be assumed to grow with its relative partition.



# JUSTICE, TOLERANCE, AND INFORMATION



**left ignorance**



**ignorance**

**ignorance**

**e.g. there is a friendly wizard**

# CONCLUSION: BACK TO THE POLITICAL PROBLEM

$$(\neg I \rightarrow U) \wedge (U \rightarrow J) \wedge (J \rightarrow T) \wedge (T \rightarrow L \wedge P)$$

Justice and Tolerance can be fostered by increasing Uncertainty, which can be increased by decreasing Ignorance.

# CONCLUSION: BACK TO THE POLITICAL PROBLEM

History: certainty and information as values.

*Prehistory*

History

Hyperhistory

Hyperhistory: uncertainty and shared ignorance as values.

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## SOURCES

This research is partly based on *The Fourth Revolution – How the Infosphere is Reshaping Human Reality* (Oxford University Press, June 2014).

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