

HEALTH, DEVELOPMENT & HUMAN RIGHTS

Oh Dearism?

Instructions

When doing the reading for this class, there are the two basic kinds of information you need to understand:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, it is *information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible position on an issue, rather than another.

Reading

Jamieson, D. (2005). Duties to the Distant: Aid, Assistance, and Intervention in the Developing World. *The Journal of Ethics*, 9(1/2), 151–170.

Curtis, A. (Contributor). (2009, April 13). Oh Dearism. [Television series episode, digital representation]. In C. Brooker (Creator), *Newswipe*. YouTube. Retrieved April 30, 2018, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8moePxHpvoK>. (Original work from April 8, 2009).

Questions

1. According to Dale Jamieson, what are the difference between humanitarian aid, development assistance, and humanitarian intervention?
2. Why is Jamieson skeptical of these three common ways of discharging a duty to help those in extreme poverty?
3. The video from Adam Curtis, a British documentarian and writer, coins the term “oh dearism”, which refers to the helplessness that people feel when confronted with the stark realities concerning foreign aid and the complexities surrounding its seeming ineffectiveness.

Do Jamieson’s arguments encourage a feeling of oh dearism? Can his two principles, presented at the end of the article, help overcome such a pessimistic (and rather depressing) view?

To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently about these issues at our next class meeting.