

Lifeboat ethics by garrett hardin

[Science](#), [Social Science](#)



The paper "Lifeboat Ethics by Garrett Hardin" is a wonderful example of an article on social science. The article "Lifeboat Ethics: the case against helping the poor" written by Garrett Hardin emphasizes the need for sharing the earth's resources equally between all the countries of the world as a concentration of these resources in one part of the world or among a particular class of people would only lead to dangerous consequences. Hardin, also states that while the resources available are limited the human population is constantly on the rise and hence there must be stricter policies to control the ever-expanding population. While explaining this, Hardin compares the land occupied by a group of people to a lifeboat. A lifeboat can accommodate only a certain number of people and there is an unused excess capacity that contributes to the safety factor of the boat. Likewise, there must always be room for excess capacity within a nation without overpopulating the land available and it is the responsibility of every individual to ensure that this capacity is always maintained irrespective of being poor or rich. The needs of any given nation will rise with an increase in the population and any amount of sharing between the richer and poorer nations will not improve the situation any further. Citing the tragedy of commons, Hardin explains that the sharing of common resources without the responsibility to protect them would only lead to ruins. The misuse of air and water which is common to all can be adequately controlled by creating awareness through education. While supporting the establishment of humanitarian groups such as the world food bank and programs like the food for peace initiated by the U. S, the author does not hesitate to point out to the vested interest of the governments which are indirectly benefited

through such schemes at the cost of the taxpayers. Thus all such acts of humanity should be devoid of any selfish interest and must work towards doing better than harm. Additionally, without solely relying on aid from others even the poorer countries should learn the art of budgeting and save resources for emergencies. This system of keeping a check on their resources would also help to control the population growth. Another solution that could be adopted to minimize dependency on foreign aid would be to adopt newer technologies such as the green revolution which promise greater yields and better resistance to crop damage through some section of people do argue about the real consequences of increasing food production raising questions about the impact that it could have on the population growth. It should, however, also be borne in mind that increasing food supply would only decrease the number of other resources such as forests and natural pastures which are also required by man thus putting an extra strain on the environment. Adding to this burden would be the rising number of immigrants as an increasing number of immigrants in rich countries would only exhaust their resources and destroy environments. The rising need for cheap labor added to other vested interests of the country contribute to such actions through certain countries like Hawaii are wary about the increasing number of immigrants. However, people in America might question how immigrants can be kept out as all of us are immigrants or descendants of immigrants in one way or the other. The author argues that it would be best to leave the actions of the past and begin afresh keeping in mind the world's posterity by actively controlling reproduction and hence using the available resources effectively.