

Reciprocity and Basic Income

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The Reciprocity Problem

- Reciprocity problem is the chief ethical objection to basic income
- Parasitism: A is a parasite to B if the economic relationship between A and B makes A better off and B worse off
- Basic income violates reciprocity in distributive justice by making parasitic economic relationships possible
- One solution is to make a basic income scheme conditional

The Social Product

- Parasitism involves receiving the benefits of the social product without making any contribution to it
- Narrow view of social product: quantitative measures such as GDP and GNP
- Broader view of social product: combined goods and services in a wide sense

Capabilities and Contribution

- Capability approach to human development is a useful way of thinking about the concept of the social product
- Contributive activity is engaging in capability-promoting behaviour
- Wide range of activities can count as reciprocating the material support of basic income

Conditionality and Basic Income

- Reciprocity should not be jettisoned in defending basic income
- Ethical conditionality and political unconditionality
- Example of universal health care