The economist Joseph Schumpeter memorably described capitalist entrepreneurial culture as an endless process of “creative destruction.” So conceived, it raises a fundamental ethical question: Can it be justified? Is it anything other than the expression of unbridled and socially disruptive greed? Portrayals of entrepreneurship in the scholarly literature and popular folklore suggest an affirmative answer to these questions, but they do not explicitly articulate it. I will attempt to do so by examining two evaluative concepts that figure prominently in that literature—‘adventure’ and ‘achievement.’

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