

**Thank you Title IX**

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## **PROCRUSTES, POL POT & TITLE IX**

Procrustes was an innkeeper in the legend of Theseus, of Minotaur fame. The legend of Theseus is one of the most instructive of all the Greek Myths, primarily because of the figure of Procrustes. While he was a rather secondary, possibly even tertiary, character in the plot line of the myth, Procrustes' stature as an allegorical representation of certain baleful extremes in man and society is possibly without equal.

Indeed, it suddenly occurs to me that Procrustes is such an appropriate allegorical figure for today, that the word should probably best be spelled **AlleGorecal**.

### **The Myth of Theseus**

The myth of Theseus involves three stages. The first is his trip to Athens and from there onto Crete to find the Minotaur. The second involves his penetration of the Labyrinth -- where the Minotaur was housed -- and his slaying of that dire hybrid of man and bull. The third and final stage involves his clever escape from the Labyrinth using a ball of yarn and his return to Greece. Procrustes was one of a handful of interesting allegorical characters that Theseus encounters as part of stage one.

### **Procrustes, Mattress King of Greek Mythology**

The critical aspect of Procrustes was his marvelous, fantastical bed. He ran an inn, and the most important part of that inn was this marvelous bed. It was bed perfection, pure and simple, superior to any one might find today. Not even the expensive Swedish beds one sees marketed in pricey upscale retail establishments in Beverly Hills could compare. Insomnia was never a problem at Procrustes' inn. His fantastical Perfect Bed was ostensibly known far and wide, and enjoyed a reputation beyond compare, at least according to Mr. P himself. It is certain that none of his guests ever lodged a complaint about a sleepless night tossing and turning.

### **Plato**

In the Republic, Plato argues that every physical object in reality has its perfect counterpart that exists in an abstract world. Each chair or bed in the ordinary world, according to Plato, is merely an imperfect or incomplete manifestation of that Perfect Ideal. These real world manifestations of the abstract idea of the object in question inevitably contain implicit imperfections and flaws. By definition they cannot encompass all aspects which would comprise the quintessentially perfect apotheosis of that object. But, this is exactly what the platonic "idea" was -- the abstract perfect essence of the object in question.

If you listened to Procrustes' sales pitch and were a student of Plato, you would think that somehow he had come to possess this Platonic Ideal of The Bed.

As such, all of Procrustes' guests simply had to try his bed. Perhaps his inn was more accurately a bed and breakfast establishment, since there was evidently only one guest at a time. Indeed Procrustes saw to it that none of his visitors ever got a chance not to try his wonderful bed -- he was simply too much of a humanitarian not to share his treasure with one and all, albeit one at a time.

## **What Made Procrustes' Bed Special?**

It was reputedly not the thick mattress nor the fluffy pillows. Indeed the guests never had too clear an idea what was so great and one-of-a-kind about this bed, at least not until they were in it. The bed was evidently equipped with some non-standard features which provided the perfectly painful answer. For, if the guest was too short for Procrustes' Perfect Bed, the good innkeeper would enlist its excellent stretching mechanism, later called "the rack" by the Spanish Inquisition. The guest was lengthened appropriately to fit The Perfect Bed and thus restore perfection to Procrustes' corner of the world. Likewise if the guest was too tall, the bed contained a handy clipping device like a giant paper cutter, that could slice through pesky ankles and shins with minimal difficulty, thereby forefending against the unthinkable possibility that a guest might be too long for the Perfect Bed and thus once again restoring order and perfection to the world, at least from Procrustes' perspective if not the guest's.

As per the plot line in the myth of Theseus, Procrustes was hoist in his own petard. Theseus had been forewarned that Procrustes' bed might have some problematic aspects, so Theseus only pretended to retire. When Procrustes came to check the fit, Theseus was prepared and overpowered him, and of course then thought it would be appropriate to test first the stretching mechanism and then the shears, in order to assure the good innkeeper that both were still in perfect working order. Needless to say, Theseus emerged intact from this encounter, but word has it that Procrustes' inn went into foreclosure.

## **Pol Pot, Stalin and Chilikov**

Pol Pot was an unusually ardent adherent of Procrustes, at least as judged by his activities while in charge of Cambodia. He was educated in liberal Europe and came to believe that the quintessentially perfect society was an agrarian Marxist state, essentially where everyone in the entire country would work on a collective farm.

This idea was first pioneered by Stalin in the Ukrainian famine of the 1930's, where millions died. The Ukrainian farmers were independent and didn't want to collectivize, so Stalin solved that problem by simply taking all their food. In some instances families actually consumed their children to survive, according to the testimony of witnesses years later.

The serial killer with one of the greatest all-time tallies, Chilikov (also known as the Russian Ripper) purportedly lost a brother that way, and may have dined with him as well to commemorate that special occasion (that part of Chilikov's testimony was suppressed). At over 50 documented victims, Chilikov's tally is not far from doubling that of America's official record holder, John Wayne Gacey. Up to 6 million people starved to death during the Ukrainian Famine, perhaps 20% to 25% of the total deaths generally attributed directly to the Red Tsar. So, because Chilikov was operating in an unofficial and non-Procrustean capacity, in contrast to Stalin, he could not even begin to approach Stalin's numbers. Interestingly, Chilikov evaded indictment for many years because unusually the chemistry of his blood did not match that of his semen.

Sadly for Pol Pot, neither could he match Stalin in the number of deaths that resulted from his Procrustean efforts to enforce perfection on his world, since there were only

perhaps 10 or 12 million people living in Cambodia. But he probably did eclipse Stalin on a percentage basis, especially if this grim mathematics is actuarially adjusted to reflect the shorter period of time that Pol Pot got to enjoy his Procrustean depredations. Roughly 2 million died in Cambodia's killing fields. Pol Pot felt that the professors, doctors, lawyers -- basically the educated classes -- were inconsistent with his picture of the perfect agrarian Marxist society, and so, like feet that dangled over Procrustes' perfect bed they simply just had to go. And go they did, in droves, as Pol Pot and his bloody minions yoked them up to plows to imitate tractors and oxen for endless hours, days, weeks -- whatever it took to excise the unwanted excess that didn't fit with Pol's perception of The Perfect Society.

### **Procrustean Perfection and its Effects**

The idea embodied by Procrustes and as practiced to near-perfection by Pol Pot (as well as other Procrustean luminaries like Hitler, Stalin, Mao, and others) was that the ends justified the means, that in seeking to create The Perfect Society like Stalin or Pol, or The Perfect (Aryan) Man in Hitler's case, individuals simply don't count, their fate is but a footnote regardless of numbers and horror, since the goal of ultimate Perfection excuses whatever may be required to reach that most glorious goal. They say the road to Hell is paved with good intentions and hard as it may be to believe that's what actually motivated these monsters, at least at first and at least in their own minds. Just as Theseus' Procrustes was less concerned about the welfare of his guests and more concerned about an abstract ideal of perfection, so did these societies descend into a man-made hell on earth in similar abstract pursuit.

What Hitler, Pol Pot, Stalin, and Mao all had in common was a passionate but twisted vision of love of Man in the abstract, coupled with an utter cold indifference to the individuals that added all together comprise Man. Stalin let his own son (named "Yakov") die in Auschwitz instead of deigning to respond to the Nazi's bargain proffer to exchange him for a captured general or two. (When approached by the Germans with this offer, Stalin coldly replied "I have no son named Yakov"). All these monsters wanted to change Man for the better according to their own particular conception of abstract perfection, and were utterly, ruthlessly indifferent as to how they got there and who and how many got destroyed in the process. Exactly like Procrustes and his Perfect Bed.

### **Title IX**

Title IX as currently administered is fundamentally identical to each of these Procrustean models from the standpoint that it tramples on individual rights and fairness in the pursuit of an abstract definition of perfection.

When Title IX first passed, it specified that male and female athletes would be treated equally by the colleges and universities that received the "benefit" of federal funds. At the risk of oversimplifying, as originally conceived by congress, Title IX provided that if there were 100 athletes then each would receive 1% of the revenue available, regardless of who was male or female. In this conception "equal" was defined at the individual level so each individual was treated identically. This meant that if half the athletes were men and half were women, men and women each got half the funding, but if there were 75 male athletes and 25 females, then the men got 75% and the women, 25%.

In point of fact, male and female college students are actually different from one another (imagine that!!) and the men tended to be a lot more interested in competing in sports than the women. By roughly a 10 to 1 margin. So, up until the Clinton administration modified the definition of equal, under Title IX as originally promulgated men got most of the funding since they also had most of the athletes.

The aggressive feminists that grew in political influence under the Clinton administration didn't care for this, they wanted a "more perfect" society where regardless of individual choice and inclination, men were equal to women in a more enlightened, Procrustean sense.

So, under their modified definition of equal, if half the students were male and half were female, then women athletes automatically were allocated 50% of the funding even if they only comprised 10% of the total athletes. Under this more enlightened Procrustean definition of equality, the women and men were viewed as two separate groups, not as individuals. Each group received perfectly proportionate funding and this fitted the Perfect Bed exactly. But viewed from an individual perspective the results were just a bit unfair in that each individual female athlete may well have received 9 to 10 times the funding as each male athlete.

Pol Pot surely smiled, and Procrustes would have been beside himself with joy had his capacity for joy not been rudely truncated by Theseus.

### **Title IX New Procrustean Math**

Assume \$X is the amount available to the college or university for allocation to all athletics, both male and female. If 50% of the students are female, then 50% of the funding goes to the female athletes, such that both males and females get \$.5X. If (as seems to be the case) the "natural and unfettered" male/female college sports participation behavior pattern is that roughly 90% of the athletes are male and 10% female, then the per-male allocation is \$.5X divided by 9, whereas the per-female allocation is \$.5X divided by 1. Plug in any number for "X" and the result will be that each individual female athlete gets 9 times what each male athlete receives.

Hence, the Procrustean shears come into play with the males' sports programs, just as the handy Procrustean stretching device simultaneously attempts to expand the females' sports programs.

### **Who Gets Hurt?**

Unfortunately, what resulted was wholesale emasculation of men's athletic teams, especially those with a highly testicular element such as wrestling. College wrestlers are among the toughest hombres to walk the planet. Among today's UFC competitors, luminaries like Randy Couture, Sean Sherk, Josh Koscheck, Mark Coleman, Rampage Jackson, Jens Pulver, Uriah Faber, John Fitch, Chuck Lidell, Tito Ortiz -- just about all the UFC competitors from the US in fact -- were college wrestlers. These are human wolverines, pound for pound the most powerful to be found. Wolverines are reputed to have driven grizzly bears 10 times bigger from their kills, and high school and especially college wrestlers are the same. I have personal knowledge of at least one instance where the starting 133lb wrestler at a Div 1 university got into a fight with one of the

football team's linebackers, who literally may have been almost twice as big. The wrestler won decisively. These are gladiators, testicular to the max.

And of course, to the great delight of the feminists these most testicular of males were the first to be clipped under the Procrustean shears that Title IX represents. But unlike Theseus' Procrustes, the feminists' Title IX didn't play around with the ankles, it aimed rather higher. To the nation's future's vast impairment, these strongest of tomorrow's citizens, the ones for whom Navy Seal training is a nice break from their normal routine and who live for the "street fight with rules" that is college wrestling, were the first to go.

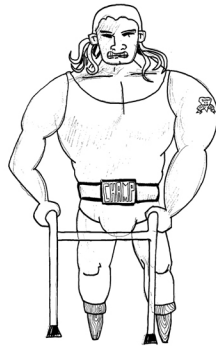
So, although our own Procrustean experiment is, certainly, far kinder and gentler than Pol Pot's or others, do not let that fact cloak it for what it is. Hopefully its long term detrimental impact will also be more benign, but we won't know that until the next time we are in a fight to survive and can only defend ourselves with an emasculated citizenry.

Or, like Bill Cosby indirectly suggested in one of his hilarious early stand-up routines, we can always try dousing them with Midol.....

Damocles  
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#### **Note to Essay:**

It's been almost two years since this was written. Sadly, it seems that our nation's effort to fight terrorists with lawyers, coupled with our culturally masochistic outrage over water-boarding (which leaves the subject unharmed and intact) -- while at the same time we're comparatively un-excited over our enemies' literally skinning people alive or slowly beheading them with a knife or saw -- strongly suggests we've already reached our collective **Midol Moment**. The mosque being built on or near the 9/11 site certainly suggests this too, as does Eric Holder's apparent inability to link and utter the words "Islamic Terrorist."



Thank you Title IX (2)

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