

From philanthropy to philanthropists

Tom Parr

Introduction

Philanthropy refers to practices that aim at the mitigation of (the harmful effects of) social, economic, or political injustice. These practices may be directed either ‘toward assisting long-term social and economic transformations’ or ‘be intended to fulfill the short-term immediate needs for the recipients during a crisis generated by natural disasters, political violence, social strife, or pandemics’ (Banerjee, 2013, 587).

Philanthropy is typically practiced voluntarily, in the sense that it is neither legally prohibited nor legally required. It is left to us to decide for ourselves whether or not to practice philanthropy. There is, however, emerging agreement (amongst political philosophers, at least) that we *should* be willing to practice philanthropy, at least to some degree. In other words, there is emerging agreement that there is a *duty* to practice philanthropy. Arguments in defence of this conclusion are standardly justified by reference to the demands of social justice and, in particular, the demands of social justice in a world characterised by global injustice.

It is often assumed that our philanthropic duties are best discharged through charitable giving and, in particular, by making *financial* donations to charities that are effective at mitigating (the harmful effects of) injustice.¹ This assumption has prompted theoretical inquiries into the following types of questions: Why and how much money should we give? To whom and for which purposes should we give? The intimate connection between philanthropy and financial donation is conveniently illustrated by the full title of a recently published book on the subject, *Giving Well: The Ethics of Philanthropy* (Illingworth, Pogge & Wenar, 2011).

¹ A notable exception to this is that of *organ philanthropy*. The case of Zell Kravinsky, who donated a kidney, in addition to \$45 million, is well reported in the literature on philanthropy. See Peter Singer, ‘What Should a Billionaire Give - and What Should You?’ in Illingworth, Pogge and Wenar, 2011

This Chapter challenges the alleged intimate relationship between philanthropy and charitable giving. In particular, it is shown that we ought to resist characterising our philanthropic duties in terms of duties to engage in charitable giving. To this end, a more radical claim is established—namely, that our philanthropic duties extend to cover our choice of career as well. That is, in addition to being willing to engage in charitable giving, we ought also to be willing to pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice.

This Chapter begins, in section 1, with a brief summary of the literature on the relationship between social justice and philanthropy. Particular attention is given to arguments developed by Peter Singer (1972; 2010) and Thomas Pogge (2008), which have each been especially influential. Section 2 consists of a defence of the claim that our philanthropic duties include not only a duty to engage in charitable giving, but also a more radical duty to pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice. The thought, in a nutshell, is that, by focusing on charitable giving alone, we risk letting ourselves off the moral hook too easily. Our philanthropic duties, that is, have greater scope than an exclusive focus on charitable giving might suggest. Two objections to this argument are then considered and responded to in the next two sections. The first objection, which is discussed in section 3, challenges the plausibility of this argument by purporting to establish its *over-demandingness*. The second objection, which is discussed in section 4, challenges the plausibility of this argument by claiming that it rests on sociologically naïve assumptions. The respective responses to these two objections clarify further both the content and status of the position defended in this Chapter. Finally, in section 5, the implications of this argument are illuminated.

Social Justice and Philanthropy

There are several compelling arguments that demonstrate how social justice imposes on us a duty to mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice. Many of these arguments proceed from very modest assumptions and, as a result, are attractive to those with very different political outlooks. The ecumenical nature of these arguments is politically convenient in so far as it has facilitated a near consensus on the moral imperative to practice philanthropy, at least to some degree.

Two arguments in particular warrant being singled out for particular attention. These are the arguments developed by Singer and Pogge. Singer begins his argument in defence of a duty to practice philanthropy by asking us to consider the following:

...if I am walking past a shallow pond and see a child drowning in it, I ought to wade in and pull the child out. This will mean getting my clothes muddy, but this is insignificant, while the death of the child would presumably be a very bad thing (1972, p 231).

When analysing this case, it is natural to conclude that to refuse to attempt to rescue the child would be to act *wrongfully*. If correct, this implies the presence of a duty to attempt to rescue the child. This is the case despite the fact any attempt to rescue the child would necessarily involve bearing some costs—namely, getting one’s clothes muddy. Notably, Singer asserts that the explanation for our reaction to this case is given by the following moral principle: ‘if it is in our power to prevent something bad from happening, without thereby sacrificing anything of comparable moral importance, we ought, morally, to do it’ (1972, p 231). Let us call this the *principle of rescue*.

The principle of rescue, though apparently quite uncontroversial, has radical implications for how we conceptualise the demands that social justice makes upon us. This is because just as it is wrongful to refuse to attempt to rescue the child in the aforementioned case, so too the principle of rescue dictates that it is wrongful to refuse to attempt to rescue a child in analogous cases in which doing so would not involve bearing significant costs. For example, the principle of rescue asserts that if you had good grounds to believe that you were able to rescue a child by making a £200 donation to the Against Malaria Foundation, then it would be similarly wrongful for you to fail to do so.² To refuse to make the donation in this case, that is, would be exactly like refusing to attempt to rescue the drowning child from the pond.

It is sometimes suggested that the principle of rescue mistakenly directs our attention to the *symptoms* rather than the *causes* of injustice. It is concerned with who should bear the costs associated with rescuing drowning children rather than with the separate issue of how we should stop children from falling into ponds. This is problematic, so the argument goes, since

² A helpful discussion of the cost-effectiveness of saving lives can be found in Singer (2010, p 86-7).

the appropriate response to injustice is not (only) to mitigate its harmful effects, but (also) to tackle its underlying causes. A consequence of the failure to appreciate this is that there will always remain injustice that needs correcting for.

However, even if the empirical component of this objection is sound, it fails to impugn the principle of rescue. This is because the principle of rescue is indeterminate regarding the target of philanthropic action. It is likely that the principle of rescue will *in some cases* require us to make charitable donations to mitigate the harmful effects of injustice, and *in other cases* direct our philanthropic attention to progressive social movements, such as the Occupy Movement, say, that tackle the causes of injustice. In any given instance, which of these two acts is required by the principle of rescue will be determined by which act is most efficient at mitigating (the harmful effects of) injustice, which in turn will be determined by the social, economic, and political facts of the situation.

Whilst the principle of rescue has many supporters, it is not unanimously endorsed. In particular, there is a subset of libertarians who challenge the principle of rescue by denying the moral imperative to attempt to rescue the drowning child in Singer's example. They assert that, whilst it is no doubt praiseworthy to attempt to rescue the child, it would not be *wrongful* to refuse to do so. It is politically important to be able to offer arguments in defence of a duty to practice philanthropy that are capable of being endorsed by these libertarians. This is not because libertarianism offers a plausible alternative to the principle of rescue; rather, it is because many citizens (correctly or not) have libertarian sympathies.

A defence of the duty to practice philanthropy that is consonant with the demands of libertarianism is developed by Pogge. Pogge begins with the claim that there is a negative duty 'to ensure that others are not unduly harmed (or wronged) through one's own conduct' (2008, p 136). In cases where a citizen fails to observe this requirement, he continues, she then becomes liable to compensate the victims of the wrongdoing. In simple terms: If Taylor has a negative duty not to harm Lewis, but unduly harms Lewis nonetheless, then Taylor would become liable to compensate Lewis for the harm suffered. An attractive feature of this argument is that, in grounding liability to compensate in *negative* (rather than positive) duties, it utilises a moral framework acceptable even to those libertarians who deny the duty to attempt to rescue a drowning child. That is, even libertarians acknowledge that compensation is justified when one citizen unduly harms another.

With these foundations laid, Pogge then embarks on an examination of the implications of this normative commitment. In particular, Pogge brings to our attention an important set of facts regarding the global political economy and, more specifically, the extent to which the global political economy unduly harms the global poor. First, there are *globally shared institutions* that affect the circumstances of the global poor ‘through investments, loans, trade, bribes, military aid, sex tourism, culture exports, and much else’ (Pogge, 2008, p 205). Often these institutions are experienced as harmful to some. Secondly, there is the fact that some states have appropriated an unfair share of the world’s resources and, as a result, other states have been denied their fair share of the world’s resources (Pogge, 2008, p 207). Thirdly, there is a *common violent history*, such that current inequalities are largely the result of ‘historical processes in which moral principles and legal rules were massively violated’ (Pogge, 2008, 209).

These three facts reveal the extent to which contemporary global poverty is the result of (historical and ongoing) wrongdoing of the kind that renders citizens living in western parts of the world liable to pay compensation. In turn, these considerations sanction duties both to tackle the causes of ongoing global injustice *and* to issue compensation for the harmful effects of the global political economy. Let us call this the *libertarian principle*.

It is worth stressing two features of the libertarian principle. First, as noted earlier, it is more ecumenical than the principle of rescue and, as a result, is capable of securing a higher level of general support. Secondly, the libertarian principle is in one way more demanding than the principle of rescue. Whereas the principle of rescue renders citizens liable to bear only less than *significant costs*, the libertarian principle renders citizens liable to bears costs equal in magnitude to the level of harm for which they are responsible. It is, of course, possible that the level of harm for which a citizen is responsible will be greater than ‘significant’.

Social Justice and Career Choice

Both the principle of rescue and the libertarian principle seek to establish the conclusion that social justice imposes on citizens a duty to practice philanthropy. Typically, this duty is cashed out in terms of a duty to make charitable donations to mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice. One worry with this, however, is that it seems fetishistic to focus exclusively on

charitable donations, especially when there are other means available that are perhaps more expedient at mitigating (the harmful effects of) injustice. If there are more effective tools for mitigating (the harmful effects of) injustice, ought we not to be prepared to make use of them? Let us consider, for example, the practice of using one's career to mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice. Just as the principle of rescue and the libertarian principle exert demands over citizens' financial decisions, perhaps similarly the principle of rescue and the libertarian principle exert demands over citizens' career choices?

As a mechanism for mitigating (the harmful effects of) injustice, the pursuit of certain types of careers is superior in at least two ways. First, assuming that one is relatively competent, it will be beneficial also to work for the cause to which one is committed in addition merely to contributing financially to that cause. Citizens who make charitable donations *and* work, say, in international development do more to mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice than those who merely make charitable donations.³

Secondly, the pursuit of certain types of careers is also superior as a response to injustice by virtue of it being a *public* activity. Empirical evidence suggests that many citizens are *conditional contributors*, who are willing to bear burdens only if they have the assurance that others are also willing to bear equivalent burdens (Singer, 2010, pp 64-5). Whether this is a morally defensible position is not relevant; what matters is that many citizens act in this way. This presence of conditional contributors is important as it alerts us to the fact that, when examining the expedience of various responses to injustice, it is important to take into account the extent to which those actions are publicly verifiable. This is because public actions are more capable of promoting assurance and, hence, more likely to lead to conditional contributors being willing to contribute.

This point is made most clearly by Andrew Walton (2012), who asks us to consider an example in which both Clive and Deborah are willing to bear certain costs in the pursuit of some valuable end. Whereas Clive has committed to bearing the necessary costs, Deborah is a conditional contributor. Deborah is only willing to bear the necessary costs if she has assurance that Clive is willing to bear his share of the costs also. Clive has the option either

³ Similar affects may also be achieved indirectly: if more citizens were to desire to pursue careers in international development, this may have the effect of lowering pay in international development. This may free up funds that could then be put to better use.

of making a financial donation to a just cause or of performing the more publicly verifiable act of mending broken playground rides. Walton notes that there are at least two reasons for thinking that Clive ought to mend broken playground rides, rather than make a financial donation. First, Deborah could believe that ‘making a financial contribution does not constitute a genuine contribution, perhaps because she feels that it is not in keeping with the spirit of the project’ (Walton, 2012, p 133). If this were the case, Clive’s financial donation would predictably lead to Deborah failing to contribute. This fact counts against making a financial donation, especially given the presence of a more publicly verifiable alternative that would avoid this outcome. Secondly, if ‘one’s only means of making a financial contribution is very secretive’, then that too could predictably lead to Deborah failing to contribute (Walton, 2012, p 133). This too counts against making a financial donation and in favour of mending broken playground rides.

These considerations suggest that, in the long-run, (the harmful effects of) injustices are more effectively mitigated through the pursuit of public activities, which are capable of guaranteeing higher levels of assurance. This is because, by virtue of exhibiting certain properties—‘to wit, those which are suitably public and which garner wide support from a population’—it ‘will be more conducive to prompting others to act in desirable ways’ (Walton, 2012, p 127). This lesson has implications for the content of our philanthropic duties. In particular, it reveals that we have reasons to prefer discharging our philanthropic duties through publicly verifiable activities, such as one’s choice of career, rather than through more secretive means, such as making charitable donations. If correct, this argument generates a *prima facie* case in defence of the claim that citizens ought to be willing to pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice.

The Demandingness Objection

The previous section sought to assemble a case in defence of extending the scope of philanthropic duties beyond merely making charitable donations, and to include a willingness to pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice. This section is concerned with an objection to this conclusion, which focuses on its alleged over-demandingness. Demandingness objections do not refer to a single objection, but rather to an eclectic set of objections. These objections are united by a shared structure: they all attempt to show that the demandingness of the requirements of a position count against the plausibility of that

position. Of course, they could count against it in many ways, and each of these ways gives rise to a distinct demandingness objection. It is not possible to consider each version of the demandingness objection. Instead, this section proceeds by offering some quite general remarks that serve as a response to the set of demandingness objections. More precisely, the aim is to show how the position defended in the previous section is—or, at least, may be amended to become—less demanding than initially appears. Establishing this will alleviate some of the concerns regarding the position's demandingness.

Though the duty to pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice appears to be a very demanding one, there are at least two responses to this conclusion. The first response invokes the familiar distinction between *wrongdoing* and *blameworthiness*. Whilst the argument of the previous section demonstrates that citizens who fail to pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice engage in *wrongdoing*, this need not necessarily entail that they are *blameworthy*. The force of this point is captured neatly in a passage by G.A. Cohen:

It is essential to apply principles of justice to dominant patterns in social behavior—that, as it were, is where the action is—but it doesn't follow that we should have a persecuting attitude to the people who display that behavior. We might have good reason to exonerate the perpetrators of injustice, but we should not deny, or apologize for, the injustice itself (2000, p 143).

Very often, our hostility to highly demanding moral principles reflects unease about the widespread adoption of 'a persecuting attitude'. As Cohen's remarks show, however, this unease does not give us reasons to resist highly demanding moral principles. This is because, in such cases, the affirmation of others' wrongdoing need not commit us to blaming them. We could consistently maintain that, though refusing to be willing to pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice is wrongful, it need not in general be a blameworthy act.

In addition to this, there is a second, more concessionary response to demandingness objections to the position defended in the previous section. This response derives from the fact that it is in principle consistent with a duty to pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice that citizens are permitted to pursue a fairly wide range of careers. This is

because there is indeterminacy in how we understand the phrase ‘careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice’. The point, in short, is that the demandingness of the duty will be sensitive to how we specify what constitutes a career that mitigates (the harmful effects of) injustice. If it is understood to include only those careers that *maximally* mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice, then the duty will be highly demanding. However, if the duty is understood to include all those careers that *generally* mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice, then it will be possible to discharge the duty through the pursuit of many more careers.

In essence, the demandingness objection prompts us to develop a definition of ‘careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice’ that avoids two extremes. First, it ought not to be defined so widely that it lacks any political purchase. This would be the case if it were to be defined such that the duty excludes only particularly harmful careers, such as, say, assassin or investment banker. Second, it ought not to be defined so narrowly that it generates overly-demanding duties. This would be the case if it were to be defined such that the duty could be satisfied only by pursuing the single career that maximally mitigates (the harmful effects of) injustice. If a given specification is either overly- or insufficiently-demanding, then the appropriate response is simply to think either more or less expansively about the range of careers that can be said to satisfy the duty in question. Once this feature of this approach is appreciated, demandingness objections to the duty to pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice would seem to lose their force.

The Naïvety Objection

Generally speaking, this Chapter has cast philanthropy, and the duties deriving from its importance to the realisation of social justice, in a positive light. Philanthropy, let us remember, has been characterised as a tool for mitigating (the harmful effects of) injustice. It may be objected, however, that this Chapter’s analysis, and the ensuing conclusions, depend upon sociologically naïve assumptions. In particular, it may be objected that the arguments presented pay insufficient attention to the oppressive and unaccountable aspects of philanthropic relationships. Though this objection, which can be called the *naïvety objection*, applies to all approaches that cast philanthropy in a positive light, it is particularly acute for the version advocated in this Chapter, which seeks to extend the scope of philanthropic duties to include a willingness to pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice.

The naïvety objection comes in two forms. The first challenges the attractiveness of philanthropy by pointing out that philanthropists seldom practice philanthropy with the *intention* of mitigating (the harmful effects of) injustice. Rather, motivations for practicing philanthropy are varied (Anheier and Leat, 2013), and not always so morally unobjectionable. The analysis of philanthropy up until this point has been insufficiently sensitive to the fact that *voluntarily giving* one's time or money can re-entrench a sense of dependence and, by implication, re-enforce social inequalities (Slim, 2002, esp. 4-5). This oppressive aspect of philanthropy is aggravated when the philanthropic act is motivated not by a concern for social justice, but instead by a concern for, say, power or social status. If correct, these conclusions would put pressure on the idea that philanthropy can serve as an *effective* tool for mitigating (the harmful effects of) injustice.

The second version of the naïvety objection focusses on the undue influence that some philanthropists are able to exert. The worry, here, is that even some well-motivated philanthropic ventures may lack the necessary democratic accountability to render them morally justifiable. As Robin Rogers points out, the claim that philanthropy can effectively mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice 'is based on a rather flat assumption that what matters are results rather than process. Philanthropy, of course, is not the role of government and cannot be—because it is based on voluntary donation—representative' (2011, p 377). This objection does not deny the effectiveness of philanthropy; rather, it challenges its *legitimacy*.

It is important to note that the two naïvety objections would seem to bite more forcefully against some types of philanthropic practices than others. Even if philanthropy always re-entrenches social inequalities and lacks democratic accountability, it is surely the case that some forms of philanthropy re-entrench social inequalities and lack democratic accountability more than others. It might therefore be thought that the crucial implication of the naïvety objections is not that we should condemn philanthropy as such, but instead that we should condemn only those forms of philanthropy that re-entrench social inequalities and lack democratic accountability *to a greater degree*.

Though this conclusion is intuitive, it ought to be rejected. This is because the justification that underpins this conclusion is insufficiently attentive to the distinction between *the moral status of an action* on the one hand, and *the moral status of recommending it* on the other.

Whereas the two naïvety objections are capable of establishing that the philanthropist's act is wrongful, it need not follow from this that it would similarly be wrongful to recommend that the philanthropist act in this way. As an example of a case in which this result arises, let us consider the following gruesome case presented by Victor Tadros:

I am standing on the shore of a lake and a boy is drowning out of reach. There is a boat on the shore and only one person can get in the boat. Unfortunately, though, I'm no sailor and if I try to rescue him I will almost certainly fail. You, an experienced sailor, are standing next to me. I encourage you to save the boy, but you are unwilling to do so. You are wearing a shiny new suit, and once you get out to the boy your suit will almost certainly get wet. I have a claw hammer and I could give it to you. That would allow you to save the boy without damaging the suit. But unfortunately you would have to jam it into his eye to pull him out (2011, p 161).

Even though it is clearly wrongful for you to save the boy with the claw hammer (rather than pull the boy out of the water in a way that will get your suit wet), I am surely required to recommend your wrongful action by giving you the claw hammer. The point of this example is not to show that the moral status of an action and the moral status of recommending it always diverge; rather, it is that they may diverge when the costs of failing to recommend an act are sufficiently great, as would be the case if the boy were left to drown.

Cases involving philanthropy often share a similar structure to this case. Though many philanthropic practices have properties that render them wrongful, it is not the case that we ought not to recommend them. This is because failing to recommend philanthropy may result in the incurrance of grave costs. This would be so if, for example, rather than being willing to engage in charitable giving and pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice, philanthropists instead pursued more obviously self-interested goals. Even if certain forms of philanthropy are wrongful, it is surely better that citizens' financial and occupational efforts are invested in them rather than in serving other ends.

It is important to issue a clarification in order to avoid a misunderstanding. The position defended in this section does not sanction an uncritical attitude towards philanthropy. That is, it is not the case that whenever philanthropy is wrongful it ought nonetheless to be

recommended. It is consistent with the argument of this section that certain forms of philanthropy ought not to be recommended under certain conditions—namely, when not recommending it is likely not to result in the incurrance of grave costs. The take-home message of this section is only that the naïvety objections are insufficient to establish that philanthropy in general ought not to be recommended.

Social Policy and the Importance of Philanthropists

This Chapter has defended a duty to pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice. This conclusion is, no doubt, strongly at odds with current practice and, for this reason, will strike some as unacceptably extreme. This worry is best understood not as one concerning the philosophical validity of this Chapter’s argument, but, instead, as one concerning the *political significance* of the argument. The worry, in a nutshell, is that the conclusions endorsed in this Chapter are too radical to stand any meaningful chance of garnering political support and, for this reason, cannot serve any important political end.

There are at least three responses to this worry, all of which involve further clarification of either the argument developed in this Chapter or its implications. The first is suggested by David Estlund’s recent work (2011), which seeks to establish that, while ‘ought’ might imply ‘can’, it does not imply ‘is likely’. Zofia Stemplowska and Adam Swift summarise the thought as follows: ‘it would be odd for political philosophers to desist from the business of telling people what they should be doing just because they know they are not going to do it’ (2012, p 387). Even if citizens are not likely to be willing to pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice, this should not provide a reason to let them off the moral hook. The veracity of the duty to pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice must surely be independent of whether or not citizens are willing to discharge it.

The second response denies the empirical premise that citizens are unlikely to exhibit a willingness to pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice. At first blush, this may seem to be an unpromising strategy to pursue. This is because a society in which citizens pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice looks to be a very distant one. Within the context of career choice, the practice of acting self-interestedly looks to be strongly entrenched, and is a motive that would seem to be nearly impossible to displace. This dismissal is too quick, however. This is because, as Kwame Anthony Appiah

(2010) has shown, there is a tremendous capacity for rapid transformations of moral behaviour. One of Appiah's central insights is that so-called *moral revolutions* can occur in remarkably short periods. Duelling, Chinese feet binding, and Atlantic slavery were all widespread practices that ended very suddenly, often within a generation or so (Appiah, 2010). He also notes that the law tends only to play a somewhat limited role in the development of moral revolutions; duelling, after all, was widely practiced for many years despite it being illegal to do so. This is significant for our purposes as it suggests that we should be much more hesitant to dismiss this Chapter's conclusions on the grounds that a society in which citizens pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice looks to be a very distant one. Instead, this worry simply prompts us to think harder about how we ought to bring such a society about. This leads neatly onto the final response.

The third response is much more concessionary than the previous two. This response develops by making explicit the implications of this Chapter's argument for social policy. These are steps that, if taken now, would bring us closer to the goal of having a society in which citizens generally pursue careers that mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice. In short, the kinds of social policies sanctioned by this Chapter's argument are ones that aim at raising public awareness either about the demands that social justice makes upon citizens' career choices or about the extent to which citizens' choice of careers is capable of affecting others.

Though this end may be pursued in many ways, it would seem reasonable to conclude that *civic education* will play an especially important role in this regard. This could be achieved through the inclusion of citizenship classes as part of a national curriculum; the teaching of citizenship through other subjects, such as the study of literature, history, or geography; or through the fostering of a school ethos that aims at ensuring the citizens co-operate with their peers in a way that takes seriously others' interests (Clayton, 2006, pp 144-5). The extent to which each of these practices should be pursued is dependent upon many complex empirical facts regarding each practice's effectiveness at ensuring that citizens take seriously the demands that social justice makes upon their choice of career.

The purpose of this Chapter has not been to recommend that citizens pursue any particular career. Rather, it has been to advocate a particular model for how citizens should think about their own choice of career—namely, that they should use their career to pursue the mitigation

of (the harmful effects of) injustice. The precise content of this demand of social justice is sensitive to empirical data in many ways. After all, it is a largely empirical matter as to which careers best mitigate (the harmful effects of) injustice. That is, it is to be empirically tested whether (the harmful effects of) injustice is best mitigated through the pursuit of a career in medicine or international development, or through the pursuit of a highly paid career, which enables one to make much more generous financial donations. These are the important social scientific questions to which we must now turn.

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