

## **Pulled Up Short with Stanton Wortham**

# **Is it your responsibility to end world poverty?**

*Featuring Scott Seider with Stanton Wortham (host) and Melissa Fitzpatrick (commentator)*

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### **Stanton Wortham 00:08**

Welcome back to another episode of Pulled Up Short. We're very happy to have you with us. Today, we're pleased to have with our guest, Scott Seider, who is a professor in the Lynch School of Education and Human Development. And we also have with us as a discussant, Melissa Fitzpatrick, who is a faculty member in the Portico program and the Carroll School of Management at Boston College. Thanks to both of you for being with us. I'm looking forward to hearing what Scott has to say. It sounds like a provocative topic. So Scott, could you talk to us a little bit about how we should be thinking about world poverty and how to end it?

### **Scott Seider 02:13**

Sure. Well, let me tell you a little bit about this article I read in 1999, as I was graduating from college and moving into my first job as a high school teacher that had a real impact on this topic. So as I said, in 1999, Princeton philosopher, Peter Singer wrote this article that appeared in The New York Times called "The Singer Solution to World Poverty". When he wrote this article, approximately 30,000 people were dying every single day across the world of malnutrition. You know, 1999 was a little while ago. And so, over the past 20 years, those statistics have gotten a little bit better. Today, approximately 25,000 people are dying every single day, about 9 million people a year due to hunger. This is a particularly timely topic right now because the United Nations Undersecretary General has expressed concern that the COVID pandemic is actually increasing that statistic to possibly 50,000 deaths a day due to hunger. While it's not quite as dire as in the developed world, I think it's also important to this conversation that approximately one in eight Americans in the United States (38 million people, 15 million children) live in food insecure homes, and that means that people in those homes aren't getting enough food to live a healthy life. There are fears also that the pandemic increases those numbers to maybe one in four Americans and 30 million children.

I think like what Singer gets at in his piece, and what I wanted to talk about today is: for those of us who are living more comfortable and more affluent lives, what is our responsibility to our fellow American citizens and our fellow global citizens who are contending with hunger? I think I would say and Singer would say that due to our country's long standing emphasis on a kind of a rugged individualism and personal liberty, many Americans answer that question by saying, "Well, it's a good deed to take actions that help people contending with hunger, whether in our country or across the globe, but it's certainly not our responsibility or an obligation." And in the article that Singer wrote for the New York Times back in 1999, he tried to push on that. He tried to push affluent Americans to feel a moral responsibility for reducing those daily deaths from hunger-- a malady that's entirely solvable. And so this article, *The Singer Solution to World Poverty*, argues that everyone who has excess wealth--which Singer defines is anyone earning more than \$30,000 a year-- has a moral obligation to donate all of their discretionary income to alleviate hunger and poverty.

**Stanton Wortham** 05:08

Wow, that's two stunning things that you're telling me. First, 25,000 people a day, dying around the world of hunger. That's startling. And, then, it certainly does pull me up short for you to be telling me that we all should be giving away most of our income to feed people around the world. Does he really mean that? Do you really mean that we should be giving away most of our income?

**Scott Seider** 05:33

So well, let me walk you through Singer's argument a little bit. And I'm excited to talk a little bit more later in the conversation about how personally impacted and professionally impacted I was by that piece that I read 20 years ago. In the article, Singer makes the observation after speaking with experts that a donation of approximately \$200 to a reputable organization like UNICEF or Oxfam could help, and this is his quote, "help a sickly two year old transform into a healthy six year old, offering safe passage through childhood most dangerous years." So from Singer's perspective, what that means is that if any individual makes a \$200 donation to a reputable organization, like Oxfam or like UNICEF, then you can be reasonably confident that your \$200 is actually saving a life. One of those 30,000 people who would have died today or tomorrow or the next day due to malnutrition, will not. Given that information, this is the conclusion that Singer draws and he says, "In the world as it is now, I can see no escape from the conclusion that each of us with wealth surplus to his or her essential needs should be giving most of it to help people suffering from poverty so dire is to be life threatening." And then he goes, "That's right. I'm saying you shouldn't buy that new car, take that cruise, redecorate your house, or get that pricey new suit. After all, a \$1,000 suit could save five children's lives."

And then the article goes on. Singer tries to prove to us, the reader, that we have this moral obligation to donate our excess wealth. And he does so with a couple philosophical examples. I think the easiest one to describe in a podcast is one called 'The Shallow Pond,' which actually comes from a different piece of writing, but the broader points he's making are the same. So here's 'The Shallow Pond' example that Singer offers; he says, "Imagine that you're on a walk one day, wearing your brand new \$1,000 suit, and you walk past a shallow pond and you notice a child has fallen in and appears to be drowning. To wade in and pull the child out would be easy, but it means that your expensive clothes will be ruined." So Singer asked the reader, "Do you have an obligation to ruin your suit and rescue the child?" And Stanton, I'll put that question to you as sort of the broader audience. What would you say in response to that scenario?

**Stanton Wortham** 08:03

That one seems pretty obvious to me that, of course, yeah, you can't worry about your suit. If the child's right in front of you drowning, you really have to hop in and save them.

**Scott Seider** 08:12

Yep. Singer says yes, that's the right answer. In fact, he notes that nearly every American would say, "Yes, you absolutely have an obligation to jump in and save the child, even if your \$1,000 suit gets ruined." Then Singer argues that practically speaking, there's just no difference between walking past the shallow pond and leaving a child to die, and ignoring that donation request letter we all get in the mail from Oxfam or UNICEF. He says if you think it would be wrong *not* to jump into the shallow pond and save the child, then he says, "It's hard to deny that it is also very wrong not to send money to UNICEF or Oxfam unless there's some morally important difference that I've overlooked."

**Stanton Wortham** 08:54

Somehow I have this intuition that the two things are different; that if the child's right in front of you, it feels immediate and personal. It's you and the child. Whereas 25,000 people a day dying around the world feels like it's a system level problem and not an individual problem. I kind of feel like, yeah, I have an obligation because this child is right in front of me. But out in the world, there's no way I can save all those people. And there are all these other people and all these systems that should be acting to do something about hunger, and so it doesn't feel the same sort of immediate obligation. Do you think that's wrong?

**Scott Seider** 09:31

So you just brought up one of the two most common critiques of Singer's argument, so let me take on both of them. Singer anticipated this in the article and takes them on in the article too. So one of the

counter arguments that comes up a lot that you didn't actually bring up is the concern about your money actually being used appropriately. You know, if you've jumped into the shallow pond, you can be quite confident that you were saving a child's life, whereas if you send \$200 off in the mail, do you really know what it's accomplishing? That's one argument that folks often make. Singer says, 'Well, yes, that's a reasonable concern, but there are now sufficient numbers of people in organizations like Charity Navigator that have worked hard to identify reputable charities like UNICEF. So that concern about your money, not actually accomplishing what you want it to should be satisfied. That's how he responds to one of the most common concerns. Then, he turns his attention to the one that you just brought up.

It seems like 'The Shallow Pond' is an individual situation where *you* are the singular person who can rescue this child, whereas the thousands of young people dying every single day of malnutrition - that feels like a broader problem. You know, you're not the only person who's responsible for solving it. With regard to that point, in 'The Shallow Pond' example, Singer argues that, 'Well, we know that relatively few people are making substantive donations to hunger relief organizations. We also know that relatively few wealthy countries are stepping up and sizably taking on that issue.' So he says, 'Well, let's bring it back to 'The Shallow Pond.' Imagine a child's drowning in the shallow pond, and you see that ten other people are standing around the pond watching the child drown, but not taking action. Would that relieve you of your responsibility to jump in? Singer's perspective is that 'No, it doesn't.' In fact, he kind of ups the stakes there. He says, "To answer the question affirmatively is to endorse follow-the-crowd ethics, the kind of ethics that led many Germans to look away when the Nazi atrocities were being committed. We do not excuse them because others were behaving no better." So for him, as a huge utilitarian philosopher whose interest is ultimately in what's the best possible outcome, he doesn't see the lack of action of other individuals or other countries, or the failure of the system more broadly, to relieve you of your obligation. From his perspective, if you know that you can do this, then you have that direct responsibility to act. What Singer does acknowledge, though... He says, "What is unquestionably true is that it's easier to ignore an appeal for money to save the lives of children that you'll never meet, than to ignore the cries for help of a child drowning right in front of your eyes.

But Singer argues that that only explains why it's easier not to act in one situation than the other. But that explanation doesn't mean that our responsibilities in those two situations are different, since the ultimate outcome is that a child will die due to our inaction. Finally (and I think this is interesting for me as a psychologist) Singer also acknowledges that psychologists might argue that human beings haven't yet evolved to see themselves as responsible for the well being of people halfway around the world, whereas we do see ourselves as responsible for someone in trouble right in front of us. When

you have that sort of intuition that there's some difference between these two situations, it may be some sort of evolutionary instinct kicks in in one situation and not the other. What Singer says, which I think is really interesting: he argues that that explanation might be accurate, like about why we feel a sense of why we innately feel a sense of responsibility in one situation, but not the other. But then he argues that the fact that we have these evolutionary tendencies doesn't make those tendencies morally right, or mean that we're bound to follow those tendencies. In a later publication, he wrote, "The fact that we tend to favor our families, communities, and countries may explain our failure to save the lives of the poor beyond those boundaries, but it does not justify that failure from an ethical perspective." So I think that's kind of an interesting piece there.

**Stanton Wortham** 14:03

Yeah. So I think you've succeeded in making us all uncomfortable, because none of us is giving away anything close to that fraction of our income. And it is something to think about. Why is it okay for me not to give when the giving can make such a big difference for other people? My intuition, as I think many people's is, is to decide, "I'm not going to do this." And so I have to make up reasons why. But as opposed to me casting around for arguments, I wanted to go back to something you said earlier, which was you were a high school teacher, and you used this example with your high school students. I'm curious about how that went.

**Scott Seider** 14:44

Great. Thank you. So you're absolutely right. Singer's article was published in 1999, which is just as I was graduating from college. I was 21 years old, and I took a teaching job just down the road from BC in Westwood High School in Westwood, Massachusetts. And I was in my first year of teaching, and I was just thinking a lot about my role in the world. I hadn't actually meant to be teaching in an affluent suburb like Westwood. And so just in my own role, I was just actively thinking about ways to make that work that I was doing in Westwood feel more justice-oriented. So Singer's impact had a real impact on me in my teaching, and let me maybe tell you a little bit about why.

What I ended up doing was teaching ninth graders that first year, and I ended up doing a unit with my ninth graders on persuasive writing. Because I just read the Singer piece, I assigned my students to propose a hunger relief organization that I should donate to, why I should donate to it, how much I should donate to it. Each of my students were tasked with persuading me to donate to a particular organization and how much I should donate. What I pledged to my students is that I would actually do that. I would choose the most persuasive piece of writing, and I would carry that out. At the time, I actually shared my salary with my students, which was publicly available, but I now look back on that and think that's probably something I wouldn't do now, 20 years later. But as promised, I ended up

following through on that pledge. My students wrote their persuasive pieces, and I think the winning essay called for me to donate a couple thousand dollars to Heifer International. And that's what I did. So that was my first year teaching in Westwood. And I really liked that assignment. I felt good about it. I felt like I had gotten my students thinking. I felt like it got me thinking.

Then the next year at Westwood high school, my second year teaching, I had a chance to design a senior course for seniors that I called Literature and Justice. I included in the Literature and Justice course a unit on hunger and poverty. As part of that unit, I shared this article with my student. I'm sure that I built the unit around this article because I've been really influenced by it. What was really interesting is that my students hated this article. I think it would be fair to say that they just deeply resented the idea that they had moral responsibilities to people they didn't know. I'd also say, I think that they feel threatened by Peter Singer's implicit argument, that their wealth, that of their families as young people growing up in this affluent suburb, was no more deserved than the poverty of the children dying across the globe that Singer was arguing on behalf of.

As part of that unit, I'd actually assigned my students to write an essay comparing their response to Peter Singer's essay, and then also read another essay by philosopher Ayn Rand, called "The Virtue of Selfishness" that argues effectively the exact opposite. I asked them to do some writing and responding to these two pieces. And, 20 years later, I still have these essays. So here's just a short excerpt from two of them. One of my students, Brittany, wrote, "At the extreme and polar opposite view of Rand is Peter Singer, who I believe to be quite insane and moronic." So that's how she started her piece. Then another of my students, Doug, wrote of Singer, "I think he just likes to hear himself talk and say how great of a person he is and that the rest of us don't help out enough. He should not have the right to tell people what to do." I was caught off guard by my students' reactions to Peter Singer but also really interested by it. I think my interest in their reaction is really what propelled me into graduate school in psychology, with the goal of learning more about how schools could nurture students' sense of social responsibility. In some ways, that question of how can schools play a supportive role in strengthening students' feelings of civic and social responsibility is really what I've been working on for the last 20 years now as a scholar.

Here at the Lynch School, I teach the Applied Adolescent Development course for both undergraduates and graduate students. As part of both courses, my students and I read work by psychologist Erik Erikson. Erickson argues that adolescence is the peak period of identity exploration in the lifespan. In fact, Erikson argues that adolescence is when individuals cast aside blindly adhering to what their parents and close family members say, and go out looking for new and different ways of understanding the world, like new beliefs, new value systems. From Erickson's perspective, that's the

central task of adolescence. That work by Erickson is foundational scholarship in adolescent psychology, but it's also fair to say that Erickson was making that argument in the late 1960s, when the majority of adolescents in the United States were moving into adult roles with regard to work and family around 18 years old. And so in 1999, when I was a first year teacher, and even more so today in 2020, most of the adolescents in a town like Westwood won't be living sort of independent adult lives until their mid 20s, or even later. I share all that to say that some scholars have argued that the identity exploration Erickson wrote about happening in adolescence, where young people are actively seeking out new and different ways of understanding the world - a number of scholars argue that that process has actually been pushed into young adulthood, or what's sometimes referred to as emerging adulthood. Especially for those Westwood students who finish high school, and then go away to college, or join the military, and encounter a much more diverse set of peers; I think that sort of shift in setting and greater distance from their family is really conducive to thinking deeply, critically, and reflectively about an entirely new way of understanding the world.

My theory is, and I'm going to find out this spring because I'm planning to assign this Peter Singer piece to my undergraduates here at BC, that many young people will be much more willing to consider Singer's arguments in college than they were in high school, even if the difference in timing is only six months or a year or two. I think that the shift from one setting to another can make a big difference in terms of your openness and interest in taking on new and different ways of understanding the world.

**Stanton Wortham 21:48**

We'll certainly be interested to find out whether or not your optimism about BC students is warranted. I hope so. We did do some research here about character development among BC students, and there seems to be a transition that happens between year two and year three, where they do start to think much more broadly about others and their obligations to moral order beyond themselves. So hopefully, that's something that you'll find as you start working with them. I appreciate you bringing this topic to our attention. It certainly has pulled me up short, this notion that it seems obvious to me, I should be jumping into a dirty pool to save a child and ruining my suit. And so now I'm thinking about what that means for my obligations to other children all around the world who are suffering. So we appreciate you bringing this challenge to us. Now it would be great if Melissa would come in and ask a couple of questions.

**Melissa Fitzpatrick 22:44**

Yes, I would love to ask a couple of questions. And I want to thank you Scott so much. You gave such a great overview of this extremely provocative piece. Yeah, I really enjoyed it. And I have to say, I've taught this piece at BC. I'm going to give you a little bit of insight into my own experience with it. Like

Stanton said, I teach Portico, which is a business ethics class. So Singer is a standard part of the curriculum. I read it for the first time a couple years ago. I mean, it provoked me. I was deeply jarred.

Singer's piece fits into the deontology/utilitarianism debate. So I don't want to get into all the details of that to bore everyone, but it's meant to show students another side of that debate - to precisely pull them up short, I think. I have to say that it always works. Students' reactions, at least my experience at BC, are very similar to your students. So this makes for rich conversation. Usually they're angry when they get into the classroom, and they're really angry in the business school. You can imagine some of the reasons why they might be really angry. But of course, that makes for a rich conversation. So I love teaching it.

So the reason I'm bringing up the utilitarianism/deontology debate is because at first, students almost unanimously think that utilitarianism ('Promote the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number') is so much more practical than Kantian ethics. But then this text pushes them to rethink that position, because it makes clear just how difficult it is to be a utilitarian actually, because it's about the common good. It's not about private self interest. So utilitarianism is not Adam Smith's "invisible hand," no matter how much they would like it to be. It turns out that the common good is a lot less expedient than students would like it to be. So part of the utilitarian package is being willing to sacrifice what I desire for the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number.

At the end of the piece, I love that he's like, "Okay, fine. If you're not going to do what I claim we should do (give all of our money away that we would otherwise spend on things that we don't need) then at least recognize that you can't claim to be living a good life." And I think that's what really socks it to you at the end of it, because it's like, "Oh gosh, of course, we're not doing what he says to do." From a utilitarian perspective, how can you say that we're living a good life when so many people are suffering and we're not doing everything we can to change that? So my question is, do you think *that* is part of the serious allergy to the text? Because your kids are going to hate it too, I guarantee it. So the serious allergy to this text is that Singer is really forcing us to take a look at and contend with the monster within ourselves. He's actually calling us out. So do you think that that's sort of why we're so allergic to it? But because it's a mirror, showing us something that we don't want to see? How can we fit that neatly into the school curriculum, to attain the ends that you're talking about? Because it's so provocative that students don't want to do anything that he tells us to do. In some sense, it has the opposite outcome of what he intends, because everyone's like, "Screw this guy. Is he actually giving away the amount of money that he says he is?" And no, he's not giving everything away over what he needs to live. So how do we balance the provocation with a really important message?



**Scott Seider 26:33**

Those are great questions, and it's always interesting to talk about this with a philosopher because of course, I come at it from a psychology perspective. From a psychology perspective, I think the answer about why students are so frustrated has to do with this psychological theory. So there's a scholar at New York University, John Jost, who a number of years ago offered something called "system justification theory," which is effectively: as human beings, we have a deep psychological need to see the existing systems governing our lives as just. We have a psychological need to legitimize the status quo. I think that what happens when anyone reads Singer is that he's destabilizing the status quo. He's saying, "Hey, the current state of affairs is utterly unjust." I think that Jost would say that we just have a strong psychological need to defend ourselves against the possibility that we're living in a highly unjust system.

To your second point, I think you raised a really important question of, what if this article is actually dissuading people from continuing to think deeply about this? I actually have a small, personal connection to that question. When I started graduate school, I was really motivated by this in particular. So at some point, I showed my advisor some of my students' writings responding to Singer, and I was trying to write a paper about it. My advisor actually knew Peter Singer, through some scholarly channel. At some point, he lets Peter Singer know that I had all these essays where students were vitriolically responding to him. Singer was writing a book at the time, and he actually reached out to me and asked if he could see the essays. And so I shared the essays with him. What's super interesting is that he's a utilitarian philosopher, so he definitionally believes in doing what will create the greatest good for the greatest number. I think that, in looking at the essays, he sort of concluded (I'm sure other pieces of data were pushing him in this direction) that if me, Peter Singer, making this extreme argument is actually dissuading people from even contending with the question of charity and moral obligation, then as utilitarian, I should actually reduce my claim.

So he actually wrote this book in 2009 called *The Life You Can Save* where he reduces his ask so to speak. He reduces the amount he is asking people to give in order to sort of see themselves as living just lives. And he explicitly says in the book, "I don't believe this. I actually believe that morally you have a responsibility to do the full thing, but I've come to actually..." He quotes a bunch of my Westwood students you know, with pseudonyms, and actually says, "But I have become convinced that asking for all of your excess wealth isn't actually going to accomplish my ends." So he actually kind of reduces his ask a little bit. I think that's really interesting. It's just another way in which the utilitarian piece kind of comes into it.

**Melissa Fitzpatrick 30:15**

That is so interesting and so cool that you conversed with him and that the conversation influenced his approach. This is the thing about utilitarian calculus: you're always changing it based on the experience and information that you receive. Someone like Kant would say, "That's why it's such a corrupt moral system, because it's always subjective and based on the interests of people, primarily yourself." But it's cool to see the way he worked it out. He probably galvanized more people to give in by asking like that. My next question is actually related to this. So first of all, I love your Westwood persuasive writing assignment. I think that's a really great idea. And I'll pitch it to my team, actually, because that could be something that would be really fun to do. But on the final exam for Portico, I always ask students - because it's such a hot button topic, they get so angry, and they're ready to rage after it - I always ask students whether or not they agree with Singer, and to build a case for whether or not they do and why.

To speak to your point, students agree with the general ask: we should give more. There's something great about what he's saying, the obligation to give resonates with everyone in the way that he thinks it does. But the majority of students disagree with the extreme conclusion of giving everything away. Part of the argument they give is that it would destroy industry and actually amount to a lot of unhappiness. The net unhappiness would be so much more, because people would be giving everything away, and people would lose motivation to work. So this is similar to a critique of communism: industries would collapse, society would collapse, etc. It is a very pro-capitalism answer. I wonder if you've considered that angle yourself, or if you've had that response come up. They see his solution as something that would be detrimental to the remarkable creative force and power that is capitalism, so driven by the desire for more, which includes luxury. They want to claim that his solution wouldn't actually secure the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number, especially considering what happiness or what capitalism has done for humanity in terms of health and wealth in the last 200 years, which is something we can't deny, to some extent, right? So this is the trouble with utilitarianism, again, where it's essentially a cost benefit analysis. I don't know if you have any thoughts on that.

**Scott Seider** 32:58

This extreme moral obligation to give your excess wealth is grounded in the current moment where the vast majority of people are *not* doing that, and governments are not stepping up. I think where your students' arguments falls off is that if even a *sizable* percentage of people started to donate substantially to reduce easily preventable death, then not everyone would have to donate all of their excess wealth. We're only having to donate all of our excess wealth, in part because the vast majority of folks won't. Your students' argument - that Singer's ask would bring capitalism to its knees - doesn't quite work. Because if by some miracle, there started to be momentum around doing this, the amount that people would have to give would actually be very small.

**Melissa Fitzpatrick 34:11**

Yeah, I think that's a really good point. I can't help but ask myself, is it really so outrageous what he's asking us to do? Because I think of when I was a PhD student, I lived on \$20,000 a year in Boston. That was the money that I made, and I was able to save. It's obviously not an ideal salary at all, but I didn't have a family. I was just taking care of myself. So his numbers today would amount to more than \$30,000 a year. I'm not sure how inflation would work, but maybe \$50,000 a year? I always ask, what makes it so outrageous? Or to flip the question, what really gets in the way of giving substantially more than we do? Or more interestingly, what would it take psychologically, which is maybe your area, to overcome what gets in our way?

**Scott Seider 35:09**

That's a really good question. It's interesting. You've taught this to young people much more recently than I have. I'll sort of get another crack this spring, but my hypothesis is actually this: it's less about the amount on some level, even though there's some shock value there, than about the idea of obligation.

One of the first papers I wrote when I was in graduate school was this article called "Resisting Obligation." At least for those affluent teenagers, the high school students that I was studying, the idea that you had obligations to people you did not know was astounding to them. That was actually the thing that they were pushing back on very, very strongly. They would go up and down, tell you that of course, it's a good deed to help out someone that you don't know, but they had gotten into a place philosophically where they just felt like the only people you have obligations to are your family and maybe a close friend or two. I think that is a shift in how Americans have thought about responsibility over time.

If we want to bring sociology into it, in 1985, a whole team of folks wrote this book called *Habits of the Heart*, where they did this big study of the United States and of belief systems. They looked at de Tocqueville's original claim that what made Americans distinctive was this combination of belief in individual liberty and a sense of community responsibility. The two things stood side by side, and in '85, what Bellah and that team of colleagues who did this national study concluded was that the language of individuals had far surpassed the language of communitarianism. Of course, I was looking at a very particular group of young people in a particular suburb, but what I would fear is that maybe the language of individualism over the past 40 years has grown stronger. That's an interesting question to think about, as I get ready to introduce this article again to young adults.

**Melissa Fitzpatrick 37:53**

That's so interesting. Your response is great, because I think it really sharpens what the aim is with this text, which would be the the paradigm shift from "me, me, me" to "who am I, without what's around me;" to understand that my identity is actually built on community in a way that's so much more robust than we realize.

**Scott Seider 38:13**

Yeah. It's possible that quite a number of things have happened over the last 20 years that may have actually deflated young people's belief in meritocracy. Whether it was recession or the pandemic, there's been quite a number of ways in which I think our belief in America's meritocracy has been punctured, at least somewhat. Perhaps there is a big difference between 1999 and today in terms of young people's response to this. I wonder if in 1999, my students were really, really predisposed to say, "Hey, the American Dream is sort of working well." To be fair, 1999, if you remember, was the height of the technology bubble and so on. It was quite a distinct time in terms of beliefs about how easy it was to become quite wealthy and so on and so forth.

**Stanton Wortham 39:28**

Well, great. This was a very provocative session, and I'm sure that everyone is going to be reflecting on what kinds of obligations they have and to whom. So thank you very much Scott Seider for bringing this idea. And thank you, Melissa Fitzpatrick, for joining in and asking some great questions. Thanks to everyone for joining. We appreciate your being here for another episode of Pulled Up Short, and we will hope to see you next time.

Thanks for listening to this episode of Pulled Up Short. We hope it's provided an opportunity to reflect on unexamined assumptions and consider alternative ways of thinking about and being in the world. Hope to have you with us next time.