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Assignment 3

Equality of Opportunity

While equality of opportunity is a noble goal, it alone is not enough to address the underlying inequalities that lead to societal disparities. A more practical approach would be to focus on providing opportunities for success and a safety net for those who may not be able to succeed despite the opportunities presented to them.

"The case against equality of opportunity" by Javier Zarracina is an article that argues against the idea that everyone should have an equal chance to succeed in life. Zarracina argues that this ideal is impossible to achieve and that it overlooks the fact that some people are born into disadvantaged circumstances that make it harder for them to succeed. Equality of opportunity is a noble ideal that many of us strive for. Still, as Javier Zarracina points out in their article on Vox, it is an ideal that is often impossible to achieve. The reality is that some individuals are born into disadvantaged circumstances that make it harder for them to succeed, no matter how much opportunity is presented to them. I agree with Zarracina that focusing solely on equality of opportunity can lead to a lack of attention to the needs of those who are already disadvantaged. For example, suppose we only focus on providing equal access to education and job training. In that case, we may overlook the fact that some individuals may not have access to adequate healthcare or healthy food, which can negatively impact their ability to learn and succeed in the long run. Instead of focusing solely on equality of opportunity, we should also focus on addressing the underlying inequalities that lead to disparities in the first place. This can include policies that address poverty, lack of access to healthcare, and other social determinants of health. Last week we took a look at Martin Luther King Jr's "I have a Dream" speech, one of the most powerful speeches

talking about equal rights. King argues that "The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges." (King, 1963). This is a thought-provoking statement that makes sense even today as we continue to fight for equality. I believe that a more practical approach would be to focus on providing opportunities for individuals to succeed but also provide a safety net for those who may not be able to do so. Things like giving a basic income, affordable housing, and free healthcare would allow more people to get out of their comfort zones and start developing the skills they need to help make the world an equal place. Paul Bloom talks about how people don't necessarily want equality; they want fairness in this week's reading. Bloom talks about an experiment where children were asked who should get more of a reward between two fictional characters. The two fictional characters were told they would get a reward for cleaning their room. There were five items up for grabs. When the researchers told the children the fictional characters had done an equal share of the work, they said they should throw away one of the items and give both of them two items each. When the children were told that one had done more than the other in cleaning the room, the children were "quite comfortable giving three to Dan and two to Mark. In other words, they were fine with inequality, so long as it was fair." (Bloom, 2015). I totally agree with this take, and I believe that we are all equal, we are all just human beings, but those of us who do more than others should be rewarded justly. This ties in with another reading from this week, "The Gettysburg Address," from president Abraham Lincoln. Right from the speech's beginning, Lincoln says, "All men are created equal" (Lincoln, 1863). Back when Abraham Lincoln gave this speech, I don't think Lincoln was necessarily addressing everyone in this quote, mainly just "men," as he states. However, it is still a powerful line nonetheless, and with a bit of modification to today's standards, we could say that "everyone is created equal." It's the opportunities that we take and don't take that determine how we live.

In conclusion, while equality of opportunity is an admirable goal, it is not enough. We must also address the underlying inequalities that lead to disparities in the first place and provide a safety net for

those who may not be able to succeed despite the opportunities presented to them. I think "I, Pencil" is an excellent example of how individuals with different skills and expertise, regardless of their background or social status, come together through the division of labor, highlighting the equality of individuals in their ability to contribute to society through their specialized skills. We can only truly create a culture where everyone has a fair chance to succeed by addressing these issues.

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