

Welfare and a Just Society: An Ethical Examination of Theory and Practice A presentation on justice, poverty, and social welfare programs by senior philosophy major Patrick Sitzer on Wednesday, April 13, at 4:15 pm in the Little Theatre {Quad 346} (SJU)

Abstract:

The question of what we owe each other in a just society is not an easy one to answer since it involves moral relationships between both individuals and wider organizations. In this project, I examine two differing theories of justice (Robert Nozick's libertarianism and John Rawls' classical liberalism) to lay a philosophical foundation as an examination of this question of what we owe each other in terms of distributive justice and welfare programs. The question of a "social safety net" and relief for the poor is particularly relevant in modern society, so I shall examine the philosophy behind the arguments both for and against it stretching back to the poorhouse era through to the 21st century. A look at the ethics of welfare will not only help us to understand more about the issue at hand, but the importance of applying philosophy to a social issue and finding a balance between philosophy and a practical life in a just society.