

Misanthropy is better
than this

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In my first philosophy club meeting I was introduced to the intriguing argument against charity; piloted by a man named Slavoj Zizek he envisions a society where poverty is impossible. He is confused by the United States' decision to make charity a constituent of our government.

He believes that by giving a man handouts you are decreasing his determination to succeed. Zizek stated that “ The worst slave-owners were those who were kind to their slaves, and so prevented the horror of the system being realized by those who suffered from it, and understood by those who contemplated it, so, in the present state of things, the people who do most harm are the people who try to do most good.” Now this is an extreme example, but one should look deeper into what he is saying. By not showing people that their life circumstances are harmful to them, you are actually preventing them from improving it. He also adds, “ There is a certain type of misanthropy which is better as a social attitude than this cheap, charitable optimism.

” He envisions a society of people driven to never ride on the backs of others. Charity is demoralizing because you are prolonging the problems they currently have; whereas misanthropy will drive people to make change. This “ cheap” charity that Zizek is referring to is a major trademark of our government, which is welfare. In the New York Post, Michael Tanner proposes in his article, When Welfare pays Better than Work, a great option, “ Here’s an offer for you: \$38, 004 per year, tax free. No work required. Apply at your local welfare office.

” We live in the greatest country on Earth, a place where capitalism brings those motivated to the top, while covering for those who are less fortunate. However, we are motivating people to accept a life on welfare. That is why guidance is the answer: not charity. Show the youth that there is better life awaiting them and it can be attained with education, and then we as a nation must give them one. On the other hand we do need a safety net. Without the comfort of welfare, people would not take the risk in pursuing ideas that could possibly advance our society: such as new technologies and entrepreneurship.

But if you raise the water level all boats will still float on the surface; meaning that if we concentrate on developing all of our youth, the need for welfare will be minimized. Success can be accomplished with a determined mentality that forces people to apply themselves. It is a mindset that teenagers in struggling areas fail to obtain because of the lack of attention they received as young students. As a nation it is our duty to guide these kids towards success. Let us refrain from treating our problems with welfare, and instead solve them at the roots.

It is crucial to guide our youth to see the beauty in education and the opportunities that lie beyond the school grounds. However in these struggling areas, students are set up for a life on welfare before they apply for their first job. Giving a man fish so he can eat for the day is aid, but teaching a man how to fish so he can eat for a lifetime is guidance. Let us concentrate on all of our youth and incorporate an attitude that will make them dedicated to their studies and thus be given the opportunities that education can lead to. As a result, we will level the playing field of America’s

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youth, and allow equal opportunity for all kids to take advantage of. In a brilliant example a man named Bob Lenz has shown the difference between assistance and guidance.

By redesigning the curriculum and goals of a few inner city schools he, along with his partners, has completely transformed the success of the students. It didn't take money, it took effort. Coming in, fifty-five percent of his students were below grade level in math and English, more than sixty percent qualified for free or reduced-price lunch, and fourteen percent are special education students. But after his reformation, a full sixty percent are first-generation college-bound students. Bob Lenz has done this in four schools, proving that with a small adjustment guidance makes more of an impact on students. How unjust does it sound that public education provides unequal opportunity for students across the nation? The nurture of school and peers are driving some areas the wrong way.

Let us enact a true “ No Child Left Behind” policy. Imagine a nation where no matter where you were born, you could become successful.