# Peace Corps Aff

### Fwk

#### The standard is maximizing expected wellbeing. If you want me to spec further on my standard just tell me.

#### First, the constitutive obligation of the state is to protect citizen interest—individual obligations are not applicable in the public sphere. Goodin 95

Robert E. Goodin. Philosopher of Political Theory, Public Policy, and Applied Ethics. Utilitarianism as a Public Philosophy. Cambridge University Press, 1995. p. 26-7

The great adventure of utilitarianism as a guide to public conduct is that it avoids gratuitous sacrifices, it ensures as best we are able to ensure in the uncertain world of public policy-making that policies are sensitive to people’s interests or desires or preferences. The great failing of more deontological theories, applied to those realms, is that they fixate upon duties done for the sake of duty rather than for the sake of any good that is done by doing one’s duty. Perhaps it is permissible (perhaps it is even proper) for private individuals in the course of their personal affairs to fetishize duties done for their own sake. It would be a mistake for public officials to do likewise, not least because it is impossible. The fixation on motives makes absolutely no sense in the public realm, and might make precious little sense in the private one even, as Chapter 3 shows. The reason public action is required at all arises from the inability of uncoordinated individual action to achieve certain morally desirable ends. Individuals are rightly excused from pursuing those ends. The inability is real; the excuses, perfectly valid. But libertarians are right in their diagnosis, wrong in their prescription. That is the message of Chapter 2. The same thing that makes those excuses valid at the individual level – the same thing that relieves individuals of responsibility – makes it morally incumbent upon individuals to organize themselves into collective units that are capable of acting where they as isolated individuals are not. When they organize themselves into these collective units, those collective deliberations inevitably take place under very different circumstances and their conclusions inevitably take very different forms. Individuals are morally required to operate in that collective manner, in certain crucial respects. But they are practically circumscribed in how they can operate, in their collective mode. And those special constraints characterizing the public sphere of decision-making give rise to the special circumstances that make utilitarianism peculiarly apt for public policy-making, in ways set out more fully in Chapter 4. Government house utilitarianism thus understood is, I would argue, a uniquely defensible public philosophy.

#### Second, only impacts and values that exist in the physical world are relevant. Physical realism is the only meaningful ontological theory of being. Williams,

Donald Williams. “Naturalism and the Nature of Things.” The Philosophical Review, Vol. 53, No. 5 (Sep., 1944), pp. 417-443. Duke UP. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2181355

Casting up our accounts to this point, we observe that physical realism is in sum a meaningful, consistent, and essentially confirmable hypothesis. We turn accordingly to assess its credibility a posterior, in relation to the actual evidence, as we should that of a scientific theory or a war communique. We can know forthwith that materialism, granted that metaphysics is confirmable at all, is in principle the most thoroughly confirmable of all world hypotheses. It initiates the most conclusive confirmation or disconfirmation. The ideal aim of systematic knowledge is to disclose the fewest primitive elements into which the diversest objects are analyzable, and the fewest primitive facts, singular and general, from which the behavior of things is deducible. Metaphysics is the most 'scientific' of the sciences because it tries the hardest to explain every kind of fact by one simple principle or simple set of principles. It is the most empirical of sciences (as Peirce reminded us) because, by the same token, a metaphysics is relevant to and confirmable by every item of every experience, whereas every other science is concerned with only a few select and abstract aspects of some experiences, Physical realism is the ideal metaphysics, the veritable paradigm of philosophy, because its category of spatio-temporal pattern best permits analysis of diverse complexity to uniform and ordered simplicities, is most thoroughly numerable, and so most exactly and systematically calculable. Socratic purposes, Platonic ideals, Aristotelian qualities, Plotinian hierarchies-these are surds in comparison with a system de la nature, limned in patterns of action in the ordered dimensions of a spatio-temporal hypersphere

#### Third is the act omission distinction, governments are morally responsible for their omissions because they always face choices between different sets of policy options, all of which advantage some while disadvantaging others.

Cass R. **Sunstein and Vermeule** Adrian [“Is Capital Punishment Morally Required? Acts, Omissions, and Life-Life Tradeoffs. Copyright (c) 2005 The Board of Trustees of Leland Stanford Junior University. Stanford Law Review December,2005 58 Stan. L. Rev. 703]

The critics of capital punishment have been led astray by uncritically applying the act/omission distinction to a regulatory setting. Their position condemns the "active" infliction of death by governments but does not condemn the "inactive" production of death that comes from the refusal to maintain a system [\*720] of capital punishment. The basic problem is that even if this selective condemnation can be justified at the level of individual behavior, it is difficult to defend for governments. [n58](http://www.lexisnexis.com.floyd.lib.umn.edu/us/lnacademic/frame.do?tokenKey=rsh-20.737298.6087973779&target=results_DocumentContent&reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1187847773274&returnToKey=20_T1938900223&parent=docview##) A great deal of work has to be done to explain why "inactive," but causal, government decisions should not be part of the moral calculus. Suppose that we endorse the deontological position that it is wrong to take human lives, even if overall welfare is promoted by taking them. Why does the system of capital punishment violate that position, if the failure to impose capital punishment also takes lives? We suggest that the distinction between government acts and omissions, even if conceptually coherent, is not morally relevant to the question of capital punishment. Some governmental actions are morally obligatory, and some governmental omissions are blameworthy. In this setting, we suggest, government is morally obligated to adopt capital punishment and morally at fault if it declines to do so. The most fundamental point is that, unlike individuals, governments always and necessarily face a choice between or among possible policies for regulating third parties. The distinction between acts and omissions may not be intelligible in this context, and even if it is, the distinction does not make a morally relevant difference. Most generally, government is in the business of creating permissions and prohibitions. When it explicitly or implicitly authorizes private action, it is not omitting to do anything or refusing to act. [n61](http://www.lexisnexis.com.floyd.lib.umn.edu/us/lnacademic/frame.do?tokenKey=rsh-20.737298.6087973779&target=results_DocumentContent&reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1187847773274&returnToKey=20_T1938900223&parent=docview##) Moreover, the distinction between authorized and unauthorized private action - for example, private killing - becomes obscure when the government formally forbids private action but chooses a set of policy instruments that do not adequately or fully discourage it. To be sure, a system of punishments that only weakly deters homicide, relative to other feasible punishments, does not quite authorize homicide, but that system is not properly characterized as an omission, and little turns on whether it can be so characterized. Suppose, for example, that government fails to characterize certain actions - say, sexual harassment - as tortious or violative of civil rights law and that it therefore permits employers to harass employees as they choose or to discharge employees for failing to submit to sexual harassment. It would be unhelpful to characterize the result as a product of governmental "inaction." If employers are permitted to discharge employees for refusing to submit to sexual harassment, it is because the law is allocating certain entitlements to employers rather than employees. Or consider the context of ordinary torts. When Homeowner B sues Factory A over air pollution, a decision not to rule for Homeowner B is not a form of inaction: it is the allocation to Factory A of a property right to pollute. In such cases, an apparent government omission is an action simply because it is an allocation of legal rights. Any decision that allocates such rights, by creating entitlements [\*722] and prohibitions, is not inaction at all.

#### Fourth, Phenomenal introspection is reliable and proves that util’s true.

Sinhababu Neil (National University of Singapore) “The epistemic argument for hedonism” [http://philpapers.org/archive/SINTEA-3 accessed 2-4-16](http://philpapers.org/archive/SINTEA-3%20accessed%202-4-16) JW

The Odyssey's treatment of these events demonstrates how dramatically ancient Greek moral intuitions differ from ours. It doesn't dwell on the brutality of Telemachus, who killed twelve women for the trivial reasons he states, making them suffer as they die. While gods and men seek vengeance for other great and small offenses in the Odyssey, no one finds this mass murder worth avenging. It's a minor event in the denouement to a happy ending in which Odysseus (who first proposes killing the women) returns home and Telemachus becomes a man. That the[y] Greeks could so easily regard these murders as part of a happy ending for heroes shows how deeply we disagree with them. It's as if we gave them a trolley problem with the 12 women on the side track and no one on the main track, and they judged it permissible for Telemachus to turn the trolley and kill them all. And this isn't some esoteric text of a despised or short-lived sect, but a central literary work of a long-lived and influential culture. Human history offers similarly striking examples of disagreement on a variety of topics. These include sexual morality; the treatment of animals; the treatment of other ethnicities, families, and social classes; the consumption of intoxicating substances; whether and how one may take vengeance; slavery; whether public celebrations are acceptable; and gender roles.12 Moral obligations to commit genocide were accepted not only by some 20th century Germans, but by much of the ancient world, including the culture that gave us the Old Testament. One can only view the human past and much of the present with horror at the depth of human moral error and the harm that has resulted. One might think to explain away much of this disagreement as the result of differing nonmoral beliefs. Those who disagree about nonmoral issues may disagree on the moral rightness of a particular action despite agreeing on the fundamental moral issues. For example, they may agree that healing the sick is right, but disagree about whether a particular medicine will heal or harm. This disagreement about whether to prescribe the medicine won't be fundamentally about morality, and won't support the argument from disagreement. I don't think the moral disagreements listed above are explained by differences in nonmoral belief. This isn't because sexists, racists, and bigots share the nonmoral views of those enlightened by feminism and other egalitarian doctrines – they don't. Rather, their differing views on nonmoral topics often are rationalizations of moral beliefs that fundamentally disagree with ours.13 Those whose fundamental moral judgments include commitments to the authority of men over women, or of one race over another, will easily accept descriptive psychological views that attribute less intelligence or rationality to women or the subjugated race.14 Moral disagreement supposedly arising from moral views in religious texts is similar. Given how rich and many-stranded most religious texts are, interpretive claims about their moral teachings often tell us more about the antecedent moral beliefs of the interpreter than about the text itself. This is why the same texts are interpreted to support so many different moral views. Similar phenomena occur with most moral beliefs. Environmentalists who value a lovely patch of wilderness will easily believe that its destruction will cause disaster, those who feel justified in eating meat will easily believe that the animals they eat don't suffer greatly, and libertarians who feel that redistributing wealth is unjust will easily believe that it raises unemployment. We shouldn't assume that differing moral beliefs on practical questions are caused by fundamental moral agreement combined with differing nonmoral beliefs. Often the differing nonmoral beliefs are caused by fundamental moral disagreement. As we have no precise way of quantifying the breadth of disagreement or determining its epistemic consequences, it's unclear exactly how much disagreement the argument requires. While this makes the argument difficult to evaluate, it shouldn't stop us from proceeding, as we have to use the unclear notion of widespread disagreement in ordinary epistemic practice. If 99.9% of botanists agree on some issue about plants, non-botanists should defer to their authority and believe as most of them do. But if disagreement between botanists is suitably widespread, non-botanists should remain agnostic. A more precise and systematic account of when disagreement is widespread enough to generate particular epistemic consequences would be very helpful. Until we have one, we must employ the unclear notion of widespread disagreement, or some similar notion, throughout epistemic practice. Against the background of widespread moral disagreement, there may still be universal or near-universal agreement on some moral questions. For example, perhaps all cultures agree that one should provide for one’s elderly parents, even though they generally disagree elsewhere. How do these narrow areas of moral agreement affect the argument? This all depends on whether the narrow agreement is reliably or unreliably caused. If narrow agreement results from a reliable process of belief-formation, it lets us avoid error, defeating the argument from disagreement. But widely accepted moral beliefs may result from widely prevailing unreliable processes leading everyone to the same errors. There's no special pressure to explain agreement in terms of reliable processes when disagreement is widespread. Explaining agreement in terms of reliable processes is preferable when we have some reason to think that the processes involved are generally reliable. Then we would want to understand cases of agreement in line with the general reliability of processes producing moral belief. But if disagreement is widespread, error is too. Since moral beliefs are so often false, invoking unreliable processes to explain them is better than invoking reliable ones. The next two sections discuss this in more detail. We have many plausible explanations of narrow agreement on which moral beliefs are unreliably caused. Evolutionary and sociological explanations of why particular moral beliefs are widely accepted often invoke unreliable mechanisms.15 On these explanations, we agree because some moral beliefs were so important for reproductive fitness that natural selection made them innate in us, or so important to the interests controlling moral education in each culture that they were inculcated in everyone. For example, parents' influence over their children's moral education would explain agreement that one should provide for one's elderly parents. Plausible normative ethical theories won't systematically connect these evolutionary and sociological explanations with moral facts. If disagreement and error are widespread, they'll provide useful ways to reconcile unusual cases of widespread agreement with the general unreliability of the processes producing moral belief. 1.3 If there is widespread error about a topic, we should retain only those beliefs about it formed through reliable processes Now I'll defend 3. First I'll show how the falsity of others' beliefs undermines one's own belief. Then I'll clarify the notion of a reliable process. I'll consider a modification to 3 that epistemic internalists might favor, and show that the argument accommodates it. I'll illustrate 3's plausibility by considering cases where it correctly guides our reasoning. Finally, I'll show how 3 is grounded in the intuitive response to grave moral error. First, a simple objection: “Why should I care whether other people have false beliefs? That's a fact about other people, and not about me. Even if most people are wrong about some topic, I may be one of the few right ones, even if there's no apparent reason to think that my way of forming beliefs is any more reliable.” While widespread error leaves open the possibility that one has true beliefs, it reduces the probability that my beliefs are true. Consider a parallel case. I have no direct evidence that I have an appendix, but I know that previous investigations have revealed appendixes in people. So induction suggests that I have an appendix. Similarly, I know on the basis of 1 and 2 that people's moral beliefs are, in general, rife with error. So even if I have no direct evidence of error in my moral beliefs, induction suggests that they are rife with error as well. 3 invokes the reliability of the processes that produce our beliefs. Assessing processes of belief-formation for reliability is an important part of our epistemic practices. If someone tells me that my belief is entirely produced by wishful thinking, I can't simply accept that and maintain the belief. Knowing that wishful thinking is unreliable, I must either deny that my belief is entirely caused by wishful thinking or abandon the belief. But if someone tells me that my belief is entirely the result of visual perception, I'll maintain it, assuming that it concerns sizable nearby objects or something else about which visual perception is reliable. While providing precise criteria for individuating processes of belief-formation is hard, as the literature on the generality problem for reliabilism attests, individuating them somehow is indispensable to our epistemic practices.16 Following Alvin Goldman's remark that “It is clear that our ordinary thought about process types slices them broadly” (346), I'll treat cognitive process types like wishful thinking and visual perception as appropriately broad.17 Trusting particular people and texts, meanwhile, are too narrow. Cognitive science may eventually help us better individuate cognitive process types for the purposes of reliability assessments and discover which processes produce which beliefs. Epistemic internalists might reject 3 as stated, claiming that it isn't widespread error that would justify giving up our beliefs, but our having reason to believe that there is widespread error. They might also claim that our justification for believing the outputs of some process depends not on its reliability, but on what we have reason to believe about its reliability. The argument will still go forward if 3 is modified to suit internalist tastes, changing its antecedent to “If we have reason to believe that there is widespread error about a topic” or changing its consequent to “we should retain only those beliefs about it that we have reason to believe were formed through reliable processes.” While 3's antecedent might itself seem unnecessary on the original formulation, it's required for 3 to remain plausible on the internalist modification. Requiring us to have reason to believe that any of our belief-formation processes are reliable before retaining their outputs might lead to skepticism. The antecedent limits the scope of the requirement to cases of widespread error, averting general skeptical conclusions. The argument will still attain its conclusion under these modifications. Successfully defending the premises of the argument and deriving widespread error (5) and unreliability (7) gives those of us who have heard the defense and derivation reason to believe 5 and 7. This allows us to derive 8. (Thus the pronoun 'we' in 3, 6, and 8.) 3 describes the right response to widespread error in many actual cases. Someone in the 12th century, especially upon hearing the disagreeing views of many cultures regarding the origins of the universe, would do well to recognize that error on this topic was widespread and retreat to agnosticism about it. Only when modern astrophysics extended reliable empirical methods to cosmology would it be rational to move forward from agnosticism and accept a particular account of how the universe began. Similarly, disagreement about which stocks will perform better than average is widespread among investors, suggesting that one's beliefs on the matter have a high likelihood of error. It's wise to remain agnostic about the stock market without an unusually reliable way of forming beliefs – for example, the sort of secret insider information that it's illegal to trade on. 3 permits us to hold onto our moral beliefs in individual cases of moral disagreement, suggesting skeptical conclusions only when moral disagreement is widespread. When we consider a single culture's abhorrent moral views, like the Greeks' acceptance of Telemachus and Odysseus' murders of the servant women, we don't think that maybe the Greeks were right to see nothing wrong and we should reconsider our outrage. Instead, we're horrified by their grave moral error. I think this is the right response. We're similarly horrified by the moral errors of Hindus who burned widows on their husbands' funeral pyres, American Southerners who supported slavery and segregation, our contemporaries who condemn homosexuality, and countless others. The sheer number of cases like this requires us to regard moral error as a pervasive feature of the human condition. Humans typically form moral beliefs through unreliable processes and have appendixes. We are humans, so this should reduce our confidence in our moral judgments. The prevalence of error in a world full of moral disagreement demonstrates how bad humans are at forming true moral beliefs, undermining our own moral beliefs. Knowing that unreliable processes so often lead humans to their moral beliefs, we'll require our moral beliefs to issue from reliable processes. 1.4 If there is widespread error about morality, there are no reliable processes for forming moral beliefs A reliable process for forming moral beliefs would avert skeptical conclusions. I'll consider several processes and argue that they don't help us escape moral skepticism. Ordinary moral intuition, whether it involves a special rational faculty or our emotional responses, is shown to be unreliable by the existence of widespread error. The argument from disagreement either prevents reflective equilibrium from generating moral conclusions or undermines it. Conceptual analysis is reliable, but delivers the wrong kind of knowledge to avert skepticism. If all our processes for forming moral beliefs are unreliable, moral skepticism looms. 4 is false only because of one process – phenomenal introspection, which lets us know of the goodness of pleasure, as the second half of this paper will discuss. Widespread error guarantees the unreliability of any process by which we form all or almost all of our moral beliefs. While widespread error allows some processes responsible for a small share of our moral beliefs to predominantly create true beliefs, it implies that any process generating a very large share of moral belief must be highly error-prone. Since the process produced so many of our moral beliefs, and so many of them are erroneous, it must be responsible for a large share of the error. If more of people's moral beliefs were true, things would be otherwise. Widespread truth would support the reliability of any process that produced most or all of our moral beliefs, since that process would be responsible for so much true belief. But given widespread error, ordinary moral intuition must be unreliable. This point provides a forceful response to Moorean opponents who insist that we can't give up the reliability of a process by which we form all or nearly all of our beliefs on an important topic, since this would permit counterintuitive skeptical conclusions. Even if this Moorean response helps against external world skeptics who employ counterfactual thought experiments involving brains in vats, it doesn't help against moral skeptics who use 1 and 2 to derive widespread actual error. Once we accept that widespread error actually obtains, a great deal of human moral knowledge has already vanished. Insisting on the reliability of the process then seems implausible and pointless. I'll briefly consider two conceptions of moral intuition – as a special rational faculty by which we grasp non-natural moral facts, and as a process by which our emotions lead us to form moral beliefs – and show how widespread error guarantees their unreliability. Some philosophers regard moral intuition as involving a special rational faculty that lets us know non-natural moral facts.18 They argue that knowledge on many topics including mathematics, logic, and modality involves this rational faculty, so moral knowledge might operate similarly. This suggests a way for them to defend the reliability of moral intuition in the face of widespread error: if intuition is reliable about these other things, its overall reliability across moral and nonmoral areas allows us to reliably form moral beliefs by using it. This defense won't work. When an epistemic process is manifestly unreliable on some topic, as widespread error shows any process responsible for most of our moral beliefs to be, the reliability of that process elsewhere won't save it on that topic. Even if testimony is reliable, this doesn't imply the reliability of compulsive gamblers' testimony about the next spin of the roulette wheel. Even if intuition remains reliable elsewhere, widespread disagreement still renders it unreliable in ethics. I see ordinary moral intuition as a process of emotional perception in which our feelings cause us to form moral beliefs.19 Just as visual experiences of color cause beliefs about the colors of surfaces, emotional experiences cause moral beliefs. Pleasant feelings like approval, admiration, or hope in considering actions, persons, or states of affairs lead us to believe they are right, virtuous or good. Unpleasant emotions like guilt, disgust, or horror in considering actions, persons, or states of affairs lead us to believe they are wrong, vicious, or bad. We might have regarded this as a reliable way to know about moral facts, just as visual perception is a reliable way to know about color, if not for widespread error. But because of widespread error, we can only see it as an unreliable process responsible for our dismal epistemic situation. Reflective equilibrium is the prevailing methodology in normative ethics today. It involves modifying our beliefs about particular cases and general principles to make them cohere. Whether or not nonmoral propositions like the premises of the argument from disagreement are admissible in reflective equilibrium, widespread error prevents reflective equilibrium from reliably generating a true moral theory, as I'll explain. If the premises of the argument from disagreement are admitted into reflective equilibrium, the argument can be reconstructed there, and reflective equilibrium will dictate that we give up all of our moral beliefs. To avoid this conclusion, the premises of the argument from disagreement would have to be revised away on moral grounds. These premises are a metaethical claim about the objectivity of morality which seems to be a conceptual truth, an anthropological claim about the existence of disagreement, a very general epistemic claim about when we should revise our beliefs, and a more empirically grounded epistemic claim about our processes of belief-formation and their reliability. While reflective equilibrium may move us to revise substantive moral beliefs in view of other substantive moral beliefs, claims of these other kinds are less amenable to such revision. Unless ambitious arguments for revising these nonmoral claims away succeed, we must follow the argument to its conclusion and accept that reflective equilibrium makes moral skeptics of us.20 If only moral principles and judgments are considered in reflective equilibrium, it won't make moral skeptics of us, but the argument from disagreement will undermine its conclusions. The argument forces us to give up the pre-existing moral beliefs against which we test various moral propositions in reflective equilibrium. While we may be justified in believing something because it coheres with our other beliefs, this justification goes away once we see that those beliefs should be abandoned. Coherence with beliefs that we know we should give up doesn't confer justification. Now I'll consider conceptual analysis. It can produce moral beliefs about conceptual truths – for example, that the moral supervenes on the nonmoral, and that morality is objective. It also may provide judgments about relations between different moral concepts – perhaps, that if the only moral difference between two actions is that one would produce morally better consequences than the other, doing what produces better consequences is right. I regard conceptual analysis as reliable, so that the argument from disagreement does not force us to give up the beliefs about morality it produces. Unfortunately, if analytic naturalism is false, as has been widely held in metaethics since G. E. Moore, conceptual analysis won't provide all the knowledge we need to build a normative ethical theory.21 Even when it relates moral concepts like goodness and rightness to each other, it doesn't tell us that anything is good or right to begin with. That's the knowledge we need to avoid moral skepticism. So far I've argued that our epistemic and anthropological situation, combined with plausible metaethical and epistemic principles, forces us to abandon our moral beliefs. But if a reliable process of moral belief-formation exists, 4 is false, and we can answer the moral skeptic. The rest of this paper discusses the only reliable process I know of. 2.1 Phenomenal introspection reveals pleasure's goodness Phenomenal introspection, a reliable way of forming true beliefs about our experiences, produces the belief that pleasure is good. Even as our other processes of moral belief-formation prove unreliable, it provides reliable access to pleasure's goodness, justifying the positive claims of hedonism. This section clarifies what phenomenal introspection and pleasure are and explains how phenomenal introspection provides reliable access to pleasure's value. Section 2.2 argues that pleasure's goodness is genuine moral value, rather than value of some other kind. In phenomenal introspection we consider our subjective experience, or phenomenology, and determine what it's like. Phenomenal introspection can be reliable while dreaming or hallucinating, as long as we can determine what the dreams or hallucinations are like. By itself, phenomenal introspection doesn't produce beliefs about things outside experience, or about relations between our experiences and non-experiential things. So it doesn't produce judgments about the rightness of actions or the goodness of non-experiential things. It can only tell us about the intrinsic properties of experience itself. Phenomenal introspection is generally reliable, even if mistakes about immediate experience are possible. Experience is rich in detail, so one could get some of the details wrong in belief. Under adverse conditions involving false expectations, misleading evidence about what one's experiences will be, or extreme emotional states that disrupt belief-formation, larger errors are possible. Paradigmatically reliable processes like vision share these failings. Vision sometimes produces false beliefs under adverse conditions, or when we're looking at complex things. Still, it's so reliable as to be indispensible in ordinary life. Regarding phenomenal introspection as unreliable is about as radical as skepticism about the reliability of vision. While contemporary psychologists reject introspection into one's motivations and other psychological causal processes as unreliable, phenomenal introspection fares better. Daniel Kahneman, for example, writes that “experienced utility is best measured by moment-based methods that assess the experience of the present.”22 Even those most skeptical about the reliability of phenomenal introspection, like Eric Schwitzgebel, concede that we can reliably introspect whether we are in serious pain.23 Then we should be able to introspectively determine what pain is like. So I'll assume the reliability of phenomenal introspection. One can form a variety of beliefs using phenomenal introspection. For example, one can believe that one is having sound experiences of particular noises and visual experiences of different shades of color. When looking at a lemon and considering the phenomenal states that are yellow experiences, one can form some beliefs about their intrinsic features – for example, that they're bright experiences. And when considering experiences of pleasure, one can make some judgments about their intrinsic features – for example, that they're good experiences. Just as one can look inward at one's experience of lemon yellow and recognize its brightness, one can look inward at one's experience of pleasure and recognize its goodness.24 When I consider a situation of increasing pleasure, I can form the belief that things are better than they were before, just as I form the belief that there's more brightness in my visual field as lemon yellow replaces black. And when I suddenly experience pain, I can form the belief that things are worse in my experience than they were before. Having pleasure consists in one's experience having a positive hedonic tone. Without descending into metaphor, it's hard to give a further account of what pleasure is like than to say that when one has it, one feels good. As Aaron Smuts writes in defending the view of pleasure as hedonic tone, “to 'feel good' is about as close to an experiential primitive as we get.” 25 Fred Feldman sees pleasure as fundamentally an attitude rather than a hedonic tone.26 But as long as hedonic tones are real components of experience, phenomenal introspection will reveal pleasure's goodness. Opponents of the hedonic tone account of pleasure usually concede that hedonic tones exist, as Feldman seems to in discussing “sensory pleasures,” which he thinks his view helps us understand. Even on his view of pleasure, phenomenal introspection can produce the belief that some hedonic tones are good while others are bad. There are many different kinds of pleasant experiences. There are sensory pleasures, like the pleasure of tasting delicious food, receiving a massage, or resting your tired limbs in a soft bed after a hard day. There are the pleasures of seeing that our desires are satisfied, like the pleasure of winning a game, getting a promotion, or seeing a friend succeed. These experiences differ in many ways, just as the experiences of looking at lemons and the sky on a sunny day differ. It's easy to see the appeal of Feldman's view that pleasures “have just about nothing in common phenomenologically” (79). But just as our experiences in looking at lemons and the sky on a sunny day have brightness in common, pleasant experiences all have “a certain common quality – feeling good,” as Roger Crisp argues (109).27 As the analogy with brightness suggests, hedonic tone is phenomenologically very thin, and usually mixed with a variety of other experiences.28 Pleasure of any kind feels good, and displeasure of any kind feels bad. These feelings may or may not have bodily location or be combined with other sensory states like warmth or pressure. “Pleasure” and “displeasure” mean these thin phenomenal states of feeling good and feeling bad. As Joseph Mendola writes, “the pleasantness of physical pleasure is a kind of hedonic value, a single homogenous sensory property, differing merely in intensity as well as in extent and duration, which is yet a kind of goodness” (442).29 What if Feldman is right and hedonic states feel good in fundamentally different ways? Then phenomenal introspection suggests a pluralist variety of hedonism. Each fundamental flavor of pleasure will have a fundamentally different kind of goodness, as phenomenal introspection more accurate than mine will reveal. This isn't my view, but I suggest it to those convinced that hedonic tones are fundamentally heterogenous. If phenomenal introspection reliably informs us that pleasure is good, how can anyone believe that their pleasures are bad? Other processes of moral belief-formation are responsible for these beliefs. Someone who feels disgust or guilt about sex may not only regard sex as immoral, but the pleasure it produces as bad. Even if phenomenal introspection on sexual pleasure disposes one to believe that it's good, stronger negative emotional responses to it may more strongly dispose one to believe that it's bad, following the emotional perception model suggested in section 1.4. Explaining disagreement about pleasure's value in terms of other processes lets hedonists maintain that phenomenal introspection univocally supports pleasure's goodness. As long as negative judgments of pleasure come from unreliable processes instead of phenomenal introspection, the argument from disagreement eliminates them. The parallel between yellow’s brightness and pleasure’s goodness demonstrates the objectivity of the value detected in phenomenal introspection. Just as anyone's yellow experiences objectively are bright experiences, anyone's pleasure objectively is a good experience.30 While one's phenomenology is often called one's “subjective experience”, facts about it are still objective. “Subjective” in “subjective experience” means “internal to the mind”, not “ontologically dependent on attitudes towards it.” My yellow-experiences objectively have brightness. Anyone who thought my yellow-experiences lacked brightness would be mistaken. Pleasure similarly is objectively good. It's true that anyone's pleasure is good. Anyone who denies this is mistaken. As Mendola writes, the value detected in phenomenal introspection is “a plausible candidate for objective value” (712). Even though phenomenal introspection only tells me about my own phenomenal states, I can know that others' pleasure is good. Of course, I can't phenomenally introspect their pleasures, just as I can't phenomenally introspect pleasures that I'll experience next year. But if I consider my experiences of lemon yellow and ask what it would be like if others had the same experiences, I must think that they would be having bright experiences. Similarly, if in a pleasant moment I consider what it's like for others to have exactly the experience I'm having, I must think that they're having good experiences. If they have exactly the same experiences I'm having, their experiences will have exactly the same intrinsic properties as mine. This is also how I know that if I have the same experience in the future, it'll have the same intrinsic properties. Even though the only pleasure I can introspect is mine now, I should believe that others' pleasures and my pleasures at other times are good, just as I should believe that yellow experienced by others and myself at other times is bright. My argument thus favors the kind of universal hedonism that supports utilitarianism, not egoistic hedonism.

### 1AC- Soft Power

#### Recent American policies on foreign aid and global health under the Trump administration has eroded American soft power.

Daalder 17

Daalder, Ivo H. “The Decline of American Soft Power.” Chicago Council on Global Affairs, Chicago Council on Global Affairs, 29 Mar. 2017, www.thechicagocouncil.org/blog/global-insight/ivo-daalder-weeks-reads-decline-american-soft-power//nhs-KK

The nature of American power today is in flux. Not because of a lack of military might – the United States still maintains by far the most powerful military in the world. And not because of a lack of economic prowess – despite all of its problems, the strength, reach, and dynamism of the American economy remains unmatched. Instead, it is America’s political and cultural appeal, what Joseph Nye has called “soft power,” that is fading, thus reshaping American influence around the world. Take immigration. In recent months, the Trump administration’s hostile rhetoric toward immigrants, coupled with its controversial travel ban, has represented a significant departure – not just in terms of policy but from the belief in the power of international exchange. This power is evident in the fact that immigrants comprise 30 percent of all American Nobel Prize winners and the founders of 90 American Fortune 500 companies, as Bret Stephens points out in a recent *Wall Street Journal*column. It should be cause for concern, then, that amid this new political climate, nearly 40 percent of American colleges and universities are seeing an overall drop in foreign applicants. America’s declining soft power can also be seen in the Trump administration’s approach to global health. The new White House budget calls for dramatic funding cuts in organizations that fight infectious disease – from the National Institutes of Health to USAID to the Prevention and Public Health Fund. These cuts belie America’s role as a global health leader but more importantly, as Michael T. Osterholm and Mark Olshaker write in *The New York Times*, they threaten American citizens and population centers across the globe with the prospect of unpreparedness for the next outbreak. As American soft power fades, so too will America’s influence in the global order it helped create. Soft power has traditionally ensured that American interests are reflected in international institutions. But as the United States turns inward and makes significant cuts to its diplomatic resources, its influence – and thus its interests – will be diminished. Importantly, this comes at a time when rival powers are attempting to undo the American-centric order. Look at Russian efforts to undermine the European Union or its attempts to recreate an order based on traditional spheres-of-influence. Or consider China’s development of the Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank or its championing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Trade Partnership, both of which would create a more robust Chinese political orbit. The bottom line is that America’s soft power is declining precisely when it is needed the most. The many global challenges facing the United States today require not just hard military power but the wise application of American political, cultural, and diplomatic force. This week’s reads explore some of these challenges, as well as the changing dynamics of American power.

#### Increasing the membership of the Peace Corps will increase American soft power.

Reiffel and Zalud 06

Rieffel, Lex, and Sarah Zalud. “International Volunteering: Smart Power.” Brookings, Brookings, 28 July 2006, www.brookings.edu/research/international-volunteering-smart-power///nhs-KK

The face of America that has been welcomed most enthusiastically in the rest of the world for decades has been the face of a volunteer: assisting with disaster relief, building houses for poor families, teaching English to university students, and so much more. International volunteer programs contribute directly and indirectly to our nation’s security and well-being. They represent one of the best avenues Americans can pursue to improve relations with the rest of the world. The scale of these programs, however, is far below the levels suggested by their benefits. The federal budget for FY 2006 supports 75,000 AmeriCorps volunteers working domestically but only 7,800 Peace Corps volunteers working in foreign countries. Reflecting the value that Americans see in volunteering overseas, programs in the private sector have grown rapidly in the past ten years. In 2005, at least 50,000 Americans participated in NGO and corporate programs. The number could be much higher, easily more than 100,000, with a program like AmeriCorps that leverages private funding. The number could be doubled again by offering additional options suitable to large pools of talent, such as retiring baby boomers. The potential dividends from scaling up international volunteer programs are impressive relative to most other “soft power” programs of the U.S. government. The time is ripe for a breakthrough in this area, with policies aimed at strengthening existing programs such as increased funding for the Peace Corps, raising the public awareness of volunteer programs overseas, linking service and studie, and measuring effectiveness. It is a smart way to knit the United States more effectively into the fabric of this rapidly changing world.

#### Soft power is an impact filter

Rieffel 05 –Brookings Institution, writing fellow [“REACHING OUT: AMERICANS SERVING OVERSEAS By Lex Rieffel Visiting Fellow The Brookings Institution” 1775 Massachusetts Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20036-2103 December 2005<http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/research/files/papers/2005/12/07volunteering%20rieffel/20051207rieffel>]LADI

The devastation of New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina at the end of August 2005 was another blow to American self-confidence as well as to its image in the rest of the world. It cracked the veneer of the society reflected in the American movies and TV programs that flood the world. It exposed weaknesses in government institutions that had been promoted for decades as models for other countries. Internal pressure to turn America’s back on the rest of the world is likely to intensify as the country focuses attention on domestic problems such as the growing number of Americans without health insurance, educational performance that is declining relative to other countries, deteriorating infrastructure, and increased dependence on foreign supplies of oil and gas. A more isolationist sentiment would reduce the ability of the USA to use its overwhelming military power to promote peaceful change in the developing countries that hold two-thirds of the world’s population and pose the gravest threats to global stability. Isolationism might heighten the sense of security in the short run, but it would put the USA at the mercy of external forces in the long run. Accordingly, one of the great challenges for the USA today is to build a broad coalition of like-minded nations and a set of international institutions capable of maintaining order and addressing global problems such as nuclear proliferation, epidemics like HIV/AIDS and avian flu, failed states like Somalia and Myanmar, and environmental degradation. The costs of acting alone or in small coalitions are now more clearly seen to be unsustainable. The limitations of “hard” instruments of foreign policy have been amply demonstrated in Iraq. Military power can dislodge a tyrant with great efficiency but cannot build stable and prosperous nations. Appropriately, the appointment of Karen Hughes as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs suggests that the Bush Administration is gearing up to rely more on “soft” instruments.2 The soft instruments of power can be thought of as including a vast array of public sector and private sector activities. They range from the government’s position in the international debate about global warming to the Fulbright program of academic exchanges to the behavior of American tourists overseas. For the purposes of this paper they are defined as the residual set of instruments after excluding hard instruments, with hard instruments being defined as all instruments involving any kind of armed military or police force.

### 1AC-Disease

#### HIV/AIDS is a growing issue and many are new infections.

Sidibe 17 (Sidibé, Michael. “GLOBAL HIV AND AIDS STATISTICS.” Executive Director of UNAIDS, September 1, 2017. https://www.avert.org/global-hiv-and-aids-statistics.)

HIV continues to be a major global public health issue. In 2016, an estimated 36.7 million people were living with HIV (including 1.8 million children) – with a global HIV prevalence of 0.8% among adults.1 2 Around 30% of these same people do not know that they have the virus.3 Since the start of the epidemic, an estimated 78 million people have become infected with HIV and 35 million people have died of AIDS-related illnesses. In 2016, 1 million people died of AIDS-related illnesses.4 The vast majority of people living with HIV are located in low- and middle- income countries, with an estimated 25.5 million living in sub-Saharan Africa. Among this group 19.4 million are living in East and Southern Africa which saw 44% of new HIV infections globally in 2016.

#### Lack of Infrastructure and drugs warrant Peace Corps Volunteers in the fight against HIV/AIDS in developing countries like those in Africa.

Dunn 01 (“Congressional Record, V. 147, Pt. 15,.” Dunn, Government Printing Office, November 7, 2001. https://books.google.com/books?id=f5bZzb0F8GwC&dq=peace+corps+aids+with+terrorism&source=gbs\_navlinks\_s.)

The volunteers work in rural and urban settings in a variety of health activities including teaching HIV/AIDS education and prevention methodologies to local people. The Peace Corps would like to increase its capacity in HIV/AIDS education and prevention activities, especially in the area of training HIV/AIDS trainers: but it cannot do so without this additional appropriation. I believe that Peace Corps volunteers work and perform God’s work. They are the vanguards of humanitarian efforts in the struggle to eradicate HIV/AIDS. The volunteers’ efforts target training literate peer educators and community health workers who will be training others in the community. Their work is comendable and critical. Much of their work is targeted in Sub-Saharan Africa where 25 percent of the population may be infected. They have to garner the trust of the people in the community and then work to establish the building blocks necessary to transform the attitudes and behavior of at-risk populations, especially children and women. Their messages are directed at people living with HIV as well as those who are not currently infected. Children are the focus because they are impressionable and vulnerable .Young African American girls must be education because they are more likely to contract HIV and AIDS than young boys of the same age, and that goes for African kids too. Peace Corps volunteers are the front line because reality is that new drugs are expensive and not usually available throughout Africa. Additionally, the infrastructure does not exist for monitoring the immune system of victims overcome by the disease who are undertreated.That is why we must use the human factor, Peace Corps volunteers, to stem the pandemic of HIV/AIDS

#### But volunteers in the Peace Corps are decreasing

Hesller and Ifill 14 (HESSLER-RADELET, CARRIE, and GWEN IFILL. “Facing Declining Applications, Peace Corps Rethinks How to Reach a New Generation.” PBS, July 16, 2014. http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/facing-declining-applications-peace-corps-rethinks-reach-new-generation/.)

Fifty-three years ago, President Kennedy created the all-volunteer corps, which has since sent more than 200,000 U.S. citizens to 139 countries. Today, there are about 7,000 volunteers serving in 65 countries, teaching, working in agriculture and economic development, and promoting nutrition and public health. But the Peace Corps has been on the decline, as fewer people apply, and wait times for acceptance increase. Yesterday, the Corps announced plans to reverse that trend. Director Carrie Hessler-Radelet joins me now. Welcome. CARRIE HESSLER-RADELET, Director, Peace Corps: Thank you. It’s a privilege to be here. GWEN IFILL: So, tell me, 53 years — what are these changes you have announced designed to fix? CARRIE HESSLER-RADELET: Well, you know, we actually started this four years ago as part of a planned reform to upgrade all aspects of our operations and really modernize the Peace Corps. And so we focused our first four years on improving the support we provide to volunteers, so health, safety, and technical and program support, so they can do their jobs effectively. So we strengthen our base first, and now we’re ready to ramp up our application numbers. GWEN IFILL: Well, let’s talk about your application numbers. I read today that there were 30,000 incomplete applications made in nine months.

#### Outbreaks cause extinction – burnout wrong. Kerscher 14

Kerscher 14—Professor, unclear where because every website about him is in German. (Karl-Heinz, “Space Education”, Wissenschaftliche Studie, 2014, 92 Seiten)

The death toll for a pandemic is equal to the virulence, the deadliness of the pathogen or pathogens, multiplied by the number of people eventually infected. It has been hypothesized that there is an upper limit to the virulence of naturally evolved pathogens. This is because a pathogen that quickly kills its hosts might not have enough time to spread to new ones, while one that kills its hosts more slowly or not at all will allow carriers more time to spread the infection, and thus likely out-compete a more lethal species or strain. This simple model predicts that if virulence and transmission are not linked in any way, pathogens will evolve towards low virulence and rapid transmission. However, this assumption is not always valid and in more complex models, where the level of virulence and the rate of transmission are related, high levels of virulence can evolve. The level of virulence that is possible is instead limited by the existence of complex populations of hosts, with different susceptibilities to infection, or by some hosts being geographically isolated. The size of the host population and competition between different strains of pathogens can also alter virulence. There are numerous historical examples of pandemics that have had a devastating effect on a large number of people, which makes the possibility of global pandemic a realistic threat to human civilization.

### 1AC – Solvency

#### Plan: The United States federal government should require all citizens ages 16-25 to complete “national service” in the, Peace Corps or Corporation for National and Community Service. Completion certificates should be awarded to all citizens after a year of service, and must be required to obtain a paid job in the United States.

#### This is the only way to solve – here’s a solvency advocate

Brennan and Upshaw 12 – Matthew and Kyle, Naval Postgraduate School (“AMERICAN SERVICE: NEW NATIONAL SERVICE FOR THE UNITED STATES” http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a573814.pdf) LADI

UNIVERSALITY IS A MUST . . . YES, IT MUST BE COMPULSORY  All men and women must participate in a program to achieve the desired benefits of national service. As evidenced by case studies in Israel, Singapore, and India, without full participation the outcomes of the program will never fully meet the original objectives.  Service must be accomplished by men and women some time between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five. For example, high school dropouts could serve as early as sixteen years of age. Others could serve upon completing high school, and could use their national service experience to explore different possibilities for where they may seek work afterwards. For others, by expanding the upward boundary for service to twenty-five, individuals could complete college prior to completing their service.  Our own history during the Revolutionary and Civil Wars has shown that when military service is not fully undertaken by all parts of American society, the burden of service falls to the poor, which certainly does not bind society more closely together.  As practiced in Nigeria, completion certificates should have to be presented upon completion of service and should be required for obtaining work within the U.S. This would ensure compliance with the program. B. SERVICE IS MORE THAN FULL-TIME  The length of service could vary by service type with the typical obligation lasting one year. However, a program where an individual serves in a physically demanding or austere environment, such as on a trail construction crew in Appalachia may only need to require service for nine months. The military, where a significant investment is made to train members, would require an eighteen month service commitment. At the high end, service in the Peace Corps would remain at its current twentyseven months.  Service should be performed thirty-five to forty hours per week. One nuance is that, as in Canada’s Katimavik program, during some nights and weekends, individuals might engage in competency development or other community-related activities to promote specific national service objectives, such as fulfilling local and social needs.  Service needs to remain service and not become a job. Following completion of an individual’s service obligation, s/he can seek employment or other opportunities with the same organization, but not under the auspices of national service. For example, upon completing one’s national service in the military, an individual should have the opportunity to re-enlist and pursue the military as a career option. C. SO MANY DIFFERENT WAYS TO SERVE  A key finding of examining national service is the notion that a successful program must provide a wide variety of service options. Service options should overlap almost every sector of society: finance, the environment, healthcare, education, disaster response, military and foreign service.  Fully recognizing that not every individual can serve where they would want, it needs to be recognized that some areas, e.g., anti-poverty work, simply require someone with a broader range of life and educational experiences.  A national service program should eliminate some, but not all, of the opportunities which exist under current domestic service programs. The national service program should absorb a significant portion of AmeriCorps SN and the entire NCCC. The Senior Corps and portions of AmeriCorps SN and VISTA should remain as they are today to allow for a lifetime of service opportunities for individuals. D. EVERYONE IS INVOLVED—IT IS A CULTURE OF SERVICE  Service needs to be accepted by everyone with an understanding that everyone has a role to play. For its part, the government needs to make service a sustained priority. This means that a program cannot be reduced 69 or cut (as occurred with the CCC, Zivildienst in Germany, the NSS in India, and the IDF in Israel) as other national priorities emerge. Parents, meanwhile, need to encourage and motivate youth to find the right area in which to serve.  Service needs to be viewed as valuable. The value cannot be measured just in terms of financial cost-benefit terms. The value in service lies in the benefits that accrue for both the individual and society in terms of social glue, civic engagement, and democratic commitments that service inspires.  Role models are critical to the success of future service programs. Young people will benefit greatly from seeing former service members both draw on and speak about their service experiences. Leadership by and encouragement from service members are both powerful elements, vital in motivating future generations.

#### Compulsory service would be best served within the Peace Corps. Valentine 13

Valentine 13, Curtis. [a Term Member with the Council on Foreign Relations and a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer]. “National Security and National Unity: A Case for Compulsory Service,” Council on Foreign Relations. https://www.cfr.org/blog/nationalsecurity- and-national-unity-case-compulsory-service March 06, 2013.

The goal of any program is to have impact. A program of compulsory service would do best to use the Peace Corps model of embedding volunteers in the communities they serve. Locating volunteers from other parts of the country would create the cultural exchange needed to fully earn the respect of those the volunteer would be serving. The program would also promote skills transfer and capacity building for sustainability. This movement is a global one; other countries in Europe, Africa, and the Caribbean are considering expanding or creating compulsory service projects for their young population ages 15-29 as well. In Ghana, the government is expanding and re-evaluating their current National Service program to ensure volunteers are well placed and well resourced. In Barbados, the government is creating a new National Youth Service program to address the need for Bajan youth to work with each other for the common good. Though many European countries like France and Germany have ended mandatory military service, other countries like Austria, Denmark, Finland, and Greece continue to require male citizens perform military service. Compulsory service is bold, but the absence of a bold solution will only ignore growing social seclusion. Without a pro- gram like compulsory service, Americans will continue to struggle with the idea that we are inextricably linked. Barring a bold solution from national leaders, America will continue to move forward without a long term plan to rebuild communities and create the social cohesion and national unity that is critical to U.S. national security.

### 1AC – Underview

#### Psychological evidence proves we don’t identify with our future selves. Continuous personal identity doesn’t exist.

Opar 14 [(Alisa Opar is the articles editor at Audubon magazine; cites Hal Hershfield, an assistant professor at New York University’s Stern School of Business; and Emily Pronin, a psychologist at Princeton) “Why We Procrastinate” Nautilus January 2014] AT

The British philosopher Derek Parfit espoused a severely reductionist view of personal identity in his seminal book, Reasons and Persons: It does not exist, at least not in the way we usually consider it. We humans, Parfit argued, are not a consistent identity moving through time, but a chain of successive selves, each tangentially linked to, and yet distinct from, the previous and subsequent ones. The boy who begins to smoke despite knowing that he may suffer from the habit decades later should not be judged harshly: “This boy does not identify with his future self,” Parfit wrote. “His attitude towards this future self is in some ways like his attitude to other people.” Parfit’s view was controversial even among philosophers. But psychologists are beginning to understand that it may accurately describe our attitudes towards our own decision-making: It turns out that we see our future selves as strangers. Though we will inevitably share their fates, the people we will become in a decade, quarter century, or more, are unknown to us. This impedes our ability to make good choices on their—which of course is our own—behalf. That bright, shiny New Year’s resolution? If you feel perfectly justified in breaking it, it may be because it feels like it was a promise someone else made. “It’s kind of a weird notion,” says Hal Hershfield, an assistant professor at New York University’s Stern School of Business. “On a psychological and emotional level we really consider that future self as if it’s another person.” Using fMRI, Hershfield and colleagues studied brain activity changes when people imagine their future and consider their present. They homed in on two areas of the brain called the medial prefrontal cortex and the rostral anterior cingulate cortex, which are more active when a subject thinks about himself than when he thinks of someone else. They found these same areas were more strongly activated when subjects thought of themselves today, than of themselves in the future. Their future self “felt” like somebody else. In fact, their neural activity when they described themselves in a decade was similar to that when they described Matt Damon or Natalie Portman. And subjects whose brain activity changed the most when they spoke about their future selves were the least likely to favor large long-term financial gains over small immediate ones. Emily Pronin, a psychologist at Princeton, has come to similar conclusions in her research. In a 2008 study, Pronin and her team told college students that they were taking part in an experiment on disgust that required drinking a concoction made of ketchup and soy sauce. The more they, their future selves, or other students consumed, they were told, the greater the benefit to science. Students who were told they’d have to down the distasteful quaff that day committed to consuming two tablespoons. But those that were committing their future selves (the following semester) or other students to participate agreed to guzzle an average of half a cup. We think of our future selves, says Pronin, like we think of others: in the third person. The disconnect between our present and time-shifted selves has real implications for how we make decisions. We might choose to procrastinate, and let some other version of our self deal with problems or chores. Or, as in the case of Parfit’s smoking boy, we can focus on that version of our self that derives pleasure, and ignore the one that pays the price. But if procrastination or irresponsibility can derive from a poor connection to your future self, strengthening this connection may prove to be an effective remedy. This is exactly the tactic that some researchers are taking. Anne Wilson, a psychologist at Wilfrid Laurier University in Canada, has manipulated people’s perception of time by presenting participants with timelines scaled to make an upcoming event, such as a paper due date, seem either very close or far off. “Using a longer timeline makes people feel more connected to their future selves,” says Wilson. That, in turn, spurred students to finish their assignment earlier, saving their end-of-semester self the stress of banging it out at the last minute. We think of our future selves, says Pronin, like we think of others: in the third person. Hershfield has taken a more high-tech approach. Inspired by the use of images to spur charitable donations, he and colleagues took subjects into a virtual reality room and asked them to look into a mirror. The subjects saw either their current self, or a digitally aged image of themselves (see the figure, Digital Old Age). When they exited the room, they were asked how they’d spend $1,000. Those exposed to the aged photo said they’d put twice as much into a retirement account as those who saw themselves unaged. This might be important news for parts of the finance industry. Insurance giant Allianz is funding a pilot project in the midwest in which Hershfield’s team will show state employees their aged faces when they make pension allocations. Merrill Edge, the online discount unit of Bank of America Merrill Lynch, has taken this approach online, with a service called Face Retirement. Each decade-jumping image is accompanied by startling cost-of-living projections and suggestions to invest in your golden years. Hershfield is currently investigating whether morphed images can help people lose weight. Of course, the way we treat our future self is not necessarily negative: Since we think of our future self as someone else, our own decision making reflects how we treat other people. Where Parfit’s smoking boy endangers the health of his future self with nary a thought, others might act differently. “The thing is, we make sacrifices for people all the time,” says Hershfield. “In relationships, in marriages.” The silver lining of our dissociation from our future self, then, is that it is another reason to practice being good to others. One of them might be you.