

Every person should be required to contribute something to broader society

Stance: Disagree

Word count: 401

1 In the Western, capitalist context that we are currently living in, and for this essay, what
 2 counts as a “contribution” to broader society is defined as an action done by a person which can
 3 be quantified in the form of monetary value. This is problematic for three main reasons: 1) there
 4 are many people with various physical and disabilities who are unable to contribute, 2) it is
 5 unreasonable to demand that someone contribute to a society which they did not ask to be born
 6 into, 3) traditional human ways of contributing are being replaced by technology every day, so
 7 our standards need to change. Based on that definition, and expanding on these three arguments,
 8 I argue that not every person should be required to contribute something to broader society.

9 First, many people are incapable of contributing in a quantifiable way because of their
 10 physical or mental disabilities. For example, a national survey of Canadian citizens in 2011
 11 revealed that 11% of the population reported daily limitations because of their disability (mental,
 12 physical, or both, as defined in the paper), with the unemployment rate being 74% for those with
 13 a very severe disability (Turcotte, 2014). Making it a requirement for those incapable of
 14 working, and forcing employers to hire those with less severe disabilities would simply be
 15 unrealistic and possibly unethical.

16 Second, no person asked to be born in the first place, let alone in a society which would
 17 require them to contribute in the specific way they deemed valuable. For example, it would be
 18 analogous to gifting someone a toy and demanding they perform certain actions if they want to
 19 keep it, but not letting them return the toy because they should be grateful to have it, even though
 20 nobody asked them if they wanted a toy in the first place.

21 Third, it is becoming increasingly more prevalent for jobs to be replaced by computers
 22 and emerging technology. An estimation suggests that 47% of current jobs in the US could be
 23 replaced by the next decade (Benedikt Frey & Osbourne A, 2013). A contribution to society
 24 today might be possible in the form of flipping burgers, but a company has already come out
 25 with a multi-tasking 10-second-burger-making bot which can replace an entire fast food joint
 26 (McNeal, 2015). We ought to be open to the idea that the way we currently think of contributions
 27 to broader society will be replaced, just as the way we contribute to society is changing.

References

- Benedikt Frey, C., & Osbourne A, M. (2013). *The Future of Employment: How Susceptible Are Jobs to Computerization?* Oxford: University of Oxford.
- McNeal, M. (2015, 05). *Rise of the Machines: The Future has Lots of Robots, Few Jobs for Humans*. Retrieved from WIRED: <https://www.wired.com/brandlab/2015/04/rise-machines-future-lots-robots-jobs-humans/>
- Turcotte, M. (2014). *Persons with Disabilities and Employment*. Statistics Canada.