

Letter to Author

Dear David Brooks,

I have just finished reading your article in the New York Times called "The Power of Altruism". I would like to say that I find your view on our social institutions very interesting. Specifically when you said it crushes our tendency to be good. I would like to follow up with some questions; in your opinion what specific tendencies to be good have been affected the most? what do you think the western world would look like if we were all good? To be specific how would our institutions be different if there were no selfishness? I think that if our society wasn't selfish we wouldn't advance to the future, or at least not as fast. I say this because I disagree with your opinion that economic motivation results in bad outcomes. The need for money is in my opinion one of the most powerful motivations and multiple businesses have been started because the owner wanted to be rich. Plus in that process multiple people were probably hired¹⁶⁷ which is a good that comes from the selfish need for money. To sum everything up I would like to say I agree with some of your ideas but I disagree with you on the idea that economic motivation results in bad outcomes.²¹⁰