

PDP – David Brooks Commencement Address, Dartmouth, 2015

- Mr. Brooks believes “Agency Moment” occurs somewhere between 28 and 32 years old, with it being defined as the moment when people can 1) independently assess (under their own standards) their loves; and 2) easily prioritize those loves.

- How do you assess Brooks’ theory of “Agency Moment?”
- Does he identify the correct age range for this transformation? What are your thoughts when you consider junior Soldiers? Junior Officers?
- How would you apply diverse life experiences, to include failure and some of the specific scenarios discussed by Chief Justice Roberts in his recent graduation speech (see Lifelong Learning website), to Brooks’ theory? Would they be required to sufficiently assess and test ones “loves?”
- Is Mr. Brooks’ theory limited to his audience or by his own background? If so, how?

- Mr. Brooks distinguishes a career from a vocation, with a career being something one chooses to do and a vocation acting as a calling to selflessly fill a need in the world to make a difference. What are your thoughts on these definitions? How would they apply to the following?

- Junior Soldiers?
- NCOs?
- Junior Officers?
- Senior Officers?
- You?

- Eulogy Virtues vs. Resume Virtues. Mr. Brooks states that making a commitment is a moral act. Moral acts come from moral virtues, which he calls the eulogy virtues. The other category of virtues, characterized as resume virtues, are those qualities you bring to the marketplace.

- How do you assess Mr. Brooks’ views on eulogy and resume virtues?
- On which category does the Army place the most emphasis? How are they captured by our doctrine, especially considering ADPR 1 (The Army Profession) and ADP 6-22 (Army Leadership)?
- With Mr. Brooks’ views in mind, how do you assess our OER and NCOER models? Do we adequately evaluate eulogy virtues? If so, how? If not, how can we improve?
- According to Mr. Brooks, eulogy virtues generally do not have marketplace value. Do they have sufficient value in the Army? Should eulogy virtues be evaluated and considered for career advancement?

- Think back to Brooks’ theory on a person’s “Agency Moment.” For leaders who possess great resume virtues, but little-to-no eulogy virtues (or vice versa), how would such personalities impact one’s “Agency Moment?” When and how would they truly determine their “loves?”

- Can resume and eulogy virtues coexist? Can leaders develop eulogy virtues, notwithstanding success based significantly on resume virtues?