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RECIPROCITY AND SOCIAL OBLIGATION

BY

LAWRENCE C. BECKER

I WANT to develop a tantalizing suggestion (found in many theories of justice) for a justification of what might be called non-voluntary social obligations.

By 'obligations' I shall mean moral (or legal) requirements, as opposed to mere approvals, or permissions, or recommendations. The distinguishing feature of requirements (obligations) is that culpable failure to fulfill them makes agents liable for blame, or punishment, or making restitution, or making compensation. Culpable failure to live up to non-obligatory ideals, on the other hand, or failure to realize non-obligatory values, does not carry such penalties.

A "social" obligation, as I shall use the term, is one whose "intended" beneficiaries are all of the members of the group which imposes the obligation. Duties of membership are good examples. All of the members of the American Philosophical Association are the beneficiaries (of record) of my obligation to pay my dues. All the members of my family benefit from the performance of my familial obligations; all citizens benefit from the performance of my citizenship obligations; and so forth. (Contrast, for example, the "special" obligations created by a contract between two individuals.)¹

Social obligations, like memberships, are sometimes voluntarily assumed, and sometimes not. It is with the latter kind—the non-voluntary kind—that I shall be concerned.² After all, for political philosophy, the justification of voluntary social obligations is just the tip of the iceberg. As applied to the duties of citizenship, or the family, voluntary agreements have only a limited role. Much more important are all those putative obligations imposed by our "unavoidable" memberships in societies, families, and states. We are usually just born into such groups. The memberships are unavoidable in the sense that they take effect automatically—before we agree to them, and usually before we even have the ability to recognize them for what they are. Further, they carry with them a set of constraints which limits our ability to "revoke" membership. And they are said to impose obligations on us—obligations which we did not ask for, did not agree to, and often do not want. The question is, what can justify such obligations?

Three Standard Lines of Argument

Utility, social contract, and natural rights theorists have all addressed themselves to the question. And the answers they provide—or rather, the justificatory arguments for those answers—all run into what are by now notorious difficulties.

Utility

At first sight, a utilitarian justification for at least some non-voluntary obligations seems straightforward. Children need to be protected from harm and taught the skills necessary for survival and flourishing—just so that their own happiness as individuals will be maximized, and through that, social welfare maximized. Further, stable and efficient social arrangements have social utility. Obedience to (just) laws, keeping promises, respecting the liberty of others, and doing one's fair share—along with many other things—all seem to fall into this category. Non-voluntary social obligations, *insofar as they make a necessary contribution to social welfare*, thus appear to be justifiable by utilitarian considerations.

The major problem, of course, is showing that social welfare *requires* these obligations. It is one thing to show that it requires the general practice of truthfulness, promise-keeping and so forth in the majority of the population. But it is quite another to show that any given individual must be truthful or faithful. Indeed, situations abound in which an individual's deceit or infidelity actually maximizes utility. Thus the sort of "obligations" justified by utility theory seem to be of the form "Keep your promises unless it maximizes utility not to keep them." And that is hardly what we ordinarily mean by an obligation.

Contract

Social contract theory runs into equally serious problems. At first the justification seems simple. "Actual" contracts will not explain obligations to the state. People, when they "come of age," do not typically "agree" to accept their governments in any sense which could reasonably be called voluntary. And even if they did, that would not give us an account of the legal obligations imposed on children, or the debts transferred from one generation to another. Appeals to "implied" contract, "tacit" consent and the like merely mask the fact that the notion of actual agreement is too weak to justify many of the social obligations we care most about (e.g., those toward unwanted children).

Here hypothetical contract theory seems to save the day. If we need not worry about what people *actually* agree to, but only about what they *would* agree to (under certain conditions), then things seem easier. For example, if justifiable social arrangements are simply those to which rational people would agree under conditions of free and fair choice, then obligations which would be so agreed to are justifiable. And it seems plausible to think that rational contractors would agree to some non-voluntary social obligations—no matter whether they were choosing by a maximin rule or by some other (rational) rule. Thus (some) non-voluntary obligations can be justified.

Yet this apparently straightforward argument merely disguises the fact that the justification for such obligations now rests on the justifiability of hypothetical

contact theory *per se*. If it is a defensible way of justifying moral (and legal) obligations, then the justification of non-voluntary obligations follows easily. (Not surprising, for that is one of the things hypothetical contract theory was invented to produce.) But the soundness of hypothetical contract theory is far from settled. To the same extent, so is the bindingness of obligations justified only by reference to it.

Rights Theory

Theories of obligation which begin by giving primacy to "natural" rights—usually a natural right to liberty—throw matters deeper into confusion. On the one hand there is the view that, given natural rights to life, liberty, and property, there is a very difficult obstacle indeed in the path of any attempt to justify non-voluntary obligations which are not strictly necessary for the protection of liberty itself. (This is standard libertarian fare.) On the other hand, however, there are arguments designed to show that, on the same sort of rights theory, no such obstacle exists. Samuel Scheffler, for example, addresses an argument of the following form to Nozick:

First step: Grant the point that rights are Nozickian "side-constraints" which define the boundaries of the morally permissible. Rights thus cannot be regarded as simply one element among the many goals of a just society (such as the goals of social stability, economic efficiency, and a high standard of living). Rights are not goals—and cannot be traded off for a better chance at realizing (other) goals. Rights define the constraints under which goal realization, of any kind, is morally permissible.⁴ This is a very strong version of rights theory.

Second step: Grant some generally agreed to, sketchy remarks about the moral basis of rights—namely, that their basis cannot be found in rationality alone, or in sentience alone, or in some obscure notion of human dignity. The moral basis of rights must somehow be in what is necessary for people to become and remain "persons" in some developed sense of that term. (Nozick develops it—very briefly—in terms of what is required for people to "give meaning" to their lives. Gewirth develops it—in great detail—in terms of what is necessary for rational, conative activity.)⁵

Third step: Then show that the Lockean package of rights—namely, rights to life, liberty, and property—are not the obvious consequences of this moral basis. The obvious, most plausible consequence, is a right to the means necessary to achieve a minimum level of well-being. This is so because much more than mere freedom from the interference of others (i.e., "negative" liberty) is necessary for having the ability to "give meaning" to life, or for being a "person." Some minimum of material resources, health and so on is also required. These requirements can be summarized as a right to the means necessary to achieve a minimum level of well-being. Such a right will *include* versions of the Lockean rights, of course. But it will also involve rights to "sufficient" shares of distributable goods.⁶

Fourth step: Consequently, the correlative obligations imposed on us (by each person's natural right to the means for well-being) will be much broader than those imposed by people's rights to life, liberty, and property. In particular, social obligations to care for unwanted children, and to obey many laws one did

not consent to, and which are not strictly necessary for the protection of one's life, liberty, or property are likely to be justified by rights theory after all.

The Reciprocity Argument

I rehearse these well-known difficulties in standard theories merely to set the stage for what follows. I do not mean to say that the standard theories must inevitably fail. Indeed, as I shall show in a moment, if they all fail to justify one particular non-voluntary obligation, then the argument below fails also. But even granting these difficulties, I think that the reciprocity argument, as I shall call it, is much too powerful to deserve the neglect it suffers. This argument—which relies on standard theories at one crucial point—has been suggested in many places, including Plato's *Crito*. There, when Socrates is asked to justify his decision to submit to legal but unjust execution, he imagines a discussion with the Laws. Part of that discussion concerns reciprocity. The Laws say

What complaint have you to make against us which justifies you in attempting to destroy us and the state? In the first place did we not bring you into existence? Your father married your mother by our aid and begat you. Say whether you have any objection to urge against those of us who regulate marriage? . . . Or against those of us who after birth regulate the nurture and education of children . . . ?

. . . [He] who disobeys us is . . . wrong [in part] because we are the authors of his education . . .⁷

Of course the Laws also give other reasons against escape: one is that in escaping Socrates would violate his duties as a "child" of the Laws; another is that in escaping he would break an implicit contract with the Laws. But I am concerned here only with what I take to be the germ of the following argument: the "reciprocity" argument.

First step: No one is "self-made." One's existence, and individuality as a person, is largely due to the actions, care, and concern of others—as expressed through the institutions of society, the family, and the state. This premise is supported not only by casual reflection on ordinary experience, but by all the social psychological literature on the development of the self.

Second step: People's socially formed personalities have value for them—both good and bad. That is, people value (e.g., take pleasure in, or suffer from) those personality traits, capacities, abilities, opportunities, desires, needs, and wants for which the actions of others are causally responsible.

Third step: Everyone's life is a mixed blessing—and for some, the bad grossly outweighs the good. Nonetheless, some measure of good is virtually always present.

Fourth step: Further, some of the good in everyone's life comes from the observance, by others, of putative social obligations. Everyone profits from freedom from the malicious actions of others, from the non-negligent conduct of others, and from some of their productive activities. These benefits are, in many cases, the result of others' fulfilling putative social obligations.

Fifth step: Reciprocity—at least in returning good for good⁸ to those who demand such a return—is a requirement of morality. This is so for the following

reasons. First, reciprocity is expected, and typically demanded, by people whenever two conditions are met: (1) when it costs them something to provide the benefits to us; and (2) when they cannot avoid providing us with the benefits. These conditions are characteristic of the performance of putative social obligations. People who undertake such obligations voluntarily—by starting a family, for example, or organizing a state—are bound to costly courses of conduct which are designed in part to benefit others. And people who accept the putative social obligations imposed by their unavoidable memberships (in families, societies, and states) likewise sacrifice some of their own interests for others. Such people ordinarily demand reciprocity from the people whom their actions benefit.

Second, it is clear that the standard theories of justice will often require us to meet such demands. Utility will often require reciprocity (when it is demanded by others) just to keep social situations stable and utility at maximal levels. Rational contractors would surely prefer a world in which such demands were met (at least sometimes, under some conditions) to one which differed only in that such demands were never met. And rights theory imposes correlative duties on us all which are, in effect, the reciprocals of the claims others may justifiably make on us. (Note that right holders need not exercise their rights—that is, need not make the demands they are entitled to make—and in some cases that releases us from the correlative duty. Further, when others violate our rights [their duties toward us], we are often supposed to be entitled to punish the offenders in ways which, in other circumstances, would be violative of their rights. All of this appears to justify a requirement that we meet others' demands for reciprocity with respect to the performance of the duties entailed by claim rights. When others honor our claim rights to liberty or welfare, we must honor theirs in return.)

Third, it should be pointed out that it is only reciprocity which theories of justice require here—and not willy-nilly compliance with whatever demands others may make on us. Proportional return of good for good received is one thing. Meeting the demands of those who have given us nothing, or who have harmed us, or who demand things out of proportion to what they have given, is quite another thing. The former thing—the proportional return of good for good—is reciprocity and appears to be required by all the standard theories. The latter thing—the gratuitous giving of good, or the return of good for evil, or the return of more than was gotten—is not mere reciprocity. It is beneficence of a sort that most writers regard as superogatory. At least, its justification as a moral requirement is much more problematic than the justification of the reciprocity requirement.

Finally, there is the question of when reciprocity is a moral requirement. It seems on the face of it that we should resist the conclusion that it is always required. (That is why I hedged above and said only that standard theories of justice require it at least sometimes.) After all, sometimes people who mean us harm do us a good turn by accident. Surely we don't want to say that reciprocity is owed to them. And I do not say that it is. But I do think that the reciprocity requirement applies to all cases in which people demand it in return for performing their morally justified social obligations. That is, I see no reason to hold otherwise if (as seems the case) we are sometimes required to reciprocate

for such demands. I shall offer some arguments for this position in the form of some replies to objections (below). But for now, the important point is simply that reciprocity is a moral requirement in some such cases.

Sixth step: Further, reciprocity—in returning good for good—can in principle require compliance with the specific demands made by one's benefactors. As an illustration, consider the following interior monologue:

"I made you a gift a few years ago. I know you didn't ask for it. And I didn't ask for anything in return. You were down on your luck and needed the money; I had plenty, and didn't ever expect to need your help. But now I do . . . And returning the money won't do me any good. It isn't what I need—any more than kind words were what you needed when I gave you the money. You needed a favor; it happened to be money. Now I need a favor, and it happens *not* to be money; what I need is for you to carry out these instructions."

Such thoughts are common when people ask others for favors in return. And they illustrate the point that reciprocity is not just a simple return of good "in kind." Rather, the kind of good which must be returned is governed by considerations of fittingness (as well as proportionality), and what counts as a "fitting" return is at least partly governed by the needs and wants and preferences of those to whom the return is made. There are situations in which meeting the demands of others (and nothing else) is precisely the sort of return of good for good which counts as reciprocity. Thus if reciprocity is required in those situations, meeting the demands is required.

Seventh step: When others impose non-voluntary social obligations on us—obligations to join them in producing public goods, for example—we may regard that (for the purposes of this argument) as their institutionalized demand for reciprocity.

Eighth step: Reciprocity from us in the form of carrying out such institutionalized demands—that is, such social obligations—is required (*ceteris paribus*) if it is the fitting and proportional response to the good we have received from others.

Ninth step: If carrying out a demand imposed by others is required of us, then the imposition of the demand (obligation) by those others is by definition permissible.

Tenth step: People who have benefitted us, and to whom we owe reciprocity, do in fact make many demands on us—demands which take the form of putative social obligations.

Therefore: Unless there is countervailing reason to the contrary, we can reasonably be said to "have" at least some non-voluntary social obligations—even though we don't want them, didn't agree to them, and cannot avoid the memberships which impose them.

Types of Social Obligations

On the question of what sorts of non-voluntary social obligations the reciprocity argument justifies, due to space limitations I can only make a bare gesture toward an answer. The four possibilities appear to be: (1) obligations of restraint (such as are found in criminal law); (2) obligations of care (such as

exist in negligence law), (3) obligations of effort (for example, the duty to *try* to do various things); and (4) obligations of contribution (such as the obligation to pay taxes). The reciprocity argument, in principle, seems well suited to dealing with each of the four types.

The Distinctness of the Reciprocity Argument

It might be wondered, however, why the reciprocity argument is put forward here as a distinct justification for non-voluntary obligations, since its crucial step (number five: the reciprocity requirement) so clearly depends on standard theories of justice. Those theories—utility, contract, and rights theory—either justify non-voluntary obligations directly, or they do not. If they do, then the reciprocity argument seems to add little that is new. But if the standard theories do not justify the obligations directly, how can they give the reciprocity argument the support it needs? Isn't the "reciprocity requirement," after all, just another name for a general, non-voluntary obligation?

The second horn of the dilemma is the more dangerous of the two, so I shall take it first. The "reciprocity requirement" *is* a (putative) obligation, and in the context of my argument, it is an on-voluntary one as well. So if the standard justificatory theories fail to produce any such obligations at all, then it is true that the reciprocity argument will not go through. But if, as I shall assume here, the standard theories can in principle produce at least a few non-voluntary obligations, then it seems plausible to suppose that reciprocity would be among them. This is so because reciprocity seems fundamental to the very concept of justice, and because the reciprocity requirement is such a minimal thing: merely the proportional return of good for good when such a return is demanded by others. As I shall argue below, the obligation applies only to the goods others produce by fulfilling justifiable social obligations of their own—for example, obligations they voluntarily assume or accept. So it is not possible for the reciprocity requirement to make extraordinary impositions on our time, energy, resources, and liberty. Further, it is only a fitting and proportional return that is required, and only when the return is "demanded" or "claimed" by the appropriate people. The latter stipulation provides an obvious foothold for utility theory (the potential breakdown of social stability if demands are not met); for contract theory (the "agreement" represented by such institutionalized demands); and for rights theory (the "claiming" represented by the demands). In view of all this I shall simply assume that the standard theories can justify the reciprocity requirement.

We are left, then, with the second horn of the dilemma: assuming, for the sake of argument, that the standard theories do not all fail, why bother to include all the talk about reciprocity? Such talk seems to add little that is significant.

I think, however, that it does add enough to warrant giving the reciprocity argument separate status. The argument is obviously not a full-fledged theory of justice. But if it works—through something that is a full-fledged theory—then it grounds some non-voluntary obligations firmly and directly in a social norm of great power and scope—a norm which we have reason to believe is universal in human societies.⁹ The fact that standard theories of justice support

this extant norm, and through it entail the existence of non-voluntary obligations, is of some practical importance.

The argument also has theoretic importance, for it helps to define the potential scope of non-voluntary obligations. Utility and contract theories always seem in danger of proving too much here—of proving that we have exhaustingly extensive social obligations.¹⁰ Rights theory always threatens to prove too little—to fail to justify even minimal duties of care, effort, and contribution, for example.¹¹ But if these theories are used to justify social obligations *indirectly*—by way of justifying the requirement of reciprocity—then we may have a convenient way of imposing the constraints we struggle to attach to utilitarian and contractarian accounts, and of enlarging the scope of social obligations authorized by rights theory. Those would be considerable achievements.

Objections and Replies¹²

There are some objections to the reciprocity argument which come immediately to mind, however. And since they are serious enough to call the whole argument into question, I shall reply to them as a way of giving additional support to the main line of argument.

Totalitarian Demands

Objection. For one thing there is the suspicion that the argument justifies too much. What is to stop the state, for example, from simply overwhelming us with demands for reciprocity—demands which amount to the imposition of a totalitarian form of government? Are we required to fulfill such obligations just because we are “in debt” to our fellow citizens? Must we do *anything* our “creditors” demand—no matter how repugnant or invasive of privacy?

Reply. The answer is no. Reciprocity requires fitting and proportional returns of good for good. By definition, participation in injustice is not a fitting return of good; thus any demand, by those to whom we owe reciprocity, that we owe them obedience to an unjust regime must be rejected. Further, we are not required (by the reciprocity argument) to return good for *evil*. So to the extent that what we receive from others is the product of injustice, we owe them nothing for it—that is, we certainly do not have an obligation, based on reciprocity, to reward them for their injustice. And finally, there is the matter of proportionality. Demands on our time, energy and wealth which are disproportionate to what we have received cannot justify social obligations by way of the reciprocity argument. So we need not think that the argument opens the door to totalitarian demands.

Obligations to the Undeserving

Objection. It might be objected, however, that the argument requires us to repay people who benefit us only accidentally—even those who actually intend to harm us but through ineptness or circumstance end up helping us. Surely the argument should be restricted to requiring reciprocity only to those who “deserve” our efforts—for instance, to people who actually intend to benefit us.

Reply. The answer to this objection is straightforward. The reciprocity argument is suitably restricted in this regard. We owe reciprocity in the form of fulfilling social obligations only to those who have benefitted us *by way of fulfilling their social obligations*. (Recall the fittingness and proportionality requirements again.) That rules out accident and unexpected benefits from malevolent acts. And if our benefactors fulfilled their obligations grudgingly, then it seems natural to say that we owe only grudging fulfillment in return. If they benefitted us blindly—that is, without knowing who we were—then we owe only the same impersonal benefit in return. It may be that for *other* reasons we should be beneficent to those who try to injure us, or to everyone regardless of their attitudes toward us. But this does not follow from the reciprocity argument.

*Speculating in Reciprocity.*¹³

Objection. It still might be thought, however, that the reciprocity argument puts entirely too much power in the hands of others. It looks as though enterprising people (unasked by anyone) could build up a lot of reciprocity credits by simply inventing and then fulfilling all sorts of putative social obligations. When such people then demand a comparable return from us, it appears that the reciprocity argument would support them. But surely we don't want to hold that non-voluntary social obligations can be imposed in this way.

Reply. The most direct reply to this objection is to point out its underlying assumption: that entrepreneurial manufacturing of unasked for debts is, on balance, a bad thing. (Otherwise, what is there to object to?) If so, then the reciprocity argument does not justify a social obligation to repay the debts—any more than it justifies an obligation to repay those who benefit us through the misfiring of their malevolent intentions. Such repayments are not returns of good for good; they are returns of good for evil. Christian love may require this, but reciprocity does not.

Overpayments and Balances Brought Forward

Objection. Finally, it is necessary to say something about people who contribute more than their share to social welfare—not from any attempt to profit from the overage, but merely because they are so talented, or so strategically placed, that their most ordinary efforts to reciprocate produce extraordinary benefits.

Think of an inventor who, merely in an effort to fulfill a social obligation to do useful work, discovers a cost-efficient and ecologically sound way to convert solar energy to electricity. And suppose the inventor does this after only one year of effort (beyond the necessary education). The social benefits of the invention would be enormous—out of all proportion to the socially required annual contribution from one person. Suppose, in fact, we could say with some assurance that the social benefits were worth two trillion times the annual contribution.

Two important questions arise. First, is the inventor now exempt from any further social obligation to work? Second, if so, can the inventor transfer or transmit the unexpired portion of that exemption to others?

Reply. The answer to the first question depends on the nature of the social obligation the inventor fulfilled. If it was a continuing obligation to *work*—an obligation of effort as opposed to an obligation to make a lifetime contribution of a certain size to the wealth of the community—then the answer is no. The inventor has not overfulfilled the obligation to work. But if the obligation was for a fixed monetary contribution, then that obligation has been overfulfilled. And the ordinary rules for overpayments might be applicable here: namely, that we return the overage as best we can—if not in kind, then is some form of currency which is a more or less acceptable substitute. In the case at hand we can repay the inventor with wealth, with honors, with privileges, and so forth. The only question would be whether such repayment is “owed”—whether we owe people anything for the largess they willingly give and we gratefully receive. That is a difficult question in social and political philosophy, but neither the difficulty of it nor any conceivable answer to it is an objection to the reciprocity argument.

Similarly for the question of transferring or transmitting one’s “social credits.” It has long been recognized that the concept of a property right need not include rights to transfer or transmit.¹⁴ Those elements of “full ownership” require special justification. So to say that it is right for people to keep what they earn is not (necessarily) to hold that it is right for them to sell it, or to pass it on to their heirs. Analogously, to say that we owe the inventor something for the overpayment represented by the solar energy device is not to hold that he or she can transfer or transmit our debt. Those rights require special justification. And while the question of their justification is a difficult matter, neither the difficulty of it nor any conceivable answer to it is an objection to the reciprocity argument.

Conclusion

In short, I think that the moral requirement to reciprocate—to make a fitting and proportional return of good for good received—yields a justification for a significant class of other social obligations—obligations which we may not want, to which we did not agree, and which we cannot avoid. Standard justificatory theories, working by way of the reciprocity requirement, can avoid some of the difficulties they run into in trying to specify the extent of non-voluntary obligations. Utility and contract threaten to justify too much; rights theory too little. The reciprocity argument seems more balanced. Its neglect has not been a benefit to social and political philosophy.

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NOTES

¹Two subtleties lurking in this definition are worth pointing out. First, beneficiaries “of record” are those whom an obligation is *designed* to benefit. There are often “accidental” beneficiaries as well, of course. If members’ dues enable an organization’s creditors to get their money, they benefit indirectly from a social obligation not specifically designed to benefit them at all. Second, social

obligations are always *within* groups, not across them. Otherwise, my debt to a corporation (of which I am not a part) would count as a social obligation. In that case it is safe to say that any useful distinction between special and social obligations would collapse. Of course, my general obligation to pay my debts (as opposed to a specific debt) may be considered a social obligation—the performance of which may (but perhaps need not?) require the payment of this specific debt. But that is distinguishable from the specific obligation to the corporation.

²Janice Moulton's paper, "Contract Theory and Obligations without Consent" (presented at the Pacific Division Meetings of the APA in March, 1979) persuaded me to settle on the term "non-voluntary"—despite its misleading contrast with a technical sense of "voluntary obligations" occasionally found in legal philosophy.

³Samuel Scheffler, "Natural Rights, Equality, and the Minimal State," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 6 (1976): 59–76.

⁴See Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia* (New York Basic Books, 1974): 28–35.

⁵See, respectively, Robert Nozick, *op. cit.*, pp. 48–51, and Alan Gewirth, *Reason and Morality* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1978).

⁶Scheffler, *op. cit.*, page 70. Gewirth, of course, argues for such rights on exactly this basis—i.e., on the basis of a right to well-being. See *Reason and Morality*, Chapters 2, 3, and 4.

⁷*Crito*, at 50–51, in *The Dialogues of Plato*, vol. 1 (Jowett trans.), New York, Random House, 1937. This germ of the reciprocity argument is quite commonly found in major theories of justice, however, as Brian Barry has pointed out: "Justice as Reciprocity" [manuscript]. It is certainly in Rawls, to cite a recent example: *A Theory of Justice*. (Cambridge, Harvard Belknap Press, 1971), pp. 102 ff. And Anthony Flew even supplies a reference to Confucius: *The Analects*, translated and edited by W. E. Soothill (Taiyuanfu Shansi, Soothill, 1910) XV S.23. The relationship to Christianity's "Golden Rule" is also evident.

⁸Returning bad for bad is more problematic, as Plato shows clearly in the *Republic*, Book I (the exchange with Polemarchus at 335). On this point, see also Joel Kidder, "Requital and Criminal Justice," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 15:255–278 (1975).

⁹See, for example, Alvin Gouldner, "The Norm of Reciprocity: A Preliminary Statement," *American Sociological Review* 25: 161–178 (1960).

¹⁰See Peter Singer's discussion in "Famine, Affluence and Morality," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 1:229–243 (1972).

¹¹I have in mind the reluctance of libertarians on these matters.

¹²I am indebted to Charlotte Becker, Elizabeth Minnich, and the members of the Syracuse University Department of Philosophy (particularly Joel Kidder) for pressing these objections.

¹³I owe the phrase to Joel Kidder.

¹⁴See Lawrence C. Becker, *Property Rights: Philosophic Foundations* (London and Boston, Routledge&KeganPaul, 1977), Chapter 2.