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Securing Equal Relations: An Addition to Elizabeth Anderson's Democratic Equality

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Securing Equal Relations: An Addition to Elizabeth Anderson's Democratic Equality

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James Richard Ewing

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Part 1: Introduction

Within social and political philosophy, egalitarianism entails some social theory of equality, although there is much debate in egalitarian literature as to what a prioritization of equality actually amounts to within a social or political framework (Arneson 2013). In this paper, I will focus on a contemporary *relational* form of egalitarianism, a theory of Elizabeth Anderson (1999) which she calls “Democratic Equality.” Through Democratic Equality, Anderson promotes a vision of egalitarianism which seeks to give individuals the capacity to stand in equal relations with one another in society. Although equal relations is a fine goal for egalitarianism (and perhaps the best goal for any egalitarianism), I will argue that Democratic Equality as Anderson describes it is not sufficient to achieve these relations. Ultimately, her theory is insufficient because it lacks the distributive component which gives individuals the material capacity to stand in equal social and political relations.

I analyze Anderson’s theory using a particular version of the ideal vs non-ideal theory distinction made by Charles Mills (2005). Because, as I argue, her theory relies on ideal social institutions, chiefly an ideal distribution of wealth, it does not account for important points of distributive injustice which would ultimately uproot equal relations. Therefore, I will propose a distributive framework that could supplement Democratic Equality and provide individuals the resources they need to stand in equal relation with one another. Rather than proposing a responsive or isolated distributive component, such as income constraints, raised minimum wages, or a more rigorous tax system, I will suggest a more fundamental reform which is in line with some of Anderson’s distributive and luck egalitarian predecessors, one which places productive assets in the hands of working individuals. Specifically, I will argue for John Rawls

(2001) conception of a liberal socialist regime which entails a distribution of the means of production among sets of democratically organized workers.

In order to understand relational egalitarianism, it is helpful to note the philosophical backdrop from which it arose. Often, relational egalitarianism is juxtaposed with distributive or luck egalitarianism (see Anderson 2010 and Schemmel 2011). Distributive theories of equality, which dominated egalitarian literature during the second half of the 20th century, held that egalitarianism should either divide resources (or their value) equally amongst citizens (see Dworkin 1981a, 1981b, 2000, and Rawls 1999, 2001), or divide them in a way (perhaps unequally) which produces equal well-being or welfare for citizens (see Cohen 1989 and Arneson 1989, 2000). One of the goals of these theories is often to equalize or compensate for an individual's naturally occurring bad luck. If for instance, one had been born with a disability, a small amount of talent, or into a poor family, they could receive the compensation required to uplift them, therefore bestowing equality by way of goods received or welfare attained. To whatever extent distributive and luck egalitarians may implicate the state of relationships within society, they are primarily focused on distribution of resources or the resulting welfare.¹

Another influential figure in egalitarian literature is John Rawls (1999, 2001). Not without controversy, he is drawn on from both sides of the relational and distributive egalitarian debate, insofar as he promotes a seeming resourcist conception of primary social goods, but also insofar as his principles of justice lay the ground for equal relations among individuals sometimes independent of distribution (e.g. the difference principle) (see Arneson 2013). Rawls' philosophy will become important in the final sections of the paper, when I use his discussions of

¹ For further clarification, this is what Elizabeth Anderson calls a *third-person* conception of justification, rather than a *second-person* or *interpersonal* conception (Anderson 2010, 2-3).

political regimes, specifically his notion of a liberal socialist regime, as a distributive supplement to Anderson's Democratic Equality.

In what follows, my paper will be divided into four parts. In Part 2, I outline Democratic Equality and show how it can be subjected to Mills' distinction between ideal and non-ideal theory. In Part 3, I critique the distributive component of Democratic Equality, arguing that it does not do enough to counteract real inequalities in American social and political institutions. In Part 4, I extend my distributive critique to a capitalist critique more generally, arguing that Democratic Equality's distributive issues are symptomatic of the larger socioeconomic framework of capitalism. Lastly, in Part 5, I conclude by suggesting an alternate distributive component, a liberal socialist regime, to bolster Anderson's egalitarianism and secure equal relations.

Part 2: Anderson and Ideal Theory

a. Democratic Equality

Anderson's relational egalitarianism distinguishes her significantly from preceding luck egalitarians. Instead of valuing primarily the equalization of bad luck through distribution or compensation, her goal lies within the social relations themselves. Democratic Equality is fundamentally concerned with securing equal relations for citizens and preventing socially created oppression from injuring these relations. It can be expressed as a positive and negative goal.

Negatively, egalitarians seek to abolish oppression—that is, forms of social relationship by which some people dominate, exploit, marginalize, demean, and inflict violence upon others... Positively, egalitarians seek a social order in which persons stand in relations of equality. (Anderson 1999, 313)

Unlike luck egalitarians, who express concern for the personal possessions and characteristics of individuals, such as inherited wealth, talent, physical and mental traits, Anderson looks at the social and political characteristics of individuals; that is, how they stand and relate to others in society.

At times, it is necessary for Democratic Equality to address naturally occurring “unlucky” or “misfortunate” personal characteristics, for example congenital handicaps or diseases. In these cases, aid or distributed resources may be granted, but only if a threat is posed to equal relations which distribution could eliminate (Anderson 1999, 320). In the first place, however, the social conditions must be addressed. For example, before one asks the question of whether or not disabled people should be compensated for their disability, public spaces can be made handicap accessible (320). By approaching the matter in this way, recipients of aid are treated less like pitiable misfortunes who require saving and more like equal and respected members of society (where the former is implied by the “bad luck” conception of equality). By contrast, other personal traits, like talent, tastes, and emotional states do not concern the relational egalitarian, for it is not their place to manage the personal lives of citizens (335). Rather, it creates an environment where all individuals can stand in equal social relations but have the burden, responsibility, and freedom to manage their personal lives, goals, and misfortunes.

Under Democratic Equality, social relations are measured in terms of capabilities, following Amartya Sen (1992). Capabilities can be understood as the set of functionings a person has the capacity to perform in society (Anderson 1999, 316). Anderson thus modifies the positive and negative goals of Democratic Equality:

Negatively, people are entitled to whatever capabilities are necessary to enable them to avoid or escape entanglement in oppressive social relationships. Positively, they are entitled to the capabilities necessary for functioning as an equal citizen in a democratic state. (316)

Negatively, people have the capability to avoid socially created oppression, like those outlined by Iris Marion Young (1990): exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, violence, or cultural imperialism. Positively, Anderson outlines three broad categories of capabilities which must be secured through Democratic Equality: the capability to function 1) as a human being, 2) as part of cooperative (economic) production, and 3) as a citizen of a democratic state (Anderson 1999, 317). As human beings, individuals require access to the basic means of survival to be capable of living; they require means to food, water, and shelter. As economic agents, they require the ability to hold a dignified place in the workforce, which includes access to means of production, education, and occupations. And finally, as a citizen in a democratic state, they must not only have access to basic facets of political participation like voting, running for office, etc., but also civil freedoms which include freedom of speech, movement, and access to goods and services (318).

There are, however, some important qualifications which significantly affect these capabilities. First, Anderson is quick to point out that capabilities, or the ability to function, do not necessarily imply functioning (318). That is, Democratic Equality does not secure equal levels of functioning to all members of society, but gives equal access to these levels of functioning. She gives the case, for example, of someone failing to reach these levels if they willingly join a religious group that discourages political participation (318). Second, Democratic Equality only gives citizens access to a level of functioning sufficient to maintain equal relations; it does not, however, allow all citizens to function at every social and political level (318). Anderson gives the example that, even if everyone has an equal opportunity to vote

in elections, they may not have an equal opportunity to be bilingual or earn a PhD (318-319). Nevertheless, because there is access to a *basic* level of functioning, relations can be said to be equal.² In this way, Anderson's theory can be considered a *sufficientarian thesis*, that is, it provides a basic set of capabilities which are sufficient to garner equal relations, but does not concern itself about inequality past this minimum level.

b. Ideal and non-ideal theory

In order to assess Democratic Equality and the extent to which it might achieve equal relations, I will consider the distinction between ideal and non-ideal theory outlined by Charles Mills (2005). This discussion requires a bit of background explanation, for there are many different senses of the terms 'ideal' and 'ideal theory.' First, all normative theorizing is ideal in the sense that it strives or promotes some goal that may not yet exist, such as egalitarians talking about the ideal of equality; this is a general and trivial sense of 'ideal theory' (73). Second, theories or models used in normative theorizing may be considered ideal if they make simplifying assumptions and abstractions in order to be understood (74). A scientific model, for instance that of a cell, may be idealized in the sense that it does not show every part of a real cell but only a few important organelles. These two senses of ideal are *not* the senses that Mills is discussing.

The difference between ideal and non-ideal theory can be seen as a difference between what Mills calls the ideal-as-idealized model and the ideal-as-descriptive model (74). The ideal-as-idealized model represents some phenomenon in the way that it should or is supposed to exist or function (ideal). The ideal-as-descriptive model, on the other hand, represents some

² Her third qualification is not discussed here. It entails that capabilities are spread out over a life-time, rather than awarded at one specific time, as a "starting-gate" (Anderson 1999, 319).

phenomena in the way it actually exists, according to reality (non-ideal). Both models idealize in the two senses described above, that they may be used in normative philosophy which asserts some sort of idealized end goal, and that they abstract away from certain details about the phenomenon in question. However, there is a key difference between the two. Ideal-as-idealized models, when used in theory, describe phenomena the way they *should* or *might* function or exist. Ideal-as-descriptive models, on the other hand, describe phenomena the way they *do* function or exist.

Take the following example, adapted from Mills. Say I want to vacuum my house, and I am trying to figure out how long I need to clean. Assume I have a relatively old but reliable vacuum. Using ideal theory, I might look online or on the vacuum's package to see how fast it can clean: "Only twenty minutes for the entire house!" However, this theory relies on the assumption that I have a brand new, perfectly functioning (ideal) vacuum cleaner. If I use this estimation, I will likely fall short and mismanage my time, possibly hindering my goal of cleaning the house. If, on the other hand, I examine my actual vacuum, assess the wear and tear, I may have a better estimation of cleaning time: perhaps 40 min. By using non-ideal theory, and assessing the reality of the situation, I can more effectively reach my goal of a clean house.

Now take a more philosophical example. Say I have the goal of increasing civic awareness in America. Using ideal theory, I may argue that each family in America should receive a free standardized English textbook on American government, history, and politics. Subsequently, each citizen will have to pass a standardized civics test. At first, this may seem like a fine theory. However, upon closer inspection, it turns out I have not accurately assessed the situation and may have even disadvantaged certain populations. For, I did not take into account the reality that many communities and populations are (a) non-English speakers or (b)

illiterate. By requiring a civics test, but effectively barring certain populations from passing it, I am contributing to oppression and will likely fail to realize my initial goal.

The issue with ideal theory in social and political philosophy is that, by leaving out certain social political facts, one misses important points of oppression that exist in society, especially those that are hidden or non-mainstream (traditionally those faced by the working class, women, and non-whites). Any subsequent ethic will be incapable of addressing or remedying these points of oppression, and may actually reinforce them. Mills, moreover, makes an even starker claim. Not only is ideal theory used in much Western social and political philosophy, but it has become *ideology* (79). In other words, (ideal) theory itself has become an oppressive mechanism in Western philosophy, culture, and society.

There are several ways ideal theory can appear in normative social and political philosophy. Mills lists several examples, which include: an idealized social ontology, idealized capacities, silence on oppression, ideal social institutions, idealized cognitive sphere, and strict compliance (76). In this paper, I will attempt to locate *ideal social institutions* within Elizabeth Anderson's Democratic Equality.³ Mills writes:

Fundamental social institutions such as the family, the economic structure, the legal system, will therefore be conceptualized in ideal-as-idealized-model terms, with little or no sense of how their actual workings may systematically disadvantage women, the poor, and racial minorities (76)

Of the fundamental social institutions that Mills includes above, I will consider the economic structure implied by Elizabeth Anderson's theory. Particularly, I will look at the distribution scheme and the broader socioeconomic organization. Issues of race, gender, and sexuality also merit discussion with respect to Anderson's ideal social institutions, as they may disadvantage

³ Cleary, ideal social institutions overlap with other types of ideal theory. A discussion of other types of ideal theory and their intersection may be the topic of future research.

individuals further. I save a more thorough discussion of these issues for future research, although some of this is discussed in Part 3 with respect to environmental justice.

Anderson's Democratic Equality can be understood as *requiring* ideal social institutions. I say "required" intentionally, as I am making a slight departure from Mills' treatment of ideal theory, and there is an important difference between ideal theory *itself* and theory that *requires* ideal social institutions. Mills is chiefly concerned with ideal theory and critiquing ideal theory as ideology. In particular, his object of critique is John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice*, which is purported to be an ideal theory by Rawls himself. Rawls writes, "The reason for beginning with ideal theory is that it provides, I believe, the only basis for the systematic grasp of these more pressing issues" (1999, 8). *A Theory of Justice*, therefore, *is* an ideal theory which Mills believes neglects important racial, gender, and socioeconomic questions. Elizabeth Anderson, on the other hand, makes no claim that her theory is ideal, and I will not be exploring this possibility here. Rather, I am more concerned about the unspoken assumptions and implications which underlie her theory. In other words, I am not assessing her theory explicitly, but those social and political structures and institutions that would be required for her theory's success, and which are therefore implicit assumptions of her theory. In Anderson's case, I will be looking at the kind of distribution and socioeconomic system she takes to underwrite Democratic Equality.

c. Distribution Pattern

Democratic Equality requires an ideal distribution pattern. By this, I mean that Democratic Equality needs a certain distributive pattern in order to secure its goal: equal relations in terms of capabilities. Anderson, however, provides little discussion of any specific type of distribution framework; she merely gives hints to a few distributive components, which

will be discussed below. Therefore, I take her to be implicitly requiring a distribution pattern which would allow citizens to stand in equal relations. I will argue that the assumed distribution pattern, or the vague one that she hints at, fails in important respects. Specifically, it does not appear capable of providing the material resources to citizens that are required for equal relations in society.

Using *relational* egalitarianism, Anderson is attempting to shift away from a purely distributive, third-person conception of justice, which was championed by luck egalitarians, and towards an interpersonal social contract conception of equality (Anderson 2010). Her focus, therefore, lies with equal relations and capabilities rather than equal distribution or welfare; distribution, for her, is only a means to this end. The distributive pattern that Anderson does (briefly) discuss is one which is to be regarded as a “system of cooperative, joint production,” that is, a system where “people regard every product of the economy as jointly produced by everyone working together” (Anderson 1999, 321). In terms of concrete implementations, this entails an economy where able-bodied individuals have to work for wages, where wages will be sufficient to provide one’s biological, economic, and civil capabilities. To this end, she discusses the possibility of raising minimum wages (325). Beyond this, however, Democratic Equality appears to be at the mercy of some version of free-market capitalism (see Anderson 2008).

The distribution schema is similar to her conception of capabilities in that it is one of sufficiency. She writes,

Once all citizens enjoy a decent set of freedoms, sufficient for functioning as an equal in society, income inequalities beyond that point do not seem so troubling in themselves. (326)

As long as one has sufficient income to grant them access to a sufficient level of functioning, they are considered to be standing in equal relations with one another. Furthermore, inequalities

beyond this minimum are deemed acceptable, albeit under certain circumstances. The acceptability of inequality rests on one condition: how easily money has the ability to be converted into social status. She writes:

The degree of acceptable income inequality would depend in part on how easy it was to convert income into status inequality—differences in the social bases of self-respect, influence over elections, and the like. (326)

In a society where social status and power can be commodified easily, less inequality would be allowed beyond the sufficient level; in a society where social status and power are not easily commodified, more inequality would be permitted past the minimum level.

This aspect of Democratic Equality, the acceptability of distributive inequality of income, requires or assumes the presence of ideal social structures. The ideal structure here is not only the distributive system. There are, in fact, two related structures: the distributive system and what I am calling a high *wealth-to-capabilities conversion rate* (WCCR). A WCCR is basically a measurement of the ability of wealth to influence (or be converted into) social and political capabilities and powers, and therefore measures the extent to which wealth can influence social relations. A WCCR may be assessed in several social and political spheres, such as politics and policy, the criminal justice system, or the education system. In each case, we are asking: to what extent does wealth influence politics and policy, one's legal or criminal status, or one's level and quality of education? The coupling of distributive pattern and WCCR is important because the distributive system alone is not the issue, as Anderson notices above. In fact, it is perfectly reasonable to imagine large inequalities in distribution not affecting equal relations in society. In this (unlikely) scenario, however, there would also need to be a low wealth-to-capabilities conversion rate which would prevent wealth to be converted into unequal capabilities. We can

call this a *low WCCR*, because wealth has only a small impact on social relations. On the other hand, a *high WCCR* is a rate where wealth has a large impact on relations.

The actual coupling of distributive pattern and WCCR in the United States do not prevent inequalities in wealth from impacting equal relations. Because societies structured like the United States have 1) highly unequal distributive patterns, and 2) a high WCCR, large inequalities in wealth lead to large inequalities in capabilities and relations. This will be outlined in more detail in Part 3.

Anderson might have responded to these realities in one of two ways. First, she might have recognized the distributive inequalities in the United States and the ability to convert wealth easily into capabilities, and suggested a more rigorous distributive component to Democratic Equality. This would be an example of using non-ideal theory, for she would be recognizing the actual economic social institutions and responding to them. Second, she might have considered the real distributive inequality and high WCCR, but assumed that these institutions would be functioning ideally. In other words, she may have used ideal theory to abstract away from these important points of oppression, leaving an additional distributive point unnecessary. I will argue that she responds with the latter, that is, she uses ideal theory to abstract away from these realities.

A non-ideal principle or tenet, one that considers the actual conditions of distribution and the wealth-to-capabilities conversion rate, is necessary to allow Democratic Equality to guarantee equal relations. In terms of non-ideal principles, there are two broad possibilities of reform: one which distributes wealth more equally (distributive system) or one prevents wealth from influencing social relations (WCCR). Though Anderson has yet to fully develop such a

principle, she has briefly spoken about the need for additional distributive constraints (2008).⁴ This may entail, in addition to a minimum wage, an upper and middle level constraint. Here, Anderson does appear to recognize the fact that, because wealth often secures power and influence and can upset equal relations, there needs to be an income constraint to prevent this (266). Additionally, she advocates offering social insurance to the middle class which would allow it to grow:

Egalitarians prefer not just that income inequalities be limited at the top and bottom, but that individuals be crowded in the middle of the distribution. (267).

These constraints are beginning to recognize the social structures which allow wealth to influence social relations. However, they are largely underdeveloped, and furthermore, Anderson does speak about other major sources of wealth, such as inheritance and capital assets.

Because Anderson uses ideal theory and only develops a minimal distributive component for Democratic Equality, her relational egalitarianism will not secure equal relations. In Parts 3 (and also Parts 4 and 5), I will outline this issue in greater depth and begin to suggest a more robust reform (Part 5).

d. Socioeconomic Structure

The second, interrelated, ideal institution required by Democratic Equality is the socioeconomic structure, capitalism. Although Anderson has discussed implementing several distributive policies within the capitalist framework, she has not outlined an alternative to capitalism itself. For this reason, I will take capitalism to be an assumed background condition of Democratic Equality, one which, presumably, would allow Democratic Equality to secure equal relations. I will argue, contrary to this assumption, that capitalism as a real social framework (or

⁴ She mentions nothing of the sort in 1999 and 2010, and only briefly in 2008.

as a conceptual ideal) would not allow Democratic Equality to secure equal relations and actually impedes them severely.

In order to make clear the distinction between the distributive pattern and the socioeconomic structure, we can think about things in the following way. The distributive pattern entails the means by which members of society are allocated economic resources such as wealth. They may include, for example, frameworks like a purely free market system, some sort of welfare state, a central command economy, mixed economy, etc., all of which exist *within* the overall socioeconomic scheme. The broader socioeconomic scheme, which may entail some variation of capitalism, socialism, feudalism, or communism, encompasses not only a distributive scheme, but all of the relational procedures and norms of a society. It influences, for example, access to means of production, workplace relations, labor vs capital relations, technological development, geographical infrastructure, the financial system, trade relations, etc. Although the type of distribution scheme is closely related to the type of socioeconomic structure, they are not the same. Take an example: although both laissez-faire capitalism and welfare-state capitalism fall under the socioeconomic category of capitalism, they have different methods of distribution, the former entailing an unregulated free market and the latter entailing a highly regulated free market with social safety nets.

In her egalitarian work (1999, 2008, 2010, 2015), Anderson does not normatively address capitalism as an institution itself with much depth. Rather, she is more concerned with the institutions and egalitarian procedures within capitalism. To this end, she has seriously discussed raising minimum wages (1999), income constraints at the lower, middle and high levels (2008), reforming the workplace (2015), and “a system of cooperative, joint productions” (1999). Furthermore, she does not advocate explicitly for alternatives to capitalism, such as socialism,

but appears to actively promote some form of free market capitalism with income constraints (2008). Therefore, I take some form of capitalism to be implied under Democratic Equality and purportedly required for its success.⁵

There are a couple ways in which capitalism might be considered ideal, and therefore problematic. First, we might consider ideal capitalism to be a certain conceptual framework which would theoretically garner equal relations, as opposed to actual capitalism as it exists in the United States. Here, there is a difference between capitalism as a conceptual ideal and capitalism as a socioeconomic reality. Second, we might consider distinctions within conceptual ideals of capitalism itself. In other words, there may be one conceptual mapping of capitalism that acknowledges logical contradiction and necessary oppression, and another, more ideal conception, which envisions capitalism as perfectly free, just, and equal (both of which, at this point, do not acknowledge the material realities of capitalism in the United States). This second type of idealization depends on which ideal conceptualization of capitalism one holds, whether it be critical or exemplary.

For the purposes of this paper, I will focus on the first distinction, that between conceptualization and reality, and leave the second to further research. Although it is not clear what type of idealization of capitalism Anderson favors, it will not make much difference so long as she holds *some* idealization to the exclusion of oppression and inequality, which I argue she does.

Part 3: Distributive Critique

⁵ Using a term from John Rawls (2001), it may be likened to a *background institution* or part of the *basic structure*. In other words, it is something which functions in the backdrop of egalitarianism, and is essential for egalitarianism's success, but is not included in any of the explicit egalitarian principles. For Anderson, capitalism can be viewed as a background condition for democratic equality.

Within the United States, significant inequalities of wealth lead to inequalities in social relations. In other words, the United States has both an acceptability of distributive inequality and a high wealth-to-capabilities conversion rate. For equal relations to be achieved by Democratic Equality, however, these characteristics should be inversely related: when the WCCR is high, then distributive inequality is lowered, and vice versa. Because Anderson fails to (1) recognize the divergence from her theory and real social institutions, and (2) offer an additional component to supplement her theory, I take her to be relying on ideal social institutions. In this section of the paper, I will highlight the distributive inequalities in the United States and the existence of a high WCCR. In Parts 4 and 5, I will attempt to remedy these ills with non-ideal theory.

It is not difficult to see the existence of high inequality in the United States. For this reason, I will spend less time outlining material inequalities and more on the United States' high WCCR. That said, there are some crucial realities that need to be highlighted. Inequality in America has been increasing steadily for several decades (see Piketty and Saez 2003, Saez and Zucman 2016, Kuhn, Schularick, and Steins 2020). Kopszuk and Suez (2016) find that in 2012, 42% of the nation's wealth was held by the top 1%, largely a result of the accumulation of wealth in the top 0.1%, whose wealth increased from 7% of the nation's wealth in 1978 to 22% in 2012 (520). Kuhn, Schularick, and Steins (2020) find that the top 10%, which had held 67.6% of wealth in 1989 now holds 77.4% in 2016, while the bottom 50%, which held 2.9% in 1989, now holds 1.2% in 2016 (19). The United States also ranks as the most unequal country among its G7 counterparts. Measured by the Gini coefficient on a scale of 0-1, where a 0 signifies total equality and 1 signifies total inequality, the US stands at 0.434 in 2017, behind the UK at 0.392, Japan at 0.363, and France at 0.326 (Horowitz, Igielnik, and Kochhar 2020). Elizabeth Anderson

does not mention the severity of this inequality in her work. And more importantly, she does not recognize how these inequalities can be converted into social and political inequalities.

Wealth in the United States is easily converted into a variety of social capabilities. It can grant, for instance, access to a high-level education and the opportunity for an elite profession. It can be used to pay for expensive bails or lawyers for criminal defense. In this paper, I will focus on the ways in which wealth can influence politics, particularly through the political institution of lobbying. This example should be seen as representative of a broader truth about social institutions in the United States, namely, that they can facilitate unequal relations if there are underlying inequalities in wealth.

Lobbying, broadly construed, can be thought of as the sum of the ways in which people, interest groups, or firms try to influence policy and policy makers (Rowbottom 2010, 87). Instead of directing this influence through the electoral process (voting), campaigning, or holding rallies, however, lobbyists are concerned with influencing politicians directly. For example, when an individual or firm lobbies they may meet with a politician directly or with one of their advisors and try to persuade them to push certain policy decisions. This persuasion, as I am referring to it here, does not consist of bribery or monetary incentive, but argument, logic, and empirical findings.⁶ In itself, there is nothing about lobbying which is detrimental to political equality. In fact, some believe it to be a necessary aspect of an active democracy for citizens to try and influence policy through lobbying (88). Politicians also benefit from lobbying, for instance when lobbyists provide information or research from focus groups or think tanks. In this way, they can become better informed when making policy decisions.

⁶ Practices like bribery or under-the-table funding are another issue that will not be discussed here.

Generally speaking, there are two types of professional lobbying, in-house and multi-client firms (89). The former are employed by and within a company, and whose job it is to secure the company's interests by working with officials to promote certain policy outcomes. A multi-client lobbying firm, on the other hand, offers lobbying as a service which can be bought in the market by those who can afford it.

The institution of lobbying facilitates inequalities of political influence insofar as it operates on the basis of wealth. Although anybody can theoretically lobby, it is invariably wealthy individuals or firms that have the ability to engage in effective, professional lobbying. De Figueiredo and Richter (2014) outline a few key statistics about professional lobbying, including its impact on American politics, how much money is spent on it, and who specifically is using and benefiting from it.

Lobbying is pervasive in the United States as a means of political influence. In the US, lobbying expenditures are five times higher than political action committee contributions (Milroy, Primo, and Groseclose 2000), and in 2012, organized interest groups spent 3.5 billion dollars on lobbying the federal government (De Figueiredo and Richter 2014, 165). Of those who participate in lobbying, De Figueirido and Richter (2014) find two patterns: it is not only the case that corporations and trade associations make up the largest lobbying expenditures by interest groups (165), but that "*large corporations and well-funded groups are more likely to lobby independently than are smaller groups*" (166, my emphasis added). The reason for this is that smaller, local, grassroots groups cannot afford the costs of lobbying (166).

There are a few important patterns to note about lobbying and political influence. First, it is typically firms, associations, or interest groups, rather than individuals that utilize lobbying, either in house or multi-client. Individuals usually lack the monetary funds to pay for lobbying

themselves. Second, among firms, associations, and interest groups (which include everything from Fortune 500 companies to environmental protection agencies to local nonprofit organizations and community groups), it is the largest and wealthiest groups which spend the most money on lobbying, and therefore reap a majority of its political fruits. Therefore, an inequality which is rooted in wealth is transferred to inequalities in effective lobbying, political influence, and ultimately social relations.

Lobbying as a real political institution within the United States does not fulfill the positive or negative goals of Democratic equality. Positively, it does not give citizens the capability to function as equals. As shown above, those individuals or firms with more wealth have a significantly greater ability to produce political influence. The failure of the positive goal of Democratic Equality leads to a failure in the negative goal of Democratic Equality, that citizens have the capabilities to avoid oppression. Because, through lobbying, citizens are not afforded the capacity to function as equals, some citizens have the ability to socially oppress others through their political influence.

Although there are several ways this oppression can be seen, it is particularly visible in cases of environmental injustice, specifically with respect to oil and gas production. Environmental injustice occurs when certain populations (usually disadvantaged, low-income, and containing people of color) are disproportionately exposed to the negative effects of pollution and waste (see Maantay 2002). For the past several decades, literature and mainstream media alike have identified several cases (see Maantay 2002 and Colarossi 2020). One of the causes of environmental injustice, or at least one of the reasons it persists, can be traced to the political and legal system. Simply, there are not enough laws or regulations to prevent oil and gas companies from polluting struggling communities. Subsequently, the lack of regulatory barriers

can be traced further back to lobbying, as lobbying is one of the ways businesses, corporations, and communities influence policy.

There are large discrepancies in lobbying between oil and gas companies on the one hand, and environmental and civil rights groups on the other. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, oil and gas lobbying amounted to \$110,690,954 in 2020, and the largest spender was Chevron Corp at \$8,930,000 (“Oil and Gas: Lobbying, 2020” 2021). These dollars are used to influence policies that improve companies’ ability to extract and refine oil, which in turn involves environmental pollution. Environmental lobbyists, on the other hand, spent a total of \$17,022,602 on lobbying; their largest spender was the Nature Conservancy at \$1,710,000 (“Environment: Lobbying: 2020” 2021). Organizations like the Nature Conservancy push for policies that reduce the environmental impact of oil and gas companies, and simultaneously, their negative health effects on nearby communities. Additionally, civil rights lobbyists have this on their agenda. One of the most prominent civil rights lobbying organizations is the NAACP, who spent a mere \$925,500 on lobbying in 2019, only some of which was geared toward environmental injustice (“Client Profile: NAACP” 2021). From this data, it is clear that oil and gas companies have the ability to spend much larger quantities of money and effect policy to a larger degree than their counterparts. It is not surprising when one looks at the wealth of these companies. Chevron, for instance, has a 136 billion dollars market value (“Fortune 500” 2020), while the Nature Conservancy's net assets were estimated at 6.7 billion dollars (“Nature Conservancy” 2020).

I am arguing here that the institution of lobbying and the ability to exert political influence through lobbying is a cause or at least a facilitator of environmental injustice. Because oil and gas companies have the wealth and resources to spend significantly larger amounts of

money in lobbying, as opposed to environmental and civil rights groups, they can influence policy which deteriorates equal relationships in society. And it is also clear, from this example, that it is not lobbying as such which is the issue, but the underlying inequalities of wealth.

Inequalities in lobbying and political influence are the result of (1) a high WCCR rate and (2) an unequal distribution of wealth. In other words, the institution of lobbying allows money to be converted into political influence relatively easily because there are background inequalities of wealth. This can be summarized in the following argument:

P1: Through the institution of lobbying, people and firms can influence policy and politics (definition of lobbying).

P2: The amount of wealth an individual or firm has determines how effective they can lobby (definition of a high WCCR in the context of lobbying).

(Intermediate conclusion: the amount of wealth an individual or firm has determines how effectively they can influence policy and politics)

P3: There are inequalities in wealth (empirical fact).

(Intermediate conclusion: there are inequalities in effectiveness of lobbying)

C1: There are inequalities in political influence, which can entail injustices such as environmental injustice

C2: There are, in both a positive and negative sense, unequal social relations

It is clear that this type of inequality surpasses the reasonable bounds of Anderson's sufficientarian thesis, which does not grant equal political functioning as such, but the capacity to achieve a basic level of political functioning. In many cases, individuals do not have the capacity to achieve a basic level of political functioning because of the institution of lobbying. Moreover, even their basic human capabilities, that of health and wellbeing, may be completely neglected, as in the case with environmental injustice.

There are two general ways of addressing the real institution of lobbying and the unequal relations it generates. First, we could attempt to reform the institution of lobbying itself, so that wealth cannot as easily be converted into political influence through lobbying. In other words, we turn a high WCCR to a low WCCR. Second, we could leave the institution of lobbying as it is and alter the general distribution of resources (wealth) that give people access to effective lobbying. These methods closely mirror those discussed by Schemmel (2011). The former is similar to what he calls a *procedural protection*, or that “which offers institutional safeguards against the abuse of holdings and power by those in superior social positions” (376). The latter is similar to what he calls *distributive policies*, or that “which aim at preventing the abuse of power by limiting material inequalities, so that the advantaged have comparatively less means to buy power” (376).⁷ Clearly, using a combination of these or other programs of reform may be useful in eliminating inequality within Democratic Equality. In fact, Schemmel takes Anderson (1999) to promote *procedural and sociopsychological protections over distributive policies* (376).

For the purposes of this paper, I will focus on distributive policies that promote equality. As it pertains to lobbying, therefore, I will not be focusing on reforming the institution of lobbying (and its WCCR) but the distribution of wealth which serves as a means to unequal lobbying practices and subsequently unequal political influence. Schemmel (2011) lists two reasons for prioritizing distributive policies over procedural and sociopsychological protections; I will add a few of my own below. First, he thinks that distributive policies are less intrusive and therefore less impinging on liberty than other methods like procedural and sociopsychological

⁷ He also discusses a third option, *sociopsychological protection*, or “the ‘engineering’ of social attitudes, for example, in school and through the media, which instill a practical sense of basic equality, and of the limited moral importance of de facto inequalities in talents, capacities, and social functions and professions, into the members of a cooperative scheme, so that those occupying superior positions become less disposed to make use of any opportunities of abuse that their positions” (376).

protections. The latter may involve, for instance, invasion of privacy, expansionary control of individuals and groups, and fixing the social meaning of goods (378). Second, he thinks that a distributive pattern might be more effective than the other two methods. It is a matter, he describes, of taking the weapons away from the advantaged rather than prohibiting their use (379). By eliminating material inequalities, rather than trying to change behavior and policy, there is less opportunity for inequality in the first place. Additionally, he notes the inherent political danger, without distributive policies, of wealth influencing politics and leaving the means of production in the hands of a few (379).

There are other reasons for focusing on distribution rather than WCCR, not discussed by Schemmel. First, there are several institutions, similar to lobbying, which each facilitate unequal relations but ultimately depend on inequalities of wealth. Examples include the criminal justice system, education system, and the financial system. Instead of dealing with the procedures of just one of these social institutions, I seek to address the fundamental underpinnings of many social institutions. Second, Democratic Equality, as a broad egalitarian theory, is not positioned to address each and every institution in a society; rather, it sets the basic guidelines of how a society and its institutions provide equal relations. In other words, I take distribution to be one of the key questions for egalitarianism to answer, but not the functioning of individual institutions like lobbying. Related to this is the question of freedom and liberty. Distribution does not explain how lobbying ought to operate, but secures the underlying distributive equality that gives institutions the freedom to lobby the way they want. As noted previously, moreover, lobbying can be thought of as an integral part of participatory democracy; the problem is not lobbying per se but the inequalities of wealth that can be used to exploit it.

In conclusion, lobbying is just one social institution which generates relational inequalities through inequalities in political influence. Anderson's Democratic Equality does not account for this cause of inequality as it relies on ideal versions of these types of social institutions and distribution as a whole. Therefore, it misses an important point of oppression. It will be my goal in the final sections of this paper to show which distributive policies can address these points of oppression and supplement Democratic Equality so it can more effectively secure equal relations.

Part 4: Capitalist Critique

Democratic Equality requires a distributive component to account for the inequalities generated by real social and political institutions. The addition of a distributive component constitutes a transition from a theory which relies on ideal social institutions to a theory which recognizes the real conditions of social oppression and responds to them. A distributive component can be added, theoretically, to the positive and negative goals of Democratic Equality as follows:

Negatively, people are entitled to whatever capabilities and *distribution (of wealth/resources)* are necessary to enable them to avoid or escape entanglement in oppressive social relationships. Positively, they are entitled to the capabilities and *distribution (of wealth/resources)* necessary for functioning as an equal citizen in a democratic state.⁸

There are many methods, mediums, and forms of wealth distribution that could be involved in an egalitarian enterprise. Schemmel (2011) writes:

Relational egalitarians have to pay particular attention to how such distributions come about, that is, to the question of which kind of socio-economic arrangements best succeed at treating people as social and political equals while bringing about permissible

⁸ Of course, one may presume adequate distribution underneath the capabilities requirement. I make it explicit, however, because Anderson, in her formulation, neglects adequate distributive components.

distributive outcomes. Can welfare states be so reformed as to be up to the task, or do they have to be supplemented with additional elements, such as an unconditional basic income? Or do they even have to be replaced with different arrangements that fundamentally restructure the ownership of the means of production, such as a "property-owning democracy," or a liberal version of socialism? (390)

My goal in choosing a distributive component will not only be to redistribute wealth so that citizens will be able to relate as equals. Rather, I want to suggest a change to the underlying social and economic institutions that ensures a continuous distribution of wealth that is sufficient for equal relations.⁹ In other words, I am not seeking a responsive redistribution, one which takes from some and gives to others, but a preventative restructuring of institutions which guarantees each individual the resources they require to relate as equals. Redistribution, in the sense of taking and giving, would ideally be done away with under the reformed framework.

Additionally, as mentioned earlier, I am not seeking to alter specific social institutions, like the lobbying, education, or criminal-justice system. Rather, this should be thought of as a deeper, more fundamental change that focuses on the general framework of society and the style of relationships citizens have to each other and the world around them. These frameworks, which can be called *socioeconomic structures*, include varieties of capitalism, socialism, and communism. They dictate the basic rules and regulations of the social, political, and economic world, including the mode of distribution (of wealth, opportunity, capital, etc.), the ownership of productive assets and means of production, structure of the market, the commodity, the workday, etc. A socioeconomic structure encompasses particular social institutions, like lobbying, and broad social institutions, like the distribution pattern or market style; it lays the ground rules for these institutions and the social interface of society at large.

⁹ Redistribution already occurs in many modern capitalist societies, through taxes and the welfare state. Clearly, this is insufficient for the redistributions necessary to achieving equal relations, as noted in Part 3 concerning material inequality in the United States.

There are several reasons to address the broader socioeconomic foundation of society rather than dealing with specific facets of it, like distribution, lobbying, etc. First, as mentioned above, it is a preventative and fundamental approach, which ideally will eliminate the root impetus for inequality and work to maintain equality in the long run. Second, and relatedly, it eliminates the need for continuous and significant redistribution in the form of taxes and the welfare state. If people already have the material means to stand in equal relations as a result of the underlying distribution of the socioeconomic structure, it will be unnecessary to keep taking from some and giving to others. Distribution of wealth sufficient for equality will already be built into the system. Third, this technique will not only address the question of distribution as it relates to equal relations, but also other aspects of life and production which contribute to relations. Changes in workplace relations and hierarchies, ownership of means of production, autonomy and freedom, daily and work lifestyle, etc. will extend beyond distribution and secure even less oppressive productive, political, and civil processes. Fourth, and finally, this broader and more systematic change will have the ability to help those oppressed populations (those facing racial, gender, sexual oppression) which already face, in addition to material deprivation, some combination of marginalization, exploitation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence (see Young 1990). Importantly, the socioeconomic reconfiguration will need to consider the plights of these populations, especially those whose oppression intersects at multiple lanes, in order to remove long-standing barriers and biases.

In her work, Elizabeth Anderson does not address the larger socioeconomic picture which frames Democratic Equality. Although she promotes certain structural reforms like a minimum wage increase (1999), high-, middle-, and low-income limitations (2008), and vague notions of access to means of production, education, and opportunity (1999, 318), she fails to coherently

address the ills of capitalism which underlie and produce these distributive issues. It will be my goal, unlike Anderson, to address the more fundamental socioeconomic aspects of society, capitalism in particular, and suggest large scale reform.

To determine what type of socioeconomic structure would best supplement Democratic Equality, I will turn to one of Anderson's predecessor, John Rawls. In *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement*, Rawls discusses five regimes (social/political systems) which might guarantee the equal social relations which are required by Democratic Equality and some of which Schemmel alluded to above: laissez-faire capitalism, welfare-state capitalism, state socialism with a command economy, property-owning democracy, and liberal (democratic) socialism (136). The first three Rawls disregards immediately, on account of their not guaranteeing some combination of equal political and economic liberties, basic rights, or fair equality of opportunity (137-138). They can be discounted from consideration for supplementation of Democratic Equality as well because they do not secure equal relations.

Both a property-owning democracy and liberal socialist regime meet the standards of Rawl's principles of justice (Rawls 138). It is not clear exactly what socioeconomic structure is entailed by a property-owning democracy, although it appears capitalistic. Like traditional forms of capitalism (laissez-faire and welfare-state capitalism), both private property and productive assets are owned by private individuals and are traded within a free market. Unlike laissez-faire capitalism, however, wherein wealth and capital can be monopolized by a few without regulation or interference, a property-owning democracy ensures that wealth and capital are dispersed among citizens (139). And, unlike welfare-state capitalism, it does not redistribute wealth by diverting the income of the rich to the poor through welfare programs (which is completely omitted by laissez-faire capitalism). Rather, Rawls writes:

Property-owning democracy... [ensures] the widespread ownership of productive assets and human capital (that is, education and trained skills)... against a background of fair equality of opportunity (139).

In this way, a property-owning democracy ensures a system of fairness and equality from the start (and throughout), granting social freedom and capabilities without having to constantly redistribute wealth from property-owning capitalists to the non-property owning poor (140). Simply, each person can be thought of as a skilled, part-time capitalist; they have access to capital (productive assets) which gives them a meaningful stake in the economy, but also the training that allows them to find good work. Capital (human and productive) falls under Rawls' category of primary social goods, along with things like basic rights and freedoms, which are granted to each citizen in order to ensure the principles of justice and fairness.

A liberal socialist regime differs from a property-owning democracy in that productive assets (means of production) are owned not by private individuals but by society itself, and more specifically, democratically run firms. Rawls writes:

In the same way that political power is shared among a number of democratic parties, economic power is dispersed among firms, as when, for example, a firm's direction and management is elected by, if not directly in the hand of, its own workforce. (138)

Other than this main difference, a property-owning democracy and a liberal socialist regime are quite similar. Each achieves justice as fairness through political democracy, a free market, private property, and a dispersed ownership of the means of production. The only difference is, with respect to the ownership of means of production, property-owning democracy holds that productive assets are held privately and dispersed among citizens, whereas a liberal socialist regime grants each worker access to means of production through the firm that they work for. In other words, a liberal socialist regime gives the workers stock, or equity, in their own company,

whereas a property-owning democracy gives workers stock in another company, other than the one they are employed under.

While both a property-owning democracy and liberal socialist regime are acceptable according to justice as fairness, Rawls does not choose one regime over the other (139). Rather, each could be approached under the guidelines of justice as fairness. It is also fair to say that neither has been achieved by the current United States regime, which likely falls somewhere between laissez-faire capitalism and welfare-state capitalism, both of which fail to live up to Rawls' and Anderson's standards. In the final portion of this paper, I will take the socioeconomic frameworks suggested by Rawls and use it to answer the question of what kind of distributive component should be added to Anderson's Democratic Equality. Of the two viable regimes he outlines, a liberal socialist regime will be most effective at securing the equal relations which Anderson aspires for in Democratic Equality.

Part 5: Democratic Equality and a Liberal Socialist Regime

The idea of a liberal socialist regime, or at least aspects of it, have been widely discussed, practiced, and accepted as a viable and just (see Schweickart 2011). The way Rawls puts it is quite standard. Goods and services are bought and sold on a competitive free market. They can be held privately, when they are purchased and owned by the consumers, but they can also be owned socially, when they exist as the means of production which are owned and operated by the members of the particular firm. The main difference between capitalism as it exists in America today (as well as property-owning democracy) and a liberal socialist regime is that individuals in a liberal socialist regime, individuals cannot privately own productive assets

(means of production) through investments like stocks.¹⁰ Rather, productive assets would be owned socially, by the firm, whose members would be organized democratically, as opposed to hierarchically.

It is clear, if not from Rawls' discussion, then current and historical data, that neither laissez-faire capitalism, welfare state capitalism, nor state socialism with a command economy is sufficient to facilitate equal relations. It is less clear, however, between a property-owning democracy and a liberal-socialist regime, which would garner more equal relations and pair best with Democratic Equality. Although both may be sufficient to garner equal relations, I will argue that a liberal socialist regime is to be preferred to a property-owning democracy and may even do better to secure equality.

The merits of a liberal-socialist regime are drawn from the fact that the means of production are owned and operated democratically by workers of a particular firm. That is, workers own partial stock in the company assets and operate the assets directly, everyday they go to work. There are several benefits to this set-up. First, although both a property-owning democracy and liberal socialist regime grant ownership of productive assets to citizens, it seems most efficient, practical, and commonsensical that a person owns stock in their own company, rather than some arbitrary bundle of other companies. For this reason, it would be easier to facilitate and organize fair ownership of productive assets within a liberal-socialist regime. Second, for purposes of work ethic, incentive, and productivity, it makes sense for workers to be partial owners of their own company. This way, their output as a worker is directly tied to the profitability and value of the firm, urging them to work harder and "buy in" to the collective effort of the firm. Society as a whole is incentivized to be more competitive and innovative.

¹⁰ Unless, of course, we are talking about the productive assets of the firm for which the individual works. But even here, they do not technically own it privately, but solely insofar as they are part of the firm's workforce.

Under a property-owning democracy, on the other hand, because the company one works for is not necessarily the company they have stock in, they have no extra incentive to be productive or be a team player. Besides these benefits, there are also more explicit dangers of a property-owning democracy that a liberal socialist regime escape.

Because productive assets are held privately in a property-owning democracy, there is greater chance of foul play resulting in unfair distribution and oppressive relationships. It is unclear from Rawls' discussion what rules and regulations would govern the ownership and trading of privately held productive assets within a property-owning democracy. He mentions that capital and wealth are to be distributed among citizens, rather than held by a few (139). However, once capital is sufficiently distributed, there is no telling whether this distribution would hold. It seems certainly possible and even likely, for example, that certain individuals trade away their stock and other individuals amass it, perhaps under uninformed, deceitful, or exploitive conditions. This, in turn, may eventually recreate inequalities in productive assets and wealth, shifting the property-owning democracy back to some form of laissez-faire capitalism. Under a liberal socialist regime, on the other hand, this could never happen. Because each person owns stock in their own company, they would be unable to trade it away to anybody else; the only way to "trade" stock would be to seek employment at a different firm. Additionally, one individual would not be able to amass large, unfair quantities of productive capital because they only have access to the assets of the single firm they work for. In order to build their capital, they must invest labor, time, and money into their own company. In sum, a liberal socialist regime is more stable and has less chance of devolving into an oppressive regime. Additionally, it makes the most sense from an organizational, incentive, and productivity standpoint.

The important question to ask now is this: how exactly will a liberal-socialist regime facilitate the distributive component which is to be added to Democratic Equality and help secure equal relations? There are two broad ways, one negative and one positive, which mirror the negative and positive goals of Democratic Equality. Negatively, it prevents individuals from amassing productive assets and reaping unequal monetary benefits from this ownership. This, in turn, prevents oppressive relationships resulting from inequalities in wealth, like those outlined earlier in the case of lobbying. In the current United States stock market, those who own and trade equity generate enormous sums of money for themselves, sometimes far more than their employable income (if they are in fact working), while those who cannot afford to invest in the stock market, though they may be receiving a modest wage or salary, remain disadvantaged financially (see Saez and Zucman 2016, 530; Kuhn, Schularick, and Steins 2020, 1 and 43). Under a liberal-socialist regime, on the other hand, the only equity that one has access to is the partial stock of their own company. From this ownership, they may amass stock value and earn dividends if the company is productive, but they cannot reap benefits from other companies or the labor of other company's workers.

Along with this primary negative element, there is an important byproduct. By tying the ownership of productive assets to employment, firms ensure that members of society will be productive laborers. That is, individuals cannot solely earn a living from trading tens of thousands dollars worth of stocks. Rather, in order to have access to any stock, they must be employed, and in order to profit from this stock, they must work productively and competitively.

Positively, a liberal socialist regime gives individuals access to wealth and resources in the form of the equity of the company they work for, thereby providing them the means to stand in equal standing with fellow citizens and preventing them from sinking into poverty and

destitution. Like the ownership of a house, for instance, or other types of investment, partial ownership of the company one works for is an investment and a store of value. Under the correct configuration, one should be able to deposit and withdraw from this pool when inclined or necessary, whether they want to invest and allow their wealth to grow, or want to take it out to spend on the market. Unlike a traditional investment, however, stock in one's own company has the added benefit of being directly tied to their own employment and productivity; it is not primarily bought (although this could be done), but worked for over the course of a lifetime. The value of stock and the dividends received from it will be supplemented by fair wages which are determined democratically, along with the hours, management, benefits, firm operation, and investment habits of the firm, which are also democratically decided.

There may be numerous benefits of a liberal-socialist regime besides those dealing with wealth and capital distribution. They may include improvements to worker happiness, worker health, overall productivity, efficiency, etc. Additionally, it should be noted that although one form of investment, investment in company stock, will be tied to employment, other forms of investment, such as bonds, real estate, and other securities may still be bought and sold on the market. In this way, the investment market will remain, to the benefit and growth of the free market. These benefits, along with a more detailed account of the particular setup of a liberal socialist regime and a transition plan, will be left to subsequent research (but see Schweikart 2011). The goal here, again, is to give enough detail to show how a liberal socialist regime could adequately supplement Anderson's Democratic Equality.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have (1) outlined Elizabeth Anderson's relational egalitarianism, Democratic Equality, (2) showed how this egalitarian regime requires ideal theory and therefore fails in its positive and negative goals of equality, and (3) added a supplemental distributive component, a liberal socialist regime, in order to aid Democratic Equality in securing equal relations. Anderson's theory marks an important shift from preceding luck and distributive egalitarians, insofar as it focuses on equal relations rather than a purely distributive set-up. However, it is also clear that her theory does not do enough in the way of distribution. In order to achieve equal relations, an egalitarian theory must not only outline the rules, procedures, and capabilities which facilitate equal relations, but also set out the material foundation on which these rest.

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