EDUCATIONAL THEORY

RECASTING "FUNDAMENTAL 'BRITISH' VALUES": EDUCATION, JUSTICE, AND PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

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Abstract. Societies concerned with preventing acts of violent extremism often target the ideas that are thought to motivate such acts. The state's use of educational institutions is one mechanism by which those ideas are subjected to challenge. Teaching liberal democratic values to students is one method. Here, David Stevens argues that this model is misguided. First, commitment to violent methods is not primarily driven by the attractiveness of radical ideas themselves, but by material facts and circumstances. Second, an education that ignores the teaching of various socioeconomic values, such as a commitment to a certain degree of material equality and welfare provision, is inadequate as a conception of citizenship. These criticisms are related. Citizens are owed certain resources and commitments *as* citizens, and grounds for dissatisfaction and violence are reduced when citizens receive the holdings to which they are entitled, and when their fellow citizens recognize and endorse this. Consequently, it is the role of education to teach directively toward the adoption of such socioeconomic values and commitments.

Key Words. violent extremism; sense of justice; moral education; John Rawls

Introduction

The teaching in schools of "fundamental British Values" is part of the UK government's wider policy program for preventing violent extremism. Promoting the values of democracy, liberty, the rule of law, and toleration is explicitly aimed at combatting the *ideological* challenge of terrorism. It contests the "extremist ideas" that play a causal role in the radicalization process that leads to supporting or conducting acts of terrorism. By educating to develop a commitment to such values, extremist ideas are less likely to take root in the minds of the young.

In this paper I argue that this model is misguided. My claim is two-fold. First, I argue that the list of values is inadequate. An adequate account of citizenship for modern liberal democracies must include the promotion of certain values of socioeconomic justice. This will include educating for a commitment to such things as a broadly egalitarian distribution of healthcare, economic resources, and educational and employment opportunities, and the attitudes that underpin such commitments. Second, I will argue that the causal model itself is too narrow. The model wrongly focuses on the role of *ideas* as the main driver of radicalization and violent extremism. There are good reasons to doubt the causal primacy of ideas and, consequently, reasons to doubt the solution of offering competing ideas as an antidote. Such a model misses a wider set of drivers of extremism that revolve around the "deep social fact" of material inequality.[1] Such inequalities underpin the status harms, relations of domination, feelings of exclusion, and erosion of

1. Martin O'Neill, "The Facts of Inequality," *Journal of Moral Philosophy* 7, no. 3 (2010): 397.

self-respect that members of marginalized groups often experience and that those who promote violent extremism often exploit.

These criticisms are, of course, related. Each refers to a different level of the same model. Both point to the need for a focus on a more egalitarian distribution of socioeconomic resources and a moral education that promotes the dispositions that underpin such a distribution. The first set of reasons are intrinsic; citizens are owed such resources and commitments *as* citizens. The second set are instrumental; grounds for dissatisfaction and violence are reduced when citizens receive the holdings to which they are entitled to as a matter of justice, and when their fellow citizens recognize and endorse this. Consequently, I will argue that it is the role of education to promote socioeconomic values and a sense of justice among schoolchildren by teaching *directively* toward their adoption.[2] This includes developing a more broadly egalitarian and cooperative ethos among citizens via education.

This paper has the following format. Section one outlines the UK's Preventing Violent Extremism strategy and the teaching of "fundamental British values."[3] Section two argues that the list of values is incomplete because it lacks any socioeconomic norms. I argue that a plausible account of democratic citizenship must include commitments to such socioeconomic norms. This includes commitments to the provision of such things as universal healthcare and a broadly egalitarian distribution of economic resources. Section three argues against the Prevent strategy and its assumption of the motivating power of ideas as the main causal driver in generating support for violent extremism. Drawing on empirical research, I argue that those who support or join radical groups or causes are not primarily driven to do so because of the seductive nature of extremist narratives, but because of more straightforward factors such as economic, social, and political discrimination. Section four shifts the debate onto sounder empirical footings by considering how economic inequality undermines the social bases for individual self-respect and shared citizenship. Section five argues for a conception of education that includes educating children to adopt a sense of justice that includes various socioeconomic norms. This will include employing educational means to create a

2. Directive teaching is teaching that aims at bringing pupils to endorse certain attitudes and beliefs. On the distinction between directive and nondirective teaching, see Michael Hand, *A Theory of Moral Education* (London: Routledge, 2018).

3. While "British" values and the UK's Preventing Violent Extremism legislation provide a point of departure for this paper, the focus is not limited to the UK. Combatting the so-called radicalization process, preventing violent extremism, and the instrumental use of educational institutions to inculcate the right values to achieve these ends are policy concerns of many different countries. The UK has, however, led in its response in these areas and many other countries have followed suit.

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broadly egalitarian ethos as part of a conception of social solidarity. Section six concludes by way of offering an example of such an ethos.

Prevent and British Values

Like many democratic societies, the UK is concerned to mitigate the threat of violent extremism by preventing individuals from coming to affirm the goals and methods of terrorist causes. This "coming to affirm" is termed the "radicalization" process.[4] The UK's "Preventing Violent Extremism" (Prevent) strategy, launched in 2006 and subsequently updated several times, aims to tackle the radicalization process that it understands as underpinning violent extremism.[5] Prevent operates on the basis of a particular causal model of how radicalization occurs. This model is characterized by two reductive assumptions about why individuals join extremist causes and what can be done about it.

The first assumption is that it is radical ideas themselves that play a causal role in attracting recruits: "[T]errorism is the symptom; ideology is the root cause."[6] The process is one of *seduction*. Those who espouse ideologies committed to violent means seek to exploit various vulnerabilities in potential recruits in order to manipulate their thought processes and beliefs. This occurs "behind the backs" of such individuals as exploiters seize on narratives and "intrapsychic mechanisms" that skew deliberation away from rational decision-making.[7] This includes exploiting familiar cognitive biases and flaws in human reasoning such as wishful thinking, myopia, and confirmation bias.[8]

4. "Radical" and "radicalization" (as a process) are themselves contentious terms and their use problematic. Radical views, or the process of coming to adopt radical views, are not by themselves necessarily bad or something to be avoided or repressed. As history shows, radical views can be something to be applauded or welcomed. The presence of radical views, where "radical" is taken, for instance, to mean in tension with the mores of the surrounding society, can present a progressive challenge to existing ideas and values, and can bring about important social change. Similarly, the idea that radical views or radicalization are necessarily linked to violent extremism is false. Many people hold "radical" views and are abhorred by the thought of violence in the pursuit of those (or any) ends. The concern of many is that by combatting the so-called radicalization process, governments find cause to shut down legitimate viewpoints that challenge the status quo. For an excellent discussion of these concerns, see Sigal Ben-Porath, "Learning to Avoid Extremism," in this issue.

5. The Prevent strategy grew out of the need to respond to the threat of Islamist extremism in the wake of events such as 9/11 and the July London bombings. More recently, it has expanded to include Far Right violent extremism. Hence, in talking of *ideological* causes, the initial focus was on *religious* beliefs. Attempts to combat these causes included articulating and sponsoring alternative understandings of those religious doctrines.

6. HM Government, *Prevent Duty Guidance*, March 12, 2015, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance, 5.

7. Jon Elster, *Ulysses and the Sirens: Studies in Rationality and Irrationality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 82.

8. For a summary of these limitations on rational decision-making and their relevance to policymaking, see Sigal Ben-Porath, *Tough Choices: Structured Paternalism and the Landscape of Choice* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 30–33.

The second assumption is that, given the causal role of ideas, preventing radicalization requires policies aimed at helping individuals become resilient to such processes. This resilience can be cultivated in several ways. The Prevent framework has sought to provide moderate alternative versions of religious doctrines. It has done so through the sponsorship of individuals and groups inside particular faith communities who endorse such versions. It has also sponsored initiatives that provide an alternative focus for young people, such as youth clubs, which will promote greater resistance to extremist ideologies. Prevent has sought to strengthen the psychological and critical capacities of individuals so that they are able to better resist the pull of extremist ideas.[9] The teaching of "fundamental British values" guidance issued to schools in 2014 is one dimension of this resilience building.

The guidance on teaching British values is nested within both the Prevent strategy and the 2002 Education Act, which makes provision for the promotion of the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils. The provision of SMSC aims to develop such things as students' self-knowledge, self-esteem, and confidence as well as the ability to distinguish right from wrong, to have respect for the law, to encourage respect for others and further tolerance between different cultural traditions, and to encourage a commitment to the democratic process.[10]

The four fundamental values underlying SMSC are democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.[11] The guidance states that through these values pupils should come to hold a conception of citizenship that recognizes decision-making through the democratic process, obedience to the law as essential for the well-being and safety of all, the recognition that freedom of religion is protected by law, an attitude of toleration for other faiths and beliefs, and recognition of the need to combat discrimination.[12] To "be promoted" means to actively shape the beliefs of pupils to affirm and act upon these values, and to challenge opinions, behavior, or efforts to promote systems that undermine these fundamental British values.[13]

There have been several criticisms of this characterization of "British values" and the Prevent strategy more generally. Prevent has been criticized for singling out Muslims, for exacerbating existing social divisions, for increasing feelings of exclusion and disenfranchisement, and for fostering counterproductive rent-seeking

9. See Laura D'Olimpio, "Educating the Rational Emotions: An Affective Response to Extremism," in this issue, for a different account of resilience-building.

10. Department of Education, *Promoting Fundamental British Values as Part of SMSC in Schools: Departmental Advice for Maintained Schools*, November 2014, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf, 6.

11. Ibid., 4.

12. Ibid., 6.

13. Ibid., 5.

behavior.[14] The British values have been criticized for implying that, by appending the word "British," these values are somehow uniquely British. Furthermore, if the aim is to combat the influence of a tiny minority of violent extremists who may identify with other countries or non-national movements, then labeling such values as British rather than as universally desirable values to be promoted is unlikely to attract such individuals.

I will advance two further objections. In the next section I will argue that the conception of citizenship encapsulated by the British values is inadequate. I will argue that an adequate conception of citizenship justifies shaping the moral beliefs of children to adopt a wider range of moral commitments than is included under the British values guidance. Specifically, I will argue that the list should be expanded to include certain socioeconomic values and commitments, such as commitments to a fair distribution of society's material resources. In the section after, I will argue that the assumptions on which the Prevent model rests are empirically flawed.

Moral Education and a Sense of Justice

A moral education that seeks to shape the beliefs of children must go beyond the commitments in the British values guidance and include socioeconomic commitments and attitudes.[15] My argument begins from the thought that an adequate account of citizenship should recognize and respect the freedom and equality of all citizens. Following John Rawls, citizens are free and equal in virtue of their possession of two "moral powers": a capacity for a conception of the good, and a capacity for a sense of justice.[16] A capacity for a conception of the good is the capacity to form, revise, and rationally pursue a conception of one's rational advantage. A capacity for a sense of justice is the capacity to understand, apply, and act from a public conception of justice. That is, it is a disposition to act in accordance with principles of justice, and to support the just political and

14. See Lee Jarvis and Michael Lister, "Disconnected Citizenship? The Impacts of Anti-terrorism Policy on Citizenship in the UK," *Political Studies* 61, no. 3 (2013): 656–675; Paul Thomas, "Failed and Friendless: The UK's 'Preventing Violent Extremism' Programme," *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 12, no. 3 (2009): 442–458; and David Stevens, "Reasons to Be Fearful, One, Two, Three: The 'Preventing Violent Extremism' Agenda," *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 13, no. 2 (2011): 165–188. Rent seeking is the investment of resources for the purpose of securing a monopoly position with a material sponsor. Because a monopolistic position with a government is valuable, groups (including religious groups) can be expected to invest resources to secure it. Securing government resources allows providers of religion to increase financial (and other) benefits while reducing outputs. Such rent-seeking behavior is pernicious — it is counterproductive in terms of preventing extremism because it removes from religious groups the need to recruit adherents or secure funds from willing donors; it insulates them from market forces.

15. For a view that rejects the notion of violent extremism as raising questions about values at all, see Ben-Porath, "Learning to Avoid Extremism." Despite different starting places, both our accounts endorse similar kinds of educational reforms such as an ethos of justice and Ben-Porath's "bottom up" approach of addressing the social needs of those who are vulnerable to recruitment as well as fostering an inclusive, depolarizing, educational experience and a "shared fate." See also Dianne Gereluk, "A Whole-School Approach to Address Youth Radicalization," in this issue.

16. John Rawls, *Justice as Fairness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 18–19.

legal institutions that underpin the proper treatment of others in accordance with the kinds of behavior we owe them. A sense of justice is necessary if we are to lead independent lives. Without the appropriate limits on our behavior that a sense of justice brings, the pursuit solely of our own ends would undermine the independence of others. Rawls states that, in virtue of these two moral powers, persons are free, and that their "having these powers to the requisite minimum degree to be fully cooperating members of society makes persons equal."[17]

One consequence of this conception is the duty to arrange society's institutional framework in such a manner that it provides a fair distribution of the benefits and burdens of social cooperation. This includes familiar basic rights, freedoms, and opportunities for employment and education, and the distribution of socioeconomic goods such that all citizens have the means to pursue their chosen ends. Such goods facilitate the realization of the two moral powers. It follows from this that children have an interest in receiving an upbringing that provides them with an understanding of the requirements of justice and instills in them the attitudes to comply with those requirements. This includes an education that brings children to a set of beliefs about the value of social unity and instills attitudes about the proper treatment of others in line with the requirements of justice.

It is worth noting an important consideration. When individuals are free to form their own views, it is inevitable that they will arrive at different and conflicting judgments about what roles, relationships, and goals are worthy of pursuit. Even citizens who are committed to treating each other fairly and with respect will disagree about such matters. However, this is *reasonable* disagreement because the foundation of a commitment to fair and equal treatment and an ideal of social unity remain. What follows from this is that the state should be guided by a conception of political morality that does not gainsay the views of reasonable citizens on such matters, or side with any one (or set) of these reasonable views. This is what I have termed elsewhere the *acceptability requirement*.[18] Laws and policies lack justification to the extent that citizens can reasonably reject the moral ideals and principles that guide them.

The acceptability requirement poses a stringent test that laws and policies must pass. It also rules out many possible uses of education, such as policies that endorse a particular conception of the good or that are aimed at promoting a particular sense of what constitutes citizens' well-being. The correct position, where such matters are concerned, is for the state to remain neutral between competing conceptions. The appropriate educational position therefore is to teach children in a *non-directive* manner. That is, the aim of the curriculum (and the teacher) should be to present such matters in a nonpartisan way.

17. John Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, paperback edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 19.

18. Matthew Clayton and David Stevens, "What's the Point of Religious Education?," *Theory and Research in Education* 16, no. 1 (2018): 65–81.

This account is attractive for at least two reasons. First, laws that regulate the interaction of citizens with one another are necessary, but coercive. Individual freedom is best preserved, as Rousseau noted, if citizens agree to the laws that constrain them.[19] Self-imposed rules are not coercive. Second, society is attractive to the extent that its citizens view it as a joint enterprise in realizing a scheme of social cooperation. As Rawls states, citizens in such a society see themselves as "ready to propose fair terms of social cooperation and to abide by them provided others do," and to achieve a system of cooperation guided by principles of justice that are acceptable to reasonable citizens.[20] Citizens are partners in the production of a shared valuable end. In this they are like players in a game who share the final end of playing the game well together.

The stringency of the acceptability requirement does not, however, rule out the cultivation of a sense of justice in children as part of an appropriate moral education. There are two grounds on which this kind of education can be supported. The first ground is the interest that third parties have in children receiving a moral education that develops in them the attitudes and behaviors that would fulfill the duties owed to third parties. Many of these duties can be legitimately enforced by the state. These duties include duties not to harm or threaten others, not to discriminate against others, and not to abuse or neglect those over whom we have a duty of care. Enforcement by the state includes the right to coerce individuals in the performance of those duties, or to prevent them acting in ways contrary to the fulfillment of those duties. These enforceable duties contain the set of socioeconomic duties stated above in terms of the provision of the means for individuals to pursue their chosen ends. This will include ensuring that there is a just distribution of welfare, healthcare, and wealth and income. Enforcement of these duties includes laws governing taxation, record keeping, fines, and imprisonment.

Given these enforceable duties that are owed by citizens to each other, children should be taught to accept and fulfill those duties when they come of age. If justice requires that we do not harm others, then children should be taught that they have a duty not to harm others, and to cultivate in them the attitudes and motivations to comply with this duty. If justice requires a fair distribution of wealth and income that enables all persons to pursue their chosen ends, then children should be taught that they have a duty to pay their fair share through things such as taxation schemes and to cultivate in them the attitudes and motivations to comply with this duty.

The second ground appeals to the interests of children themselves. Recall that self-imposed rules are a way in which individual freedom and coercive laws can be reconciled. The Rawlsian account I have set out seeks to preserve individual

19. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings* (1762; repr. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

20. Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 54.

self-rule or independence by trying to find institutional arrangements, laws, and policies that are acceptable to citizens. This gives us a reason to favor a directive moral education that helps preserve this "political autonomy" of citizens. What children would gain from such an education is the help to understand and accept that they are under such duties and that others are morally permitted to coerce them into performing them. This would help bring the moral beliefs of citizens into line with those duties and enable them to see the laws under which they live as their own self-imposed rules rather than as rules imposed on them from the outside.

A further point of note here is that the individual-centered defense mandates a more extensive kind of moral education than the third-party defense does. The third-party defense requires only that children learn to conform with their duties to others. The individual-centered defense requires a moral education that shapes the attitudes and beliefs of individuals so that they understand, accept, and act on the basis of the values that generate their duties to others. It requires that rather than mere conformity of action, individuals comply with the reasons for such actions.

I have argued that the lack of socioeconomic values in the scheme of fundamental values to be promoted — and the resulting kind of moral education — is a serious omission in the program of promoting British values. It overlooks a central aspect of what is required by an adequate account of citizenship. In order for citizens to lead meaningful lives they require a fair distribution of material resources and opportunities. Educating children to come to affirm a sense of justice that includes duties to provide such a fair distribution is central to this project. While socioeconomic values are conspicuous by their absence, this omission is linked to an even more fundamental error in the Prevent model upon which the British values framework is based.

The Limitations of the Prevent Model

I now argue that the model of recruitment on which the Prevent strategy is based is empirically flawed. To prevent individuals from coming to endorse and conduct acts of violent extremism, it is necessary to know what drives individuals toward such actions. Prevent offers a particular answer to this question: individuals are manipulated by the power of ideas. Recruiters use a variety of mechanisms to convince individuals of the plausibility of some extremist doctrine. This causal model is typified in notions such as "brainwashing" individuals that have been commonplace in broader public and government discussions of, in particular, Islamist extremism. Such notions imply a lack of rationality on the part of those who are "radicalized"; that they are seduced into acting in ways that are contrary to their own rational self-interests. Consequently, preventing radicalization consists of providing better education, better — more rational — ways of thinking, and the powers of critical analysis that will provide a bulwark against such seduction.

Despite its intuitive appeal, a wealth of social scientific evidence points to the falsity of the assumptions on which this model is based. The idea that is it *ideas* that are the key element of the causal chain just does not fit with the available evidence. To see this, it is possible to draw on a host of previous cases and

significant amounts of survey data where individuals have been drawn into radical "sects," "cults," or "fundamentalist" groups where seemingly irrational beliefs are a mainstay and about which there is considerable sociological analysis.[21] While fundamentalists or radicals often adopt behaviors and attitudes that are seemingly bizarre to outsiders, such groups rarely do any harm and often do a lot of good. Nevertheless, such groups do share similarities with those who do commit acts of violent extremism, in that they share certain features, encounter the same kinds of operational problems, and often implement the same kinds of solutions.[22]

One example that bears a striking resemblance to the focus of Prevent are the early responses to the cults of the 1970s, such as the "Moonies."[23] Media attention at the time focused on stories of grooming and manipulation, as well as the mental vulnerability of those who joined. The outlandish New Age ideas they espoused were not something any rational individual could be committed to, so they must have been the victims of "brainwashing." Legislation, judicial rulings, and counter-cult activities such as "rescuing" loved ones were popular responses to the perceived threat of the irrational cultists and their demagogic leaders.

As the evidence grew, however, it became clear that converts were not those who were suffering from mental health issues or who were uneducated. Most converts were young, healthy, and intelligent. Similarly, from the extensive studies available of such cults, there was no evidence of abduction, coercion, manipulation, or deception.[24] Even the famed recruitment practices of the Moonies — the two-day "retreat" — was extremely poor at boosting membership (which never amounted to more than a few thousand members). Fewer than 25 percent who attended such retreats joined the group for more than a week, and fewer than 5 percent remained members after one year.[25]

Similar evidence has emerged about those who have conducted acts of terror on British soil in recent years, including the "homegrown" terrorists such as Richard Reid (the "shoe-bomber") and the July 2005 London bombers. Those who undertook these acts were not uneducated loners. Instead, their decisions to join radical groups (and subsequent decisions to leave) turned out to be overwhelmingly

21. For an overview of themes and empirical research, see Sriya Iyer, "The New Economics of Religion," *Journal of Economic Literature* 54, no. 2 (2016): 395–441. For a comprehensive treatment of cults — including explanations of formation and recruitment — see Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge, *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival, and Cult Formation* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985).

22. Laurence Iannaccone, "The Market for Martyrs," *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion* 2, no. 4 (2006): 1.

23. Here I draw on the accounts in Iannaccone, "The Market for Martyrs"; Eileen Barker, *The Making of a Moonie: Choice or Brainwashing?* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984); and Stark and Bainbridge, *The Future of Religion*.

24. Barker, *The Making of a Moonie*, 121–131, 207.

25. Iannaccone, "The Market for Martyrs," 4; and Barker, *The Making of a Moonie*, 149–172.

the products of straightforward cost-benefit analysis rather than due to indoctrination. Time and again, those who joined such groups explained their decisions as based on careful deliberations, often including frank assessments about how little they had to lose, given how they often felt about how their lives had gone so far. They cited friendship, a sense of belonging, solidarity, self-worth, or being valued by others as tangible benefits of membership.[26]

Most of us experience the goods of friendship, solidarity, and self-worth from a variety of different sources: family, workplace, leisure activities, and so forth. The bases of our self-respect and belonging are diffuse. For others, these bases are narrower and concentrated, sometimes in one convenient and intense package. The intensity of the experience of being around like-minded people engaged in a costly activity where the benefits of solidarity are produced collectively can be attractive to those who lack strong connections or sources of self-respect from other directions. Weaker ties, feelings of exclusion and social marginalization, experiences of discrimination or being denied opportunities are all push factors for individuals to seek these benefits in intense packages elsewhere. Hence, the sociological "law" of conversion is that membership rarely occurs unless the recruit develops stronger ties to other group members than to nonmembers.[27] Consequently, those with weaker social ties are more likely to join, and those with strong ties are less likely to. This is not to deny that ideological commitments are also important, but they rarely lead the conversion process.[28] Where beliefs are central to the self-definition of a particular cause, then those who take up the cause will likely tend to articulate their reasons in terms of doctrine. But the causal story is actually the reverse. As Laurence Iannaccone writes, "Social attachments are the

26. See Ronald Wintrobe, *Rational Extremism: The Political Economy of Radicalism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007). See also Ben-Porath, "Learning to Avoid Extremism."

27. Iannaccone, "The Market for Martyrs," 6.

28. Addressing ideological commitments can be beneficial. My aim is not to deny that this is part of the picture. See, for instance, Michael Hand, "Education, Extremism, and Aversion to Compromise," in this issue, for one such suggestion regarding teaching the virtue of compromise. Ideas and beliefs can enter the picture in a meaningful sense at a number of places. For instance, in the realm of religious beliefs, membership in "strict" or fundamentalist sects or groups tends to show a continuity of ideas among individuals as they "switch" from one set of beliefs to a closely related, but more literal or fundamentalist version of their faith. Interdenominational religious switching is far less common. The preexisting installment of ideas and beliefs seems to play a crucial role. In cases of acts of terrorism, including suicide missions, ideas can play a role in the decision-making processes of those who undertake such acts. Much is made of doctrinal instructions and promises, such as heavenly rewards. As a *motivational* factor for such actions, these claims seem open to serious doubt. Spiritual rewards seem consolatory — they have a disinhibitory effect on usual normative constraints. For a more sustained treatment of the role of ideas, see David Stevens and Kieron O'Hara, *The Devil's Long Tail: Religious and Other Radicals in the Internet Marketplace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). My claim in this piece is that ideology, or ideas, are neither the *sole* causal driver of violent extremism, nor are they the *main* causal driver of violent extremism. Moreover, where ideas do matter, then the process of coming to affirm those ideas is often better explained by the benefits of group membership rather than the motivational power of the ideas themselves. A set of policies that focuses all its resources on the idea-driven model may achieve some results, but it will likely miss many others.

horse that pulls the cart of ideological change."[29] And, as Paul Thomas observes regarding Prevent describing Islamist extremism as a threat to social cohesion, the causal arrow runs in the opposite direction: extremism becomes attractive when there is a lack of social cohesion.[30]

Economic (In)justice and Self-Respect

I have cast doubt on the Prevent model in terms of its normative and causal adequacy. The focus on challenging ideas is unlikely, on its own, to undermine the supply of individuals willing to take up an extremist cause. A more adequate model is one that addresses the demand side of the equation — specifically, one that addresses socioeconomic justice. Cultivating a sense of justice that supports institutions that realize a fair distribution of wealth, employment, and healthcare will remove or mitigate many of the socioeconomic divisions upon which violent extremists seize. In this section I draw out the relationship between economic inequality and a range of social ills.

Recent social scientific research has revealed a deep and enduring connection between material inequality and a vast array of social problems. The leading research in this field demonstrates a relationship between levels of violence, ill health, mental illness, and low self-esteem, and the gap between rich and poor.[31] The relevant relationship is not between absolute levels of economic development or societal wealth and social problems. Rather, it is the relative level of economic inequality within a society that is linked to the degree of social ills that society experiences. Societies with larger inequalities in wealth also experience more instances of such problems. Societies where resources are spread in a more egalitarian manner experience fewer instances of such problems. The relatively inegalitarian societies of the UK and the US experience higher levels of violence, ill health, and low self-esteem than the relatively egalitarian societies of Japan, Norway, and Finland, for example.

The relationship between inequalities of wealth and violent extremism is one that occurs via this broad set of social ills which, in turn, create the resentment and dissatisfaction that can lead to aggression and provoke political violence.[32] Here inequality operates as a "deep social fact" that causes "relational inequalities" such as status harms, relationships of social domination, the breakdown of social

29. Iannaccone, "The Market for Martyrs," 6.

30. Thomas, "Failed and Friendless."

31. Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Spirit Level: Why Equality Is Better for Everyone* (London: Penguin, 2010); and Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Inner Level: How More Equal Societies Reduce Stress, Restore Sanity, and Improve Everyone's Well-Being* (London: Penguin, 2020). See also Peter Lawrence, "The Global and National Inequality Faultlines: The Economic Dimensions of (In)security," *Journal of Global Faultlines* 8, no. 1 (2021): 23–33.

32. See Ted Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970), 12.

solidarity, and the erosion of individual self-respect.[33] This set of relational inequalities in turn causes broader social issues such as violence, addiction, illness, and terrorism. This is the case even in political communities where social and political rights are formally guaranteed.[34] Inequalities in economic resources can breed sentiments of inferiority among those who fare worse. As Rawls writes of the relationship between inequality and social status:

> [It] brings us closer to what is wrong with inequality itself. Significant political and economic inequalities are often associated with inequalities in social status that encourage those of lower status to be viewed both by themselves and by others as inferior. This may arouse widespread attitudes of deference and servility on one side and a will to dominate and arrogance on the other. These effects of social and economic inequalities can be serious evils and the attitudes they engender great vices.[35]

Such feelings of inferiority undermine self-respect, where self-respect is understood as a person's sense of her own value, a secure conviction that her conception of the good or her life plan is choice-worthy, and a confidence in her ability to fulfill such plans.[36] One way in which this undermining can occur is via the expectations and norms that result from the ways of life enjoyed by the affluent. Where those who fare worse cannot meet those expectations, they may feel inferior, even shame, because they lack the necessary attributes for success, and therefore view themselves as undeserving of respect.[37] Individuals may come to feel their lives lack value because they cannot live up to the standard of success as it is measured in their society.[38] As such, "the *inner* experience of reduced social status is associated with a loss of self-respect."[39]

On the other side of the equation, those who benefit from significant inequalities may also come to identify with their superior social status, and it may form an important foundation of their own self-respect. These feelings of superiority can foster the arrogance and willingness to dominate that Rawls mentions. Both affluent and poor in such cases suffer from defective attitudes; they base their estimations of the relative worth of their lives on falsehoods. These "great vices" undermine the conception of individuals as equals upon which justice turns. They

33. Martin O'Neill, "What Should Egalitarians Believe?," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 36, no. 2 (2008): 150–151; and O'Neill, "The Facts of Inequality," 403.

34. Thomas Scanlon, "The Diversity of Objections to Inequality," in *The Ideal of Equality*, eds. Matthew Clayton and Andrew Williams (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 44.

35. Rawls, *Justice as Fairness*, 130.

36. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, revised edition (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 386.

37. Thomas Scanlon, *Why Does Inequality Matter?* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2018), 30–31; Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, 389; and Scanlon, "The Diversity of Objections to Inequality," 43. See also Ben-Porath, "Learning to Avoid Extremism."

38. Wilkinson and Pickett, *The Spirit Level*, 43.

39. O'Neill, "What Should Egalitarians Believe?," 127.

also threaten an effective sense of community, social solidarity, and the view of society as a scheme of social cooperation.[40]

Such grievances can arise where economic inequality is the direct result of overt discrimination. Such discrimination "usually involves some combination of employment discrimination, access to government health, educational or social services, formal or informal housing segregation, and lack of economic opportunities available to the rest of society," and the resulting grievances are ordinarily "directed against the state, economic status quo, mainstream society, and the majority population."[41] Loss of self-respect and grievances can also result from inequalities that are not the result of overt discrimination, even in societies where legally entrenched rights to education and employment exist, because those inequalities are seen as being legitimately generated on the basis of individual merit.[42]

In one sense this legal entrenchment of rights, and a system of merit, may simply legitimize existing inequalities and privileges. That is, it may allow existing economic elites to perpetuate, reproduce, and extend their already dominant position through such things as their ability to purchase educational opportunities or to access networks of advantage.[43] Even where resources are targeted to leveling the playing field in terms of substantive opportunities, such that talent rather than social background is the determining factor of success, the meritocratic system can still generate status inequalities. Even a fair meritocracy — one that equalizes opportunities for those of similar talents and abilities — leaves in place the hierarchical system in which some, by its very definition, are left behind.[44] In such a society, some positions will be seen as more desirable and valuable than others. This will be the case both in terms of the economic and status rewards associated with such positions, but also the kinds of fulfillment commonly attached to them. Some talents will, therefore, be seen as more worthy of development; a competitive system that sorts children according to their possession of these things creates "winners" and "losers."

Whatever the causes of economic inequalities, then, the undermining of self-respect inherent in a meritocratic system is likely to fuel feelings of resentment, inferiority, and exclusion. These are fertile grounds for extremists to recruit

40. Wilkinson and Pickett, *The Spirit Level*, 45; Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, 90; Scanlon, "The Diversity of Objections to Inequality," 51; and O'Neill, "What Should Egalitarians Believe?," 130.

41. James Piazza, "Poverty, Minority Economic Discriminations, and Domestic Terrorism," *Journal of Peace Research* 48, no. 3 (2011), 341.

42. Michael Sandel, *The Tyranny of Merit: What's Become of the Common Good?* (London: Penguin, 2020).

43. See Thomas Piketty, *Capital and Ideology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020). Piketty's work demonstrates the deleterious social and political effects of a system that permits the perpetuation of a hierarchy through merit that can be co-opted by the wealthy.

44. Jo Littler, *Against Meritocracy: Culture, Power, and the Myths of Mobility* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2017), 3.

by leveraging discontent.[45] Even a one-unit increase in a country's Gini coefficient has been shown to result in a 7.4 percent increase in terrorist attacks.[46] As such, levels of economic inequality are a significant predictor of domestic terrorist events, and the absence of inequality is a negative predictor.[47] Where individuals experience the loss of self-respect that stems from significant inequalities and social marginalization, group membership that offers an intensity of experience, a sense of belonging, respect, and worth, can appear an attractive proposition. By contrast, societies with more generous welfare states and less inequality have fewer incidents of violent extremism. This is especially the case where public spending is high on healthcare, unemployment, and active labor market policies.[48] Such an explanation does not seek to draw a direct link between poverty and terrorist acts of the kind that suggests there is a causal link in the case of individual terrorists — clearly, not all violent extremists are from economically deprived backgrounds. Rather, this explanation points to inequality creating social conditions and relational inequalities that heighten levels of dissatisfaction and frustration especially among marginalized groups.

A Sense of Justice and an Ethos of Solidarity

Part of the aim of educating for a sense of justice is to mitigate any deleterious effects on self-respect and social solidarity that result from a system that allocates positions of advantage according to talents. Here I make a number of remarks about how this may be undertaken.

The conundrum is captured by Scanlon:

> On the one hand, one wants children in all parts of society to see the value of doing well in school and qualifying for higher education. On the other hand, they should not feel inferior to those who do well in these ways, or believe that such people look down on them (whatever the actual attitudes of these people may be).[49]

An effective sense of justice provides the motivation for individuals to act out of a concern for the realization of principles of justice that shape and direct institutions. This includes seeking to create and sustain institutional arrangements for the fair distribution of liberties, opportunities, and resources. Part of this will include support for principles, such as Rawls's difference principle, that seek to secure certain goods and limit economic inequalities. Support for such limits on inequalities will

45. Piazza, "Poverty, Minority Economic Discrimination, and Domestic Terrorism," 341.

46. Tim Krieger and Daniel Meierrieks, "Income Inequality, Redistribution, and Domestic Terrorism," *World Developments* 116 (2019).

47. Piazza, "Poverty, Minority Economic Discrimination, and Domestic Terrorism," 348. Accordingly, Piazza further notes, absolute level of economic development is not a predictor of domestic terrorism. Countries with higher levels of economic development and wealth, and greater degrees of inequality, experience more instances of domestic terrorism than countries that are poorer and more equal.

48. Tim Krieger and Daniel Meierrieks, "Terrorism in the Worlds of Welfare Capitalism," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 54, no. 6 (2010): 902–939.

49. Scanlon, *Why Does Inequality Matter?*, 35.

reduce the degree to which pernicious inequalities can take hold and contribute to the undermining of self-respect.

A sense of justice, however, goes beyond support for just institutions and is intended to provide the motivation for individuals to act on principles of justice "in the course of their daily lives."[50] For Rawls the extent to which individuals are to act on principles of justice in their daily lives is limited. At various points Rawls writes as though a sense of justice is satisfied when individuals act in accordance with the institutional requirements of justice, such as paying their taxes.[51] Beyond conformity with such requirements, individuals can pursue their own maximal self-interest in terms of seeking careers or positions of advantage.[52]

There is an obvious issue with such a partition of motives that would require individuals to act or vote in a publicly egalitarian manner, on the one hand, while acting in a privately self-interested manner, on the other. While this may not be impossible psychologically, such a schizophrenic set of dispositions would likely be difficult to sustain for most.[53]

This issue of feasibility aside, the stronger objection to acting on privately partial motives in individual economic decisions is that it would give rise to the kinds of invidious comparisons that I have argued we should see as worrying. Rawls recognizes this when he considers the damage to self-respect that may result from a system where some talents are seen as having greater value than others. Rawls's solution is that the impact on self-respect will likely be mitigated by the tendency of people with similar talents and aspirations to associate with their own ilk and not with those who have different talents and aspirations.[54] These "non-comparing" groups or classes would provide a buttress to feelings of inferiority, resentment, or the loss of self-respect. Instead, membership in such groups would provide the loci of affirmation and value that allow individuals to pursue their life plans with confidence:

> [T]he plurality of associations in a well-ordered society, each with its secure internal life, tends to reduce the visibility, or at least the painful visibility, of variation in men's prospects. For we tend to compare our circumstances with those of others in our group, or in positions we regard as relevant to our aspirations.[55]

I am less sanguine than Rawls's apparent hope that such out-of-sight-out-of-mind practices will be successful in reducing the impact of inequality on

50. Rawls, *Justice as Fairness*, 9.

51. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, 293–296.

52. For discussion, see Michael Titelbaum, "What Would a Rawlsian Ethos of Justice Look Like?," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 36, no. 3 (2008): 294–296.

53. See Eammon Callan, *Creating Citizens: Political Education and Liberal Democracy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 31.

54. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, 388.

55. Ibid., 470.

self-respect.[56] It seems dubious to think that in contemporary societies, characterized as they are by myriad forms of physical and digital communication and interaction, where the lives of others are easily and constantly available to view and where materialistic concerns dominate, that comparisons will still not be easily and regularly made. This seems the root of the problem as I have identified it here; that the exposure to the abilities and achievements of others is constant, grinding, and unavoidable.[57] It creates feelings of inferiority and resentment, and it undermines the solidaristic nature of a society in which individuals view themselves as part of a cooperative enterprise for mutual benefit. Moreover, it does so by perpetuating such perceptions among, and about, traditionally marginalized groups.

The understanding of a sense of justice I have argued for is one that overcomes this issue because it takes the idea of individuals acting on principles of justice "in the course of their daily lives" to mean something more extensive than conformity to legal constraints, even where those constraints are manifestations of what socioeconomic distributive outcome is required by justice. At least two different sites for such an extension exist.[58] One is the existence of a social ethos — a set of beliefs and attitudes that shape and sustain the practices of the group of people who share it.[59] The second is the individual productive decisions that citizens make.[60]

The kind of ethos I am imagining here is a set of internalized dispositions held by members of a political community that shape, either implicitly or explicitly, the informal conventions and practices of their shared lives.[61] Those dispositions should track the broader values and principles of justice appropriate for the political community. Here, this would include a set of beliefs and attitudes that endorse the idea of citizens as free, equal, and engaged in a cooperative social enterprise for mutual benefit. It would also include, as we have seen, a socioeconomic component.[62] This would, for instance, involve educating children in such a way as to offset wider social tendencies to extol economic success as particularly praiseworthy, especially at the expense of those who fare worst, as well as instilling a recognition that remaining inequalities are often matters of natural fortune rather than grounds for according differential status.[63]

56. Rawls does, it should be noted, recognize the possibility that such arrangements will be insufficient for ameliorating knocks to individual self-respect, especially where the expectations of the less advantaged are lower (Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, 478–479).

57. For further reflections on this point, see Ben-Porath, "Learning to Avoid Extremism."

58. Steven Lecce, *Against Perfectionism: Defending Liberal Neutrality* (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 252–257.

59. Ibid., 253.

60. Ibid., 257–259.

61. Titelbaum, "What Would a Rawlsian Ethos of Justice Look Like?," 290.

62. See ibid., 302–307.

63. Lecce, *Against Perfectionism*, 253–254.

The second site at which the application of a sense of justice might move beyond compliance with legal regulations is in terms of personal decisions, particularly regarding economic and productive choices. Even within the bounds set by legal constraints there is considerable latitude for the exercise of personal choice about things such as what career to pursue or what salary can be negotiated. An education for a sense of justice would help children see the consequences of future deliberations about where to work and on what terms. This is not to suggest that education should promote a strong productive ethos where citizens are to view themselves as laboring for the common good or on the basis of a conception of personal virtue.[64] Such conceptions would fall foul of the acceptability requirement as I have described it here because they would be based on conceptions of human flourishing that many individuals would reasonably reject. Rather, it is to suggest, following Andrew Mason, that individuals who accept that the basic structure is justly regulated will not seek to unfairly leverage advantages for themselves within that structure.[65] They will recognize, that is, that while certain kinds of decisions are legally permitted, they are nevertheless subject to considerations that flow from that conception of justice. For example, the ability of parents to secure work experience or internships, and to support their children financially while they undertake them, may be legally permitted even within a scheme of fair equality of opportunity, but would allow some individuals to leverage better career prospects. Although not illegal or overtly corrupt, it is unfair because such options are not available to others.[66] An ethos that worked against seeking to gain such competitive advantage would recognize the broader reach of principles of socioeconomic justice.[67] Similarly, where it is held that natural talents are morally arbitrary, securing an unfair advantage on this basis would also be the target of an education for a sense of justice. Holding that natural talents are arbitrary in this way is to reject the idea that the possession of higher-than-average levels of such talents is sufficient reason to entitle an individual to a greater-than-average share of social wealth.[68]

Many educational strategies for developing this ethos of solidarity exist. Here I briefly mention two. First, competition in schools and in education generally

64. For such conceptions, see Joseph Carens, *Equality, Moral Incentives, and the Market: An Essay in Utopian Politico-economic Theory* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1981); and G. A. Cohen, "Incentives, Inequality, and Community," in *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, vol. 13, ed. Grethe B. Peterson (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1992), 263–329.

65. Andrew Mason, *Living Together as Equals: The Demands of Citizenship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 144.

66. Ibid., 133.

67. See Titelbaum, "What Would a Rawlsian Ethos of Justice Look Like?," 301.

68. Mason, *Living Together as Equals*, 145.

should be appropriately limited.[69] This is not to say that there is no place for competition in schools. Competition can serve valuable purposes, such as for the identification and development of talents.[70] Rather, it is to argue that competitive environments and attitudes should not be introduced into areas where they are not warranted. There are moral limits to competition and educational institutions should be arranged according to, and in a manner that reinforces, those limits.[71] One should not design competitive frameworks that unnecessarily set children against each other or make the realization of one set of interests dependent upon setting back the interests of others. This has considerable repercussions for both in-school activities and behaviors, but also for curriculum design as well as assessment and examination systems.[72] In particular, arrangements that emphasize success as tied to the cost of interfering in the success of others should be limited as much as possible. Instead, pupils should be encouraged to share in one another's successes and failures so that they come to identify with the interests of others and feel relief when others succeed in achieving goals, rather than threatened by it.[73]

Second, there should be a change or diversification in attitudes about what occupations are deemed as socially desirable, or what talents and abilities are especially valuable. An education that took seriously the aim of emphasizing a wide range of roles as equally desirable and socially beneficial, rather than focusing on a very narrow range, would help break the link between talents and self-respect. It would also create multiple pathways to rewarding employment rather than pushing increasing numbers of children to a narrow set of roles, thus creating "bottlenecks" where widespread failure to secure such roles is the norm.[74] This is especially the case with the kind of emphasis on academic learning and achievement that Scanlon cites, and which schools and the teaching profession in general promote as the highest form of success. Where other, nonacademic, paths are promoted and valued highly, then those who are not high academic achievers will be less likely to perceive themselves, or to be perceived by others, as inferiors or losers. As Lisa Nandy writes, "The low value accorded to vocational qualifications by comparison with academic qualifications continues to disadvantage those who choose the former route."[75] The 2004 Tomlinson report on curriculum and

69. The following draws directly from the excellent discussion in Waheed Hussain, "Pitting People Against Each Other," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 48, no. 1 (2020): 79–113.

70. See ibid, 80.

71. Ibid., 80–81.

72. See Lisa Nandy, "What Would a Socially Just Education System Look Like?," *Journal of Education Policy* 27, no. 5 (2012): 677–678.

73. Hussain, "Pitting People Against Each Other," 100.

74. Joseph Fishkin, *Bottlenecks: A New Theory of Equality of Opportunity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). See also Hussain, "Pitting People Against Each Other," 102–105.

75. Nandy, "What Would a Socially Just Education System Look Like?," 678.

qualifications reform provided one such opportunity in the UK to create a single type of qualification that covered both academic and vocational education, and treated each with parity, rather than elevating one above the other.[76]

One possible concern is that because the strategies suggested here require considerable educational and societal reform to achieve, and because real reforms are very likely to fall short of such measures, an educational strategy that drew attention to the kinds of deep social inequalities I have highlighted might prove counterproductive. It might lead, that is, to further dissatisfaction and disenchantment, and therefore to more violent extremism rather than less.[77] As an empirical conjecture this may or may not be true, and further social scientific research would no doubt be necessary before it could be concluded one way or another. For what it is worth, my impression is that, in the UK at least, levels of dissatisfaction about discrimination and inequality of status are not insignificant, and many people are both conscious of that fact and feel frustrated at a lack of outlets for recognizing and correcting it.[78] As a normative objection I believe it also fails. Silence in the face of injustice for fear of raising the consciousness of those who are subject to those injustices (and of those who are oblivious to it) and who may seek to bring about social change only serves to compound it. Examples such as the Civil Rights and the Suffragette movements demonstrate the need to address injustices openly and to manage the reshaping of institutions and attitudes in a way that minimizes the potential for violence as well as seeking to maximize consensus. Overcoming complicated and entrenched problems and injustices often requires institutional and attitudinal change. The latter can often spark and sustain the former. Education has a vital role to play in terms of fostering the right kinds of attitudes where justice is concerned.

Conclusion

I have argued that policy programs that attempt to prevent violent extremism by a heavy focus on the motivating role of ideas is flawed. It is flawed on two counts: first, the role of ideas as the mainstay of the causal model for the radicalization process misses the important socioeconomic driver of dissatisfaction and disenfranchisement. Second, the teaching of values in schools that do not include a place for values of socioeconomic justice and the cultivation of a wider sense of justice renders the conception of citizenship it promotes incomplete. I have argued that any plausible attempt to combat violent extremism must, therefore, include among its methods an attempt to educate for a sense of justice that promotes certain socioeconomic norms. This will include seeking to create, via education, an ethos of justice or solidarity among citizens.

76. See ibid.; and Department for Education and Skills, *14–19 Curriculum and Qualification Reform: Final Report of the Working Group on 14–19 Reform*, October 2004, http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/pdfs/2004-tomlinson-report.pdf.

77. I thank the editors for this point.

78. For a detailed analysis of this kind of claim, see Doret de Ruyter and Stijn Sieckelinck, "Creating Caring and Just Democratic Schools to Prevent Extremism," in this issue.

I shall conclude by pointing briefly to an important precedent in British society regarding this kind of ethos, which might serve as something of a model for teaching socioeconomic values and a sense of justice in schools. This is the enduring popular support for the National Health Service as a provider of universal, comprehensive healthcare that is free at the point of delivery, of high quality, and paid for out of public funds. Despite areas of the British welfare state — such as unemployment benefits or child and family support — coming under fire from attitudes about deservingness since the 1960s, support for the NHS has not suffered similar attacks. In many ways the NHS remains faithful to the values of its founder, Aneurin Bevan.[79] Bevan's vision for the NHS was one that embodied the values of a classless society in which citizens regarded themselves as equal participants in a cooperative enterprise:

> [N]o society can legitimately call itself civilized if a sick person is denied medical aid because of lack of means. … Society becomes more wholesome, more serene, and spiritually healthier, if it knows that its citizens have at the back of their consciousness the knowledge that not only themselves, but all their fellows, have access, when ill, to the best that medical skill can provide.[80]

Bevan's proposal rejected insurance-based schemes, two-tier systems, and means-based health care, in favor of a solution that recognized healthcare as a service to be supported from public funds. Citing the likes of Pasteur and Fleming, Bevan wrote, "few would have described themselves as Socialists, but they can hardly be considered representative types of the competitive society."[81] And, again, "A free Health Service is a triumphant example of the superiority of collective action and public initiative applied to a segment of society where commercial principles are seen at their worst."[82] The commercial principles being seen at their worst refers to the resistance to the formation of the NHS by medical professionals, particularly General Practitioners. Here Bevan employed the cooperative notion to expose such claims based on vested interests as inconsistent with a commitment to mutual benefit: "The old system pays me better, so don't interfere."[83] Such self-interest was explicitly set against the intrinsic values of the caring professions of doctors, nurses, and teachers who did not view the value of their roles in terms of how much money they were likely to make.[84]

Bevan's creation of the NHS was enabled by a tide of public support for the values his vision embodied. Those who sought to limit its reach or to protect their own private interests faced overwhelming contrary public pressure. These values

79. Dorothy Wedderburn, "The Superiority of Collective Action: The Case of the NHS," in *Living as Equals*, ed. Paul Barker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 101.

80. Aneurin Bevan, *In Place of Fear* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1952), 79.

81. Ibid.

82. Ibid., 89.

83. Ibid.

84. See G. A. Cohen, *Why Not Socialism?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 59.

have proved remarkably resilient and the NHS is still spoken of as a national treasure. Despite the introduction of an internal market in 1991 and various threats and attempts to "sell off" the NHS, as well as controversial elements such as prescription charges, the British public are highly resistant to attempts to undermine the universal, comprehensive, and free at the point of delivery nature of the NHS. The attitudes behind this support remain the same: an ethos of cooperation and mutual support as the basis of a decent society where individuals should not have to worry about paying for healthcare at a time when they are ill.

Given the existence of an ethos of solidarity regarding the NHS, teaching about its values in school as embodying the kinds of moral duties individuals owe to one another is appropriate and valuable. It also provides an effective vehicle through which educating for an appropriate sense of justice may be conducted.

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