

Challenges of Beneficence: Revising the Terms

Abstract: Familiar accounts of beneficence take as its target human need. If, as is the case in our world, need is large, beneficence threatens to be demanding, interfering with our lives and our relationships. Working from some Kantian insights and arguments, I lay out an alternative, focused on engaging with a person's ends rather than meeting needs, that sets up three distinct duties to provide assistance, not one. The upshot may (or may not) be demanding, but not in a way that is objectionably interfering.