

The First World Problems Foundation

For once, I'd like to see a very wealthy person create a foundation dedicated to solving First World Problems. Everybody is trying to feed the hungry, house the homeless, cure cancer and so on. But first world problems get totally neglected!

People denigrate first world problems, but they are worth solving! I mean survival and pain avoidance are great, but if we're all just trying to help each other not get sick and die, who will push humanity forward?

Plus, solving first world problems tends to have all kinds of wider benefits over time. While all the Good People of the world were doing things like helping poor people get better shoes so they could walk everywhere in less pain, some guy thought, "You know the real problem? Rich people need more toys. I'll invent a horseless carriage for them to mess around with!" That horseless carriage, a luxury for the rich, did more to help the poor when it bloomed into a world-changing automobile industry than any amount of free shoes. Who worries about walking shoes when you can ride the bus?

Cell phone? First world problem solver. Most people could use payphones, or if they had a phone, couldn't afford long-distance calls. Somebody decided the big problem with the world was that rich people needed to get that annoying phone cord out of the way, and also put phones in cars to be able to call their limo driver after dinner so they could make a timely exit, and also be able to walk on the beach while making business deals so they could demonstrate their dominance in movies scenes from *Wall Street*. The cordless, then the car phone, then mobile phone come along. Totally ridiculous bauble for the rich. Who needs to talk on the phone in the car?

Now cell phones are the lifeblood of people in even the poorest countries and they conduct banking and business on the cheap, plentiful devices! Solving that first world phone cord problem did more for the poor than all the charity of the age combined!

Just one more reason our best minds should be working on solving first world problems. There are many, many more first world problems left to be solved, and the list grows every day. Like how to stop Starbucks employees from always putting the siphole in line with the little paper seam in the latte cup so I spill a few drops on my skinny jeans when I take a sip. Whoever solves that deserves a Nobel Prize! This is the kind of work that will drive humanity forward!

As I accumulate wealth, I think I'll get working on establishing the First World Problems Foundation. Maybe you can join me. Together, we can remove small annoyances from the lives of the super prosperous, and thus make the world a better place.

(I thought of this as a standup comedy bit, but since I don't do standup comedy, I decided to post it here. Doesn't translate into writing as well as in my imaginary standup routine. Just picture everyone laughing as I flawlessly deliver it.)