

Words Poorly Used #51 — Reciprocity

Wow! I was at a discussion group meeting today where the topic was energy independence (another set of words used poorly), where the question was begged, is reciprocity even possible between states? We were discussing whether the US should demand give and take with other oil producing nations. Whenever the word demand is included in a sentence, we are in the zone of coercion, not peaceful resolution. The oldest form of reciprocity, appearing in many cultures, is what we nowadays call the golden rule. Treat other people the way in which you hope to be treated. Not complicated. But can the US suddenly clean up its act, demanding of itself the overtures necessary for reciprocity with any other state. I say states cannot do reciprocity. States are all about gaining advantage and exercising it.

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