

Real World Graduation: Question 23

Edward D. Duvall
24 Mar 2018

Question 23

A certain person holds the following opinion on the work ethic: "Everyone should get off their butt, find a job, and do for themselves unless they can afford not to work, or they are too old, or too sick to hold a job." What is the fallacy in their reasoning?

- a) He or she is ignoring the fact that people should not have to work for less than they are worth.
- b) He or she is ignoring the fact that some people do not want to work and they shouldn't be forced; everyone has a right to basic necessities.
- c) He or she is ignoring the fact that the world is interconnected now, and it is no longer necessary to "do for one's self".
- d) He or she is ignoring the fact that "doing for one's self" is actually a form of selfish indulgence and smug self-satisfaction, which leads to the type of effete snobbery so harmful to community harmony.
- e) This person is an extremist ideologue and his statement contains no evidence of logic or reason, so the question is irrelevant.

Answer to Question 23

This is a trick question. All of the answers are wrong.

Answer a) is wrong because an hour of a person's labor is worth what they can get for it; there is no objective determination of "worth". Wages and salaries are simply the price of labor. It is a factor in every product that is produced and every service that is performed. The total cost of producing or providing a service is the combinations of labor prices combined with all the other costs: rent, materials, machinery. If the end price of a product or service cannot be sold for more than the total cost of providing it, then the product or service will not exist. If the goal is higher wages, then the costs of production will increase in proportion to the amount of labor that goes into production. Therefore, the prices you pay for those articles and services will also increase. Labor ultimately is worth what it can be re-sold for, not what some theorist claims it should be.

Answer b) is wrong because some people do not want to pay other people's bills, and they should not be forced. The "right to basic necessities" for able-bodied people is a political concept calculated as a convenient excuse for politicians to buy votes. There is no legitimate right to demand basic necessities from other people's pockets.

Answer c) is wrong because the interconnectedness of the world (whatever that means) does not pay your bills. Nor does it pay any other bills other than by generating revenue from some source (such as advertising). If it did, then "interconnectedness" is a self-perpetuating wealth-creating mechanism; if that were true, why isn't the internet free?

Answer d) is wrong because it consists of 100% psychobabble. Your friendly neighborhood sociologists would like for you to embrace it, because if you adopt this mode of thinking, it will be easy for them and their corporate, government, and activist allies to bully you into believing anything.

Answer e) is wrong because this is not extremist rhetoric. History shows that this person's attitude, and its widespread belief and application in previous generations, made America great. America will decline in proportion to how far we drift away from this principle.