

Discussion section debate #2

Background: People can use their money to alleviate suffering and death in more or less direct ways. For example, people can donate their money to effective charities, without ever interacting with needy people. However, they can also use their money to purchase supplies for their local homeless shelter, where they might also volunteer their time and personally feed the starving.

Debate question: Given current circumstances, if individuals living in affluent countries like the United States have the money to spend on luxury and frills, are they morally obligated to use at least 10 percent of their incomes to alleviate suffering and death (either directly or indirectly)? To put that in perspective, for a household bringing in \$50,000 a year, that household would have to use at least \$5,000 per year for the purpose of alleviating suffering and death.

Group 1: Provide reasons to think that affluent individuals who have the money to spend on luxury and frills are *morally obligated* to use at least 10 percent of their incomes to alleviate suffering and death (either directly or indirectly) and that it is *morally wrong* not to do so.

Group 2: Provide reasons to think that affluent individuals who have the money to spend on luxury and frills are *not* morally obligated to use at least 10 percent of their incomes to alleviate suffering and death (either directly or indirectly) and that it is *morally permissible* not to do so.

Group 3: Discuss the debate rubric and use it to assess the debate.