

# Mobilizing the Workforce

PHIL 334: Pandemic Ethics

## The Harvard Plan: “Mobilize and Transition”

COVID-19 Rapid Response Impact Initiative | White Paper 2

### When Can We Go Out? Evaluating Policy Paradigms for Responding to the COVID-19 Threat

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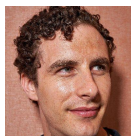
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## The Harvard Plan: “Mobilize and Transition”

### Three Policy Approaches:

1. Freeze in Place
2. Mobilize and Transition
3. Surrender

They argue for the superiority of the “Mobilize and Transition” policy.



## The Harvard Plan: “Mobilize and Transition”

### Mobilize and Transition:

What would it involve?



The most important elements of this aggressive investment would be (1) implementing the IT required for contact tracing; (2) increasing testing capacity to millions of tests administered per day; (3) acquiring proof that at least temporary immunity is possible and the ability to conduct reliable antibody screens; and (4) isolating vulnerable populations and replacing most care givers for vulnerable populations with immune individuals or individuals who maintain extreme isolation.

## 4. Isolating vulnerable populations and replacing caregivers with immune individuals

### The Harvard Plan: “Mobilize and Transition”

**Mobilize and Transition:**  
What would it involve?



In the Mobilize and Transition paradigm, people should plan first for an intense three-month period of participation in the innovation and experimentation of mobilization—whether in quarantine or on the front lines with routine use of personal protective equipment. This will be followed by a phased transi-

This policy approach simultaneously **transitions** the infrastructure and labor force in the country, including repatriation of certain kinds of industrial production, and thereby measurably reduces the country's vulnerability to pandemics in the future. When routine business activity resumes, with the

### The Harvard Plan: “Mobilize and Transition”

**Mobilize and Transition:**  
Why should we do it?



## 04 The Case for Mobilize and Transition

Once we see a pandemic pathogen as a national security threat, we recognize that we need forms of planning akin to those used in wartime to address it. The objective is not merely to secure health but instead to protect the economy, society, liberty, justice, and health against the COVID-19 threat simultaneously.

### The Harvard Plan: “Mobilize and Transition”



I'll make this interview available for you to watch on the course website for those who are interested...

# Productive Justice



## Productive Justice: The Received View

Recently, two prominent views have emerged that bear directly on these questions. According to the first view, justice does not constrain occupational choice, so that, as a matter of justice, people can choose to work whatever lawful jobs they want. According to the second view, justice generally forbids the state from forcibly assigning jobs, so that, as a matter of justice, the state must generally rely on incentives if it wants to get things done. Together, these two views yield a fairly complete theory of productive justice. For together they imply that what is produced, by whom, and on what terms is generally to be settled in and through a labor market.

## Productive Justice: The Impossibility Result

### Three Jointly Inconsistent Claims:

1. Justice does not constrain occupational choice.
2. Justice forbids forcibly assigning jobs.
3. Justice requires society to ensure more than mere liberties.

### Example:

Taking a job as a contact tracer

- (1) It's not unjust of you to decide to do another job instead.
- (2) It would be unjust for the government to *force* you to become a contact tracer.
- (3) Justice requires society to provide us with protection from the pandemic.

## Productive Justice: The Impossibility Result

### Three Jointly Inconsistent Claims:

1. Justice does not constrain occupational choice.
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3. **Justice requires society to ensure more than mere liberties.**

### Why Not Give Up (3)?

"Suppose teachers flatly refused to teach girls..."

Would it then no longer be unjust to fail to educate girls?

Of course not!

## Productive Justice: The Impossibility Result

### Three Jointly Inconsistent Claims:

1. **Justice does not constrain occupational choice.**
2. Justice forbids forcibly assigning jobs.
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### Why Not Give Up (1)?

"It is implausible to attribute injustice to ... occupational choices."

It is reasonable to make choices that are permitted by the institutions that shape lives and form expectations.

Also, blaming individuals wouldn't accomplish anything.

## Productive Justice: The Impossibility Result

### Three Jointly Inconsistent Claims:

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### Why Not Give Up (2)?

This is the option Stanczyk thinks is most promising.

Allow that, in some cases, it's consistent with justice for the state to forcibly assign jobs.

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Allow that, *in some cases*, it's consistent with justice for the state to forcibly assign jobs.

Might the *COVID-19 Pandemic* be just such a case?

## What Can We Be Forced to Do?

1. Get vaccinated
2. Wear a mask
3. Be assigned a job

**What Do You  
Think?**