**Is the US Dependence on Charity Immoral? (13 votes)**

[BenChida](https://courses.edx.org/courses/HarvardX/ER22x/2013_Spring/discussion/forum/users/1330541) a day ago

Posted by: EdSilha

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 25.

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. (2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Is the United States political position that citizens must depend on charity to provide some their basic needs (food banks, shelters) immoral?

The US is one of only a few developed countries that does not provide universal health coverage for all citizens, making some dependent on free clinics (a demeaning experience). Although we claim to be a society of equal opportunity, is the claim false given that the quality of the schools students attend are often dependent on the wealth of their parents and neighbors? Can children have equal opportunities when some have health care while others that lack it are often sicker?

Does this violate Article 25?

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(this post is about [Live Question and Answer Session with Professor Sandel, Part 2 / Top Vote-Getting Questions](https://courses.edx.org/courses/HarvardX/ER22x/2013_Spring/jump_to/i4x:/HarvardX/ER22x/discussion/6efbd5d53d5241b6bf99409448272104))

1. [0](javascript:void(0)) [steve6789](https://courses.edx.org/courses/HarvardX/ER22x/2013_Spring/discussion/forum/users/931776)

about 19 hours ago

We all have rights huh? Why? Should the be earned? Or is the correct response..."I exist, give me!"

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* + Then who judges who has earned what? Are things to distributed by a panel that decides who should get what?

–posted about 19 hours ago by [Mr\_Phil](https://courses.edx.org/courses/HarvardX/ER22x/2013_Spring/discussion/forum/users/909485)

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1. [0](javascript:void(0)) [AussieSteve](https://courses.edx.org/courses/HarvardX/ER22x/2013_Spring/discussion/forum/users/1807379)

about 18 hours ago

I believe it is immoral to have to rely on charity - our government should guarantee a safety net. For those outside the US, the opposition within the US to universal health care services is baffling.

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1. [0](javascript:void(0)) [etstowell](https://courses.edx.org/courses/HarvardX/ER22x/2013_Spring/discussion/forum/users/441203)

about 18 hours ago

Why do you think you have a right to anything other then the right to try and be responsible for your own well being. Private charity is for those truly in need. What right do bleeding hearts have to take others property. They can give their own property and no one will stop them.

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* + But as soon as there is any law, even just to stop anarchy, then you have disturbed the system, The ability to "fend for yourself", the idea of a level playing field is gone. Example, laws to say who owns sunlight that falls on a bit of ground, the rain that falls from the sky, the technology that we didn't ourselves invent.

–posted about 18 hours ago by [Mr\_Phil](https://courses.edx.org/courses/HarvardX/ER22x/2013_Spring/discussion/forum/users/909485)

* + Why do you think you have a right to anything other then the right to try and be responsible for your own well being.

What about those who are physically or mentally incapable of being responsible for their own well being, no matter how hard they try? Are they not entitled to some minimum standard of living that we as a society can provide?

What right do bleeding hearts have to take others property.

What right do libertarians have to the concept of property? As far as I'm concerned, all wealth is "earned" by virtue of luck, either by the genetic lottery or accident of circumstance. As such, you are no more entitled to any particular resource than the rest of society.

–posted about 17 hours ago by [gprice](https://courses.edx.org/courses/HarvardX/ER22x/2013_Spring/discussion/forum/users/1393732)

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1. [0](javascript:void(0)) [ceebeegeebee](https://courses.edx.org/courses/HarvardX/ER22x/2013_Spring/discussion/forum/users/1857383)

about 18 hours ago

Having heard your lecture broadcast by the BBC last year on the US views on National Health provision, Prof Sandel made it clear that the US perspective on social/economic rights is very dependent on the (perhaps excessive) weight given to "freedom", which I now understand is supported by the Libertarian philosophy. Much of the rest of the world does not give so much weight to freedom over other rights. Would Prof Sandel comment on this? - Carolyn, England

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