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Part I

Introductory Remarks

About the Roosevelt Club

Our world is facing pressing issues, to which orthodox approaches have yielded only unfruitful answers - we must surpass this shortcoming. Our work brings together individuals from differing backgrounds, uniting them in synergistic conversation and written reflection; our aim is to produce bold, innovative, and pragmatic thinking on the challenges of the modern era, and to prepare our Members for a life in service of the public good.

Never before has such singular progress been made toward a better world. We live in a world of constant improvement – to industry, to technology, to all the mechanisms that drive our society ever forward. The knowledge that we have amassed over the course of millennia is now readily available to anyone with access to an internet connection; and this knowledge is growing exponentially, stretching well beyond the limits of human understanding. We have reached heights of expertise and capability completely unimagineable mere decades in the past; we are able to grow back limbs, cure diseases that years ago would have decimated us; we have set foot on the Moon; observed and recorded hundreds of millions of galaxies, each containing celestial objects billions of times larger than our Earth.

And yet never before has there been such radical and widespread inequality; never before have we been closer to scarcity. The bees that pollinate our crops are dying, our seemingly endless reserves of natural spring water are being depleted, our livestock is diseased and kept alive almost miraculously by a cocktail of medicines. Never before have we been closer to man-made environmental catastrophe; never before have we been threatened by such destructive weaponry.

This is the world we live in: a world of constant dichotomy, constant uncertainty and constant peril. This is why we are at a unique moment in history. Now, and only now, do we exist in this balance: we have

achieved so much, just enough to become aware that there remains so much to be achieved. And we must achieve it.

We must overcome political squabbles in the face of the issues that are severe enough to break us. We must eliminate poverty and homelessness. We must push for equal rights amongst genders; and we must extend human rights to those in lack of them. We must protect our environment while developing our industry to the needs of a new economy, and we must eliminate the dangers to our food production. We must find renewable alternatives to our natural resources while increasing their availability. We must not extend aid, but eliminate the need for it.

This task is undoubtedly a daunting one, but it comes down to us. This is the task of our generation: to overcome the failures of our predecessors, and to secure our progress toward a better world. It is larger than life, but it can be accomplished: the power that each of us holds is inconceivable, and its underestimation is what limits us; but it is there, latent, ready to be exercised. Now is when we hold this power, and now is when we must exercise it.

This is what we believe in, and this is what we are working toward. We want to gather those who are passionate about these issues, passionate about enacting change, and push the limits of what these individuals can achieve. We want to voice our concerns about the picture we paint of the world and offer, in its place, alternative, solution-oriented ideas on how we can tackle the most pressing issues of our time.

Letter from the Editor

Hello, here is some text without a meaning. This text should show what a printed text will look like at this place. If you read this text, you will get no information. Really? Is there no information? Is there a difference between this text and some nonsense like “Huardest gefburn”? Kjift – not at all! A blind text like this gives you information about the selected font, how the letters are written and an impression of the look. This text should contain all letters of the alphabet and it should be written in of the original language. There is no need for special content, but the length of words should match the language.

Part II

Long Reads

In Defence of Giving Foreigners Our Tax Money

DYLAN SPRINGER

On 22 October U.S. President Donald Trump threatened to cut foreign aid to Guatemala, the Honduras, and El Salvador. The justification he provided is that a large caravan full of the citizens of these three countries is currently headed through Mexico towards the U.S. border. The people on the caravan are reportedly fleeing violence and poor economic conditions at home, and many hope to find family and a means of supporting themselves amongst the sizeable immigrant communities in the U.S.

At the core of Trump's complaint is a simple maxim of common sense – a thought process which goes something like this: 'We're sending all these people so much money, we are paying for their education, their healthcare, their jobs – and all the while our own people suffer'. This idea is not new, or particular to the United States. Noted the BBC last year, when the British government announced it was reducing the amount of money it spent on foreign aid: 'Some people think the UK shouldn't be helping people overseas while cutting services at home'.

I will make three arguments in support of foreign aid. First, we are not giving something away and getting nothing in return: foreign aid benefits both the sender and the receiver in real, tangible ways. Secondly, the money most Western countries do spend on foreign aid is a drop in the bucket, fiscally speaking. And, finally, that the little our governments do in the name of genuine humanitarianism and altruism is worth fighting for.

In the summer of 1947 George C. Marshall, Secretary of State under U.S. President Harry Truman and a distinguished general who had seen action in the Philippines, France, and China, made an address at Harvard University. The subject was Europe: it was in absolute ruins. The recent war had wrecked the Continent's infrastructure, precipitated the worst refugee crisis the world had ever

seen, and utterly annihilated a generation of young men. Worse yet, Marshall said, was the state of its economy. For over a decade Europe's nations large and small had been on a strong war footing – every man, woman, and child invested in small some measure in the production of armaments and the support of the war effort. Now the war was over and the factories were destroyed or, unneeded, left vacant. Marshall was proposing that the United States – a country which at that time was in possession of half the world's total wealth but only 6% of its population – should finance Europe's recovery. 'The remedy lies in... restoring the confidence of the European people in the economic future of their own countries and of Europe as a whole', he said.

The American people needed a good reason why they should spend such a relatively large amount of cash on a bunch of foreigners, and Marshall had one. The plan's purpose, he said, 'should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist'. He was talking about the Reds. We need Europe to be rich and enjoy American-style Western luxuries, he was saying, so that they don't vote for Communists. At the time it was a very real threat. Only a few months after Marshall made his speech at Harvard, the CIA would soon be forced to hand-deliver bags of cash to Italian politicians to stop the country from electing a leftist coalition (which was itself funded by the Soviets). Like the Marshall Plan, this was foreign aid under another name.

America and its allies have become accustomed to using foreign aid as a way to achieve their political goals. Proponents of foreign aid argue that the entire world benefits from liberal democratic capitalism, especially the biggest and most economically powerful liberal democracies (America and its allies). This argument does not convince everyone. A lot of people could not care less about the flowering of freedom and democracy in all parts of the world. To those people I would say that countries like Britain and America actually do get quite a lot in return. The countries we send money to let us put our soldiers and ships in their cities and ports; and when overall conditions in those countries improve, fewer refugees reach our shores. Foreign aid helps our P.R., greases the wheels of diplomacy, enhances our national security, and advances our national interests. This is why Trump's threat to cut aid to Central American countries is counterproductive. If he is angry about the caravan of desperate migrants, he should consider sending more aid, not less. They would not be fleeing their home countries if

they were able to lead adequate lives there.

Furthermore, we should avoid becoming too complacent in the midst of Western luxury and hegemony. Liberal democracy is dealing with perhaps its greatest threat since the fall of Communism. It faces opposition from all corners of the globe. In the Middle East and amongst the marginalised communities of the West, radical Islam holds significant pull. China has recently been more aggressive in exporting its particular brand of technocratic totalitarianism, using its own foreign aid and investment programs like the One Belt One Road initiative to curry significant power and influence in Africa on the Eurasian continent. And, to name just one more example out of many, Europe and America are continually fending off a newly-resurgent Russia under the extremely capable Vladimir Putin. In short, the logic of the Marshall Plan is far from irrelevant today

It should also be stressed that, in governmental terms, we are talking about chump change. Britain spends 0.7% of its gross national income – or about 70 pence for every hundred pounds made in Britain – on foreign aid. And even that is considerably higher than the world average. Any reasonable cost-benefit analysis would come down in favour of foreign aid.

Finally, it should not go unsaid that some things are worth doing simply because they are right. We who live in advanced, industrialised economies like the Britain, America, and Japan are very rich. Those who live in developing, agrarian or manufacturing-heavy economies like Nigeria, India, and Pakistan are often very poor. Morally and ethically speaking, it is our duty to help alleviate their suffering, and, in doing so, also help ourselves.

We live in a totally new era in which it has become – perhaps for the first time, and possibly owing to the extreme interconnectedness of the world economy – genuinely in our interest for nation-states to do the right thing. We would be fools not to take advantage of this unique moment in history.

The Moral Responsibility in Foreign Aid

Does the United Kingdom have a moral responsibility to give foreign aid to its former colonial possessions?

The issue (and expense) of foreign aid is often discussed with reference to the United Kingdom's erstwhile days as an imperial superpower. One argument that is consistently debated is whether or not Britain has a special moral obligation to give foreign aid to its former colonial possessions, as some sort of compensation for the time that they had to endure British rule. The purpose of this essay is therefore to determine the validity of this claim. It seemed appropriate to chose India as a case study: Britain's empire was far too large to warrant anything other than an analysis of one fragment of it, and its prominence within the Empire and the British national psyche (i.e. India was the "Jewel in the Crown" of Britain's empire) meant that India was a natural choice. Whilst this does mean that conclusions of this essay cannot necessarily be extrapolated, it certainly appears that there is no moral imperative demanding that Britain give exceptionally generously to states within its old empire. This is not to undermine the case for giving foreign aid, but merely to say that Britain's former subjects (in this case, India) should not be subject to special treatment.

British rule in India commenced with the passing into law of the 1858 Government of India Act, which liquidated the British East India Company, bestowed all Company property, assets, and responsibilities to the Crown, and ended Company Rule in India. The new British Raj would rule India until 1947. This period of Indian history has caused much debate, with opinion polarised on whether the subcontinent benefitted from or was exploited by the British Empire and each conclusion leads to different thoughts on the moral aspect to Britain's foreign aid. India was undoubtedly changed forever by the British Raj but, to my mind, I think to assess whether Crown Rule either benefitted or harmed India is ultimately an exercise in

futility. The history of Direct Rule in India is complex, and the immense amount of evidence that we have does not lend itself to reductive or crude labelling as it indicates that the British both demonstrably hurt and helped India. Therefore, I think that to definitively prove that British colonial rule in India did more harm than good (or vice versa) is fundamentally impossible, and therefore there is no moral necessity in the United Kingdom's foreign aid to India.

There is, however, a case to be made that British Imperialism inhibited the growth of the Indian economy and prosperity on the subcontinent. Britain's attitude towards Indian industrial development was lukewarm, and largely left to locals. Any development was dictated by Britain's own interests, and as such economic growth under the Raj was essentially stagnant, rarely exceeding 1% a year, and negative growth was not uncommon. Britain wished to protect their own manufacturing interests and encourage their own industrial revolution, and thus India experienced large-scale deindustrialisation under the Raj, with India's industrial output collapsing from a 25% share of global output in 1700 to less than 3% in 1880. The number of Indians employed in manufacturing also greatly declined under British rule, as the share of Indians working in manufacturing, mining, and construction fell from 28.4% of the workforce in 1881 to just 12.4 in 1911, again implying that the British presided over steep industrialisation in India. And, not only this, but economist Angus Maddison estimated that India's share of global GDP sharply declined from 24.4% in 1700 to a mere 4.2% in 1950. Jawaharlal Nehru thought that India's economic decline was solely a result of British colonial policy, citing tariffs, protectionism, and the fact that the British did nothing to help nurture Indian industry. It would seem, then, that the British Raj oversaw a period of great economic decline in India, did nothing to abate it, and may have even worked to cause it. If this were the whole case, it would seem self-evident that Britain owed India money in foreign aid.

However, there is ample evidence to suggest that British colonial rule benefited India economically. Firstly, whilst statistics are useful, they cannot tell us everything, and certainly tell us nothing of the economic life of most Indians. For example, India's large share of global GDP in 1700 does not necessarily mean that everyone in India was immensely wealthy or had a high standard of living. In fact, the British provided the good governance, law, and order over the whole subcontinent that enabled Indian trade to grow and facilitated modern economic development, as "were [The British] to leave In-

dia or Ceylon, they would have no customers at all; for, falling into anarchy, they would cease at once to export their goods to us and to consume our manufactures." The economic history of the Raj is further complicated by the fact that the village economy (the sector that represented three quarters of the entire population) saw their after-tax income increase from 27% to 54%, and that by 1914 the British had invested £400 million into Indian infrastructure, irrigation, and industry. Further, the British has increased the area of irrigated land eight fold. In fact, by the 1920s, India was ranked sixth in a table of industrial nations, and industrial titans like Jamsetji Tata proved that the British were not opposed to Indian industrial development. Thus, the economic legacy of the Raj is unclear, and divining the 'truth' of India's economy impractical. India's economy both benefitted from British rule and was harmed by it, and the evidence does not definitively point either way. Therefore, there can be no moral imperative behind any money Britain decides to give to India now.

However, we should not solely examine economics: British colonial rule in India could also be said to have harmed Indian society as a whole. The British presided over some of the worst human tragedies in Indian history, including numerous famines that claimed millions of people's lives, different episodes of military suppression and massacre, and, perhaps most famously, the partition of India in 1947. The Great Famine of 1876-78, by way of example, claimed the lives of some estimated over four million people across British India. The British, amazingly, exported grain from Bombay during this period, resulting in a 'grain drain' in the region, and thus greatly exacerbating the famine. The Amritsar Massacre in 1919 also provides a clear example of British colonial rule harming India, as Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer ordered his men to open fire of an enclosed crowd of twenty thousand peaceful demonstrators, killing up to a thousand people, and only ordering them to stop when they ran out of ammunition. Not only this, but the British, seeking a quick exit from India, hastily partitioned their Indian Empire, and in the process caused a refugee crisis unparalleled in history, with communal violence claiming the lives of hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of people. This communal violence was compounded by the long-standing British policy of 'divide and rule', in which Muslims and Hindus were pitted against each other in order to make India easier to control and govern. All of these atrocities occurred under the Raj, and so British colonial rule definitely harmed Indian society.

However, whilst these events were undoubtedly horrible, I think it is too crude to say that they were the direct result of British Imperial policy, and so the question of whether British colonial rule harmed India remains unclear. Partition, for example, was not a simple expression of colonial policy, rather the only way that Louis Mountbatten could ensure Indian independence without sparking an Indian civil war (which would have killed far more people). There were other forces that brought about partition, such as Jinnah's absolute refusal to consider the possibility of a united India. The Amritsar massacre was similarly complex, and owes more to the thoughtless actions of Reginald Dyer than any coherent or planned colonial policy. Winston Churchill, hardly India's champion, called the Amritsar massacre "an extraordinary event, a monstrous event, an event that stands in singular and sinister isolation", and Asquith condemned it as "one of the worst outrages in the whole of our history." The complexity of these tragedies and the incredible variety of factors that caused them makes it very difficult to apportion blame (to the Raj or otherwise) and again demonstrates that assessing the harm of British colonial rule is incredibly difficult. This seems to undermine the moral case for Britain giving foreign aid to India in the modern era.

To complicate the issue further, there is clear evidence that British rule benefitted Indian society. An 1895 government report on the situation in the North-West frontier of India noted that the local population hailed the British as liberators that brought wealth and justice to a region that had previously been ruled by tyrants. Resolutions of the Indian National Congress show that the British, far from wanting to completely oppress and disenfranchise Indians, were happy to give them political representation. Indeed, Congress had the blessing of the British. The rediscovery and reinvention of Indian history and culture was also the direct result of British scholars, who wanted to unearth India's rich and hidden past. It was also the British colonial government that broke down the archaic barriers of caste, religion, and race, which undoubtedly benefitted millions of Indians. Paradoxically, Indian nationalism and the unified Indian state could not have existed without the Raj; under British rule Indians ceased to be merely Bengali, Punjabi, or Tamil, and began to identify as Indian. The yearning for freedom and self-determination was based on the acceptance of British liberal values, and thus the modern, unified, and democratic state of India was created under British auspices. So, whilst Indian society undoubtedly suffered at the hands of the British, it benefitted as well, and British colonial

rule in India is again reduced to a crass balance sheet, with the evidence not pointing decidedly either way.

We have an incredible wealth of information about the British Raj, and much ink has been spilt on the topic of the British Empire in India. However, the evidence is so variegated that it is impossible to make a meaningful judgement as to whether British colonial rule either harmed or benefited India. Britain didn't even have jurisdiction over a third of India (which remained in the hands of the Maharajas) and this exemplifies the difficulty in assessing the harm of colonial rule. Identifying all of the effects of British rule and attributing them an appropriate weight in a cost-benefit analysis of the British Raj is just impossible to do.

Thus, anyone stressing the moral necessity of British foreign aid to India is ignoring the complexity of history: there is simply no solid base on which to build a 'moral' case for foreign aid to India. To reiterate points made at the beginning, this is not a case against foreign aid as a whole, and this certainly was not an attempt to exempt Britain from giving foreign aid. Rather, it was an attempt to demonstrate that India and other former colonies do not represent special cases on the world stage and that, when considering where the foreign aid budget should go, Britain should not prioritise countries it once ruled, but should continue look to other objectives such as need, efficacy, and consistency with current foreign policy.

The Most Powerful Climate Lie

In the wake of the IPCC's stark deadline of a dozen years to pull back from the brink of climate catastrophe, it is time for immediate action. This action begins with challenging the most destructive and pervasive lie about climate change: that it's all on us.

This month the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) released their assessment of the consequences of a 1.5 degree rise in the Earth's temperature since pre-industrial times, and a 2 degree rise. The latter, the agreed limit set by the Paris Agreement three years ago, is now known to be a drastic overestimate. Half a degree rise from the 1.5 degree threshold means an unprecedented risk to the world's most vulnerable people. On our current trajectory, we are set to surpass this by 2030. These climate prospects, while bleak, are possibly avoidable. The requirement for this is, simply, "rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society" thereby halving cumulative carbon emissions within the next twelve years. Given the context of this call for immediate response by the world's leading climate scientists, it is time to revisit our climate narrative.

Media focus on our guilt-ridden, complacent lifestyle choices - from the meat industry, to driving, to having more than one child - willfully play into the hands of those who possess the real monopoly on our climate. The fact that two thirds of all man-made global warming emissions have been traced back to 90 companies, highlights just how out of sync our focus on the individual is. Carbon emissions are still climbing. The answer, so we are told, lies in the individual. If we all change our habits for the better we can fix the problem. The problem with this is that "we", the individuals, the hegemonic voices of mainstream environmentalism, aren't everyone. In the global context, "we" are the ones with the money, and the ones doing the most harm. It is no coincidence that the richest 10% are responsible for more than half the world's fossil fuel emissions, situated where the scale of climate impact is smaller. In the global context, considering the geographically unequal effects of climate change, it is the effectivity of the richest nations that deter-

mines the safety of the environments projected to be hit worst. Domestically, the hegemonic focus on ethical consumerism as a means of mitigating climate change - from organic produce to electric cars - is only feasible for the affluent. The economic exclusivity of current environmental solutions means that individual actions cannot make the decisive difference needed to tackle carbon emissions, it is going to take greater social movements - starting at the source.

As of now, fossil industries are being allowed to continue to quietly and diligently profiteer from pushing us closer to the 1.5 degree threshold, all the while, fielding no accountability for the environmental damages they are inflicting globally. They are also in no plan to stop soon. To have hope of staying below a two-degree increase, scientists estimate we can pour roughly 565 more gigatons of CO2 into the atmosphere by 2050. Most scarily, according to the Carbon Tracker Initiative, the carbon (in proven coal, oil and gas reserves) that fossil fuel companies intend to release is five times that amount - 2795 gigatons. According to the same report, is Exxon burns its current reserves it would bring us 7% closer to the 2-degree point. As of now, fossil fuel lobbying and corporate donations puppeteering democracy have blocked most attempts to limit their impact. All the while the burdening the state with the massive task of paying for climate-ready infrastructure and picking up the pieces after the ever-increasing number of "natural" disasters.

Media narratives of climate blame are too focused on individual responsibility. This is, at best, a misplaced response for the immediacy that mitigation requires, at worst, a tool used by industries that are working to render those efforts insignificant. The steady and slow dismantling of the fossil fuel industry in response to shifts in consumer demand is not going to cut it on our updated climate timeline. The most immediate way to halt climate change is to hit those who are profiteering from the destruction of the planet where it really hurts - in the wallet. This will take unprecedented social action put financial pressure on oil and gas companies through divestment campaigns, corporate accountability efforts and targeting banks and financial institutions. On top of this, massive social political movements are necessary to regulate corporations, to take back transport, utilities and energy grids back into public control, and to raise taxes to fund massive investment in climate-ready infrastructure and renewable energy. Only in these economic systems will individuals really count - when environmental choices are for everyone, not just the affluent.

Part III

Quick Takes

Cannabis Legalisation

Currently, the black market for cannabis in the UK is worth £ 2.6bn; cannabis is sold to over 3 million people a year. The Win-Win-Win of legalising cannabis, [21]as it was described by the Institute of Economic Affairs, has interesting effects on the political and economic landscape. Just like tobacco and alcohol, if cannabis became legalised, it would be distributed and sold in a regulated way. This would allow it to be taxed. Is this the biggest issue in party politics?

Currently cannabis is sold and distributed through a black market of organised crime. The strength of the drug is not regulated, and neither is money generated through its sale. The consequences of this are felt by the taxpayer in higher policing costs and costs relating to mental health. Generally, there seem to be two schools of thought: decimalisation and legalisation. The former would treat possession of the drug as something as minor as a parking offence, while legalisation would allow free access and usage.

A vision for the future could make buying cannabis as easy as buying a pint of beer, with similar age restrictions and tax levels. Proponents of this model talk about the benefits to the end user. With regulated supply and quality, the drug would be of a higher quality than many people can get off a street corner. The reduced demand on policing and hospitals could be as large as £ 300bn per year. The political motivations for this seem clear. With the younger voters becoming increasingly disenchanted with politicians, and in particular the Conservative Party, I was sure that this would be a vote winner.

But legalisation is problematic. Firstly there are political issues. A BMG [22]research poll from 2018 found that only 51% of people supported legalisation understood as 'making it as accessible as tobacco and alcohol.' Results from a You Gov [23]survey has revealed that a small majority of people would back a relaxation of the law. This small majority can hardly justify a change in the law, and even if it did, it would struggle to break the inertia of politics to be done quickly.

But let us put the political issues

aside for a moment and consider the tax model for this proposal. Creating the right level of taxation is important. Too high, and you do not discourage the black-market; too low, and it does not generate revenue to make it worthwhile. Across the Atlantic, in the states of Colorado, Washington and California, which have legalised cannabis, black markets have flourished due to the high prices caused by excessive taxation. In the IEA 2018 report, they propose a VAT plus an excise tax, which they estimate would generate £ 690m directly, and would save public services £ 300m a year. An NGO[24] has estimated the potential benefits of legalisation much higher at £ 3.5bn.

It is hard to find a rational argument to support the existing legislation. While legalisation seems to promote a healthier form of the drug, it wouldn't necessarily increase consumption. That is putting aside the wider societal benefits of legalisation which have already been discussed. This view is echoed by William Hauge, who [25]said that the current law is "inappropriate, ineffective and utterly out of date." But just because it is rational doesn't mean it will be supported by votes, as the evidence shows. Thus, while a change in the law is likely, there is considerable political inertia against it.

Designer Babies

Human birth, in the way most people conceptualise it, entails a natural life process of one human giving birth to another. However, as of 2018, human birth can no longer be restricted to this definition. With processes such as in vitro fertilisation (IVF), babies can be grown outside of the mother's womb. With the rise of "test tube babies" has come the possibility for parents to handpick a child's genes. Though socioeconomic factors put limitations on the number of parents with access to the genetic modification of their children, the moral and political implications of genetic modification render it an important topic. With genetic modification, parents can control the sex of a child, their physical characteristics, and in some cases, even enhance their intelligence.

The advancement of biotechnology seems to be developing at such a rapid pace that society has neglected to consider the ethical ramifications of this new technology. Both state governments, like the United States and the United Kingdom, and supranational organisations like the European Union are struggling to create policies and laws to protect and contain the potential consequences of these genetically modified humans. This article will attempt to outline the ethical consequences these international governments face by legalising the unadulterated genetic modification of humans. The argument against genetic modification will be split into three concise sections: the argument for freedom, the slippery slope argument, and the argument for equality.

To begin, it is important to set aside the argument of whether or not genetically modifying babies is ethical, and for a moment consider a larger question of freedom. Though this might seem like a strategic diversion by avoiding the harder question in favour of an existential one, this question is pertinent to the argument. Freedom, in the way most people understand it, is the ability to think, feel, and act as one pleases. To be free is to have the ability steer one's life in whatever direction one chooses. However, this freedom, this ability to create one's own destiny, is compromised by genetic modification.

Prior to genetic modification, children are born with varying abilities. Some are athletically gifted, others blessed with musical talent, and some conceived with unbelievable minds. These unique gifts are not predetermined but naturally inherited. With parents choosing their children's genetics, the life of these babies encompasses a sudden predetermination that has never been dealt with before. To illustrate, if a child is genetically modified to be tall, fast, and slender, with the object of their becoming an NFL quarterback, an individual's personal autonomy is compromised. While most parents hope their children are athletic, often forcing them into sports camps and primary school teams, altering the genetic makeup of a child is a different measure – it inherently makes the playing field uneven.

In addition to tampering with the innate abilities of humans, genetic modification jeopardises the concept of "free will". While some will argue that the genetically modified children are still free to make their own decisions, this argument does not successfully dismiss the issue. To illustrate, Michael Jordan is universally agreed to be an accomplished basketball player. However, Jordan was not merely born with his endurance, speed, and precision. He worked hard to earn his title. Though parents have the ability to force their children to play sports, there is a difference between being forced to play sports and being genetically engineered to play sports. Children can resist their parents and refuse to play a sport, however, children do not have the ability to refuse genetic modification. The differentiation between being 'forced' and being 'engineered' creates the issue of a child's free will.

If designer children are merely engineered to have these talents, the definition of hard work, skill, and success becomes obscured. Without genetic modification, Jordan had to demonstrate agency and a strong work-ethic, devoting his time and money to become professional basketball player. If Jordan was designed to be an excellent basketball player, his success and accomplishments would seem less commendable. While Jordan chose to be a basketball player, the genetically modified child did not. Critics might respond by saying that even with these genetic advantages, one would nevertheless have to possess a strong work ethic. Though this is probable, it does not defeat the argument that, in terms of athleticism, the genetically engineered child will still have an innate advantage.

As wisely stated by ethicist Michael Sandler, "rather than employ our new genetic power to straighten the crooked timber of humanity, we should do what we

can to create social and political arrangements more hospitable to the gifts and limitations of imperfect human beings." Instead of creating the "perfect NFL player", society should recognise the imperfect player who works and trains to overcome obstacles, showing a better command over their life success than a human that is merely designed to be perfect. Perfection eliminates failure, and without failure, the meaning of success begs for a revised definition.

With human's individual autonomy at risk, it is also important to address what the legalisation of "designer babies" could mean in a legal sense for international governments such as those of the European Union. In January [21]EU Advocate General Michal Bobek attempted to begin the discussion regarding how these genetic technologies should be regulated. Many EU representatives feel that genetic modification in humans should be legalised for the sole reason of preventing various diseases. For example, by having access to the genes of a foetus, scientists have the ability to eliminate predisposition to illnesses such as cancer, diabetes, and even blindness. Though scientists do possess the ability to prevent these illnesses, it does not justify them using these technologies without assessing the implications of their actions.

Diseases such as diabetes and various cancerous cells are recognised as detrimental ailments that have robbed humans of their lives for countless years. However, while eliminating these genes may have beneficial short term effects, its long term consequences massively outweigh its benefits. While cancer and diabetes are universally deemed as "bad" sicknesses, handicaps such as blindness or deafness may incur more debate.

For example, in 2008 a deaf couple in the United Kingdom, Tomato and her partner Paula, wished to have a deaf child. Their first child was coincidentally born deaf. Preparing for their second child, Paula and Tomato wanted to use IVF to produce another deaf child. However, according to [22]parliament's clause 14/4/9, the selection of a hearing child through IVF is permitted, but, embryos found to have deafness genes will be automatically discarded. The case of Tomato and Paula showed the United Kingdom's implicit preference for individuals who have normal hearing capabilities. This offended the international deaf community causing those such as Steve Emery, a sign language expert at Heriot Watt University to speak out. Emery publicly stated, "This clause sends out a clear and direct message that the UK government thinks deaf people are better off not being born." With handicaps such as deafness, it seems a moral overstep to allow the government

to decide what traits are beneficial for survival and what traits should be seen as a malfunction in need of correction. If the EU Health Council decides to legalise genetic modification in respect to correcting illnesses and genetic predispositions, normal traits such as hearing and sight will be labelled as superior, those with atypical characteristics to be deemed as lesser. This will create a whole new class system within Europe, those who were groomed to be genetically superior, and those who have atypical human functions.

The slippery slope that occurs when genetic modification is legalised for "health" reasons shows that even an inherently good action can have substantial consequences. While a world free of cancer and diabetes appears a utopia, with closer examination, this idealistic visions fades away into a hellion dystopia. If the ability to eliminate precancerous genes became available, it would only be accessible to the wealthy. This would create a class system of those who are genetically "superior" and those who either could not afford to be "designed" at birth or those who chose not to be. This reality would be eerily similar to the warnings of movies like Gattaca or television programs such as Black Mirror. Though an extreme comparison, Hitler's eugenics vision, of a "perfect race" would seem to be similar to the "genetically perfect" Europeans, Americans, or British, that would come from a genetically modified DNA.

As philosopher Immanuel Kant once said, "human beings are ends in themselves, worthy of respect." To tamper with the genes of a future human, to predetermine their characteristics without weighing the political, legal, and ethical consequences of these actions, seems nothing less than a neglect of human dignity. In the words of Michael Sandler, "to change our nature to fit the world, rather than the other way around, is actually the deepest form of disempowerment." We as humans have the responsibility to work through adversity, seeing the beauty in imperfection. Great ideas and innovations stem from atypical individuals such as Albert Einstein or Vincent Van Gogh. Einstein did not read or speak until he was five, being diagnosed with severe autism. Van Gogh had depression. These two men changed the course of history, not despite their imperfections, but because of them: Einstein with his mathematical break-throughs and Van Gogh with his transformation of modern art. Simply put, imperfection within humans should be championed, not treated as a problem begging a solution.

The Ethics of Self-Driving Cars

The advent of self-driving cars has had mixed results: on the one hand, it is important technological progress that bears witness to our enduring ingenuity and the possibility of ambitious change; on the other, it has served as a testament to how wholly unprepared the global community is to face widespread technological change whose impact on human activity is uncertain.

One issue that has garnered some attention in the recent debate over self-driving cars and defining their role within our societal framework is the question of how they should 'react' to critical situations in which the occurrence of an accident is almost certain.

An excellent [21]article in The Saint by Mr. Martin George provides a good elucidation of the question, and the different considerations that it implies. The central consideration in this question seems to be how self-driving cars should prioritise the safety of the individuals involved in these critical situations. In his piece, Mr. George draws attention to a recent effort by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to understand our intuitions on this very issue. MIT's project, dubbed 'The Moral Machine,' presents us with variations of one basic scenario: a self-driving car is in a set of circumstances that will inevitably lead to an accident involving both passengers and pedestrians. In each variation of this scenario, we are asked to indicate whose lives the car should prioritise. These scenarios play around with several variables: how many passengers and pedestrians there are; whether they are humans or animals; male or female; old or young; employed or not; rich or poor; and whether pedestrians are jaywalking or not.

In short, MIT's 'Moral Machine' is looking to discern the traits that we consider most valuable. The results, so far, show that ceteris paribus we tend to prioritise humans over animals; pedestrians over passengers; young over old; female over male; employed over unemployed; and rich over poor. At first glance, this seems intuitive enough. The 'Moral Machine' asks us: who should be saved? We answer: those who are most useful to society.

Mr George's piece calls for a "global conversation" on how we are to make this calculus, how we are to decide who is more valuable. This is seems self-evident: despite the unsurprising general trends that we see in the results from the 'Moral Machine,' it is clear that the question is not one that elicits a unanimous answer. I will not seek to argue for a particular methodology in carrying out this calculus; nor will I focus on discrediting the moral foundation of such a calculus – one needn't possess a superior intellect to see that attempting to ascribe value to the life of particular individuals is riddled with difficulties both moral and practical. Rather, I will argue that to propose such a calculus in the context of self-driving cars is wholly inappropriate.

In discussing such a calculus and its inclusion in the algorithms governing self-driving cars, we are committing ourselves to two alternative conclusions, both of which are troubling.

The first is that, if we incorporate such a calculus into self-driving cars, and in turn equip these cars with the tools necessary to judge, in varying situations, the individuals whose lives should be prioritised, we are giving these cars moral agency – the ability to make decisions that have a moral dimension. Whether this agency is legitimate, of course, is part of the larger debate over all forms of artificial intelligence, and whether they should be allowed to have human-like privileges. We have no time to engage with this debate here, and regardless of what we would conclude, I venture that it is not appropriate to allow cars, in essence, to legally decide to save one individual at the expense of another – or, in a different framing, to kill one individual in order to save another. Cars should not be making moral decisions, and the mere prospect of this possibility would fit so poorly within our modern legal system that it would require a comprehensive remodelling of our conception of corporate individuality.

The alternative is that we are not, in fact, endowing self-driving cars with moral agency. Instead, we are simply incorporating into their operating systems a set of guidelines by which they are to judge an appropriate course of action – in other words, a process analogous to that of activating breaks when another car is detected in proximity. This leads to equally, if not more troubling implications: it would mean either that corporations, or, if the global community does engage in the debate that Mr. George advocates in his piece, governments, are deciding who in a society is valuable, and sanctioning, when it comes to it, the sacrifice of those less valuable for the sake of those more valuable. This is unacceptable on several grounds.

First, if we value individual freedom – and we often congratulate ourselves on doing so in the liberal-democratic West – what amounts to being arbitrarily killed is in clear violation of even the weakest conceptions of freedom. Second, this evaluation sets a dangerous precedent for any number of similar calculuses, and indeed gives corporations or governments an alarming degree of control not just over how we lead our lives, but also over whether we are entitled to life at all. I admit that some might dismiss this further point as a slippery slope, but consider this: if we deem it acceptable in certain circumstances for corporations or governments to decide who should live or die based on their value of society, consistency dictates (in the spirit of Kant) that we also deem such decisions acceptable when universalised; in other words, if we deem it acceptable for corporations or governments to make such decisions, we should also accept them on a larger scale – read: accept genocide carried out for socioeconomic reasons, for instance, in cases of marked scarcity. I believe we can all agree that genocide is not, in fact, acceptable.

It follows from this brief discussion, I think, that we should not allow self-driving cars to make decisions or judgements that are ultimately of a moral character. This is not to say that we should shy away from the extraordinary potential that technology has to improve wellbeing on a global scale. I am not contesting the fact that self-driving cars should, of course, avoid accidents insofar as there is freedom to do so; but in circumstances in which an accident is inevitable, there should be no moral-evaluative calculus. In these circumstances, it cannot be decided which individuals will suffer the worst outcomes – the result must follow, in the first instance, the blind guidelines of the law (this is to say, if a younger, more 'socially useful' pedestrian puts herself in harms way by jaywalking, an older, altogether less productive passenger must not be sacrificed); and follow, in the second instance, the blind results of chance – we should certainly not take the infamous trolley problem as the blueprint for every accident involving self-driving cars.

Mr. George is right in calling for a global discussion on the future of self-driving cars; but this discussion should not be centred on the calculus to be carried out by these cars in dire circumstances – it should, instead, be geared toward mitigating the inevitable difficulties arising from individual cars with autonomous systems that developed by independent companies all operating within the same societal framework. There is much space for discussion on this matter, but we should all agree on one thing: self-driving cars should not be making moral

decisions, whether based on our value "preferences" or on a simple utilitarian calculus. The results of these decisions would essentially amount to sanctioned executions, and this is unacceptable.

For further reading on the topic, see [22]another useful exploration of the question by Mr. Kyle Van Oosterum, also a student at the University of St Andrews.

For curious minds, try out MIT's '[23]Moral Machine' for yourselves.

Part IV

Reviews

Hit Refresh

The guiding principle behind Hit Refresh is apparent from its first chapter, in which Nadella introduces himself, not as a CEO, but simply as a person. Indeed, the first part of the book concerns itself almost entirely with detailing Nadella's background, from infancy to adulthood, and emphasising some crucial elements: his relationship with his parents, his early struggles in the United States, and the moment he learned that his first child would be born with cerebral palsy.

To me, the intention of this first part is to prevent our perception of its author as little more than a walking job title. A glance at today's corporate industry shows us why: more often than not, executives live their titles, some even are their companies (think Bezos or Musk). Nadella's contention: that leaders should be understood, first and foremost, as human beings.

This understanding certainly shouldn't be limited to leaders – everyone should attempt to understand each other. This might seem like an innocuous suggestion, but it represents a significant paradigm shift in corporate culture: the transition to praising understanding over perfection, and commending learning over unambiguous track records.

Of course, as John Rossman remarked in his recent [21]book on Amazon, leaders must be right – a lot. Nadella doesn't dispute this, but proposes instead that the cornerstone of leadership should be empathy, and not performance. Performance, he argues, is heightened by a better understanding of the needs of others.

This is not a novel idea: studies of leadership teams and executives have found that those with a higher emotional quotient [22]perform better than their counterparts in similar situations. These studies also tell us, however, that executives tend to be least empathetic group – and this is why I find Hit Refresh significant: Nadella not only sees empathy as a necessary quality in leaders, but understands his own ability to empathise as the premise of his success at Microsoft, especially in his role as CEO. "Listening," he writes, "was the most important thing I accomplished

each day."

It is truly encouraging and inspiring to see a new generation of leaders, Nadella among them, working to reform the culture of their companies with this guiding principle in mind. Companies need to shift from Friedman's destructive [23]concept of shareholder primacy toward creating long-term value for their employees, their investors, their customers, and most importantly, future generations.

For more information on the book, see [24]Hit Refresh by Satya Nadella.

Natural Capital

Dieter Helm does an excellent job of lucidly explaining the concept of Natural Capital – a subject unfamiliar to most readers, most of which myself. Helm's basic concept is to put an economic value on environmental goods and services such as clean water, forests, recreational spaces etc, such that governments would be compelled to account for them in their budgets. This would protect these environmental services and put a halt to the 'tragedy of the commons' – the abuse of natural resources as a result of lacking ownership and thus incentives for maintenance – a process which is running rampant worldwide.

The book begins with a mantra: explaining the mess we are in and why we have to change our approach to evaluating the environment. It then moves on to a more detailed discussion of Natural Capital. In this, it is unique among books concerned with the environment – of which I have read many. Helm makes a convincing case for discrediting the "save everything" mantra, instead advocating a pragmatic approach of compromise, held up by the valuation of assets central to the concept Natural Capital. I challenge anyone to not be an advocate for Natural Capital after reading this book.

Helm appealed to the environmentalist and the pragmatist in me, covering the complicated aspects of accounting for cross-generational costs, and explaining how his approach might be implemented in our economy. He further takes a very positive tone, detailing examples of where this process has been put to use, and how quickly and definitively it can effect progress.

Helm slightly dodges the issue of politics and time scales. If it really is as simple as he makes it out to be, why isn't this approach to our environment already incorporated into our countries' political agenda? Nevertheless, Helm is an economist, and it is an unreasonable expectation for the book to cover this in any sort of detail.

I would highly recommend this book to anyone interested in economics or climate change. The author's abundant knowledge and passion come through in his writing, and his argument is

a thought provoking one: it compelled me to think about the subject in detail and accept his argument, and ultimately enlightened me in an area I knew very little about.

For more information on the book, see [21]Natural Capital by Dieter Helm.

Spaces of Aid

Every day, humanitarian aid workers around the world set off to play their part in lessening the radical and widespread inequality present in our modern, global society. Problematically, the humanitarian aid that the international community provides is typically based on a set of idealised assumptions, what Smirl terms the "humanitarian imaginary." It is this set of assumptions, their connection to physical spaces of aid, and the disassociation that this creates that Smirl sets out to examine in her book.

The physical setting of the aid environment is essential to the formation of relations in the conduct of humanitarian aid, and can be key to understanding the limitations of a mission. Yet since the advent of international aid, true analysis of its environment has remained overlooked.

Spaces of Aid thoroughly examines spaces, objects, and environments, in the context of aid work. The first three chapters focus on the material and spatial environments of the international aid community. This is where the majority of the heavy theoretical discussion takes place. A very clear argument emerges here, which proves how essential an examination of material and spatial environments is to understanding every instance of aid intervention.

Valuable examples – the compound, the SUV, and the luxury hotel – ground the theoretical discussion of spatial relations in reality. Gated compounds, for instance, create distance between the physical environment of the aid workers and the local community, maintaining 'hierarchical spacial divisions' reminiscent of colonialism. Similarly, the presence of security features perpetuates the conception that what exists outside the protective wall is dangerous. Ultimately, these approaches to the physical spaces of aid limit organisations' efficacy in delivering their goals: the physical segregation between aid workers and the communities that they serve only exacerbates their pre-existing socio-emotional distance from them.

Following the theoretical discussion, the remaining two chapters make use of case studies to demonstrate the relationship between the physical and material,

and the international aid worker and the local recipient. These case studies illustrate the manner in which preconceived conceptualisations of recipient communities determine the design of aid missions.

Both Smirl's wealth of knowledge as a scholar, and her experience as a development professional make Spaces of Aid an impressive and ground-breaking analytical work. Its most important take-away: we must not consider spaces of aid as a tabula rasa. Every decision made by aid organisations originates from an outsider's conceptualisation of what the "other" needs and must be recognised as such. We need to eliminate barriers between aid workers and the communities they serve – both physical and perceived – and in so doing heighten organisations' understanding of these communities, an understanding which can be translated into better-designed, more effective humanitarian missions.

For more information on the book see [21]Spaces of Aid by Lisa Smirl.

The Name of the Rose

The world is becoming a safer and more pleasant place for everyone in it. But never before have people felt so isolated and spiritually lost; and, with the advent of nuclear and biological weapons of war, the human race has never been so close to total extinction. We seem perpetually unable to decide whether these times are the greatest in human history or the worst, and we lament that all the scientific advances in the world have not made us happy, or sane, or peaceful.

Perhaps what is needed is a little perspective: the perspective of people from a world totally different to our own. Umberto Eco's 1983 international bestseller The Name of the Rose offers a window into this world in the intriguing form of a 14th-century murder-mystery set in a remote Italian abbey. A key theme in his novel: that we should be skeptical of "prophets," and of "progress," in whatever guise they come.

Today we are accustomed to thinking of "progress" as a linear, positive process. This was not always so. Indeed, until relatively recently, people thought that the world was in an unending state of decline and disorder, ever since the glory days of the Roman Republic, or perhaps even earlier, all the way back to the Garden of Eden. This line of thought is best encapsulated by Eco through the words of his narrator, the novice Adso of Melk:

In the past men were handsome and great (now they are children and dwarves)... The young no longer want to study anything, learning is in decline, the whole world walks on its head, blind men lead others equally blind and cause them to plunge into the abyss... Everything is diverted from its proper course.

Naturally, Adso's complaint is a gross exaggeration, and could easily have been uttered by any crotchety old man from the days of Aristotle to today, but it leads us to another key lesson of The Name of the Rose: the importance of respecting the work done by one's predecessors. It has become common recently, and especially in the field of the social sciences, to discount the opinions and views of the old masters, either because we think they are archaic and useless or because we

find them offensive in one way or another. We are so accustomed to looking forwards to new inventions and ideologies that we too often forget that the best and most useful wisdom is sometimes discovered by looking backwards. This is demonstrated in the way that the protagonist of the novel uses "the logic of Aristotle" and a newly-invented pair of spectacles to decipher encrypted messages and solve a series of brutal murders. The old and the new, working together.

This protagonist, Brother William of Baskerville, provides an excellent role model for the young students and leaders of today. He stresses the importance of appreciating the value of tradition and old knowledge, keeping an open mind, of thinking critically, and expressing caution, moderation, and presence of mind throughout all aspects of life. "The Devil is the arrogance of the spirit, faith without smile, truth that is never seized by doubt," William says. In his own roundabout way, he teaches us how to be virtuous.

You should read this book because of what it says about the "big" philosophical questions, for the role-model to be found in Brother William, and, finally, because it offers a window not only into a different period of time but also into a lost and sorely-needed way of thinking. With such guidance, we may be able to thrive in this terrible and wonderful era of human history.

For more information on the book, see [21]The Name of the Rose by Umberto Eco.

Part V

Closing Remarks

Letter from the President

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