Freedom, equality, and the self under a moral obligation

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Abstract:

The question of which political values ought to be emphasized and how we should go about striking a balance between them is an oft-argued and perennially troubling one. How a government views the relationship between competing values will have a vast influence on the policies it pursues and the laws it enacts, generating subsequent consequences that reach into the daily lives of each individual citizen. Rather than approaching the issue through this top-down mentality, however, the following analysis focuses on the point of view of the non-policy making average person and their relationship to government. The argument will be made that if we are to arrive at a healthy, concrete decision on how we should balance our political values then we will need to reconsider the weight we have given to the value of freedom and furthermore what obligations we may or may not have to our governments. The first section below offers an alternative to the obligatory accounts traditionally given and examines positive and negative freedom in that light. The second section then continues the examination by considering the conflict between freedom and economic equality, offering an alternative view of the self as the key to finding a fair and lasting solution.

Keywords: economic equality; economic freedom; political values; positive and negative freedom; the self

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I. Neither positive nor negative: Reconsidering freedom from a general and voluntary moral obligation

A. Starting over

Freedom has come to be the cardinal virtue championed by modern liberal democracies and is often held up as the loftiest of goals to be sought, the distinguishing characteristic between good and bad governments, the one value that trumps all others. Proponents of freedom can be heard promoting the glory of their own country by stressing its comparatively greater amount of the trait, in ways that have all the more psychological resonance for their thoughtlessness. Yet in order for the value to be just that — a value and not a sound bite — thought is precisely what is required. Thus there arose arguments over what kind of freedom is most beneficial: the positive or the negative. The distinction between these types goes back at least as far as T. H. Green (1836-1882), though the origin of this split has usually been viewed as occurring even further in the past.[1] Whenever the split happened and whomever its originator was, the two different takes on what is usually a very poorly defined value has led to starkly different social structures and institutional functioning. Our interests are therefore in the results of how the view taken on freedom is applied and so rather than rehashing the common comparisons and contrasts made between positive and negative freedom we will instead attempt to approach the argument from a fresh angle. The following will begin with a consideration of political obligation, of trying to ascertain just what, if anything, we owe to the governments that rule our lives and lands, suggest an alternative view to obligation, and then proceed to what freedom would entail under such a proposition by considering the applicable elements of positive freedom, criticisms of those from a perspective of negative freedom, and the resulting negative elements that ought to be retained. Along the way we will achieve a fuller picture of freedom, and furthermore it will become clear (or at least clearer) that of far greater importance than what we are 'free from' or 'free to' is what we are free for, and that the moral foundation of such is really where our attentions should lie. Taking this fuller picture in hand, the second part of the essay will then explore the relationship between freedom and economic equality, and it will be seen that by shifting how we view our selves, how we define what it is that makes up the 'self', we can open unseen doors and approach the fundamental problem of balancing political values in an entirely new way.

B. A different kind of obligation

Three types of argument have typically been put forth to demonstrate a naturally occurring obligation that we all share towards our governments: 1) natural duty, 2) associative, and 3) transactional.[2] The natural duty argument presents the case that the state's moral quality and the impartial values it promotes yield an obligation of 'general duties to promote utility, justice, or other impartial moral values.'[3] Thus, we are obliged to obey our governments due to the intrinsic morality they both possess and spread in society for the benefit of all present. Associative arguments assert that our obligation stems from the roles that we have in our society or our status as members of society.

Lastly, transactional arguments put forward that due to the benefits we have received from the state we are bound to repay it, and if we do not promise to do so outright then we do so by default through remaining within the state's territory.

Simmons' examination of each of these arguments shows them to be lacking, however, and in the interests of not overburdening our discussion the summary of the flaws he finds contained therein[4] will be brief. By the natural duty account, our obligations are not to the governments we live under but to the moral virtues themselves, making it difficult to see how this argument could generate a duty to a specific government rather than to all (moral) governments everywhere. Associative accounts place our obligations as coming part and parcel with being citizens; however, states can do horrible things to their citizens (and can choose how they define citizenship), and so this argument is sometimes limited as applying to citizens of legitimate states. This leaves open the question of legitimacy, and moreover, even granting legitimacy, simply being a citizen of a legitimate state does not mean that one is morally bound to obey everything that the state demands. Transactional accounts will often argue from the standpoint of consent, whether it is given overtly or tacitly, as being the source of our political obligations. Overt consent is quite rare, however, and when given it is often coerced,[5] whereas tacit consent carries with it the problems that few of us have the opportunity to leave our birth countries (and even if we do we must live in some state) and so simply remaining cannot be considered consenting. Moreover participation in an electoral system cannot be considered consenting either as our obligations are thought to come before such acts and they will still be binding on us even if we choose not to vote. Finally, gratitude for gifts received does not count as those very gifts were unsolicited and in general a gift-giver is not considered to be in the position to state what they would like to receive in exchange for what they have given.

It would appear that, on the basis of the arguments against a natural obligation outlined above, we are under no standing political obligations to our state institutions. Let us put forward here though the notion that, the above notwithstanding, we can still be under an obligation, but that such is one to our community at large, the society in which we commit to participate, and that it is a general, voluntary moral obligation. Such an obligation does engender a burden of obedience to socially profitable public institutions, but those running the institutions are under the same obligation to the community as those being served by them, and so, following Alain Badiou, we see 'the political' dissolving into 'politics'.[6] Government here becomes a true public servant, and is as obliged to serve the good of the general community as are its non-governmental members; power becomes a tool in the proper exercise of one's vocation, not an end in itself. Although most of us would likely be willing to take on this moral obligation for its clear benefits now and later, there will no doubt be those who do not wish to participate in their society and support what must be its shared goals (of, for example, progressive improvement, increasing inclusivity and justice, etc.), the obligation under consideration is after all voluntary. Such refusers would not be bound by the obligation to obey and support that those who

accept participation are, but would still have to face the legal consequences for their actions. A strict libertarian, for instance, may refuse to pay her taxes on what are solid ideological grounds, but she would still benefit from the roadways she uses, the city parks she frequents, and the healthy colleagues she works with thanks to her government's universal healthcare system, and so it is not unreasonable for the state to penalize her for her refusal to contribute. If she believes in her cause strongly enough, she may well be willing to face such penalties, but she will not be able to argue in court that the existence of the penalties themselves is undue coercion. This is due to the fact that the government itself is the source of the penalties, and although one can refuse one's legal obligations on moral grounds (in this case, they conflict with her libertarian values) just as one can refuse to follow a club's rules, one cannot resign from being governed the way one can from club membership.[7] Refusal is an option, but it comes with consequences that cannot be avoided by 'quitting'. The choice may be a difficult one, and it can certainly be argued that it is a stacked one, but it remains a choice nonetheless. This drawback, although some will view it as being a very large one, is nevertheless unlikely to have far-reaching effects within society. The use of authority by the state one finds oneself living in (or moves into) to regulate behavior is considered a middle level between persuasion by moral argument and coercion by outright force, incentives, and/or propaganda,[8] thus implying that while the use of authority may not be as broadly acceptable as persuasion it is more acceptable than coercion. Moreover, even if such authority is labeled as de facto by our offended libertarian, there will be the 'indeterminate and embryonic sense' in which its exercise is seen as having a right to obedience; the 'de facto sense is parasitic on the de jure sense'[9] as one sense gives rise to the other.

Some objections could be made to the type of obligation offered here, and we will have to briefly deal with them before moving on to our consideration of positive and negative freedom within it. Simmons argues that a category of general, voluntary obligations is an empty, even self-contradictory, one. His reasoning is that voluntary acts cannot form the basis of moral requirements and at the same time ignore our relationships, that 'morally significant voluntary acts are morally significant precisely by virtue of creating or constituting such special relationships or performances'.[10] On the face of it, this may seem to be at odds with the account of moral obligation presented here that is both general and voluntary, but further scrutiny will reveal that in fact it is not. What the preceding has attempted to demonstrate is that, in the absence of any natural political obligations, we are still free to choose to take on the outlook of being obligated to our communities, to helping to build better societies, or not to. Instead of ignoring the relationships and performances involved, this viewpoint takes them as the basis for a more holistic approach, both creating and renewing the special relationships of those participating in the social project. A second potential objection is that the above is simply an alternative version of one of the three accounts already discussed, nothing more. Natural duty has us obligated to obey our governments because of their moral quality and the benefits government spreads in society, is not the above very similar? It must be remembered that whereas natural duty is just that, obligation in our account is taken on voluntarily, and, moreover, though it does include support of government

programs that are designed to improve society, the object of its obligation is not the government but the greater community, and that equally between non-members and members of government. Furthermore, while this moral obligatory account might be seen as an extension of our status as community members in the way that associative accounts make use of, here we still have a choice in the matter. It is true that in both accounts our place in the whole is cemented in certain ways and this may generate certain expectations of us in the minds of others, but our account here remains voluntary and open to refusal while also providing the grounds for obligation (active consent through willful participation), both features that are lacking in associative accounts. Finally, although the basis of obligation given here is that of active consent, it avoids being a transactional account as there is no notion of debt involved; when we choose to take on this obligation we do so for the sake of making our own lives and the lives of those around us better, not out of a sense of needing to repay what has been received.

C. Freedom reapplied

Given the community focus of our alternative view on obligation as outlined above, and that as part of such a view government, and those composing it, are under the same obligation as everyone else, what would freedom here entail? Which elements from a positive outlook can be applied, and which from a negative one? In the below we'll first examine positive freedom and what affect it would have on our political institutions, and then consider some common critiques of positive freedom from the standpoint of negative freedom before signaling which aspects from the negative camp would best be preserved under our alternate obligation.

Positive freedom has traditionally involved being able to make the most of oneself, to use one's abilities of will and reason in conjunction with self-control in order to fulfill one's potential.[11] Individual autonomy is here the absence of restraints as well as 'the capacity for self-mastery and self-government',[12] a necessary part of which is seen as individuals having the opportunity to strive for their best in an environment where equality of conditions of health, housing, and education exist.[13] Defending this view of freedom, Green famously summarized his position by stating that 'the ideal of true freedom is the maximum power for all members of human society alike to make the most of themselves';[14] his two principles of justice that are necessary enablers of such a condition are equal chance and non-exploitation, and rights are seen as 'the institutionalization of opportunities'.[15] Applying this view to our concept of obligation discussed above, we see that our political institutions would then take the form of guarantors, organizers, and protectors of society, of providing that which is needed for all individuals within society to have the option of pursuing self-realization, whether they choose to attempt such or not is, of course, entirely up to each individual to decide. It is important to remember here though, that in voluntarily taking on our general moral obligation individuals do so with the common goal of improving society to more broadly benefit those who compose it, rather than for purely selfish gains. This might require some general restructuring of thought given the heavily individualized and self-focused ethos most of us in modern (especially Anglophone) liberal

democracies have been raised to support and work done on feminist theory may be of some help here. Hirschmann reports that infants start to have a sense of identity at about six months, prior to which their identity is subsumed into the primary care-giver who, the world over, is almost universally female. This caregiver thus represents the other, the whole world-object, for the child and as such girls develop to see a continuation between themselves and the outside world, that they are 'the same', whereas boys must become different in order to establish their identities, separating themselves from the outside and creating a dichotomy.[16] If one's psychic development results in a disconnect between oneself and the world that surrounds, or in an essential connection between the two, then interpretations of truth and reality will likewise differ, naturally bringing with them very different accounts of social life.[17] If we are therefore to take on an obligation whose object is the advancement of society for everyone's sake, it would behoove us to adopt an outlook that is more in keeping with the feminine view defined here, of seeing ourselves as fundamentally connected with the world around us and the people who inhabit it. This has the added advantage of being much closer to the reality of our situation as very few of us could survive solely on our own, and nor would we want to.

A view that expands the 'self' in this way to include other people, institutions, and community functions within it has been criticized in a number of ways, and the Anglophone world in particular has tended to reject such an outlook, preferring a more individually focused and governmentally hands-free approach. Currie recounts an incident where a car accident occurred in which the vehicle caught fire. When a police officer arrived he did not check to see if anyone was inside the vehicle or not, leaving those who actually were trapped, resulting in their burning to death. The city was then sued, but the judge in charge ruled in favor of the city since the US Constitution is 'a charter of negative rather than positive liberties' and the 14th Amendment[18] was adopted to 'protect Americans from oppression by state government, not to secure them basic governmental services.'[19] The city, it was ruled, had no duty to help. This result may strike us as quite strange, or even harsh, but it is quite fitting with the priorities of negative freedom. Berlin worried that positive freedom would lead to a situation of tyranny, wherein one who 'knows better' would choose for others how they should attain their self-realization on the basis that if those others were truly rational or more enlightened then they would also make the choice being imposed on them from above.[20] Negative freedom approaches may instead view the nonviolation of rights as a limiting factor on actions rather than a goal to be reached; being forced to help therefore violates one's rights, whereas not being provided with what one needs does not.[21] Nozick gives the moral justification for this outlook by appealing to Kantian ethics' emphasis on treating others as ends in themselves and not as means, for since there is no social entity that sacrifices for its own good to require some people to sacrifice for the overall benefit to others that their personal loss would bring is to treat those people as being means to an end rather than as ends themselves.[22] Negative freedom promotes the absence of restraints and — as Berlin argued what 'freedom' normally means — the degree to which no other person interferes with one's activities.[23]

While we may think that these objections go too far in the opposite direction, the emphasis on maintaining purely individual liberties should not be dismissed outright. As Gray put it, 'We need freedom because our goals and values are highly diverse and often quite different from those of the people around us.' [24] Even under a community-centered moral obligation such as ours here, individuals will naturally address themselves to their own pursuits, others, and their broader societies in unique ways. Our political institutions under this obligation would need to allow individuals to pursue their own goals if such do not threaten to harm the community, as well as their own personal betterment and way of benefiting others. Berlin wisely stresses that we cannot be absolutely free, and will need to give up some freedoms to retain others, but a minimum area of individual free rein must be preserved.[25] Where negative freedom can err is in arguing for 'unrestrained possible desires' making 'the concept of liberty…vacuous due to the impossibility of enumerating restraints.'[26]

D. From here to there

In our consideration of just what we are naturally obligated to in regards to our governments, our discovery that we are, in fact, under no default obligation, and in our alternative general and voluntary moral obligation detailed above, we have seen that elements of both positive and negative freedom are necessary parts of a greater whole. To Green, a defender of the positive side, 'true freedom is fundamentally social' and 'poorer citizens' negative freedom depends on richer citizens' positive freedom'.[27] Much as Berlin was at odds with Green, they both do agree that negative freedom is 'hollow' without the abilities and capabilities to enjoy it.[28] However, as Berlin and others arguing for the negative side point out, attaching too much significance to a positive freedom outlook can lead to the creation of institutions that exercise disproportionate control. MacCallum, in what may perhaps be considered a third approach to this problem, argued that neither type of freedom exists, that both are simply parts of a single triadic freedom composed of agents, preventing conditions, and actions/conditions of character/circumstance.[29] 'Freedom is always both freedom from something and freedom to do or become something.'[30] While this triad may be useful as an analytic tool, the two approaches do stem from differing 'substantive conceptions of freedom' and therefore cannot be collapsed in the way MacCallum proposes,[31] but he is on the right track in moving away from emphasizing the distinction for surely what is more important than a purely positive or a purely negative freedom is the concern with freedom's moral basis. What kind of societies are we trying to build? What is our purpose in promoting freedom in the way that we do? We need to arrive at a shared goal or vision. Although clarifying our idea of freedom would be helpful, what are really necessary are 'moral principles and arguments to support them'.[32] It is with that objective in mind that our alternative obligation has been put forth, and the second part of this essay will attempt to further elucidate the moral principles upon which we can base our core political values. What should those values be and how should they be balanced? Can we justify sacrificing one in favor of another? It is to those issues that we now turn, focusing especially on the thorny issue of freedom versus equality, and as we'll find, the answer may come from an unexpected source.

II. Balancing freedom and economic equality: Political values and the self

A. Refining our task

The 18th to mid-20th centuries saw a great number of movements that were grounded in arguments that purported to correctly define what our appropriate political values should be and how they should be balanced. The 1990s then witnessed the so-called 'end of history' as the governments of the Communist Bloc collapsed and the Western powers suddenly found themselves able to do whatever they pleased.[33] However, recent economic stress at the turn of the present century, especially the global financial crisis of 2007-8[34] , has highlighted that our problems are far from solved, bringing the old debates back into the foreground with a greater urgency as the solution we thought we had has revealed itself to be anything but. The issue needs refining, however, and so before our analysis can begin we must ascertain just what it is that we are trying to decide. Is the issue one of economic equality versus the traditional triad of democratic values?[35] That seems too broadly put to be of much use to us, and contains within it definitional problems of its own. Economic equality is, after all, simply one part of equality generally, which covers both the legal aspect of equality of opportunity and the socio-economic aspect of equality of condition.[36] Fraternity concerns itself with an emotional state of goodwill directed at one's neighbors and fellow citizens, and even if it were possible to enforce such an internal condition, attempts to do so would no doubt be widely seen as intrusive and unwelcome.[37] The core issue here is the emphasis on a system that promotes economic equality (with all of the societal side effects seen in equality of condition) or on one of liberty; or, more specifically, liberty as economic noninterference as the arguments for liberty over equality tend to focus on redistributive mechanisms; this position will hereinafter be referred to as negative economic freedom. Our task then will involve first briefly reviewing and critiquing the positions for economic equality (equality of condition) and for negative economic freedom. We will realize that previous arguments have been grounded on an erroneous — or at least only one among other possibilities — view of what constitutes the self, and that shifting that view opens up entirely new ways of approaching our problem of political values. We will conclude by recognizing that in order to answer our question here we must first decide how we want to define ourselves, and that broader societal queries cannot be addressed until that more fundamental matter has been settled.

B. Reality, or Where we stand now

1. *The position for economic equality*

The case put for the necessity of either attaining economic equality or at least striving after it is usually based, at least in part, on an interpretation that such would be more just, and this position has perhaps no more well-known representatives than Karl Marx and his longtime associate Friedrich Engels. From very early on in their writings these men argued from a perspective grounded in observations of the lives of real people that were unfolding around them. In A Critique of the German Ideology (1845), they put forward that fundamental human needs must be met before a person can

develop further, stating 'In the real world…where individuals have needs, they thereby already have a vocation and task.'[38] The two men did not, however, see people as being strictly the products of the conditions in which they lived, but rather as standing apart and therefore able to exert influence over them.[39] Lewis, in a comment on Marx's third thesis on Feuerbach,[40] notes that the problem has 'at least two quantities; it is not a question solely of conditions, economic or otherwise; it is a question of man and conditions, for the man is never dissolved in the conditions, but exists as a separate entity, and these two elements, man and conditions, act and react the one upon the other'.[41] Whether or not we are 'dissolved' in our conditions remains a matter of contention, yet regardless of the Hegelian-influenced distinction here it is precisely to conditions that modern writers promoting economic equality have turned their attention. Sandel notes that 'For Rawls, the principles of justice aim neither at rewarding virtue nor at giving people what they deserve, but instead at calling for the resources and talents necessary to serve the common interest.'[42] Natural assets for Rawls too were seen as being means to an end, as neither just nor unjust in themselves but simply as facts which may be handled in just or unjust ways by institutions.[43] Here resources, talents, and assets are all seen as tools that can be applied to improving conditions, and when two American professors recently used Rawls' famous veil of ignorance in a survey they conducted on the right level of wealth distribution a society should have, the respondents 'created a society that is much more equal than any society on earth'.[44] Given the perennially conservative nature of American politics and common American views on governmental programs of wealth redistribution, the survey respondents' answers may be somewhat surprising but perhaps they shouldn't be. Ariely reports that the bottom 40% of Americans own just 0.3% of the nation's wealth, while the top 20% owns about 84% of the wealth.[45] Moreover, after-tax income growth in that nation from 1979-2007 strongly favored the already wealthy, as shown by the percentage of increase by group. The 0-20% group had growth of 18%, the 21-80% group had 37%, the 81-99% group had 65%, and the top 1% had a stunning 275% growth.[46] While a trend like this may be considered by some to be a special case,[47] the World Economic Forum did report last year that 'severe income inequality' was the top global risk.[48] Dworkin's position that in a contest between equality and liberty, liberty must certainly lose[49] may come as less of a shock when our current economic situation is presented in this way. Many have indeed argued that trading freedom for greater economic equality makes much sense, particularly given the very vague way that freedom has functioned in liberal thought,[50] and that specific freedoms in the form of individual rights have been the exception and not the rule in human history, and even in recent Western history.[51]

The case is far from being cut and dry, however, as a number of criticisms can be raised against the cry for economic equality, starting with its own internal ambiguity. Scanlon argued that some theory of the good is needed if judgments about distributive justice and who is better or worse off are to be made,[52] and Nagel that a measure of the 'common good' — raising questions of impartiality — is required for deciding what to permit and what to promote.[53] Yet one of the tenants of modern liberal democracies is to remain neutral on just such matters, making the point a very sticky one and arguably

one that still has not been sufficiently dealt with. Moreover, Rawls and others (notably Habermas) make political proposals as alternations of an assumed already existing reality, grounding their politics on a political level that has not been established and therefore arguing from a position of the 'circularity of the political'.[54] There are also real-world economic issues that continue to daunt advocates of economic equality. Berggren, in an empirical study of 102 countries between the years 1975-1985, demonstrated the connection between economic freedom (i.e. governmental noninterference) and growing income equality, particularly when policies are changed to increase trade liberalization and financial mobility and when implemented in a stable and continual manner.[55] In a comparison of 18 representative national samples from six Central-East European nations under Communism and following its fall[56] with 32 representative national samples from Western countries, Kelley and Zagorski found that, regardless of poor or rich, socialist or capitalist, there was a near consensus about what regular workers should earn and that high status jobs should be paid more, 'but widespread disagreement about how much more and why'.[57] What is perhaps most surprising in their study is the rapidity with which opinions on equality shifted to ones of accepted inequality in the post-Communist nations, even after many years of governmental promotion of pro-equality sentiments. There are, however, some caveats to these studies: Berggren's operated on a definition of equality that denoted an 'absence of differences between people with reference to disposable income',[58] meaning that his was a post-tax and post-transfer (hence redistribution) study, and while all respondents accepted inequality in pay in Kelley and Zagorski's study, the range among the established inegalitarian Western nations was for high status jobs to earn between 2.25 and 4.06 times the salary of an average worker. Notwithstanding public opinion, as recently as November 2008 the average public company CEO in the US was earning 400 times that of an average worker, exceeding even the highest rate found acceptable by a magnitude of nearly 100. [59] Furthermore, Belarus, in eschewing privatization and subsidizing local industry using profits from state-owned oil and gas concerns, was able to halve the number of its people in poverty by 2005 and avoided social tension during the seven years prior by 'maintaining the fairest distribution of income of any country in the region'.[60] Even more recently, the IMF found that the multiplier[61] was much higher than that upon which austerity spending cut calculations had been based,[62] meaning that vast amounts of economic output had in fact been removed by the cuts, doing much more harm than good.[63] Lanchester may be right when he writes that one way to sum up the entire field of macroeconomics is 'nobody knows anything'.[64] What does all this mean for economic equality? That the jury is still out, but some solid lessons have been learned. True equality is probably impossible, and anyway it doesn't seem to match our natural expectations. The 20th century experiments by Communist governments also showed that some measure of market forces do appear to be necessary, and that a command economy both stultifies the economy generally and leads to shortages of goods and services that are popular among average people but may not register on governmental wavelengths.[65] Nevertheless, this is not to imply that the wealth gap should be left as is, and certainly much more social good can come from moving towards equality than from moving away from it.

2. *The position for negative economic freedom*

Our examination of the case for negative economic freedom can take the form, as its arguments themselves often do, of being a foil to schemes for economic equality, stressing individual choice and liberty over goal-based governmental interference. Advocates of this position view justice as being about the 'socially acceptable use of interpersonal force', and that questions of distribution are really ones of 'which, if any, distributions may be coercively procured, e.g. by law'.[66] Self-ownership is centrally important to this line of thought, and it argues that if one owns X then one has the right to decide X's use and can veto anyone else's attempts to make use of X.[67] Narveson writes that to give equal income to Jones and Smith will not therefore make them 'equal' as each has different abilities and desires of how to use the money; he adds 'In my sense in which money can buy happiness, the same amount will buy different people different "amounts" of it.'[68] On the question of how just ownership is obtained, Nozick writes that holdings are just if and only if acquired by the principle of justice in acquisition[69] or transferred from someone else who had acquired them that way, making the issue an historical one.[70] Nozick's celebrated Wilt Chamberlain example demonstrates the negative economic freedom position on distribution by starting with any presumed just distribution D1[71] and then supposing that Chamberlain makes a deal with the owners of his team that he will only continue playing for them if he receives 25¢ from each fan at each game.[72] The fans continue attending and are more than happy to put a quarter into 'Wilt's box' at the entrance as they love seeing him play. At the end of the year, distribution D2, Chamberlain has amassed considerably more wealth than anyone else, yet has done so only through the voluntary actions of people who themselves started with holdings that were just. Chamberlain's higher wealth must therefore itself be just, and to redistribute his (or anyone else's) gains won through the voluntary actions of others would be unjust;[73] 'Any distributional pattern with any egalitarian component is overturnable by the voluntary actions of individual persons over time.'[74] Thinkers arguing for negative economic freedom and against attempts at equality will similarly point out that societies are incredibly complex and beyond any kind of planning, that they have evolved naturally and have many components championing inequality in one way or another (intellectual, physical, sexist, etc.).[75] They will remind us that central to liberalism is that government is justified because it promotes the (undefined) common good, and that that good is left up to the people to decide,[76] that while liberals may respect some people's attachment to an illiberal community, liberal respect for practices is bound by concerns for freedom and dignity.[77] Rawls even shares this individually-focused attitude, noting that liberty can only be restricted for the sake of liberty itself, and that the liberal value of autonomy is 'morally akin to the autonomy sought by groups'.[78] Taken together, self-ownership, the right to do what one wants with what one has justly acquired, societies' inherent unplannability, and an emphasis on individual autonomy and freedom all point to Narveson's confident position that liberalism followed through to its logical end must result in libertarianism, that libertarianism 'is really the culmination of liberalism, which is defined by acceptance of individuals as the ultimate authorities on their own values'.[79] Yet as solid as these

arguments may seem, it is precisely in their view of the individual, of what defines the 'self', where they fail, as the below will attempt to demonstrate.

C. An even realer reality, or The view with eyes open

1. *A mistaken self*

Much of the confusion over the correct position individuals hold in relation to society in contemporary philosophy and related fields may be traceable all the way back to Hobbes' 'state of nature'. His notion that civil society was deliberately chosen and created, launching a sovereign that both orders and transcends society, 'arguably inaugurates political modernity in its radical conception of the absence of society'.[80] The liberal concern for the individual wholly separate from society expresses this view in all of its derivative arguments about policy and proper governance. Dworkin sees the heart of liberalism as being an equal concern and respect for each individual, and that fundamental civil liberties are crucial in protecting individuals from 'external preferences'.[81] Narveson advocates the liberty rule, whereby one is free to do as one wishes as long as one does not harm or interfere with another, giving the example of a farmer who raises corn and is thereby at liberty to do with it and herself as she wishes indefinitely because her work has harmed no one else.[82] Put this way, the argument has much intuitive appeal, yet underneath it, and underpinning much other liberal thought, is the extension of self-ownership between what owns and is owned, and it is here that Narveson's and similar thinkers' definition of the self can be most clearly seen. The self is understood as one's will or mind, such that one owns one's body in much the same way that one owns one's car.[83] Just what a mind (rather than brain) consists of has been notoriously hard for both philosophers and neurologists to pin down, however, and so it is not surprising to find Narveson a few pages later, in a discussion of why fraud is invasive and morally wrong, as stating that fraud transfers to a person's mind what they do not allow there (i.e. disinformation), and 'Everyone is "boss" over his own mind on the self-ownership view.'[84] If the self is one's will or mind, then what is the boss that stands over one's mind?[85]

We note in closing that this perceived liberal balance of concern for the individual and the larger group, both by those who advocate economic equality and by those who promote negative economic freedom, is summed up in Levey's statement that 'Liberal autonomy is not an atomistic, asocial concept, but one that presupposes community and laws to which its members can be expected to subscribe.'[86] Yet the concern for broader society that we read expressed by these writers is veneer on the surface of Hobbes' view of humanity as consisting of roaming land sharks, predators ready to tear apart anyone and everyone who stands between them and their desires. This is a pre-Darwinian and fundamentally erroneous view of human beings.

2. *A shifted self*

In reality we are social animals that have evolved from social animals, and our true 'state of nature'

is no more anarchic than a community of (our close cousins) chimpanzees is. Despite our physical dimensions and high degree of personal mobility, we cannot be boiled down to solitary and unrelated units. Our societies are our states of nature; we cannot behave otherwise but to organize ourselves in these ways. Different groups of people have and will continue to have differing characteristics, but we will still function within groups and our actions will inevitably affect the other members. We never exist in a vacuum, and seeing us that way is the great fault of both liberal and libertarian views (and of all other individualist theories generally). Every one of us everywhere on the planet is part of an interconnected whole and cannot be severed from that whole. This is why, if we are serious about trying to find the correct balance between political values like economic equality and freedom, it is crucial that we begin by recognizing that whatever policies we pursue will affect the whole of society in one way or another and not simply the particular individuals at which the policies have been aimed or for whom they have been designed to serve. Let's return briefly to Narveson's corn farmer. With the best of intentions and seeking only to grow the highest quality corn that she can, our farmer inadvertently ends up using a pesticide that is harmful to honeybees.[87] These honeybees start dying in mass numbers, abandon their colonies, and leave their affiliated beekeepers scratching their heads in wonder. Meanwhile the soybean farmers who rely on bees to pollinate their fields are not able to grow the crops that they usually can, causing rippling disruptions in industries as widespread as oil production and cattle feed.[88] A view of the self that sees only our corn farmer, or our beekeepers, or our soybean farmers (or their separate wills or minds), will not be able to realistically or accurately address this or any other of the myriad real-world problems that we face. On the other hand, a view of the self that sees each of us as intrinsically and inseparably part of the whole — let us call that view one of a group-self — will be able to, and policies designed with this group-self view in mind would not need perfect knowledge of every potentiality to address the issues they are devised for in more beneficial ways than is currently happening.[89]

Let's take an example of an actual policy oriented towards the individual as separate from society that ended with tragic results in order to see how its consequences could have been avoided under the group-self view described above. An 87 year-old woman recently collapsed in the senior living facility where she was a resident in the US state of California, causing one of the nurses working there to contact emergency services. The dispatcher who took the call pleaded with the nurse for over seven minutes to give the collapsed woman CPR while waiting for the ambulance to arrive, but the nurse refused to on the grounds that the facility's staff policy states that nothing should be done in cases of health-related emergencies until official medical personnel arrive. The dispatcher even asked the nurse to give the phone to someone — anyone — else so that they could perform the CPR needed to keep the woman alive, but was told by the nurse that no one at the facility would be willing to help. By the time the emergency response team arrived and took the woman to a nearby hospital it was already too late.[90] The facility's policy is almost certainly to blame here in the untimely and entirely preventable death of the resident, and it appears to be aimed primarily at preventing any potential

litigation by allowing the full responsibility for actions taken to fall on the medical personnel sent to the scene.[91] By doing nothing the facility's owners ostensibly believe that they can be protected from unwanted consequences, and perhaps seek to further ensure this by not permitting their staff, being the representatives of the facility that they are, to do anything either. In the absence of Good Samaritan laws enforcing a duty to rescue[92] the owners appear to be right in their judgments. The nurse too appears to be legally shielded by the policy of her employers, and though the police did investigate her for criminal wrongdoing no legal statutes were found to have been broken and no charges were filed.[93] Whether or not the facility itself and/or the nurse in question are ever eventually charged with anything related to this case or another, both the policy and the nurse's failure to act are clearly culpable in the woman's death. By seeking only to protect perceived self interests, and by keeping the focus on a presumed separateness between facility staff and residents, the content of the policy and the behavior of the nurse who upheld it are exemplars of the short-sighted and damaging individualism that has come to be the norm. The culture that produced the mental outlook of the individuals involved, who are likely caring and decent people, is of course partly to blame for this tragic outcome. Yet it is equally clear that had the owners of the facility recognized their unity with the greater whole of the community they never would have implemented such a policy, and had the nurse recognized the same she would of course have immediately given whatever medical aid was necessary and she was capable of delivering to the ailing woman under her charge. Even in the worst case scenario, where the policy forbidding help exists and the care given by the nurse with the best of intentions actually made matters worse, it would be a rare jury that would find her guilty of any misconduct. This seems like common sense to us, and indeed it is, but the fact that cases like the one described here occur at all indicates just how far we have gone in striving to stress false divisions between what we understand to be ourselves and others. There can be no strict boundaries drawn between us, or even between us and the environments we reside in, because one cannot be as it is now without the other, and in cases where we remove ourselves from the community we have been a part of we find ourselves simply inhabiting another.[94] By training ourselves to look beyond where our physical bodies end and to see the wholeness of all around us, recognizing that the role we play is very much a part of that singularity, we can begin to make anew our societies in healthier and far more humane ways. Adopting the group-self view and voluntarily taking on the general moral obligation outlined here are moves in that direction.

D. The fork in the road

This is the choice we are faced with. We can either continue to argue whether A should be over B or B should be over A — be they types of freedom, equality, or broader comparative values — while ignoring the relationship between them or we can recognize that the self in society does not exist except as the group-self. If we do acknowledge the reality of the interconnectedness of our world and us in it, and if we can accept a type of general and voluntary moral obligation to our communities like the one described above, then we may yet be able to reconcile the very apposite concerns of how we should consider and prioritize our freedom while still addressing widespread economic inequality.

The individual does of course have a role and is of great importance in the group-self view under a general, voluntary obligation, but that role and that importance are not distinct from the society in which the individual lives. Our examination of the choice between emphasizing economic equality or negative economic freedom was and must have been inconclusive for the reason that it was based on a faulty view of the self. Similarly, we saw that emphasizing either a purely positive or a purely negative freedom led us into error, though the expanded sense of self promoted by positive freedom and feminist theory are closer to our group-self view here. Shifting our thinking to take on the group-self sense of identity will yield new possibilities and approaches to these and other problems of political and social values, but before we can get to them we will have to take this first step.

Notes

1) Avital Simhony, 'Beyond Negative and Positive Freedom: T. H. Green's View of Freedom', Political Theory, 21:1 (1993), 28-54. Simhony notes that although it is widely accepted in the literature that Benjamin Constant was the originator of this distinction, viewing Green as such is a more accurate depiction as Constant's focus was rather on the relations between two different types of positive freedom instead of a positive and a negative freedom as such. For our present purposes which of these two men should be credited is of far less importance than how our view of freedom should be adjusted and applied.
2) A. John Simmons, 'Political Obligation and Authority' in The Blackwell Guide to Social and Political Philosophy, ed. by Robert L. Simon (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, Ltd., 2002), pp. 17-37.
3) ibid., p. 27.
4) ibid. See especially pp. 30-35.
5) I recall that my elementary school required all students to face the US flag hanging in their classrooms and recite the Pledge of Allegiance at the start of each school day. The words to that, which are still burned in my memory, are: 'I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.' Michael Newdow famously sued to have the words 'under God' removed, and although his case was dismissed by the Supreme Court a similar one has recently been filed by a family in Boston. That those two words have become such a hot-button issue rather than the forced repetition of the pledge itself seems incredible to me. For a summary of each lawsuit, see: 'Michael Newdow', Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Newdow#Pledge_of_Allegiance; and, Hemant Mehta, 'Could This Case Remove "Under God" From the Pledge of Allegiance?', Friendly Atheist, 14 February 2012. http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/2012/02/14/could-this-case-remove-under-god-from-the-pledge-of-allegiance/.
6) Geoffrey Holsclaw, 'At a Distance to the State: On the Politics of Hobbes and Badiou', Telos, 160 (2012), 99-119. For a history of the separation of 'politics' and 'the political', see: Jeremy Valentine, 'The Political', Theory, Culture & Society, 23 (2006), 505-511.
7) G. E. M. Anscombe, 'On the Source of the Authority of the State', in Ethics, Religion and Politics: Collected Philosophical Papers Volume III (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher Ltd., 1981), pp. 130-155.

8) R. S. Peters, 'Symposium: Authority', Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes, 32 (1958), 207-260.

9) ibid., p. 219.

10) Simmons, op. cit., p. 28.

11) Simhony, op. cit.

12) John Christman, 'Liberalism and Individual Positive Freedom', Ethics, 101:2 (1991), 343-359 (p. 344).

13) Simhony, op. cit.

14) ibid., p. 40.

15) ibid., p. 41.

16) Nancy J. Hirschmann, 'Freedom, Recognition, and Obligation: A Feminist Approach to Political Theory', The American Political Science Review, 83:4 (1989), 1227-1244.

17) ibid. Interested readers should see also Carol Gilligan's In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982). Hirschmann notes that 'Gilligan in particular argues that women's worldview of connectedness results in a morality of care.' (ibid., p. 1231)

18) The right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; the lawsuit was based on the city's having denied life and liberty to the victims.

19) David P. Currie, 'Positive and Negative Constitutional Rights', The University of Chicago Law Review, 53:3 (1986), 864-890 (p. 864). Currie's article makes many interesting comparisons between rulings in the US and West Germany, where, despite the US's Bill of Rights and West Germany's Basic Law having very similar wordings, US judges have tended towards negative freedom interpretations of the law while their West German counterparts tended more towards positive freedom readings.

20) Isaiah Berlin, 'Two Concepts of Liberty', in Political Philosophy, ed. by Anthony Quinton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 141-152. Retrieved from: http://openlearn.open.ac.uk/file.php/2745/!via/oucontent/course/47/a211_reading1.pdf.

21) Robert Nozick, Anarchy, State, and Utopia (New York: Basic Books, 1974). The ruling reported in Currie's piece is somewhat more complicated than the view reported here however, as the police officer was not acting simply as an individual but as a representative of the city in a role of public service.

22) ibid.

23) Berlin, op. cit.

24) John Gray, 'A Point of View: The trouble with freedom', BBC News: Magazine, 24 August, 2012. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-19372177.

25) Berlin, op. cit.

26) Christman, op. cit., p. 353.

27) Adrian Blau, 'Against Positive and Negative Freedom', Political Theory, 32:4 (2004), 547-553 (p. 550). To this Blau adds that poorer citizens' positive freedoms (in the sense of capabilities of acting) also depend on richer citizens' positive freedoms (in the sense of doing something social). See pp. 550-551.

28) ibid.

29) Gerald C. MacCallum, Jr. 'Negative and Positive Freedom', The Philosophical Review, 76:3 (1967), 312-334.

30) ibid., p. 319.

31) Simhony, op. cit., pp. 30-31.

32) Blau, op. cit., p. 552, quoting from: Joseph Raz, The Morality of Freedom (Oxford: Oxford University Press,

1986), p. 15.

33) Ronaldo Munck, 'Deconstructing Violence: Power, Force, and Social Transformation', Latin American Perspectives, 35 (2008), 3-19.

34) 2009 could also arguably be included here, though that year is better known by the label 'the global recession of 2009'. See: 'Great Recession', Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Recession; and 'Financial crisis of 2007-2008', Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Financial_crisis_of_2007%E2%80%932008.

35) Perhaps best known in French: liberté, égalité, fraternité.

36) Christine Helliwell, 'Autonomy as Natural Equality: Inequality in "Egalitarian" Societies', The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 1:2 (1995), 359-375.

37) Though anti-fraternal behavior, such as physical acts of aggression, can of course be prohibited and/or regulated.

38) Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, 'A Critique of the German Ideology', Marx/Engels Internet Archive, transcribed by Tim Delaney and Bob Schwartz. Retrieved from: http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf.htm, (p. 53 [305-307]). Italics in the original.

39) Karl Marx, 'Theses on Feuerbach', in Frederick Engels: Feuerbach — The Roots of the Socialist Philosophy and Karl Marx: Theses on Feuerbach, Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx, trans. and intro. by Austin Lewis (New York: Mondial, 2009), pp. 94-97.

40) The referenced section of the fuller thesis reads: 'The materialistic doctrine that men are the products of conditions and education, different men therefore the products of other conditions and changed education, forgets that circumstances may be altered by men and that the educator has himself to be educated.' ibid., p. 95.

41) ibid., p. 19.

42) Michael J. Sandel, Liberalism and the Limits of Justice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 88.

43) ibid.

44) Dan Ariely, 'How Americans view wealth and inequality', BBC News: Business, 20 August 2012. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-19284017. Ariely is a professor of behavioral economics at Duke University; the study was conducted with Mike Norton, a professor at Harvard Business School.

45) ibid.

46) Michael Robinson, 'The Wealth Gap — Inequality in Numbers', BBC News: Business, 17 January 2012. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-16545898.

47) The US's status as both the world's richest nation and the developed world's least inclined towards social equity programs does make for an odd mix, but its broad trends are usually reflected in other economies, just not always to the same degree.

48) Tim Weber, 'World Economic Forum: Stark inequality "top global risk"', BBC News: Business, 11 January 2012. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-16511956. The other top dangers listed in the report were: chronic government debt, threat of cyber-attacks, global warming, failure of regulation, and population growth.

49) Ronald Dworkin, Sovereign Virtue: The Theory and Practice of Equality (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

50) William Nelson, 'Liberal Theories and their Critics', in The Blackwell Guide to Social and Political Philosophy, ed. by Robert L. Simon (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, Ltd., 2002), pp. 197-217.

51) Berlin, op. cit.

52) T. M. Scanlon, What We Owe to Each Other (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2000); cited in Nelson, op. cit.

53) Thomas Nagel, 'Moral Conflict and Political Legitimacy', Philosophy and Public Affairs, 16:3 (1987), 215-240.

54) Valentine, op. cit.

55) Niclas Berggren, 'Economic freedom and equality: Friends or foes?', Public Choice, 100 (1999), 203-223.

56) The years studied were 1987-2001. However, no data were available for Russia, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, and Slovenia for the period 1987-1989. (The other two Central-East European countries were Poland and Hungary.)

57) Jonathan Kelley & Krzysztof Zagorski, 'Economic change and the legitimation of inequality: The transition from socialism to the free market in Central East Europe', Research in Social Stratification and Mobility, 22 (2005), 319-364. Interestingly, and perhaps counter-intuitively, the respondents in Central-East European countries thought that medical doctors should be paid considerably lower wages than their Western counterparts did.

58) Berggren, op. cit., p. 205.

59) Leo Hindery, Jr., 'Why Obama, Congress must curb CEO pay', U.S. business on NBC News.com, 05 November 2008. http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/27555714/ns/business-us_business/t/why-obama-congress-must-curb-ceo-pay/#.UP0qNOh8N4s.

60) Jonathan Steele, 'Lukashenko's Way', London Review of Books, 34:18 (2012), 29-31 (p. 31).

61) A Keynesian economic term that involves both a process and a number and is used in studying how the same money moving through an economy multiple times (I pay you $1 for a candy bar, you spend that dollar on a newspaper, the newspaper salesperson spends it on a bus ride, etc.) adds much more to GDP than the same amount saved in a bank account does.

62) The calculations were based on a rate of 0.5 but the actual rate was in the 0.9-1.7 range.

63) John Lanchester, 'Let's call it failure', London Review of Books, 35:1 (2013), 3-6.

64) ibid., p. 5.

65) This happens through governmental favoring of certain industries and the declaration of production goals causing productive focus to shift to those goals rather than responding to demand.

66) Jan Narveson, 'Libertarianism vs. Marxism: Reflections on G. A. Cohen's "Self-Ownership, Freedom and Equality"', The Journal of Ethics, 2:1 (1998), 1-26 (p. 3). Italics in the original. On this issue Nozick notes that questions of allocation of goods or services must (but usually don't) consider where the goods or services will come from, and whether other people already have entitlements to them or not. See: Nozick, op. cit., especially pp. 232-235.

67) Narveson, op. cit.

68) ibid., p. 16.

69) This is a Lockean concept (that includes a weak sense of Locke's proviso 'enough and as good left in common for others') and involves either appropriating a previously unclaimed item or resource or mixing one's labor with the item or resource in order to make it one's own.

70) Nozick, op. cit. Nozick does however allow for the rectification of past injustices that have resulted in current holdings, but he does not state in what manner such rectifications should be obtained, and given Nozick's stance generally (particularly his entitlement theory) it is hard to see how any real-world rectification could be reconciled in his view.

71) Nozick writes that we may consider it to be our favorite distribution.

72) Chamberlain is considered a free agent in this example.

73) ibid., p. 163. The Chamberlain example is found on pp. 160-161.

74) ibid., p. 164.

75) Gerald F. Gaus, Political Concepts and Political Theories (Oxford: Westview Press, 2000).

76) Narveson, op. cit.

77) Brahm Levey, 'Equality, Autonomy, and Cultural Rights', Political Theory, 25:2 (1997), 215-248.

78) ibid., p. 239.

79) Narveson, op. cit., p. 26.

80) Valentine, op. cit., p. 507.

81) Gaus, op. cit. Dworkin sees this equal concern and respect for each individual as also calling for an equal distribution of resources and opportunities to every person in society. His argument for equality of resources is a fascinating one and in many respects presents a middle way between the views explored here. To Dworkin, liberty is necessarily a part of equality correctly understood, and his promotion of equality is not as a theory of sameness but as an equal share (as judged so by his 'envy test') of resources and opportunities under a market based economy that is measured by fixing held resource value at the cost to others of one having those resources. Despite this acknowledgement of social cost from individual behavior, however, the objective of his argument is to eliminate or lessen the roles luck and the genetic lottery play in individual lives without also promoting an overarching societal goal or end-state to be aimed at. Interested readers should see chapters 2 and 3 especially in Dworkin, op. cit. 'External preferences' refers to someone wanting others to act in the way he or she chooses rather than allowing those others to decide for themselves.

82) Narveson, op. cit. This is also how Narveson justifies the acquisition of unclaimed resources. The first-comer gets the resource in question and becomes its owner, meaning that anyone else following will necessarily interfere with what the first-comer has set in action; see pp. 11-13.

83) ibid., note 19 on p. 10.

84) ibid., note 35 on p. 18.

85) Or did Narveson mean 'brain' here, such that the transferred disinformation takes the form of the associated neural tissue mass that is storing it and that can be considered 'owned'? It is unclear, and this lack of clarity can perhaps be taken as indicative of the liberal position on the self generally.

86) Levey, op. cit., p. 235.

87) Narveson does note that accidental harm is a possibility which may require compensation or confiscation, but largely dismisses such cases as being too rare to worry about, his main point being to demonstrate the application of the liberty rule. See his note 26 on p. 13 of Narveson, op. cit.

88) Something very much like this may in fact have a real-world corollary. See: Bryan Walsh, 'What's the Buzz: Study Links Pesticide with Honeybee Collapse', Time Magazine: Science & Space, 11 April 2012. http://science.time.com/2012/04/11/whats-the-buzz-study-links-pesticide-with-honeybee-collapse/. For a (surprisingly long) list of crops pollinated by bees, see: 'List of crop plants pollinated by bees', Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_crop_plants_pollinated_by_bees; and for uses of soybeans see: 'Soybean', Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soybean#Uses.

89) It should be noted that the group-self view is not a Marxian view as the focus here is on the whole that each of us has a part in rather than on how the conditions of the whole of which we are a part have gone into making us the types of people that we are. Where Marxists see groups of actors (classes) operating within society, the group-self view sees those same classes as being as inextricably linked to the other classes and broader trends as the

individuals themselves are within their classes in the Marxist view. The group-self view does not champion the victory of one group within society over another; the whole is taken to be of primary importance and securing the betterment of the whole will necessarily involve promoting the betterment of all that composes it. Readers who are nevertheless interested in issues of Marxism and individualism may find the following article helpful: Mark E. Warren, 'Marx and methodological individualism', Philosophy of the Social Sciences, 18:4 (1988), 447-476.

Observant readers will have noticed that the group-self view presented here shares a number of characteristics with those described by communitarian writers. The above is perhaps best thought of as a middle road between liberal/libertarian notions of the self and communitarian ones (though the latter category is admittedly quite broad and variant). While the group-self view does acknowledge that individuals are highly shaped by their cultures and groups it nevertheless supports a legal framework that is based on rights and privileges granted to individuals as such; the group-self view is to be adopted individually and to inform both personal and public decisions. However, the pure neutrality of legal frameworks is unlikely to be an attainable goal, and as the debates on multiculturalism have shown the question of what ethics should be pursued in societies made up of very different particularist groups is an urgent one. On that point interested readers should also see the debates on the struggle for recognition; Chapter 6 ('Ethics of the Other') in Beatrice Hanssen, Critique of Violence: Between Poststructuralism and Critical Theory (New York: Routledge, 2000) has a helpful overview of the above debates that recontextualizes Fanon's work within them. Readers may also wish to pursue the works of Charles Taylor, Michael Sandel, Seyla Benhabib and Shlomo Avineri, amongst others. Jürgen Habermas has also written extensively and incisively on questions of multiculturalism and recognition.

90) Alyssa Newcomb, 'Elderly Woman Dies After Nurse Refuses to Give Her CPR', ABC News: Nation, 03 March 2013. http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/headlines/2013/03/elderly-woman-dies-after-nurse-refuses-to-give-her-cpr/.

91) The company initially stated that the employee followed policy but then later claimed its guidelines had not been properly understood by the nurse in question. Giillian Mohney, 'Bakersfield Police: No Criminal Charges Over Death of Woman Denied CPR', ABC News: Health, 06 March 2013. http://abcnews.go.com/Health/bakersfield-police-criminal-charges-death-woman-denied-cpr/story?id=18666182#.UZSKOErLvcs.

92) Good Samaritan laws granting immunity to those who administer CPR in good faith do, however, exist, but California law is vague on whether immunity is granted to non-certified performers or not. See 'CPR Refusal Death: Police Investigate Nurse', Sky News, 05 March 2013. http://news.sky.com/story/1059967/cpr-refusal-death-police-investigate-nurse.

93) Mohney, op. cit.

94) The same is true, of course, even for lonely hermits on mountaintops. In such exceptional cases the community they join is largely a natural one. Much more frequently, those who withdraw from society for reasons of religious training or the like remain part of the order they joined and are supported in their hermitage by other members of that order, rejoining their fellows after a temporary term away.

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