

**Comparing the Principle-Based SBH Maieutic Method to Traditional Case Study  
Methods of Teaching Media Ethics**

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

With a Major in Education

in the

College of Graduate Studies

University of Idaho

by

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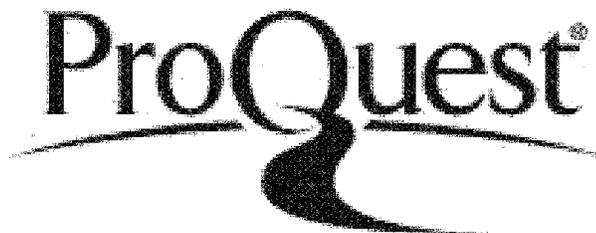


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### Authorization to Submit Dissertation

This dissertation of Thomas A. Grant, submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) with a major in Education and titled "Comparing the Principle-Based SBH Maieutic Method to Traditional Case Study Methods of Teaching Media Ethics," has been reviewed in final form. Permission, as indicated by the signatures and dates given below, is now granted to submit final copies to the College of Graduate Studies for approval.

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### Abstract

This quasi-experimental study at a Northwest university compared two methods of teaching media ethics, a class taught with the principle-based SBH Maieutic Method ( $n=25$ ) and a class taught with a traditional case study method ( $n=27$ ), with a control group ( $n=21$ ) that received no ethics training. Following a 16-week intervention, a one-way ANOVA,  $F(2, 70) = 3.65, p=.031$ , indicated students in the SBH Maieutic Method class made a statistically significant increase in moral reasoning as measured by the DIT2 P score and compared to the control class with Dunnett simultaneous tests ( $p=.0129$ ). The ANOVA indicated the case study group also showed a significant increase in moral reasoning compared to the control group as measured by the DIT2 P score as measured by Dunnett simultaneous tests ( $p=.0279$ ). However, a paired t-test applied to previously unpublished data about another media ethics class ( $n=24$ ) at the same university taught with the same case study curriculum but by another instructor failed to show a significant increase in moral reasoning on the DIT2 P score,  $t(24) = -0.78, p = .443$ . The researcher concluded that three elements of the pedagogy used in both the SBH Maieutic Method class and intervention case study class, but not in the previous case study class, contributed to the increase in moral reasoning. First, an open and trusting classroom environment was created in which students were actively engaged in discussion through Socratic and maieutic method questioning about moral issues, which stimulated the cognitive dissonance necessary for the students' moral growth. Second, students were required to reflect deeply and write at least 20 pages of essays on moral issues, to which the instructor provided quick and comprehensive feedback. Third, the instructor in the intervention classes had significant education in moral philosophy and pedagogy, as well

as support from peers in the moral education field, and promoted a normative philosophy of moral ethics rather than a relativistic view.

## Acknowledgements

As a reporter in television, I learned the importance of collaboration. I worked with many great photographers, and their efforts always made my stories deeper and more thoughtful. Such is the case with this dissertation; much of the important work was contributed by people other than myself.

Dr. Sharon Kay Stoll has been my moral inspiration for more than two decades. I believe her work in the field of moral pedagogy transforms lives, and I am forever grateful that she agreed to share her methods with me. She deserves most of the credit for whatever small contribution this research offers.

I also am deeply indebted to Professor Steve Smith, for if he had not agreed to let me stand on his shoulders, then this research would not have been possible. He deeply cares about finding the best methods of teaching, and I am impressed by his unselfish dedication to excellence.

The members of the dissertation committee have also been extremely helpful. Dr. Kenton Bird, director of the School of Journalism and Mass Media, paved the way for this research by allowing me to take over the ethics instruction for a semester. I also thank Dr. Rick Edgeman and Dr. Allen Kitchel for helping me clearly frame issues and work through difficulties.

Two other faculty members also provided significant contributions. University of Idaho statistics consultant Dr. Michelle Wiest provided invaluable statistical help. Dr. Grace Goc Karp directed my research into journalism pedagogy.

Dr. Clinton Culp, whose research also focuses on the pedagogy of moral reasoning, consulted extensively on this research project. Should there be clear thinking in this document, he deserves much of the credit.

I also thank my peers at the Center for ETHICS\*, Seth Haselhuhn and Dr. Susan Steele, who made life in the tower both fun and challenging. I thank Dr. Jennifer Beller for introducing me to ethics pedagogy many years ago in Michigan. And I thank the students who agreed to take part in this research; my greatest reward is that those students performed so impressively.

I must additionally give immense credit to the late Byron Wiswell, my mother Lorraine Wiswell Grant, and my wife Mary Ann Grant. Their support and sacrifice made this work possible. I have been blessed to share my life with such intelligent and caring people.

**Dedication**

To my father, Joseph Grant, who remains my model of a good man.

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## Chapter One: Introduction

Journalism is a public trust essential to human liberty and as such has a duty and obligation to the truth (Salzburg Seminar Session 396, 2002; Williams, 2011; Patterson & Urbanski, 2006). The primary moral value of journalism is honesty (Lambeth, Christians, Fleming, & Lee, 2004; Patterson & Urbanski, 2006; Society of Professional Journalists, 2011). The prime value of truth-telling and honesty is shared by professional organizations in marketing, advertising, public relations and broadcasting (American Marketing Association, 2011; Institute for Advertising Ethics, 2011; Radio Television Digital News Association, 2011; Public Relations Society of America, 2011). In varying degrees, these media organizations also share moral values of responsibility, beneficence, and justice.

Despite high ideals, many scholars believe modern journalism is facing a crisis of ethics that threatens to undermine its role in maintaining a free and responsible society (Day, 2006; Ward, 2010). Media convergence has blurred lines between media fields of marketing, public relations, and journalism (Jenkins, 2004). Polls show the public is losing its respect and trust for the media (Smith, 2008). This is not a novel concern. Walter Lippman (1929) railed against declines in journalistic standards in the 1920s. In the 1980s and '90s, reacting to continuing concerns about ethics in media, communications schools added an increasing amount of ethics instruction, tripling the number of ethics courses between 1977 and 1993 (Lambeth, Christians, & Cole, 1994). Although the number of ethics courses declined over the next decade, a constant rate of 75 percent of journalism educators maintain the belief that fostering moral reasoning skills of journalism students is indispensable (Lambeth, Christians, Fleming, & Lee, 2004).

More than 90 percent of media ethics classes rely on ethical decision-making case studies and lectures (Lambeth, Christians, & Cole, 1994). Plaisance (2007) says the most effective media ethics educators cultivate students' analytical ability and critical thinking, often with a Socratic approach, to enable them to effectively deliberate ethical problems. However, few researchers have used a pre-test post-test design to evaluate the effect of a media ethics course on students' value systems (Plaisance, 2007). Few studies attempt to assess a change in moral reasoning because of a media ethics class (Yoder & Bleske, 1997; Canary, 2007). Some studies assess changes in student value systems, measuring self-reported attitudes toward responsibility, honesty, fairness and other values (Plaisance, 2007; Surlin, 1987; Black, 1992). Yet, while those studies find some improvements in moral values as a result of ethics courses, the effectiveness of ethics education courses remains a question mark. Studies in Britain and the United States find little evidence of attitudinal change over the course of journalism education (Hanna & Sanders, 2008).

At the University of Idaho, Stoll and Beller (2004) have developed a methodology for teaching moral reasoning to athletes and other competitive populations that they call the SBH Maieutic Method. Research by Barnes (2009) showed the method to be more effective at raising moral reasoning scores than social constructivist approaches. Earlier research by the method's developers also showed the SBH Maieutic Method to be more effective than a teacher-centered lecture approach, and equally effective as a good-reasoned approach in which students discussed scenarios and determined the best course of action (Stoll, Beller, Reall, & Hahm, 1994). The SBH Maieutic Method is based in the work of Kohlberg (1981), Rest (Schlaefli, Rest, & Thoma, 1985), Gill (1993), and Reimer, Paulitto, and Hersch (1983), to name only a few. A central concept of the SBH Maieutic Method, the importance of deep

personal reflection to moral growth, has recently been supported in a large scale study of college students (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, 2010).

In today's world of social media and instant communication, everyone needs media education to help them establish personal standards of truthful moral judgment to guide their own communications (Foley, 2005). Continuing research using control-group designs is necessary to determine which instructional techniques are most effective at training ethically responsible media practitioners (Plaisance, 2007). This study proposes to further that goal by examining whether an effective method created to improve moral reasoning in competitive populations, the principle-based SBH Maieutic Method, can be adapted to develop a more effective method of teaching media ethics than traditional case study methods.

### **Problem Statement**

The purpose of this quasi-experimental study is to compare the principle-based SBH Maieutic Method of teaching ethics and a case-study method of teaching ethics on moral reasoning of communications students at a Northwest university.

### **Independent Variables**

The independent variable is the type of ethics instruction, either case-study based or the principle-based SBH Maieutic Method.

### **Dependent Variables**

The dependent variable is change in moral reasoning score on the Defining Issues Test 2 (DIT2).

### **Sub-problems**

1. What is morality?
2. What is moral reasoning?

3. What is moral development?
4. Why is moral reasoning important to mass media ethics?
5. What is the case-study method of teaching media ethics?
6. What is a principle-based SBH Maieutic Method of teaching media ethics?
7. How do we measure success of teaching media ethics?
8. How do we compare methods of teaching ethics?

### **Statistical Sub-problems**

1. What is the effect of a principle-based SBH Maieutic Method of ethics instruction on moral reasoning scores as measured by the DIT2?
2. What is the effect of a traditional case-study method of ethics instruction on moral reasoning scores as measured by the DIT2?
3. What is the difference in the change in moral reasoning scores as measured by the DIT2 for students in case-study based instruction compared to students in SBH maieutic principle-based instruction?
4. What is the effect by gender of a principle-based SBH Maieutic Method of ethics instruction on moral reasoning scores as measured by the DIT2?
5. What is the effect by media major (journalism, advertising, public relations, or digital communications and broadcasting) of a principle-based SBH Maieutic Method of ethics instruction on moral reasoning scores as measured by the DIT2?

### **Hypothesis Statements and Statistical Null Hypothesis Expressions**

1. Students that are taught media ethics using an SBH Maieutic principle-based method of instruction will show an increase ( $\Delta$ ) in mean moral reasoning P scores on the

DIT2 that is significantly greater than the mean increase ( $\Delta$ ) in DIT2 P scores for a control group of students who received no ethics instruction.

a.  $H_0: \Delta_{sbh} \leq \Delta_{con}$   $H_a: \Delta_{sbh} > \Delta_{con}$

2. Students that are taught media ethics using a traditional case-study method of instruction will show an increase in mean moral reasoning P scores ( $\Delta$ ) as measured by the DIT2 that is significantly greater than the mean increase in DIT2 P scores ( $\Delta$ ) for a control group of students who received no ethics instruction.

a.  $H_0: \Delta_{case} \leq \Delta_{con}$   $H_a: \Delta_{case} > \Delta_{con}$

3. Students that are taught media ethics using an SBH maieutic principle-based method of instruction will show a mean increase in moral reasoning P scores ( $\Delta$ ) as measured by the DIT2 that is significantly greater than the mean increase of DIT2 P scores ( $\Delta$ ) of students taught with a traditional case-study method of ethics instruction.

a.  $H_0: \Delta_{sbh} = \Delta_{case}$   $H_a: \Delta_{sbh} \neq \Delta_{case}$

4. There will be statistically significant differences by gender on the mean change ( $\Delta$ ) in participants' P scores on the DIT2.

a.  $H_0: \Delta_{female} = \Delta_{male}$   $H_a: \Delta_{female} \neq \Delta_{male}$

5. There will be no effect by media status on the mean change ( $\Delta$ ) of participants' P scores on the DIT2.

a.  $H_0: \Delta_{adv} = \Delta_{digital} = \Delta_{journ} = \Delta_{pr}$   $H_a: \text{at least one is not equal}$

### **Assumptions**

1. The media students participating in required courses in media ethics and news writing are representative of students in mass media within the Northwest university where the study was conducted.

2. Moral reasoning as defined in this study is equivalent to the general definition of moral reasoning among professionals in media.
3. The instruments used are reliable and valid tools for measuring changes in moral reasoning (Bebeau M. J., 2002).
4. College students in required communication classes are motivated to earn good grades and will complete required exercises to improve their ethical decision making.
5. Results of the research may be generalized under the Proximal Similarity Model (Campbell, 1986; Trochim & Donnelly, J. P., 2008). Rather than address generalizability from a strict statistical perspective, the theory of Proximal Similarity uses similar contexts to allow logical inferences from the findings of a study.

### **Delimitations**

The research was delimited to students at a Northwestern university studying for a degree in mass media. Media ethics and news writing are required courses for mass media majors.

Teaching mass media ethics has a normative moral purpose. Some education in moral philosophy focuses only on describing the moral decision-making process so that students may understand it. Mass media ethics, however, has a practical purpose of preparing students for the professional world. Therefore, this research is delimited to measurements of moral reasoning as exercised by the participants on a moral reasoning survey and not focused on the participants' understanding of the descriptive elements of the moral reasoning process.

This research is delimited to case study ethics instruction as expounded by Day (2006) and maieutic ethics instruction as described by Stoll and Beller (2004). Other forms of ethics instruction are not examined.

Although the ethic of care is considered by many as a foundation of morality, moral reasoning instruction in this study dealt primarily with justice and beneficence, and not the ethic of care (Noddings, 1984).

The researcher had an ethical duty not to harm the participants in the study. That duty imposed instructional delimitations in that the researcher was bound not to teach content that he had reason to believe would undermine the normative goals of education in mass media ethics. For a discussion of the impact of this delimitation, see Chapter Five.

The beginning sample size was approximately 90, with about 32 in each of two treatment classes and 30 in a control group. Four were enrolled in both the control news writing class and one of the treatment groups, and therefore were counted only in the treatment groups. When the study was completed, the researcher was able to match 73 pre-tests and post-tests. The attrition rate of 19 percent may be attributed to multiple factors. The DIT2, which is being used as the measurement tool in this research, takes approximately 45 minutes to complete. Consistency checks ruled out several participants (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003). A few participants dropped the class. Some participants mis-recorded their assigned numbers or failed to complete the test. The researcher assumes that the attrition rate did not affect the results of the research.

### **Limitations**

Completion of a media ethics class with a grade of C or better is required of all mass media students, but the participants had a choice of which section to take. The sections were taught by the same instructor, but with different methods and at different times on the same day. One class was taught the first period of the day and the second class was taught at midday, which affected the dispersion of the sample. The university system gives

registration preference to seniors, and more seniors chose the desirable midday offering. More juniors took the less desirable 8 a.m. class.

The time of the class may also cause an educational effect; adolescents are more evening oriented and academic performance in early morning classes may be adversely affected (Randler & Frech, 2009).

The same instructor taught each class, and may have hidden biases toward one teaching method. Researcher bias and methods of guarding against that bias will be addressed in Chapter 3.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Case-study method** — Media ethics instruction based around analysis and argument about moral issues cases drawn from journalism, broadcasting, public relations, advertising and digital media. The purpose is to teach students to develop a morally defensible position for their ethical actions (Day, 2006).

**Defining Issues Test (DIT2)** — A valid and reliable instrument for measuring moral reasoning (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003).

**Media** — Umbrella category including journalism, public relations, marketing, advertising, broadcasting and digital media (Day, 2006).

**Media ethics** — A system of applied moral principles and standards of conduct particular to professionals practicing in various media fields (Day, 2006).

**Media ethics class** — A university class designed to present a critical examination of ethical issues confronting journalists and other media practitioners. The class develops skills at moral analysis and moral decision-making in media fields (Day, 2006).

Media status — Media field of emphasis in either journalism, advertising, public relations, or broadcasting and digital media.

Moral — A state in which one knows the good, proper and right moral obligation. The moral is dependent upon motives, intentions, and actions as they affect other human beings (Frankena, 1973).

Morality — Viewing an act from a moral point of view so as to consider its affect upon persons according to moral principles and rules (Fox & DeMarco, 2001).

Moral principle — A universal and reversible rule for guiding autonomous individuals in their moral judgments (Frankena, 1973).

Moral reasoning — A systematic process of evaluating reasons for and against moral beliefs in attempt to show that those beliefs are either correct or mistaken (Fox & DeMarco, 2001).

Pedagogy — The science or art of teaching.

SBH Maieutic Method — A teaching method centered around interactive, interpersonal exchange between the teacher as facilitator and the student as the discoverer. The primary emphasis of the class is to create a learning environment that encourages critical thinking and critical inquiry of ethical and moral issues by both instructor and student (Stoll & Beller, 2004).

Value — The individual relative worth placed on some intrinsic or extrinsic object, experience or person (Frankena, 1973).

### **Significance of the Study**

The SBH Maieutic Method is known to be an effective method for raising moral reasoning scores (Stoll, Beller, Reall, & Hahm, 1994; Culp, 2012; Barnes, 2009). However, it

has never been assessed as a tool in teaching media ethics. The case-study method of media ethics instruction has been found in one study to raise moral reasoning scores of media students (Canary, 2007). However, few other studies have attempted to quantify its effectiveness or compare it to other methods. A known standard of moral reasoning exists for journalists as measured by the DIT2 (Wilkins & Coleman, 2005). The present study may help develop more effective ways of educating media students in ethics, and assess whether university education programs are preparing students with the moral reasoning capacity to serve as effective professionals.

## Chapter Two: Review of Literature

When Heidegger (1927/1962) wrote that human norms were created, in part, through “making use of information services” (p. 164), he lived in a world where newspapers were the dominant media, television was just a dream, and the Internet was still to be conceived. Yet even then he could see that the essence of our being was entwined with our use of media. In the modern world, this entanglement with media verges on absolute. As Deuze (2011) writes, we do not just live with media, we live in media. In such a world, according to Deuze, reality is permanently under construction. Media professionals face dual roles. First, they are at least partially responsible for the construction of their own personal values, principles, and norms. Second, they are challenged with the responsibility of creating, eroding, or perpetuating human values, principles, and norms for society in general.

Ethicists in media, then, are obliged to consider the deep responsibilities to society that are placed in practitioners in journalism, public relations, advertising, broadcasting and digital media. Media are major contributors to cultural evolution, and cultural evolution moves quickly. In the modern world, cultural evolution can have substantial impact on morality in only a generation or two (Haidt, 2007). Educators must train media practitioners for the dual roles of taking responsibility for creating their own moral identity and contributing to society’s moral identity. The present project will attempt to make a small contribution toward honoring the moral obligation of media professionals to themselves and society by testing two methods of teaching moral reasoning to college students in various media disciplines.

## **What Is Morality?**

What is right and what is wrong? To answer that question, we turn to the study of ethics and morality, which is primarily concerned with providing a normative theory for answering problems about what is right and what ought to be done (Frankena, 1973). Within the field of media and for the purposes of this research, potential ethical issues arise whenever communication involves significant influence on other human beings that can be judged on a basis of right and wrong (Johannesen, Valde, & Whedbe, 2008).

Aristotle (350 BC/1908) said the highest good for all human activity is virtue. Aristotle's good cannot be reached with emotion, but only through reason. If the final and self-sufficient result of an action is happiness, then that happiness must be also an activity in accordance with virtue (Aristotle, 350 BC/1908).

Aristotle's concepts of virtue, reason, and happiness stand as underpinnings of our concepts of morality even today. Day (2006) frames Aristotelian theories as one of three primary ways of analyzing ethical dilemmas in books on ethics and media: "Aristotle, it seems, continues to speak to us through more than two thousand years of history, thus affecting our destiny and our views on moral virtue" (p. 63).

But whereas Aristotle (350 BC/1908) described the ends of virtue as something godlike, modern scholars have focused on the personal and social origins of morality. Piaget (1948) studied groups of children and found that cooperation and reciprocity were the most deep seated social phenomena. Adults place moral constraints on children, but these rules are perceived by the child as external and as separate governance. In autonomous play groups, cooperation and reciprocity developed independently of adult supervision, eventually growing into concepts of equality and justice (Piaget, 1948).

Children then must play within two domains of morality: authority and autonomy. Both are concerned with normative ethics, or how one ought to act (Fox & DeMarco, 2001). They prescribe action. However, these domains of morality originate from different sources, which is an issue media ethicists must continually deal with as part of the context of morality. Moral rules may be handed down as laws by the divine, by institutions, or by parents (Fox & DeMarco, 2001).

Frankena (1973) distinguishes morality from law, however. Morality is not changeable by anything like a deliberate legislative, judicial, or executive act (Frankena, 1973). Rather, morality is a social system of regulation for which the only sanctions are signs of social favor or disfavor (Frankena, 1973). Some philosophers say the only proper motives for morality are internal. As morality has developed in the Western world, it has an individualistic aspect (Frankena, 1973). Morality calls for autonomy on the part of the individual, asking people to make their own decisions through reasoning about moral ideals (Frankena, 1973).

Moral systems are often codified into sets of ethical rules, such as the Ten Commandments in the Bible (Ward, 2010). Codes of ethics have been created for journalists (Society of Professional Journalists, 2011), public relations professionals (Public Relations Society of America, 2011), advertising professionals (Institute for Advertising Ethics, 2011), and broadcasting and digital media professionals (Radio Television Digital News Association, 2011). However, Ward (2010) says ethics should not be considered as a set of rules. Ethics are best regarded as a dynamic practical activity—something we do that demands critical examination of whether and why we do it (Ward, 2010).

Kohlberg (1981), like Piaget (1948), theorized that the foundation of autonomous human moral judgment arose from common basic human values. He conducted a lengthy study following the moral development of a group of boys from childhood to adulthood. Based on his findings, he rejected Aristotle's notion that morality had its foundation in a panoply of virtues such as courage, temperance, modesty, and good temper. Rather, Kohlberg (1981) cited Plato and said the ideal form of virtue is justice.

Kohlberg has been criticized by Gilligan (1982) for studying only men. Research by Gilligan (1982) postulates that care is also a primary virtue and that the ethic of care is often the basis of moral judgments by women. Haidt (2007) has criticized Kohlberg's theories for failing to explain some modern research findings in psychology and has advanced the theory of three additional foundations of morality: in-group loyalty, authority, and purity. However, Walker (1989; Walker & Frimer, 2009) has completed studies to search for gender differences in morality and reviewed other studies of gender differences. Walker finds no evidence that the ethic of care serves as the primary ethical foundation of women. In media ethics, justice and its derivative virtues remain the foundation of morality. Honesty, fairness, and responsibility are central elements of codes of ethics for journalists and professionals in public relations, broadcasting, and digital media. The notion of care is generally subsumed within the principle of beneficence or minimization of harm, which also figures prominently in some ethical codes.

Rawls (2001), echoing Piaget, writes that the role of the principle of justice is to specify fair terms of social cooperation between free and equal citizens. Rawls has always maintained that his description of justice as fairness is meant as a political conception rather than a moral one (Rawls, 1985). However, Rawls' idea of justice guided Kohlberg (1981)

and seems at least as appropriate for guidance of the fourth estate as for the estates of democratic government. Justice has two principles: Each person has the same right to equal basic liberties and individuals must be accorded equal opportunity, with any special benefit going to the least advantaged members of society (Rawls, 2001). Under the umbrella of justice, people are granted freedom of thought, liberty of conscience, freedom of movement, free choice of occupation, and social bases of self-respect so they are able to advance their ends with self-confidence (Rawls, 2001). To the extent that dishonesty would deprive others of those freedoms, honesty is required by justice. And to the extent that someone would be deprived of those freedoms through inaction, an obligation or responsibility attaches to preserve them. Some even use Rawls' concept of justice to derive beneficence, particularly in biomedical ethics (Beauchamp, 2008).

### **What Is Moral Reasoning?**

Moral reasoning is a systematic approach to ethical decision-making (Day, 2006; Fox & DeMarco, 2001). Moral reasoning cannot be determined by our emotions, by what other people think, or by what may happen to us as a result of the decision (Frankena, 1973). The goal must be to determine what is right or wrong through rational means (Frankena, 1973).

Moral reasoning is only one part of the process leading to moral action. Lickona (1991) conceives of the moral realm as three spheres: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. Moral reasoning is a part of moral knowing. Rest compiled a four-part model: moral sensitivity, moral judgment, moral motivation, and moral character (Bebeau, Rest, & Narvaez, 1999). Moral reasoning is part of moral judgment, which involves determining which action is right or wrong. Deciding something is right or wrong does not mean one will

take action; however, moral reasoning is a critical component on the way to moral action (Bebeau, Rest, & Narvaez, 1999).

Moral reasoning may take many different forms (Frankena, 1973). For the purposes of the present research, students will be involved in four primary forms of moral reasoning: rule-deontic, teleological, Aristotelian Golden Mean, and mixed deontic. Rule-deontic reasoning is based in principles and asserts that right and wrong can be determined by application of these principles (Frankena, 1973). Teleological or act-utilitarianism relies on weighing the potential outcomes of actions to determine which action is likely to produce the greatest balance of good over evil (Frankena, 1973). Aristotelian Golden Mean theory relies on the virtuous agent trying to find a moderate solution where there are extreme positions, thereby determining the best action (Day, 2006). The Golden Mean asks that reason be used to determine the right quantity, the right time, the right purpose, and the right manner for the action (Day, 2006). Mixed deontic reasoning combines principle-based thinking with utilitarian methods to weigh potential outcomes in cases where principles conflict with each other (Frankena, 1973).

Moral reasoning cannot take place if people cannot recognize moral issues, understand moral values, or recognize the points of view of others. Lickona (1991) says that moral blindness is a common failing. Bebeau, Rest, and Narvaez (1999) write that moral sensitivity is part of the complex moral knowledge required by moral reasoning. Hoffman (2000) writes that empathy is necessary to allow parties to moral reasoning to set aside self-interest and see the interests of other parties.

Moral reasoning is a way of trying to find answers to problems, then critiquing those answers to see if they are correct (Fox & DeMarco, 2001). Moral reasoning requires

deductive reasoning skills as well as the ability to make and test hypotheses (Fox & DeMarco, 2001). To reason morally, one must be able to identify and rank moral principles, and to weigh social goods to establish what lines of action are morally justified (Frankena, 1973). Even the theory of the Golden Mean requires moral reasoning, for one must understand such virtues as temperance and virtue, then balance the pleasure or pain that may be created by various actions (Aristotle, 350 BC/1908).

### **What Is Moral Development?**

Piaget (1948) not only conceptualized justice as the guiding principle of the moral development of children, but he also conceptualized moral development as sequential. Kohlberg (1981) provided further advancements to both those ideas, developing the notion that justice grew from the social interaction of children with their peers. Kohlberg postulated three levels of moral development: preconventional morality, conventional morality, and postconventional morality. He further broke those levels into six stages of development:

- Preconventional level
  - Stage 1: Punishment and obedience orientation.
  - Stage 2: Instrumental relativist orientation.
- Conventional level
  - Stage 3: Interpersonal concordance or “good boy-nice girl” orientation.
  - Stage 4: Society maintaining orientation.
- Postconventional, autonomous, or principled level
  - Stage 5: Social contract orientation.
  - Stage 6: Universal ethical principle orientation (Kohlberg, 1981, pp. 17-19).

Kohlberg (1981) maintained that moral development emerged from people's own considerations and deliberations about moral issues. Outside agents such as parents and teachers do not directly teach children to move through the stages of moral growth. Rather, the stages of growth emerge as people encounter moral issues, discuss them with others, find their views challenged, and therefore become motivated to develop new and more comprehensive positions. Kohlberg also hypothesized that the ability to take on the perspectives of others was a necessary condition to moral development; this theory was later confirmed by Walker (1980).

Following Piaget and Kohlberg, the dominant educational view focused on morality as having three basic elements: affect, cognition and behavior (Bebeau, Rest, & Narvaez, 1999). Lickona (1991), in his book of moral instructional techniques, diagrammed these elements as three circles related to each other but not overlapping: moral knowing (cognition), moral feeling (affect), and moral action (behavior). He saw moral development as environmental. Morality grows in a culture in which moral knowing, feeling, and action are a lived reality. He advocated character development as the primary aim of education and proposed that schools, parents, and communities must work together to foster moral growth (Lickona, 1991).

Bebeau, Rest, and Narvaez (1999) share Lickona's idea that moral development would best be served through wider community involvement in programs, but they take issue with Lickona's tripartite framework for moral development. They propose that cognition and affect are intertwined, and that all behavior is the result of cognitive-affective processes (Bebeau, Rest, & Narvaez, 1999).

They also propose that moral development be viewed as schemas rather than stages (Rest, Narvaez, Thomas, & Bebeau, 2000). Their schemas are not hard stages like a staircase, but rather soft developments reflecting shifting distributions. Rather than suddenly stepping from Stage 3 to Stage 4, a subject will gradually reduce the frequency of using Stage 3 reasoning and increase the usage of Stage 4 reasoning. Rest et al. also see moral development as reflecting social construction evolving from community experience and recognize that moral development may be partly implicit and not entirely dependent upon conscious understanding (Rest, Narvaez, Thomas, & Bebeau, 2000).

With their Four Component Model, Rest et al. (2000) suggest that all four processes of morality need to be fostered as part of moral development. Programs to increase moral sensitivity are aimed at Component 1, and efforts to improve moral reasoning are directed at Component 2. Community involvement programs tend to aim at Component 3 by trying to switch the focus away from selfish behaviors, while traditional educational approaches often focus on Component 4, developing impulse control and self-discipline necessary for societal co-existence.

Haidt and Joseph (2007) argue that reason is a very small part of moral development. They propose that most of morality is innate and automated, created as a process of biological and cultural evolution. Emotion then becomes the most important part of moral processing (Green & Haidt, 2002). Narrative is a major cultural tool for modifying moral intuitions. Haidt and Joseph (2007) propose the following statement for endorsement by all moral researchers:

The first draft of the moral mind has diverse moral content that was specified in advance of experience, but this innately given content gets revised and greatly

extended during the course of development as children actively construct their moral knowledge within a cultural context that uses narrative to shape and guide the development of specific virtues (Haidt & Joseph, 2007, p. 391).

Narvaez and Bock (2002) agree that moral actions may be automated, but they propose schema theory as consistent with automated processes. They describe moral schemas as general knowledge structures used in social cooperation and built from experience in social interaction. Once formed, schemas decrease the amount of processing that is necessary in every moral encounter. However, schemas can change in size, strength, and relationship to other moral schemas (Narvaez & Bock, 2002).

Automated processes of moral decision-making may be much easier to create than to dismantle, however. Gregg, Seibt, and Banaji (2006) conducted experiments involving attitudes toward imaginary social groups. They found that automatic preferences could be easily induced, but that these new preferences were highly resistant to modification once they were established. They write:

The moral of the story would then seem to be that right-minded attitudes should be instilled first before wrong-headed ones gain a foothold, and that egalitarian education should begin earlier rather than later so that its beneficial effects can be more far reaching and enduring. At an implicit level, prevention may be better than cure (Gregg, Seibt, & Banaji, 2006, p. 17).

Still, researchers generally agree that changing an individual's moral response is possible through education (Kohlberg, 1981; Reimer, Paulitto, & Hersh, 1983; Haidt, 2007). The difference in views seems to be in their assessment of the degree of difficulty in effecting such change. Haidt (2007) proposes intuition as the primary controller of moral

response, but allows that conscious moral reasoning can occur following the automated response and occasionally override them. He writes, "...[M]ost moral change happens as a result of social interaction. Other people often influence us, in part by presenting the counterevidence we rarely seek out ourselves" (Haidt, 2007, p. 999).

### **Why Is Moral Reasoning Important to Mass Media Ethics?**

Observers have been saying for more than a decade that media faces a crisis of ethics:

- "Nearly every poll shows that people are losing respect for journalists and that they doubt if they can trust the news media. Their dissatisfaction is not with our technical abilities. It is with our ethics and our sense of what our role is in society" (Smith, 1999, p. vii).
- "Nowhere is the need for moral reasoning more acute than in journalism and other areas of mass media" (Day, 2006, p. xv).
- "Journalism faces a crisis of ethics that threatens to lower its standards, demean its honorable history, and question its future as a democratic agent of the public sphere" (Ward, 2010, p. 3).

Modern media tenets call for professionals to be at least fair and balanced if not objective and impartial. Yet anyone making moral decisions based on automated schemas can only be as fair as their automated process allows. If moral decisions arise from automated, innate, and intuitive systems, there can be little hope for change. If media are to address issues of ethics, it must look for ways to address all components of moral development, including moral reasoning, moral sensitivity, and character development.

Educators in the field of mass communications consistently say that fostering moral reasoning skills is the top goal of ethics instruction. In surveys in 1992-93 and 2001-02,

developing moral reasoning in students was listed as “indispensable” by nearly 75 percent of the respondents (Lambeth, Christians, Fleming, & Lee, 2004). Another 20-plus percent said developing moral reasoning was important. In contrast, barely half as many mass media educators rank preparing students for professional work as indispensable (Lambeth, Christians, Fleming, & Lee, 2004).

While ethical codes may be important guides for media, they are not as important as moral reasoning. An extensive study of journalists by Coleman and Wilkins (2004) found that the three top predictors of moral development in journalists were a strong internal sense of right and wrong, a high degree of autonomy, and a view that principles are more important than rules.

Multiple authors argue that media students should be well educated in the process of ethical deliberation. Yoder and Bleske (1997) wrote that untrained media professionals do rely on automated moral processes: “Without training in moral reasoning, the student journalist seems to use intuition in reaching a decision” (p. 238). Following Media Ethics Summit II, Jay Black wrote:

As Christians insists, normative theory is necessary for us to do systematic thinking about issues; that theory should be grounded in general morality, not in narrow professional ethics. Students as well as educators should engage in pedagogy rooted in philosophical beliefs about the nature of human beings and the meaning of life (Black, 2008).

Wiesslitz and Ashiri (2011) argue that modern online journalism creates new challenges to ethical journalistic practices. They write that digital reporting has taken on a more subjective form in which the typical professional barriers have been dropped. Moral

journalists in digital media are likely to be autonomous and to view themselves as a moral witness to the suffering of others. The truth for these modern moral journalists includes personal experience and personal feelings (Wiesslitz & Ashuri, 2011).

This view of the modern digital journalist suggests that moral development is growing even more important to the profession. In digital media, there's an increasing need for media practitioners to put their own ethical house in order (Black, 2008). In other words, media practitioners in Web-based specialties must develop internal guides for ethical behavior, because no external structures are in place to guide them.

### **What Is the Case Study Method of Teaching Ethics?**

The predominant tool used to teach media ethics is the case study, a method employed by 98 percent of instructors (Lambeth, Christians, & Cole, 1994). The second most common tool is the lecture, used by 93 percent of instructors (Lambeth, Christians, & Cole, 1994). Used together as the data suggest they are, the case study and lecture represent the centerpiece of university media ethics instruction.

Christians complained more than 30 years ago that media ethics education was too simplistic. "We take classic cases, sensational situations, group several side by side, puzzle over options, and call it an ethics course or book" (Christians, quoted in Plaisance, 2007). Since then, efforts have been made to develop curricula that focus on strengthening the critical thinking and analytical abilities of media ethics students (Plaisance, 2007). Such classes generally include an overview of classical ethics theory combined with examinations of contemporary cases in journalism, public relations, and marketing (Plaisance, 2007).

Traditional case-study training in ethics may also provide models of reasoning in journalism, such as the Potter Box or SAD model (Yoder & Bleske, 1997). SAD stands for

Situation Definition, Analysis, Decision (Day, 2006, p. 67). The situation definition phase calls for students to look at the facts and principles or values involved, then formulate a statement of the ethical question. In the analysis phase, they weigh the competing values and principles, consider external factors, consider the duties of various parties and discuss applicable ethical theories. Finally, they render a decision and defend that decision based on ethical theory (Day, 2006).

The Potter Box is a four-stage method of ethical decision making. Students are asked to define the problem, identify the values, view the situation from a variety of viewpoints, then determine their loyalties, both professional and personal. The decision is rendered after taking all steps into consideration (Smith, 2008). Case-study methods may also teach deontic, teleological and virtue theories of morality as part of the training (Day, 2006; Smith, 2008).

Students are then asked to review real cases of media ethics issues and apply the ethical theories and formulas to those cases (Day, 2006; Smith, 2008). This is in keeping with the general emphasis of such classes to focus more on applied ethics than on ethical theory (Canary, 2007).

Canary (2007) compared the moral reasoning scores of students in personal conflict courses with students in communication ethics classes. She discovered that only the use of case studies was associated with higher levels of moral reasoning among communications students (Canary, 2007). Canary suggested that students who worked their way through case studies used that experience to develop their moral reasoning ability, regardless of the course focus, decision-making exercises, or use of in-class discussion. She found that lectures were ineffective as were examinations of hypothetical issues that failed to pertain to the students' lives. She recommended that instructors take a more personal approach to ethics training by

using case studies that relate to students: “Instructors who weave ethical issues involving personal action throughout course curricula are able to teach both content and critical thinking skills that students can use to be competent communicators as well as ethical decision-makers” (Canary, 2007, p. 205).

### **What Is the Principle-Based SBH Maieutic Method of Teaching Media Ethics?**

Maieutic method is similar to Socratic style, but derives from Plato’s the *Sophist* and employs a slightly different stance on the part of the instructor (Leigh, 2007). The name maieutic comes from the term for mid-wife, suggesting the method seeks the birth of knowledge. Socratic questioning employs a reductionist approach that attempts to eliminate wrong answers; in contrast, maieutic method uses a more positive approach in a quest for discovery:

The method is centered on teaching the reader to (i) engage as a partner in the positive process of knowledge acquisition, (ii) reflect upon and look for evidence and reasons that lend support to a claim or could cause one to doubt it, and (iii) creatively seek out reason or evidence that will adequately test a claim or belief’s veracity for herself (Leigh, 2007, p. 310).

The principle-based SBH Maieutic Method considers the teacher as facilitator and student as discoverer. Instruction is an interpersonal, interactive exchange between the two. The instructor challenges the participants to argue, question, and discuss issues and all their ramifications. Learning is a whole-body experience based in open listening, effective dialogue, empathy for others, and rigorous content focused on the academic interests of the learner (Stoll & Beller, 2004).

The ethical foundation is based on a rigorous examination of Frankena (1973) and his discussion of various teleological and deontic methods of moral reasoning. Frankena proposes mixed-deontic moral reasoning, but students must identify the moral processes with which they choose to work. Learners develop an understanding of their moral principles, which must be universalizable, abstract guides that hold in all instances (Stoll & Beller, 2004).

The pedagogical foundation is based on the dance of the knowing, the knower and the known as elucidated by Gill (1993):

If the knowing process is thought of as a kind of dancing, as an interactive, reciprocal, give and take relationship between knowing subjects, on the one hand, and the physical and social environment, on the other, then the resulting patterns of thought and behavior may be thought of as the dance itself (Gill, 1993, p. 183).

Within Gill's philosophy, the focus of education is on the horizontal dimension of human relationships, not a vertical hierarchy. Gill sees humans as moral agents, and, reminiscent of Aristotle, views their moral conduct as contributing to their self-realization. His view of morality is social but not relativistic. He proposes that learners must participate in a sufficient amount of interpretive moral activity to ensure the possibility of a responsible decision. The learners' partners in the dance, including the instructor and other learners, create cognitive impressions that give shape to the moral world (Gill, 1993).

The SBH Maieutic Method stresses a different order of education than traditional media ethics training, placing personal understanding of individual moral beliefs before the institutional codes of various professions. The first half of the semester is devoted to helping learners recognize their own moral principles and methods of resolving moral dilemmas, as

well as showing them methods of moral reasoning developed by philosophers. Once students have an understanding of their own moral principles, they move on to consider the principles of their profession (Stoll & Beller, 2004). A discussion of instructor training and use of the SBH Maieutic Method is attached as Appendix U.

SBH Maieutic Method uses weekly writing assignments to develop an ongoing discussion between the learner and the instructor. Rather than use case studies as writing assignments, students are asked to consider personal moral questions as well as analyze hypothetical situations. Writing assignments are focused in this way to avoid the vagaries of case studies that may lead students to relativistic thinking (Stoll, Personal communication, 2011).

The SBH Maieutic Method of discussion allows for class discussion to be shared equally between instructor and learners. The instructor listens carefully to learners, measures the learners' responses against previous responses, and responds with questions designed to stimulate cognitive dissonance in the learners. The instructor never tells learners what is right and wrong, but rather prods learners to broaden their examination of the moral principles guiding their deliberations. The instructor will answer questions about right and wrong if asked directly. However, in keeping with Kohlberg's theories of moral development, an instructor using the SBH Maieutic Method considers the contributions of all students as part of the learning process and expects learners to gain moral guidance from interactions with peers as well as with the instructor (Stoll & Beller, 2004).

The SBH Maieutic Method's focus on challenging the learners to confront their personal values with the purpose of creating cognitive disequilibrium is not unlike transformational educational technique. Mezirow (1997) says critical reflection on

assumptions can transform the frames of reference upon which beliefs and habits of mind are based. Creating discomfort with existing ideas is part of that process. “We do not make transformative changes in the way we learn as long as what we learn fits comfortably in our existing frames of reference” (Mezirow, 1997, p. 7).

In a study comparing the SBH Maieutic Method with two other methods — a teacher centered lecture and a good-reasoned approach — the SBH Maieutic Method was shown to be one of two successful approaches for increasing the moral reasoning of students. The SBH Maieutic Method significantly outperformed the teacher-centered lecture. The degree of change in moral reasoning was also higher for SBH Maieutic Method compared to the good-reasoned approach, but that difference was not statistically significant. The research suggests that interactive teaching based on theory, dialogue, and argumentation is preferred for improving moral reasoning (Stoll, Beller, Reall, & Hahm, 1994).

Another study compared the effect of the SBH Maieutic Method to that of a social constructivist method at raising moral reasoning of two classes of college freshmen. That study demonstrated that the SBH Maieutic Method increased moral reasoning scores while students taught with social constructivist methods showed no gains (Barnes, 2009).

### **How Do We Measure the Success of Teaching Media Ethics?**

Studies of journalism students in the United States and the United Kingdom find little evidence that the university experience has much impact on the media students’ professional orientation (Hanna & Sanders, 2008; Becker, Fruit, & Caudill, 1987). Most of the views of the students were deeply internalized prior to arrival at the university and were presumed to have been formed based on the influence of family and social backgrounds (Hanna & Sanders, 2008). While educators believe universities are doing a good job of providing

students with an understanding of media ethics, editors disagree, saying students are not ethically prepared when they arrive at their first job (Lambeth, Christians, Fleming, & Lee, 2004).

The best model for the required principles of a mass media graduate can be found in the codes of ethics of media professions. The Society of Professional Journalists code of ethics is generally viewed as a set of primary values for the print media (Society of Professional Journalists, 2011). The Radio Television Digital News Association code of ethics serves the same role for broadcasting and digital media (Radio Television Digital News Association, 2011). The Public Relations Society of America has created a code of ethics for the PR profession (Public Relations Society of America, 2011). The Institute for Advertising Ethics of the American Advertising Federation has written a code of ethics for the advertising industry (Institute for Advertising Ethics, 2011).

#### **Using the DIT and DIT2 to measure moral reasoning in media.**

The DIT is a proven instrument for measuring principle-based moral reasoning of journalists and other professionals (Coleman & Wilkins, 2004). In addition, the DIT has been shown to be an effective tool for measuring principle-based reasoning following an ethics intervention (Bebeau M. J., 2002). The DIT and DIT2 are designed to measure moral reasoning in a neo-Kohlbergian manner (Rest, Narvaez, Thomas, & Bebeau, 2000).

The DIT2 is an updated, valid and reliable form of the DIT (Rest, Narvaez, Thomas, & Bebeau, 1999). The DIT2 activates moral schemas and provides a measure with expanded capabilities of assessing data (Rest, Narvaez, Thomas, & Bebeau, 1999). The DIT2 can be used to assess the performance of media classes and compare them against classes given different treatments. It can also be used to compare student class scores against scores for

professionals in media and other professions. One of the five ethical dilemmas used in the DIT2 involves a media decision. For those reasons, the DIT2 appears to be a good choice as a measurement tool for media students. Other tools have been used to attempt to measure moral reasoning in media, but those tools do not have such a long-term history of producing reliable results.

The DIT2 provides two important measures of moral reasoning, the P score and the N2 score. The P score is a measurement of the extent to which a person prefers post-conventional or principle-based ethical thinking, which is defined as moral reasoning at Kohlberg's stage 5 or stage 6 (Rest, Narvaez, Thomas, & Bebeau, 1999). The P score can range from 0 to 95, and has been used as the prime measure of moral reasoning since the original DIT was devised. The mean P score for college seniors is 38.26 with a standard deviation of 16.06 (Maeda, Thoma, & Bebeau, 2009).

The N2 score is a new index that Rest, Thoma, Narvaez and Bebeau (1997) say outperforms the P score for construct validity. The N2 score not only utilizes the degree to which post-conventional reasoning is prioritized, but it also considers the degree to which lower-stage personal interest reasoning is utilized. In other words, the N2 score not only rises when more principle based reasoning is utilized, but it also rises when less self-interest based reasoning is used. With such a scoring system, the N2 score should be more sensitive to moral growth at the lower end of Kohlberg's stages, where people are moving away from self-interest reasoning (stage 2-3) and into reasoning about social order or rules (stage 4). The N2 scores are adjusted to have the same mean and standard deviation as the P score so that comparisons between the N2 and P scores can be made. The mean N2 score for college seniors is 37.8 with a standard deviation of 15.82 (Maeda, Thoma, & Bebeau, 2009).

The P score of the DIT has been used to measure the moral reasoning of working journalists in three studies, and journalists have consistently been shown to be strong ethical thinkers with a mean P score of 48.68 (Coleman & Wilkins, 2004). As shown in Table 1, journalists score slightly below working physicians, who post a mean P score of 49.2 (Marino, 2008). Professionals in the media specialty of advertising score significantly lower at 31.64 (Marino, 2008). Because the P score provides greater comparison value for journalists and other media professionals, it appears to be more appropriate than the N2 for the purposes of this study.

**Table 1: Mean P Scores of Various Professionals and Students**

Group tested	Mean P score on DIT
Seminarians/philosophers	65.1
Medical students	50.2
Practicing physicians	49.2
Journalists	48.68
Dental Students	47.6
Nurses	46.3
Graduate students	44.9
Undergraduate students	43.2
Accounting students	42.8
Veterinary students	42.2
Navy enlisted men	41.6
Orthopedic surgeons	41
Adults in general	40
Journalism Students	35.9
Business professionals	38.13
Business students	37.4
Advertising students	32.6
Accounting auditors	32.5
Advertising professionals	31.64
High school students	31
Prison inmates	23.7
Junior high students	20

Source: Marino, 2008

### **Using the Rokeach Value Survey to measure moral reasoning in media.**

Although few studies have been conducted to measure the effectiveness of methods of teaching media ethics, most that did used the Rokeach Value Survey or modified Rokeach Value Survey (Surlin, 1987; Black, 1992; Plaisance, 2007). The Rokeach is a valid instrument for measuring value choice (Thompson, Levitov, & Miederhoff, 1982). However, the Rokeach is best suited to assessing hoped-for states concerning the world or personality traits (Suhonen, 1985). It is not generally represented as a tool for measuring moral development.

To adapt the Rokeach to measure moral growth, Surlin (1987) theorized that a change in the relationship of the values “equality” and “freedom” would represent a change in ethical thinking. Using that measure, Surlin (1987) postulated that he observed moral growth in 20 members of a media ethics class because he observed an increase in the salience of the value “equality” and a decrease in the gap between the ranking of “equality” and “freedom.” However, subsequent studies could not replicate Surlin’s findings (Plaisance, 2007; Black, 1992). In his try with the Rokeach in a subsequent study, Black (1992) attempted to use changes in assessed values of “inner harmony” or “intellectual” as a guide to moral change in students. Lee and Padgett (2000) could not find any change in student values for “equality” or “intellectual” following a short ethics course. Plaisance (2007) suggested that how students rank “aboveboard,” “fair,” and “independent” could be used to show media emphasis on transparency and autonomy. However, no clear method for using the Rokeach emerges in the studies. This raises serious questions of whether the Rokeach is a suitable instrument for measuring moral reasoning changes for media ethics students.

### **Using the MJT to measure moral reasoning in media.**

The Moral Judgment Test (MJT) has been used in one study to measure the moral reasoning of media ethics students (Canary, 2007). Lind (2011) created the MJT to assess moral judgment competence as defined by Kohlberg. The instrument asks readers to consider two ethical scenarios, decide which outcome is right, and answer questions about factors that may have led them to their decision (Lind, 2011).

The MJT is a valid and reliable instrument (Lind, 2011). With only two ethical scenarios, the MJT may be easier to use than the five-scenario DIT2. However, neither of the MJT scenarios address media issues, and no one has used the MJT to measure the moral reasoning of professional journalists. Although the instrument may be simple and reliable, this lack of ability to compare results from the MJT with other classes or professionals in the field make it a less desirable instrument than the DIT2.

### **Conclusion.**

Given the importance of instructing media students in the most effective methods of making moral decisions, the present study attempts to determine whether alternative pedagogical methods may improve media ethics instruction. By using a valid and reliable instrument such as the DIT2 to measure changes in moral reasoning, the present study proposes to directly compare the traditional case-study method of teaching media ethics with the principle-based SBH Maieutic Method. The present study proposes to rely upon DIT2 P scores to evaluate the hypotheses, primarily because the P score has been previously used for comparison with students and professionals in media fields. However, N2 scores will also be reported and discussed in Appendix S, which will aid future researchers in making comparisons.

### **Chapter Three: Methodology**

This quasi-experimental study compares the effect of two different pedagogies on the moral reasoning of students in a media ethics course at a Northwestern university. The two pedagogies are a traditional case-study method and the principle-based SBH Maieutic Method. Both pedagogies are measured against a control group of media students who receive no instruction in ethics.

#### **Introduction**

In the case-study method as applied in the present research, the instructor teaches three techniques for examining the ethics of journalistic decision-making — deontic, teleological, and Aristotelian golden mean methods — then asks students to use those methods to make ethical decisions in various case studies (Day, 2006). The case-study method instructor evaluates students based on participation, quizzes, mid-term, final, and five case-study writing assignments. In the alternative class, the instructor in the principle-based SBH Maieutic method asks students to identify their personal moral principles as well as the principles of their profession, and then to apply those principles in constructed situations, some of which are personal and some of which are media related. The SBH Maieutic Method instructor evaluates students based on participation, daily quizzes, and weekly writing assignments addressing ethical issues (Stoll & Beller, 2004).

Often, pedagogical comparisons are made between classes taught by two different instructors. However, such comparisons risk being measures of the effectiveness of the instructor rather than the effectiveness of the pedagogical method. An effective instructor may achieve successful results with an inferior pedagogy. Similarly, an ineffective instructor may fail to achieve results with a superior pedagogy. Ideally, researchers would measure the

effectiveness of the pedagogy by considering the pedagogy as taught by equally effective instructors.

In this case, the classes were taught by the same instructor using two different methods. While addressing one source of error, this method also raised another possible source of error. Because the instructor was also the researcher, this method poses a serious question of researcher bias. That question will be addressed in detail as part of the research methodology under the heading “Guarding against researcher bias.”

### **Participants**

Participants were approximately 73 students in the communications department of a research university in the Northwest. They included sophomores, juniors, and seniors, plus one student working on a second degree. The media ethics class is a required class, therefore a complete cross-section of communications students enrolled. The communications school offers majors in advertising, broadcasting and digital media, journalism, and public relations. The students are self-selected into one of two possible classes during the registration process. They did not know which class was being taught with which method prior to attending the class. Approximately 26 students were in each treatment class and 21 were in a control class. The control class was a media writing class in which there was no instruction in ethics.

Normally, only one section of media ethics instruction is offered in each term. However, for the purposes of this study, two classes in media ethics were offered during the same university term. One media ethics class was taught from 8 a.m. to 9:15 on Tuesday and Thursday, and the other class was taught from 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday. The duration of the treatment was one 16-week college semester. The decision of which method to use in each class was selected at random with a flip of a coin prior to the

start of the semester to allow time for students to order books. Based on the result of the coin toss, the case-study class was scheduled for 8 a.m. The SBH Maieutic Method principle-based class was held at 11 a.m. The control group students in the media writing class in the communications department met mid-morning on Monday and Wednesday.

### **Protection of the Participants**

Participation in the research was voluntary and anonymous. Although the researcher/instructor knew the individuals in the class, the researcher had no ability to connect individual students with data collected as part of the research.

To accomplish that purpose, all participants in the study were assigned a unique random number. Using their random number as an identifier, each student was pre-tested with the DIT2, which was administered by a third party during the first week of class. To protect the anonymity of the students, the researcher had no access to the identifying numbers of the students.

Individuals were asked to keep their random number to be used as their identifier on the post-test. During the last week of the semester, using their assigned random number, the participants took a post-test with the DIT2. The post-test was also administered by a third party.

The third party maintained a list of the random numbers of the participants and did not share that information with the researcher. As a further precaution, the list did not include the participants' names; instead, they were asked to list themselves by their mother's maiden name or the name of their favorite pet. The third party had no access to the research data. Following the completion of the post-test, the third party destroyed the list.

The data was gathered by computer. The results were stored in a secure computer accessible only with a password. The survey gathered some demographic data, including the participant's grade in college (sophomore, junior, or senior), and the participant's media area of specialization. However, no identifying material was gathered.

Participants were asked to provide informed consent before taking the pre-test and the post-test. They were advised that there were minimal risks from the survey, though they may experience some discomfort from being asked to consider difficult ethical questions. Students were asked to consent by filling in the "yes" button on the computer survey before they were allowed to continue to any questions on the survey.

The researcher applied to the university's Institutional Review Board and the study was ruled exempt from IRB restrictions because it is research on instructional strategies in programs offered as part of the regular curriculum. A copy of the IRB decision letter (number IRB00000843, FWA00005639) and consent form are attached as Appendix A and B. The researcher's certificate of completion (number 368907) of the National Institutes of Health Web-based training course on "Protecting Human Research Participants" is attached as Appendix C. A modification of the IRB was obtained to allow the researcher to evaluate student writings as part of the research project. The approval letter is attached as Appendix D and the consent form is attached as Appendix E.

### **Instrumentation**

Moral reasoning of the students was assessed using the DIT2. The DIT2 is an update of the DIT, which was used for 25 years as a measure of moral judgment (Rest, Narvaez, Thomas, & Bebeau, 1999). In the DIT and DIT2, construct validity is based on a neo-Kohlbergian view of developmental progression of moral reasoning rising from

conventionality to post-conventionality (Rest, Narvaez, Thomas, & Bebeau, 2000). Based on more than 400 published studies, the DIT has been shown to be adequately reliable with a Cronbach's alpha ranging from the high 0.70s to the lower 0.80s (Rest, Narvaez, Thomas, & Bebeau, 2000). The DIT2 is shorter, purges fewer people, and has significantly better validity characteristics (Rest, Narvaez, Thomas, & Bebeau, 1999). The DIT is highly correlated with the DIT2 ( $r=.79$ ) and the moral dilemmas used in the two instruments show a high level of internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = .90). As with the DIT, the DIT2 shows high validity criteria on its primary scores, the N2 score and the P score, with Cronbach's alpha ranging from the mid-70s to the low 80s (Rest, Narvaez, Thomas, & Bebeau, 1999).

### **Design of the Study**

The two treatment groups underwent a semester-long 16-week instruction period of media ethics, either with a principle-based SBH Maieutic Method or a traditional case-study method. A control group received no ethics instruction.

The study design was:

N    O1    T1    O2

N    O3    T2    O4

N    O5            O6

### **Data Collection**

The data was collected using an online survey of the DIT2 on the Internet instrument Survey Monkey at [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com). The first page of the survey was an informed consent form, on which the participant had to click "yes" if he or she wanted to continue.

The Survey Monkey Web site used to gather data is private and can only be accessed with a password by the researcher.

The survey also collected demographic data about the students, including gender, grade level, media specialization, and athletic participation status.

### **Process**

Two treatment groups received ethics instruction using different methods and pedagogies. One class was taught with a case-study method, as modeled on the existing media ethics class at the university. The second class was taught with the SBH Maieutic Method principle-based instruction developed by Stoll and Beller (2004).

#### **Case-study method.**

Participants in the case-study treatment group were assigned to read the textbook *Ethics in Media Communications: Cases and Controversies* by Louis Alvin Day (Day, 2006). The course syllabus is attached as Appendix F. Media ethics classes at the university have been taught with this textbook for more than three years. The course followed the outline of Day's book, beginning with lectures and discussion of ethics and moral development. Students learned three primary theories of moral reasoning: Duty-based deontological theories, consequence-based teleological theories, and virtue theories based on Aristotle's Golden Mean. Throughout the course, students were asked to analyze cases with all three of these theories.

The students were asked to study sections on truth and honesty in media, the balance between the media and privacy, confidentiality and the public interest, conflicts of interest, economic pressures and social responsibility, the media and antisocial behavior, morally offensive content, media content and juveniles, social justice and the media, and stereotypes

in the media. In each section, the instructor provided a lecture to summarize significant points from the material, and then encouraged class discussion of actual cases in the media. Discussion of actual media cases took approximately 20-30 minutes of each 75-minute class period. The balance of the class was conducted with a mixture of lecture, PowerPoint presentation, and Socratic dialogue focusing on the section of Day's textbook currently being studied. Lectures were based on readings of the text and lecture notes provided by the previous instructor of the class, as well as on notes taken by the current instructor while observing the media ethics class during the previous semester. Sample PowerPoints from the class have been placed in Appendix G. Sample lecture notes have been placed in Appendix H. A sample of the Socratic method discussion in the case-study class is presented as Appendix T.

During the term, the students were required to write five case studies in which they analyzed actual cases using theories of deontology, teleology and the Golden Mean. The objective in each 3-5 page case study was to provide a complete analysis of the material from all perspectives, then come to a personal position that the student believed was morally defensible. Sample case-study assignments are included as Appendix I. The students were also asked to take a mid-term exam and a final exam. The mid-term and final included approximately 50 percent essay questions requiring analysis of cases. The mid-term and final exam are included as Appendix J. Students were given short quizzes on the codes of ethics of various media disciplines, conflicts of interest, and anti-social behavior. Over the course of the semester, each student was required to bring an example from the media of an ethical issue in their field and present it to the class for discussion. Attendance was taken in each class. The rate of unexcused absences was 10.4 percent.

Special guests were invited to discuss topics of interest in media ethics. A former newspaper editor discussed a dilemma in his newsroom prior to a class case-study assignment about that specific dilemma, and a retired military officer appeared to discuss coverage of the military prior to a case study assignment on the graphic coverage of a military death in Somalia. Students met three times in small groups to discuss cases prior to a broader discussion by the entire class. Two documentary movies were presented to the class to illustrate ethical dilemmas of media deception and economic pressure. The students were asked to write about each of those cases. With the exception of the discussion of Somalia by a military officer, the exercises were all modeled after similar exercises used in the media ethics class during the previous semester.

The instructor played a name game at the beginning of the semester to identify every student by name and encourage members of the class to get to know their classmates. At the beginning of each class, the instructor presented examples of current ethical issues in media. The instructor used a Socratic method to encourage students to take part in the discussion of those issues. Socratic method involves asking probing questions about ideas under discussion, asking expansive questions to draw out relationships between ideas, and playing the devil's advocate role to encourage students to think deeply about the issues (Gose, 2009). Students were asked directly to state their ideas about what course of action would be ethical, and to state reasons to back up their choices. Students were also encouraged to disagree with each other, but to be respectful of opposing ideas. Discussions were generally lively. An example of a discussion is included in Appendix T.

The previous instructor, who designed the class, described it as based in the pedagogy of pragmatism (S. Smith, personal communication, Nov. 3, 2011). Buccholz and Rosenthal

(2001) say classical American pragmatism provides a firm grounding for case study methods of teaching ethics. They say pragmatism demands approaching situations in their “concrete fullness and richness” and developing moral decision making as contextual and situational (Buccholz & Rosenthal, 2001, p. 27). Consequences have a primary role in establishing knowledge. Learning is modeled on practice. Learners identify problems, consider various courses of action, anticipate the consequences of those actions, formulate hypotheses and test them against other hypotheses, and then reflect on the consequences in hopes of reaching new understanding. Rather than try to determine right and wrong, students seek to determine defensible positions, much as Dewey sought not truth but warranted assertions. Social consequences were used as outcome measures in ethical cases (Noddings, 2005). In the present study, students were generally informed of the actual outcomes in cases under discussion.

Canary (2007) found that case-studies in media ethics classes are associated with increases in moral reasoning, but class discussion did not have a significant effect. “The varying effects of case studies and class discussion suggest that students who engaged in working through case studies, regardless of course focus, used those experiences to develop their reasoning skills” (Canary, 2007, p. 204). Canary (2007) suggests that students will increase their ability to morally reason by engaging in case studies about situations to which they can relate. With that in mind, three of the five case studies were designed so that students could choose from an approach that best suited their media interests. In one case, students were asked to choose from three different case studies in Day’s textbook, each focusing on the different media specialty. In two other instances, students were asked to analyze cases in which two or more media players were involved; students could choose to

take the role of the media player of their choice. For instance, one case study involved a college newspaper editor, a reporter on a competing daily and a public relations person representing the subject of the coverage.

The instructor established pre-set expectations for case-study papers, including standards for spelling and grammar. Participants were expected to summarize the situation, identify the primary conflict in values and frame the primary ethical question to be resolved. The participants were expected to address the ethical issue through each of three ethical theories: deontological, teleological and the Aristotelian Golden Mean. Finally, participants were asked to choose one theory to defend their ultimate conclusion. Participants were also asked to logically reason through the situation before coming to a conclusion. They were informed that all three theories were intended as logical mechanisms for identifying the right thing to do, and, theoretically, that all three theories should lead them to choose the same right course of action.

Some students gravitated toward a mixed ethical theory in which they used parts of each theory. For instance, Day's interpretation of the Golden Mean theory emphasized the search for compromise. Students discovered that seeking a compromise could be compatible with deciding courses of action based on deontological and teleological theories. In addition, because an early stage of Day's process requires consideration of values in conflict, participants sometimes used mixed deontological thinking and turned to teleological balancing of good and evil to decide which moral value was most important to follow. In the last three weeks of the semester, students were presented with a brief description of mixed deontological theory to help them continue pursuing that path toward the logical determination of right action.

Students always received graded papers back within a week after turning them in. Papers were heavily marked with comments from the instructor about their moral reasoning. Students were allowed to correct and resubmit their papers to earn up to 90 percent of the grade. Grades were generally high, with 19 A's, 9 B's and 4 C's.

Samples of graded papers, with names redacted, are included as a Appendix K.

### **SBH Maieutic Method.**

The principle-based SBH Maieutic Method is centered on the concept that learning is an embodied process concerned with human experience, as elucidated in the writings of Merleau-Ponty (1962). It is also based in the writings of Jerry Gill (1993), who states that all knowing is a social process. In addition, learning is viewed as an integrative cognitive process in which instructors use multiple materials, media, and ideas to introduce the learner to ethical concepts. Instruction is centered on an interactive, interpersonal exchange between the instructor as facilitator and the student as discover. The learning environment is designed to encourage critical thinking, good listening skills, effective argumentation, and conflict management (Stoll & Beller, 2004).

The text for the SBH Maieutic Method class was *Ethics* by William Frankena (Frankena, 1973). The book is available for free online. Frankena's short text is almost entirely theory and uses very few examples. However, Frankena provides a philosophical overview that addresses not only the ethical theory about how the reader may rationally determine a morally correct action, but also addresses the broader issue of character and ethical theories about what kind of person the reader ought to be.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Frankena addresses the purpose of his book in the preface: "My aim in this book is not just to introduce the problems and positions of moral philosophers, but also to do moral philosophy. That is, I shall try to write an essay in moral philosophy in which I put forward some of my own views and reasoning, and at the same time, provide an introduction to the subject in general. I try to do this because the proper purpose of an

Supplementary written materials were used to address specific areas of interest. Supplementary materials included writings by legendary newsman Edward R. Murrow, media writers Kovach and Rosenstiel, and justice expert Michael Sandel. Students read Murrow's radio reports from World War II and his reports on Senator Joe McCarthy. Students were assigned to read essays on the purpose of journalism, the use of sex in advertising, ethical issues in digital media, Rawlsian theories of justice, theories of media accountability, reporting on violence, media representations in film, independence in the media, and philosophical underpinnings of the concept of truth. The class syllabus, which includes the supplemental reading list, is attached as Appendix L.

The instructor used a name game to learn the name of each student on the first day of the semester and encouraged students to learn the names of all other students in class. Students were engaged by name in daily discussions about ethical issues using the maieutic method. The method resembles Socratic Method, and participants are encouraged to argue, question and discuss issues fully so that they understand the ramifications of all possible actions. The instructor worked to create an atmosphere that was safe, open, and trusting. Discussion of ethical issues, particularly between peers, is a critical part of moral development, according to Kohlberg (1981) and Reimer, Paolitto and Hersh (1983). The instructor's job is to generate dialogue and cognitive dissonance in the students, encouraging them to reason for themselves using their own value system as their guide. Moral growth occurs as part of an ongoing process of students' reading, writing, reflecting, and subsequently revising their moral positions.

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introduction like this must be, not merely to pass on information, but to stimulate and help the reader to do better, clearer, and more philosophical thinking about ethical questions than he would do otherwise" (Frankena, 1973, p. xv)

Each class began with a short quiz on the readings, previous discussion, and other materials. Daily quizzes were used to ensure the students were fully prepared to discuss issues. Quizzes were announced in advance through an online class discussion board that the instructor used to advance the in-class discussions. Quizzes were also used to take attendance for classes. Samples of the online postings on the discussion board, which include the quizzes, are attached as Appendix M. The rate of unexcused absences was 9.6 percent.

Students were required to write a weekly essay of between 500 and 750 words on ethical issues and dilemmas. The essays addressed unfair treatment, Murrow's objectivity during World War II, dealing with unidentified sources, sexuality in advertising, personal moral stands, unethical behavior by co-workers, honesty in reporting, theft of intellectual property, media representation in film, apologies for errors, and identifying victims in news stories. In addition, several essays focused specifically on the values of the students. One assignment asked the students to identify their values and a second assignment later in the semester asked them to refine their values based on their readings. The final two assignments asked students to reflect on their own character from a third party perspective and to devise a set of three questions to ask themselves to determine whether any action would be appropriate based on their values. A complete list of the assignments is attached as Appendix N.

Student essays were rigorously graded for spelling, grammar, and references. Referencing in APA style is one example of the rigor demanded by the SBH Maieutic Method. Students were required to reference the text, the class, and two outside sources in each essay. That promoted closer reading and listening in class, as well as outside research.

It also encouraged students to seek support for their ideas rather than to merely recite their own opinions. Students received graded papers in the next class period after the essays were due. Papers were heavily marked with comments from the instructor about the student's moral reasoning. Students were allowed to correct and resubmit their papers to earn up to 90 percent of the grade. Grades in the course were generally high, with 19 A's, 9 B's, 2 C's and 2 D's. Samples of graded papers with the names of the participants redacted are attached as Appendix O.

In the first eight weeks of the semester, students focused on understanding who they are and what ethical principles they use in their life. The writings of Frankena were used to introduce students to various ethical theories, including several types of deontology and utilitarianism. Frankena favors mixed deontological ethical reasoning based on the principles of justice and beneficence with a utilitarian weighing of consequences in cases where two principles are in conflict. During this portion of the semester, writing assignments were also focused on the student, asking them about their own experience of being treated unfairly, their own personal values, and their own moral stands. Using both Kantian philosophy and theological Golden Rule examples, students were challenged to determine whether their personal values were reversible and could be generalized to everyone.

The ethical challenges presented to students in the introductory stages of the SHB Mautic method class were similar to those described by Jurkiewicz (2002) in an intervention with students in master's of public health and master's of public administration classes. As she wrote, she played the role of antagonist in discussions:

Remaining neutral and advocating no particular viewpoint on the cases at hand, I challenged each view that was articulated in terms of whether the student believed his

or her approach should always be the case. If the student responded no, I asked what the exceptions were, and if the student said yes, I provided an extreme example of a possible unexpected outcome if one held a particular view without variance. I facilitated the discussion to ensure full student involvement, to include a variety of viewpoints, and to encourage debate (Jurkiewicz, 2002).

Jurkiewicz's description of asking students to consider whether their principles were reversible and universalizable, then challenging them with a more difficult possible situation, is much like the baseline discussion in an SBH Maieutic Method class (Reimer, Paulitto, & Hersh, 1983). Jurkiewicz (2002) found significant gains in moral reasoning on the DIT2 in her classes using such techniques. However, the SBH Maieutic Method goes further and uses class discussion to help move students through Kohlbergian stages of moral reasoning. If a student responds with answers based on personal interest, they are challenged to consider the issue based on social order and rules. If a student responds with an explanation based on laws and morality of the social system at Kohlberg's stage 4, the students will be challenged to consider stage 5 principle-based thinking.

As Culp (2012) described in reference to an ethics intervention at The Basic School of the U.S. Marine Corps, using maieutic dialogue to constantly challenge students to raise their moral reasoning to the next level creates cognitive dissonance and makes moral growth possible. Culp undertook his study with Marine Corps officers in an environment much different than that found in a college classroom. Every officer has a legal mandate not to follow any orders that are illegal or immoral. For that reason, ethics education is extremely important to the Marine Corps and to the officers in training. Instructors are highly motivated to learn the improved pedagogical methods, and Marine Corps officers are highly

motivated to learn moral reasoning. Culp (2012) showed that the SBH Maieutic Method, a planned system of ethical dialogue to promote moral growth, could be used to successfully improve moral reasoning as measured by the DIT2 with modern warriors in the U.S. Marine Corps. Studies by Culp (2012) and Jurkiewicz (2002) relied primarily on dialogue rather than writing, which suggests that this portion of the pedagogy has great importance.

In the present study, the first half of the semester of the SBH Maieutic Method class was designed to build self-understanding, trust and the ability to discuss issues thoroughly and rationally. The second half of the semester focused on specific principles related to media, including honesty, fairness, beneficence, and responsibility. Those principles were addressed because they are embedded within the codes of ethics of journalism, advertising, public relations, and broadcasting.

The students were asked to consider their own moral principles in comparison with those reflected in the code of ethics of their chosen industry, and consider what they would do if those principles came into conflict. That consideration came not only through in-class discussions, but also through the ongoing dialogue between instructor and student created as part of the writing assignments.

The class included two movies relating to Murrow. One was a documentary showing his actual broadcasts of the McCarthy era and the second was *Good Night, and Good Luck*, a dramatization of the McCarthy-Murrow conflict. The class was also shown a movie about social media, *For Neda*, which examined coverage of the Green Revolution in Iran. In addition, the class used role playing and audio presentations. Role playing and multi-media experiences can help build empathy and moral sensitivity (Hoffman, 2000).

However, all the elements were intended as part of the process of creating cognitive dissonance in the students. Cognitive dissonance is part of the process of moving to a higher stage of moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1981). The technique of stimulating cognitive dissonance has similarities to transformative learning in which a disorienting dilemma is the first step toward changing one's sociocultural assumptions (Mezirow, 1997). Cognitive dissonance leads to reassessment of previously held mental schemas about ethical issues and exploration of new courses of action. Through discussion of ethics with others in the class, as facilitated by the instructor, students reach higher levels of moral reasoning (Stoll & Beller, 2004).

Approximately once each week, the classes featured a discussion of that week's writing by a few of the students. Examples of selected discussion points can be found in the PowerPoint examples in Appendix P. Student writing excerpts were chosen for the values expressed by the writers. Examples from all students were presented to the class at least once; most students had comments discussed twice. The excerpts were used as a vehicle for deeper discussion of the values expressed. For instance, several of the students chose "love" as one of their prime values. One student's comment led to a deep discussion of the ramifications of love as a value for media, delving into whether love is possible when confronting evil and whether other values, such as respect, might be better suited to media. Another student who expressed a value of "making the world a better place" made a strong impact on other students, and his comments were often cited in other students' papers. Students were required to have two references from class in each of their papers. This encouraged students to pay attention to the comments of other students and to compare their own ideas with those of others.

Students were required to use multiple media. One group assignment asked them to find an excerpt from a movie depicting an ethical dilemma within their media speciality. The group then presented it to the class for discussion and wrote an essay about the depiction. The essay focused on whether that depiction was the way they wanted people to see them. In another assignment, students were asked to create a video apology with their laptop camera or cell phone, then send it to the professor as part of their assignment. The purpose of each assignment was to stimulate greater empathy and understanding in the student through the visceral power of moving images.

The instructor refrained from telling students what he thought was right or wrong, preferring to allow the students to reach their own conclusions through discussion, reading and writing. However, even though the instructor tried not to impose his views of right and wrong, he continually referred students toward examples in the reading where writers espoused alternative ideas. The purpose of this discussion technique was to encourage students to elucidate their own moral arguments, then to measure those arguments against the expressions of others who have considered the subject.

For example, in a discussion about telling the truth, one of the primary values of media, one student suggested it was not always necessary to tell the truth. As an example, she said that when she was seated next to a stranger on an airplane, she routinely lied to the stranger about her life. She felt she had no obligation to tell the truth to a random stranger that she would never again see. The instructor asked her to consider what St. Augustine or Kant would think of her rule. Both philosophers had expressed strict interpretations of honesty in the class reading on truth and ethics (Marlin, 2002). She responded with a reference to Nyberg, also from the reading, that there's no obligation to tell the truth when

nobody expects the truth, such as when people are telling tall tales around the campfire. The instructor then opened up the question for the class to discuss which philosopher would guide them in a meeting with random strangers, and whether they, as members of the media, would expect strangers to be truthful to them. Some class members responded that telling the truth to strangers was important because the stranger may actually be someone they would need in the future, such as when they were seeking employment. Others talked about reciprocity, suggesting that they felt an obligation to tell the truth to strangers because they expected strangers to tell the truth to them. One suggested that society depended on truth-telling even to strangers on airplanes because in an emergency people needed to be able to trust each other. This range of answers, showing thinking at various Kohlbergian stages, provided examples of moral reasoning against which other students could measure their own thoughts.

At one point in the semester, the instructor gave a small reduction in points (0.5 out of 10) to students who said in their essays that they knew what they were going to do was wrong but said they would do it regardless. This was the only occasion when the instructor adjusted grades based on ethical decisions. Some students insisted they were being honest in the essay and should not be penalized for speaking the truth. Others said that if they were never penalized for making poor moral choices, there would be no incentive to make the right choice. That led to two classes of discussion about the value of honesty and whether strong values actually lead to right actions.

In addition, the instructor repeatedly asked students to consider their proposed moral actions against the values expressed in their profession's code of ethics. The codes of ethics are expressions of the guiding principles of professionals in advertising, broadcasting,

journalism and public relations. The codes serve as evidence of what people in those professions would expect new members of the profession to consider. Using the SBH Maieutic Method, the instructor encouraged students to use learned, thoughtful reflection about how their personal moral beliefs meshed with those of the profession they hoped to join.

The classes were organized with PowerPoint slides (see Appendix P), which were posted online for the reference of students. While the instructor lectured about some complex concepts, such as philosophical concepts of truth and Rawlsian concepts of justice, he strove in each class to fill at least 50 percent of the class time with discussion and comments from the students. The discussion was directed to advance the students' thinking based on Kolbergian concepts. Students would be presented with hypothetical scenarios based on the lessons in which they had to make an ethical choice. If the students answered based on self interest, they were challenged in follow-up questions to consider social norms and rules. If they answered based on social rules and norms, they were challenged to consider the principles and values at play behind those rules and norms. In addition, they were continually asked to consider whether their decisions were reversible and could be universalized in a Kantian fashion.

### **Treatment of the Data**

The data from the pre-test and post-test was downloaded from the Survey Monkey Web site as an Excel file. The results of the DIT2 were sent to the Office for the Study of Ethical Development at the University of Alabama to be scored. The participants were scored based on schemas associated with Kohlberg's stages of moral reasoning. Each participant received a Personal Interest score reflecting judgments at Kohlberg's stage 2/3, a

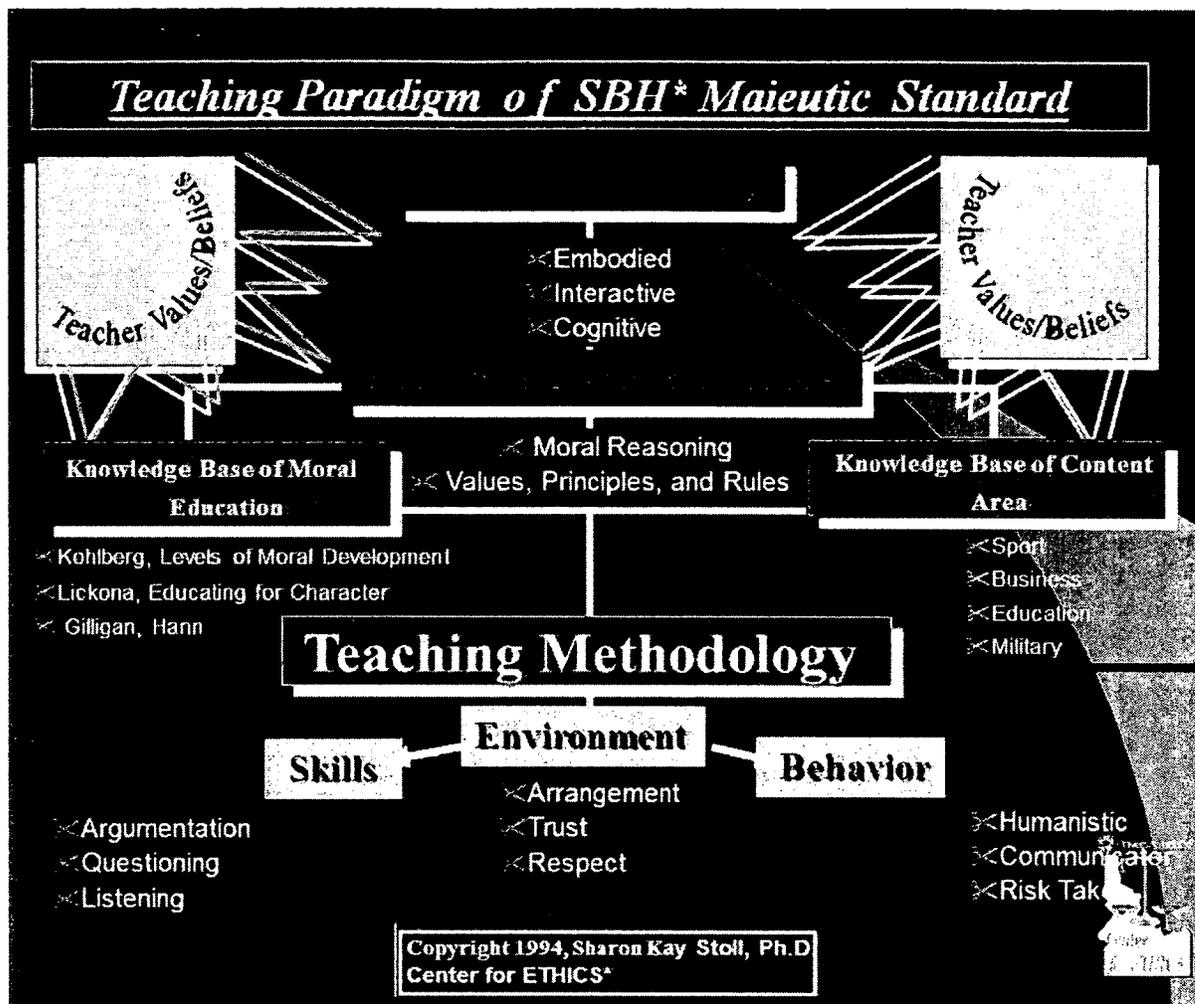
Maintain Norms score reflecting judgments made at Kohlberg's stage 4, and a Post Conventional or P Score reflecting principled judgments made at Kohlberg's Stage 5 or 6. Each participant was also given an N2 Score, which is a composite score that may be more sensitive to lower stage shifts than the P Score (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003). The scores were returned to the researcher for analysis.

Using a general linear model ANOVA, the researcher compared the DIT2 P score and N2 scores by group based on the pre-test results, post-test results, and the change in scores between pre-test and post-test, which is referred to as  $\Delta$ . Alpha was set at 0.05. Dunnett's test for comparisons to a control was used to determine if the treatment groups differed from the control group. Tukey's simultaneous test was used to determine differences between the treatment groups because Dunnett's test is appropriate only for comparisons that involve comparisons to a control group. The null hypothesis is that there will be no difference between groups.

General linear regression was used to determine the effect of gender and major (media specialty) on moral reasoning. The null hypothesis is that there will be no difference.

#### **Guarding Against Researcher Bias**

Both classes were taught by the researcher. The researcher is a journalist with 30 years of experience in newspapers and television. During the past two and half years, the researcher was involved in substantial research into moral reasoning, the pedagogy of moral reasoning, and the principle-based SBH Maieutic Method.



**Figure 1: Teaching Paradigm of SBH Maieutic Method**

The teaching paradigm of the SBH Maieutic Method (see Figure 1) requires that instructors have a strong knowledge base in the content area, which has been satisfied by the researchers' experience in journalism. However, the instructor must also have knowledge of moral education and be familiar with the SBH Maieutic Method's philosophy of learning, philosophic cognitive structure, and teaching methodology. Over the past two years, the researcher took the following steps to meet that teaching paradigm:

- Developed a knowledge base of moral education through

- A seminar on moral development theories of Kohlberg (1981) and his disciples (Reimer, Paulitto, & Hersh, 1983; Gibbs, 2003; Gilligan, 1982; Hoffman, 2000; Kuhmerker, 1991; Kurtines & Gerwitz, 1991),
- A seminar on character education methods of Lickona (1991), and
- Writing and presenting on moral theories of Gilligan (1982) and Noddings (2005);
- Studied the SBH Maieutic Method philosophy of learning through
  - A seminar on the philosophy of Merleau-Ponty (1962; 1964) and Heidegger (1962),
  - A seminar on Gill's (1993) philosophy of interactive teaching/learning, and
  - Directed study in ethics pedagogy (Fox & DeMarco, 2001; Garrison, 2010);
- Studied the philosophic cognitive structure of the SBH Maieutic Method through
  - A seminar on moral values, principles and reasoning (Frankena, 1973),
  - Directed reading in neuroscience and morality (Gazzaniga, 2005; Damasio, 1994; Tancredi, 2007),
  - A seminar on emotion and morality (Haidt & Joseph, 2007; Hauser, 2006; Nussbaum, 2001),
  - A seminar on the psychology of morality (Anscombe, 1957; Holton, 2009; Gendler, 2008), and
  - Extensive reading on theories of justice and empathy (Rawls, 2001; Sandel, 2009; Butler, 1993);

- Studied the teaching methodology of SBH Maieutic Method through
  - One year of observing Stoll teaching with SBH Maieutic Method
    - To develop knowledge of creating a trusting environment,
  - One semester of grading papers using SBH Maieutic Method
    - To learn to use writing as an ongoing discussion with students,
  - One semester facilitating discussion using SBH Maieutic Method
    - To learn active listening techniques, and
  - Six months creating and leading a sports ethics research project
    - To develop skill at recognizing moral stages of answers, and
    - To develop skill at trying to raise reasoning to the next level.

A reflection on the researcher's guided experience and training in the use of the SBH Maieutic Method can be read in Appendix U.

The researcher also spent several months examining the case-study based method as employed by the university's current media ethics instructor. The researcher presented in the class on five occasions and audited the class for one semester, compiling notes on both content and teaching techniques. With the cooperation of the current media ethics instructor, the researcher obtained all the materials currently used in the case-study based ethics education. The researcher read extensively about research into ethics instruction in journalism and other fields. In a directed study seminar in pedagogy, the researcher wrote about methods of teaching ethics to media students and examined the research about using case studies, discussion, role playing, multimedia, moral decision-making tools, and other techniques in media ethics instruction. Research suggests that both the case-study method

and the SBH Maieutic Method can be successful at raising moral reasoning scores (Stoll, Beller, Reall, & Hahm, 1994; Canary, 2007; Barnes, 2009).

However, the researcher studies directly under Stoll. Despite research showing that both methods can work, the researcher can be expected to show a bias toward the principle-based SBH Maieutic Method. To control against this threat of experimenter bias, the following techniques were used.

### **Techniques to Guard Against Researcher Bias**

The researcher obtained data from previous measurements of moral reasoning for a media ethics class involving the university's primary media ethics instructor using a traditional case-study method. Those results were gathered as part of a previous study into implicit moral judgements entitled "Moral decision-making: Reason or intuition." The IRB approval letter and modification letter for the previous study (IRB No.: IRB00000843, FWA: FWA00005639) is included as Appendix Q. The previous study used a pre-test and post-test to gather DIT2 data for a 16-week autumn semester class using the case-study method. Those results are compared to the results from the current research to measure possible researcher bias against the case-study method.

If students taught by the researcher scored no differently or scored better than those in previous classes, that would help set aside fears of researcher bias. However, if students taught by the previous instructor scored better than students taught by the researcher, that would raise the spectre of researcher bias. A general linear model ANOVA test was used to compare the change ( $\Delta$ ) in moral reasoning of students in the present study to that of students in previous classes. Results are presented in Chapter 4.

However, differences in  $\Delta$  could also be an indication that the researcher's instructional technique was inefficient compared to the previous instructor. To guard against that possibility, the researcher asked for three outside observations of each class to assess teacher performance with particular emphasis on assessing the instructional technique on the part of the instructor. The previous instructor of the case-study class attended the class three times and evaluated the instruction in the case-study class. The creator of the SBH Maieutic Method attended and evaluated both the case-study class and the SBH Maieutic Method class. In addition, a Ph.D. candidate also working in moral reasoning attended and evaluated instruction in both classes. Each presented written and spoken evaluations to guide the researcher during the term as well as to evaluate for possible researcher bias following the term. The evaluations are discussed in Chapter 5.

Changes in  $\Delta$  could also be caused if the researcher's case study instruction were more effective than the previous instructor, or if the researcher's case study instruction were contaminated with techniques used in the SBH Maieutic Method class. The researcher had an ethical duty requiring him to refrain from using techniques that he knew would result in inferior instruction. For that reason, the instructor studied the literature of media pedagogy to select the best known practices of teaching ethics with the case-study method and adapt those to the case-study class. Best practices include use of Socratic dialogue (Plaisance, 2007) and more writing of case studies (Canary, 2007). Because Socratic dialogue and maieutic dialogue are similar, the outside evaluations are also important to assess possible contamination of methods. This is discussed in Chapter 5.

Third, the researcher recorded a number of classes on audio and video to be available for analysis in the event that researcher bias became a significant issue in the research. The

audio, combined with the researcher's notes, was used to establish that the researcher diligently followed instructional methods used by the previous instructor. The audio also helped capture the level of the instructor's enthusiasm, interest, and engagement with students in each class, all of which may subtly affect teaching success. In addition, the instructor maintained copies of graded essays and tests from students in each class. The copies were compared to assess whether the instructor provided comparable amounts of feedback to students in each class.

Finally, students were surveyed to evaluate the instructor and the course content. The anonymous, internal assessment asked open-ended questions designed to elicit student information about the attitude of the instructor toward the material and toward the students in the class. At mid-term in the course, such an assessment was conducted. A meeting of the researcher's dissertation committee was held to discuss the results and to consider whether midterm adjustments were needed. The researcher had expressed concerns that it would not be ethical to continue the research if one method were shown to be ethically damaging to students. Based on the observation that no significant difference existed between the treatment classes, the research was continued without modification.

While the researcher has reason to believe that the principle-based SBH Maieutic Method can be used to improve the teaching of media ethics, the researcher is aware that traditional case-study methods have been shown in one published study to improve the moral reasoning of students. Based on that research, the researcher entered into the project with expectations that students in both treatment classes would show improvement in moral reasoning. However, no one has ever attempted to use the SBH Maieutic Method to teach media ethics.

By stating these possible biases, the researcher began the process of guarding against them. By gathering information during the treatment to guide the instruction, the researcher made provision for course corrections to avoid bias but found that such corrections were not necessary. Finally, by gathering information after the course, the researcher made preparation to assess whether the risk of bias has been minimized, and, if it was not, to ascertain where the bias may have entered the treatment. A full discussion of the issue can be found in Chapter 5.

## **Chapter Four: Results**

The purpose of this quasi-experimental study was to compare the principle-based SBH Maieutic Method of teaching ethics and a case-study method of teaching ethics on moral reasoning of mass media and communications students at a Northwest university.

The study proposed to determine which method, if any, works best to improve moral reasoning in those students. Second, the study also proposed to compare the effect of moral reasoning training by gender and media specialty.

### **Descriptive Statistics**

The participants in this study were 73 college students in journalism and mass media at a university in the Northwest. Of those, 27 were in Group 1 and were treated with a 16-week course of the case-study method of media ethics instruction, 25 were in Group 2 and were treated with a 16-week course of the SBH Maieutic Method of media ethics instruction, and 21 were in Group 3, a control group of media students in a media writing class who received no training in ethics during the 16-week period. The subjects completed pre-assessments and post-assessments with a valid and reliable instrument designed to measure moral reasoning, the DIT2.

Approximately 86 students began the study but 13 (15.6%) were dropped. This present study considers only participants whose pre-test and post-test could be matched. A discussion of those dropped is included later in this section.

To help protect against misleading inferences due to possible researcher bias against the case-study method, participating students were also compared with a group of mass media students measured in a previous ethic class. As discussed in Chapter 3, differences in moral reasoning in students in the present case-study class were compared to unpublished

data about students in a previous class to help guard against researcher bias. The comparison class, Group 4, was held in the previous semester at the same university and taught with the case-study method by another instructor. Group 4 was taught in the fall, was 16 weeks long, and had 24 participants complete the DIT2 assessments. To enhance understanding, subsequent tables will include data from both the participant cohort and the comparison class.

As shown in Table 2, the participants in the present study included 33 males and 40 females. The IRB letter of exemption is attached as Appendix A. The unpublished previous study participants included 11 males and 13 females. IRB approval for the previous study is attached as Appendix Q.

Table 2: Participants by Group and Gender

Participant groups	Males		Females		Total
	n	Pct.	n	Pct.	
Group 1 (Case study)	15	56%	12	44%	27
Group 2 (SBH Maieutic)	12	48%	13	52%	25
Group 3 (control)	6	29%	15	71%	21
Total	33	45%	40	55%	73
Comparison group					
Group 4 (Case study Fall)	11	46%	13	54%	24
Grand Total	44	45%	53	55%	97

The participants were college sophomores, juniors, seniors, and post-graduates who received their professional ethics instruction between January and May of 2012 as part of their regular college course work. The comparison groups received instruction between August and December of 2011. Media ethics is a required course for all students in the mass media department. Because the class is required for graduation, the university gives a registration priority to seniors; as a result, seniors are allowed to register for classes one day before other students may register. This may account for the large percentage of seniors in

Group 2, which was taught at the more desirable hour of 11 a.m. Early registrants tended to choose the more desirable time.

**Table 3: Participants by Group and Class**

Participant groups	Sophomore		Junior		Senior		Grad		Tot
	n	Pct.	n	Pct.	n	Pct.	n	Pct.	
Group 1 (Case study)	1	4%	17	63%	8	30%	1	4%	27
Group 2 (SBH Maieutic)	1	4%	1	4%	23	92%	0	0%	25
Group 3 (control)	8	38%	10	48%	3	14%	0	0%	21
Total	10	14%	28	38%	34	47%	1	1%	73
Comparison group									
Group 4 (Case study fall)	0	0%	11	46%	13	54%	0	0%	24
Grand total	10	10%	39	40%	47	49%	2	1%	97

The students in all groups came from four primary areas of media: advertising, public relations, print journalism, and broadcasting and digital media. Overall, somewhat more participants (33%) than average declared their major as public relations and slightly fewer (15%) than average declared their major as journalism, as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Participants by Group and Media Major (Percentage in Parenthesis)**

Participant groups	Advertising	Broadcasting	Journalism	PR	Other	All
Group 1 (Case study)	8	8	3	8	0	27
Percentage	30%	30%	10%	30%	0%	100%
Group 2 (SBH Maieutic)	8	6	2	8	1	25
Percentage	32%	24%	8%	32%	4%	100%
Group 3 (control)	0	5	4	10	2	21
Percentage	0%	24%	19%	48%	9%	100%
Total	16	19	9	26	3	73
Percentage	22%	26%	12%	36%	4%	100%
Comparison Group						
Group 4 (Case study fall)	5	5	6	6	2	24
Percentage	21%	21%	25%	25%	8%	100%
Grand Total	21	24	15	32	5	97
Percentage	22%	25%	15%	33%	5%	100%

The DIT2 is a complicated assessment that the authors estimate takes 35-45 minutes to complete (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003). Participants in the present study took an average of 35.75 minutes to complete the assessment.

Although 83 participants began the present study and approximately 45 began the comparison study, not all participants' pre-test and post-test scores could be matched. Forty-one assessments could not be matched because participants failed to write in the proper identifying number on the survey. In addition, the Center for the Study of Ethical Development at the University of Alabama, which processes the DIT2, rejected 22 assessments because they failed reliability checks for consistency. An additional three assessments were rejected because the participants completed the assessment in five minutes or less. The researcher concluded that five minutes or less was an inadequate amount of time to consider the complicated moral questions on the survey. After those assessments were eliminated, the researcher was able to match the pre-test and post-test DIT scores of 73 participants from the present study and 24 participants from the comparison group in the previous study.

All determinations are made by comparing the mean change ( $\Delta$ ) in DIT2 P scores between the pre-test and post-test. P scores measure the participants' use of principle-based moral reasoning (Bebeau, Rest, & Narvaez, 1999). An analysis of the mean change in N2 scores, a measure that also incorporates a measure of the participants' use of personal interest reasoning, is attached as Appendix S.

## Inferential Statistics

### Statistical sub-problem 1.

*What is the effect of a principle-based SBH Maieutic Method of ethics instruction on moral reasoning scores as measured by the DIT2?*

$$H_0: \Delta_{SBH} \leq \Delta_{con} \quad H_a: \Delta_{SBH} > \Delta_{con}$$

The first statistical purpose of this study was to measure what effect, if any, the principle-based SBH Maieutic Method of ethics instruction had on moral reasoning scores as measured by the DIT2. The researcher's hypothesis is that change in the mean moral reasoning score ( $\Delta$ ) for participants receiving SBH Maieutic principle-based ethics instruction would be significantly greater than  $\Delta$  for the control group. The null hypothesis is that there would be no difference in  $\Delta$  for the two groups.

As seen in Table 5, participants in the SBH Maieutic Method group ( $n=25$ ) received a mean P score of 36.88 on the pre-test of the DIT2. Participants in the control group ( $n=21$ ) received a mean P score of 33.43 on the pre-test of the DIT2. A general linear model ANOVA comparing the mean scores on the DIT2 pre-test to those of the control group showed no difference in the means  $F(2, 70) = 0.30, p = .740$ .

On the post-test with the DIT2, participants in the SBH Maieutic Method group received a mean P score of 43.44 and participants in the control group received a mean P score of 30.75. A general linear model ANOVA showed a significant difference between the means of the groups following treatment  $F(2, 70) = 3.82, p = .027$ . Dunnett's method of comparing group means to a control group mean showed the post-test mean of the SBH Maieutic Method group was significantly greater than the control group mean on the post-test ( $p = .008$ ).

The  $\Delta$  in P scores in the SBH Maieutic Method group was 6.56 points compared to the  $\Delta$  in the control group of -2.67 points. A general linear model ANOVA (see Table 6) comparing the mean change by group shows a significant difference between groups  $F(2, 70) = 3.65, p=.031$ . Dunnett's method of comparing group means to a control group mean indicates that the mean change in the SBH Maieutic Method group is significantly greater than the mean change in the control group ( $p = 0.0129$ ).

**Table 5: DIT2 P Scores by Group (Standard Deviation in Parenthesis)**

Participant groups	N	Pre-test (St. Dev.)	Post-test (St. Dev.)	$\Delta$ (St. Dev.)
Group 1 (Case study)	27	34.74 (15.40)	40.00 (17.07)	5.26 (14.40)
Group 2 (SBH Maieutic)	25	36.88 (18.41)	43.44 (17.28)	6.56 (10.93)
Group 3 (control)	21	33.43 (10.18)	30.76 (12.07)	-2.67 (11.03)
Comparison group				
Group 4 (Case study fall)	24	30.17 (15.96)	32.00 (15.38)	1.83 (11.50)

**Table 6: ANOVA comparing  $\Delta$  of Treatment Group DIT2 P Scores to Control Group**

Source	DF	Seq SS	Adj SS	Adj MS	F	P-value	
Group		2	1115.8	1115.8	557.9	3.65	0.031
Error		70	10696	10696	152.8		
Total		72	11811.8				

Dunnett Simultaneous Tests

Response Variable P-gain

Comparisons with Control Level

group = 3 subtracted from:

group	Difference of means	SE of mean difference	Adjusted T-Value	P-Value
1 (Case study)	7.926	3.597	2.204	0.0279
2 (SBH Maieutic)	9.227	3.659	2.522	0.0129

The null hypothesis was rejected. The data shows, with greater than 95 percent certainty, that participants in the SBH Maieutic Method demonstrated a significantly greater

mean increase in moral reasoning as compared to the control group that received no ethics instruction.

**Statistical sub-problem 2.**

*What is the effect of a traditional case-study method of ethics instruction on moral reasoning scores as measured by the DIT2?*

$$H_0: \Delta_{case} \leq \Delta_{con} \quad H_a: \Delta_{case} > \Delta_{con}$$

The second statistical sub-problem compared the change in moral reasoning scores as measured by the DIT2 between the case-study group and the control group. The researcher hypothesized that the participants in the case-study group would show a greater mean change in moral reasoning P scores ( $\Delta$ ) than participants in the control group who received no ethics instruction. The null hypothesis was that there would be no significant difference between  $\Delta$  of the two groups.

As seen in Table 5, participants in the case study group ( $n=27$ ) earned a mean P score of 36.88 on the pre-test with the DIT2. Participants in the control group ( $n=21$ ) received a mean P score of 33.43 on the DIT2 pre-test. A general linear model ANOVA indicates there is no significant difference between the means on the pre-test,  $F(2, 70) = 0.30, p = .740$ .

On the DIT2 post-test, participants in the case-study group received a mean P score of 40.00 and the control group received a mean P score of 30.76. A general linear model ANOVA using Dunnett's comparisons with a control showed the mean post-test P score for the case-study group was significantly greater than the mean post-test P score of the control group ( $p=0.0439$ ). In Figure 2, the changes in mean for all three groups pre-test to post-test can be seen.

The  $\Delta$  in P scores between the pre-test DIT2 and the post-test DIT2 for the case-study group is 5.26 points. The P score  $\Delta$  for the control group is -2.67. As seen in Table 6, a general linear model ANOVA using Dunnett's comparisons with a control shows that  $\Delta$  for the case-study group is significantly greater than the mean increase for the control group ( $p=.028$ ).

The null hypothesis is rejected. The data shows, with greater than 95 percent certainty, that participants in the case-study group showed a significantly greater mean increase in moral reasoning DIT2 P scores than the control group that received no ethics instruction.

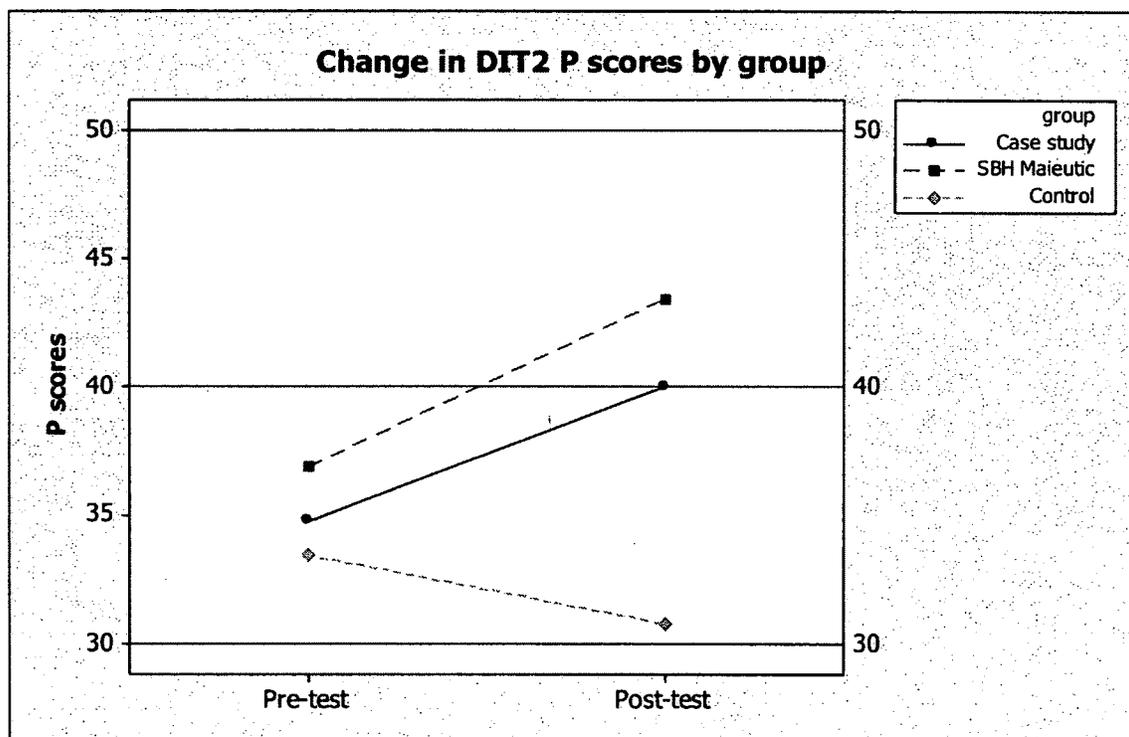


Figure 2: Change in DIT2 P Scores Pre-test to Post-test by Group

### Statistical sub-problem 3.

*What is the difference in the change in moral reasoning scores as measured by the DIT2 for students in case-study based instruction compared to students in principle-based SBH Maieutic Method instruction?*

$$H_o: \Delta_{SBH} = \Delta_{case} \quad H_a: \Delta_{SBH} \neq \Delta_{case}$$

The researcher began with the hypothesis that instruction with the SBH Maieutic Method would result in a significantly greater change ( $\Delta$ ) in DIT2 P scores than instruction using the case-study method. The null hypothesis for this third statistical sub-problem is that there is no significant statistical difference between the mean  $\Delta$  in DIT2 moral reasoning scores of the SBH Maieutic Method group and the case-study method group.

As seen in Table 5, the mean pre-test P score on the DIT2 for the case-study method group is 34.74. The mean pre-test P score for the SBH Maieutic Method group is 36.88. A general linear model ANOVA shows there is no significant difference between the pre-test P score means,  $F(2, 70) = 0.3, p=0.74$ .

The mean post-test P-score on the DIT2 for the case-study method group is 40. The mean post-test P score for the SBH Maieutic Method group is 43.44. A general linear model ANOVA using Tukey's simultaneous test for differences between the means shows no significant difference in the post-test P score means ( $p=.716$ ).

The mean difference in  $\Delta$  in P scores for the case-study method group is 5.26 points. The mean difference in  $\Delta$  in P scores for the SBH Maieutic Method group is 6.56 points. A general linear model ANOVA using Tukey's simultaneous test shows no significant difference between groups based on the  $\Delta$  in pre-test and post-test scores ( $p=.9239$ ).

The null hypothesis cannot be rejected. The data showed that there is no statistical difference in the  $\Delta$  in mean P scores between participants in the SBH Maieutic Method Group and the case-study group. However, as will be discussed in Chapter 5, differences in scores between the comparison group and the intervention groups in the present study suggest pedagogical reasons for the success of the moral reasoning interventions recorded in the present research.

#### Statistical sub-problem 4.

*What is the effect by gender of a principle-based SBH Maieutic Method of ethics instruction on moral reasoning scores as measured by the DIT2?*  
 $H_0: \Delta_{female} = \Delta_{male}$   $H_a: \Delta_{female} \neq \Delta_{male}$

$H_0: \Delta_{female} = \Delta_{male}$   $H_a: \Delta_{female} \neq \Delta_{male}$

Statistical sub-problem four proposes the null hypothesis that no statistically significant mean change in DIT2 P scores will be observed pre-test to post-test based on the gender of the participants.

As seen in Table 9, the mean P score for males ( $n=33$ ) on the DIT2 pre-test is 34.73 and the mean P score for females ( $n=40$ ) is 35.40. A general linear model ANOVA showed no significant difference in P scores on the pre-test by gender,  $F(1, 71) = .04, p = .852$ .

The mean P score for males on the post-test is 36.18 and the mean P score for females on the post-test is 40.45. A general linear model ANOVA shows no significant difference between the mean P scores on the post-test by gender,  $F(1, 71) = 1.21, p=0.274$ .

**Table 7: Change in DIT2 Scores by Gender (Standard Deviation in Parenthesis)**

	DIT2 P scores			
	N	Pre-test (St. Dev.)	Post-test (St. Dev.)	$\Delta$
Male	33	34.73 (15.41)	36.18 (16.41)	1.45
Female	40	35.4 (15.12)	40.45 (16.77)	5.05

The  $\Delta$  in the P score between the pre-test and the post-test is 1.45 points for males and 5.05 points for females. A general linear model ANOVA shows no significant difference in  $\Delta$  in P scores by gender,  $F(1, 71) = 1.43, p=0.235$ .

The null hypothesis cannot be rejected. There is no statistically significant evidence that the mean change in P score differs by gender.

#### **Statistical sub-problem 5.**

*What is the effect by media major (journalism, advertising, public relations, or digital communications and broadcasting) of a principle-based SBH Maieutic Method of ethics instruction on moral reasoning scores as measured by the DIT2?*

$H_0: \Delta_{adv} = \Delta_{digital} = \Delta_{journ} = \Delta_{pr}$   $H_a: \text{at least one is not equal}$

The fifth statistical sub-problem proposed the null hypothesis that there is no difference in moral reasoning scores on the DIT2 based on the media major of the participants.

As shown in Table 10, the mean DIT2 P score on the pre-test for advertising majors ( $n=16$ ) is 35.25. The mean DIT2 P score on the pre-test for broadcasting and digital media majors ( $n=19$ ) is 30.63. The mean P score on the pre-test for journalism majors ( $n=9$ ) is 37.11. The mean P score on the pre-test for public relations majors ( $n=26$ ) is 36.11.

The mean P score for participants in other majors ( $n=3$ ) is 42. However, the number of participants in the other category is so small that it would be statistically unreliable. For that reason, the group of participants in the other category is excluded from consideration in this portion of the analysis.

A general linear model ANOVA of the groups by major, excluding participants in the other category, shows no significant difference in mean pre-test DIT2 P scores by major,  $F(3, 66) = 0.67, p=0.575$ .

The mean DIT2 P score on the post-test for advertising majors is 40. The mean P score on the post-test for broadcasting and digital media majors is 35.37. The mean P score on the post test for journalism majors is 40.89. The mean P score on the post-test for public relations majors is 40. A general linear model ANOVA shows no significant difference in post-test DIT2 P scores by major,  $F(3, 66) = .38, p=0.771$ .

The  $\Delta$  in DIT2 P scores between the pre-test and post-test for advertising majors was 4.75 points, for broadcasting and digital media majors 4.74 points, for journalism majors 3.78 points, and for public relations majors 3.23 points. A general linear model ANOVA shows no significant difference in the  $\Delta$  of DIT2 P scores by major,  $F(3, 66), p=0.976$ .

**Table 8: Comparing DIT2 P Scores by Media Major (Standard Deviation in Parenthesis)**

Major	N	DIT2 P scores		$\Delta$
		Pre-test (St. Dev.)	Post-test (St. Dev.)	
Advertising	16	35.25 (14.86)	40.00 (14.5)	4.75
Broadcasting	19	30.63 (12.98)	35.37 (14.98)	4.74
Journalism	9	37.11 (20.35)	40.89 (15.56)	3.78
Public relations	26	36.77 (15.78)	40 (19.80)	3.23

Based on the data, the null hypothesis that there is no difference in moral reasoning scores by major cannot be rejected.

## Chapter Five: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to compare two methods of teaching ethics to media students in the Northwest — the principle-based SBH Maieutic Method and a traditional case-study method. However, that narrow statistical purpose must also be discussed in light of the study's broader pedagogical purpose of developing improved techniques for instructing students in media ethics.

As shown in Chapter 4, the researcher found that a 16-week intervention with both the SBH Maieutic Method and the case-study method resulted in a statistically significant increase ( $\Delta$ ) in moral reasoning as compared to a control group that received no training in ethics. However, as will be discussed later in this section, the  $\Delta$  for a comparison group taught by another instructor that also received a 16-week treatment with the case-study method did not demonstrate a statistically significant increase in moral reasoning scores.

The present study supports research that the SBH Maieutic Method is an effective pedagogy at improving moral reasoning (Barnes, 2009; Stoll, Beller, Reall, & Hahm, 1994). The present study also supports research that the case-study method can improve moral reasoning of media ethics students (Canary, 2007).

Based on the Proximal Similarity Model (Trochim & Donnelly, J. P., 2008), these findings may be generalized to other groups that display similar characteristics to those of the participants in the present study. In particular, the results of this study may apply to the ethics instruction of media students in classes of less than 30 in which the students are highly motivated by university requirements to obtain a grade of C or better.

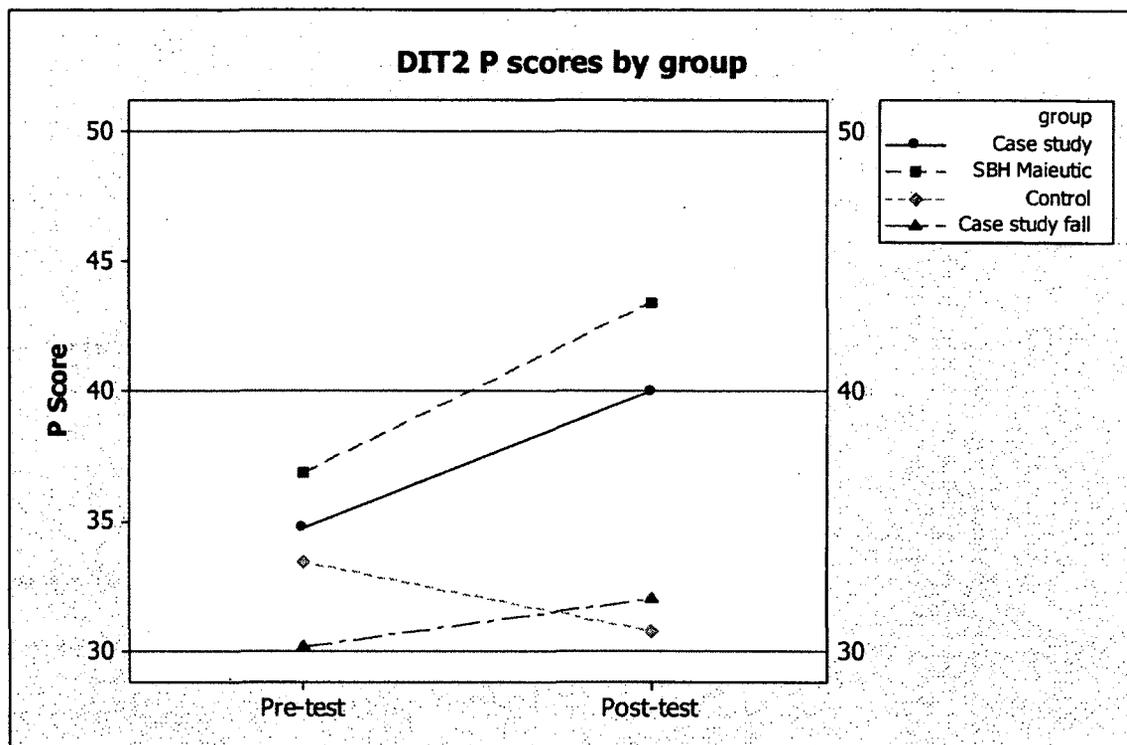
However, one aspect of the present study also suggests that not all instruction with the case-study method produces equal results. Because of concerns about researcher bias

against the case-study method of instruction, data from a comparison group in another study was used to provide an indication of whether the researcher altered the presentation in the case-study class to minimize its affect on moral reasoning. The comparison case-study class was the researcher's model for teaching the case-study group, and both groups used the same textbook and curriculum. However, rather than show evidence of minimizing the affect of the case-study intervention, the comparison data shows that the researcher's case-study group outperformed the group upon which the case-study method was modeled.

As Figure 4 shows, the comparison case-study class failed to demonstrate the significant increase in moral reasoning observed in the researcher's two classes. In the present discussion, the researcher postulates that differences in the pedagogy do exist between the researcher's class and the comparison class. Those differences arose because of a delimitation of the research project — an ethical delimitation on the researcher that required him to avoid methods and practices likely to lead to relativistic thinking on the part of the participants. Because the purpose of media ethics instruction is normative, relativism can be viewed as harmful to the subjects. In situations in the case-study class where the researcher was faced with an instructional choice in which one path appeared likely to lead to relativistic thinking, the researcher turned to techniques that the literature of the pedagogy of case-study instruction suggested greater likelihood of normative success.

That led the researcher to apply three pedagogical techniques, already central to the SBH Maieutic Method, to both the interventions in the present study, even though they were not used by the comparison case-study group. The success of both interventions in the present study suggest that these techniques can provide a baseline for pedagogical improvements in media ethics instruction. Those three techniques are skilled use of Socratic

or maieutic discussion and questioning to promote cognitive dissonance, writing assignments requiring deep reflection by students, and instructional use of a normative ethical philosophy promoting high standards of character.



**Figure 3: DIT2 P Scores by Group with Comparison Group Results Included**

The comparison class, noted in Figure 3 as “case study fall,” did post a small increase in moral reasoning scores, but the mean score on the DIT2 post-test remained lower than the beginning point of the other groups. A paired t-test of pre-test post-test results of the comparison case-study group in the fall showed no significant change in moral reasoning ( $t=0.78, p=.443$ ).

A one-way ANOVA of the DIT2 pre-test P scores showed no significant difference between the means of any of the four groups,  $F(3, 93) = .81, p=.492$ . A one-way ANOVA of the post-test P scores showed at least one of the groups was different,  $F(3, 93) = 3.62, p=.016$ . However, Dunnett’s simultaneous test showed no difference between the control

group and the comparison case-study group from the fall ( $p=.6326$ ). A one-way Bonferroni simultaneous comparison of post-test P scores of the SBH Maieutic Method group and the comparison case-study group shows a notable, though not statistically significant, difference ( $p=0.063$ ). On the N2 scale, however, the DIT2 post-test scores of the SBH Maieutic Method group and the comparison case-study group were statistically different ( $p=0.0298$ ). Students in the SBH Maieutic Method group achieved moral reasoning results that the fall case-study group did not match. A complete report of the N2 scores can be found in Appendix S.

The DIT2 N2 scores measure not only the amount of principle-based reasoning as shown in P scores, but also consider the amount of lower-level personal interest reasoning. In the context of this research, the data suggests that something may have been occurring in the SBH Maieutic Group to increase principle-based reasoning and decrease self-interest reasoning, which did not occur in the comparison case-study group. However, a sharp increase in principle-based reasoning and decrease in self-interest reasoning did occur in the case-study group taught by the researcher, even though the researcher based his case-study class on the comparison case-study group. This discounts concerns about researcher bias against the case-study method, and also raises the need for further consideration of the reason the researcher's groups scored higher than the comparison class. In particular, it raises the question of whether the researchers' education in moral reasoning and in teaching the SBH Maieutic Method may have affected the instruction in the case-study class.

The composition of the class itself could be a factor. The comparison class scored lower on the pre-test, though not significantly. In addition, there was no statistically significant difference in  $\Delta$  between the two treatment groups and the comparison group. The

class size was roughly 50 percent larger than the treatment groups, so the work load of the instructor was greater. One could infer that the comparison case-study participants were less motivated or less interested than their counterparts in the present study, and therefore performed at a lower level.

However, all groups were taught during the same year at the same university. The demographic makeup of the comparison has a roughly equal mix of males and females, and juniors and seniors. Because the class is required, they can reasonably be expected to be motivated to get a grade of C or better. The students were required by the instructor to complete the DIT2. However, a large number of the students failed to complete it properly or were rejected by consistency checks, and only 24 pre-tests and post-tests — slightly more than half the students — could be paired. It is also reasonable to conclude that the most attentive students completed the DIT2 without error and that the results are at least representative of existing case-study instruction.

Given the paucity of evidence supporting the effectiveness of the case-study method of ethical instruction at raising moral reasoning, it is also reasonable to conclude that some shared practices used in both the SBH Maieutic Method group and the researcher-taught case-study group — practices that were not used in the comparison case-study group — contributed to the success of the present moral reasoning intervention.

For that reason, this discussion will examine the instructional practices in the present study shared by the SBH Maieutic Method and the case-study method in this research project. It will also examine the differences between the case-study practice employed in the researcher's class and the comparison class, in the belief that this analysis will provide direction as to best practices for successful ethics education in the future.

### **Why Use the Case-Study Approach?**

A combination of lectures and case studies is the most common approach to media ethics instruction (Lambeth, Christians, & Cole, 1994), but research provides only limited support for the effectiveness of this approach. Canary (2007) found that writing about case studies was effective but discounted the value of lectures. No other studies using a valid and reliable measure of moral reasoning demonstrate that the case-study method of teaching media ethics is effective. Meta-analysis of ethics instruction in other fields provides equally mixed reports about case-study instruction. In the field of business ethics, Wright (1995) argued that the literature failed to provide an adequate answer to the basic question of whether moral judgement could be learned. A survey of ethics education in Australian psychology departments reported that students need to be involved in at least 20 hours of case-study discussion to show significant increases in moral reasoning scores on the DIT (Davidson, Garton, & Joyce, 2003). A meta-analysis in science programs complained that few studies explicitly evaluated ethics instruction (Antes, et al., 2009). However, based on a limited sample of 26 studies, Antes, et al. (2009), found that case-based instruction was more effective than lectures, and that student results were enhanced by engagement in highly interactive courses with a number of different learning activities.

The strongest support for the case-study approach rests on philosophical ground. Winston (2000) asks the rhetorical question, "Why use the case method?", but provides only philosophical answers: Case studies encourage moral imagination, challenge assumptions, and simulate the collaborative decision-making processes of the real world. Case studies are seen as a useful tool because they promote discussion and analysis (Wyatt-Nichol & Franks,

2010). Many instructors believe using realistic case examples is the best way to engage students (Keefer, 2005).

Much has been written about the use of case studies; however, the definition of “case study” varies widely. At its most basic level, a case study involves a narrative about a dilemma that requires a critical decision (Winston, 2000). To some writers, case studies and discussion are inseparable elements of the pedagogy (Bunch, 2005), but to others the participant’s personal process of reaching the decision by writing an essay is considered as separate from and more important than the discussion of the case study (Canary, 2007).

In contrast, relatively little has been written about the SBH Maieutic Method, but the method is more strictly defined. In part, that’s because the definition of the SBH Maieutic Method rests with its creator and chief practitioner, Dr. Sharon Kay Stoll. The techniques of the SBH Maieutic Method are almost always learned through reading and discussion with Dr. Stoll, as well as through observation and internships under her tutelage. The close relationship between Stoll and practitioners of the SBH Maieutic Method has helped preserve a clear definition of its accepted techniques and practices. See Appendix U for a discussion of the researcher’s process of learning the SBH Maieutic Method.

The case-study method employed in the present study and the SBH Maieutic Method share many features. For instance, both involve group discussion of ethical dilemmas and writing about dilemmas, although the source and construction of the dilemmas may differ. Both use professional codes of ethics as foundational elements of instruction. In the present study, both methods were taught by the same instructor, who was also the researcher. For these reasons, the present study must be analyzed against the background of previous research not only to assess whether the case-study method and SBH Maieutic Method served

to increase moral reasoning of students, but also to analyze which elements of the methods contributed to raising the students' moral reasoning.

### **Effect of the Moral Reasoning Intervention**

Moral reasoning is only one part of the process leading to moral action (Lickona, 1991; Bebeau, Rest, & Narvaez, 1999); therefore, the researcher cannot assume that successful moral reasoning instruction will lead to increased ethical behavior. However, the researcher can conclude that interventions with the SBH Maieutic Method and case-study method succeeded at the educational goal of improving moral reasoning, which is a goal most media educators say is the critical element of ethics education (Lambeth E. B., Christians, Fleming, & Lee, 2004).

However, several questions about the intervention remain. No increase in moral reasoning was observed in the control group, indicating that the process of learning to write news reports does not by itself lead to improvements in moral reasoning. Because the mean DIT P scores for journalists at 48.68 is very high (Wilkins & Coleman, 2005), there may be a tendency to overvalue the writing itself. However, while the present study suggests that writing is an important part of ethics pedagogy, success of the intervention depends upon other factors, as well. The individual needs to observe his or her own ethical stance in relationship to the ethical stances of others (Piaget, 1948; Kohlberg, 1981; Reimer, Paulitto, & Hersh, 1983). The individual must then have the chance to reflect upon his or her ethical stance, and, if necessary, to revise it (Reimer, Paulitto, & Hersh, 1983). This continued process of observing, reflecting and revising, which occurs when journalists confront ethical dilemmas in the course of interviewing people and interpreting events, is central to moral growth.

If the researcher examined solely the change in moral reasoning of the comparison group in the media ethics class from the fall semester, he would not have seen a statistically significant growth in moral reasoning. Something about the case-study and SBH Maieutic Method classes in the present research project led to improvements that were not observed in the comparison media ethics class in the fall, even though the fall class served as the model for the researcher's spring case-study class in the present study.

A cursory examination might attribute the difference in scores to the variable of the instructor himself, which is a limitation of this pedagogical study. Both classes in ethics in the present study were taught by the researcher, while the comparison class was taught by another journalism educator; however, there is little empirical evidence to support the assumption that some intrinsic characteristic of the instructor was responsible. Both instructors are approximately the same age and each has approximately 30 years of professional experience in media. The model instructor has slightly more experience, having taught media ethics for three years. The researcher observed the other instructor's class for a semester, took extensive notes, and planned the daily curriculum based on the lesson plans of the other instructor. During the research, the model instructor observed the researcher teaching the intervention class and made pedagogical suggestions to the researcher. Student evaluations of the case-study class were good for both instructors.

There is no evidence to suggest the researcher was biased against the case-study method. However, the researcher made some changes to the pedagogy of the case-study method based on best practices discussed in the literature of ethics education. The researcher established personal familiarity with each of the students in the class and used a questioning style based on the Socratic method. The researcher required more writing and provided more

detailed written feedback to students about their writing. The researcher also based the case-study class in an ethical philosophy that discouraged relativism and accepted a less rigid view of deontic and teleological theories than advocated by Day (2006). In addition, the researcher's training in the SBH Maieutic Method may have affected methods used in the case-study class. The researcher will elaborate on those changes in the following sections because they now appear to be important factors in the pedagogy of ethics instruction.

### **Use of Socratic and maieutic method in class discussions**

Both treatment classes taught by the researcher relied heavily on class discussion. Discussion in the case-study class was based in the Socratic method, as recommended by Plaisance (2007). The SBH Maieutic Method class used the maieutic method to drive discussion (Stoll & Beller, 2004).

The Socratic method relies on a process of reduction, steering the students toward an answer by asking questions intended to push them away from wrong ideas and drive them toward the right answer. The instructor does not tell the student the answer, but uses the questioning to elicit it. With the Socratic method, the instructor requires the student to discover the answer through his or her own mental process of questioning and narrowing the possibilities until only the right choice remains.

The SBH Maieutic Method is based in a mutual search for truth by the student and the instructor. Gill (1993) calls it a dance of the knower, the knowing, and the known. With the maieutic method, all parties assume there is a truth, though they do not necessarily assume that the instructor knows it. Instead, the maieutic method requires that instructor and student join on a mutual quest to seek the truth.

In practice, however, the Socratic method and maieutic method may appear very much alike. Students are chosen at random and are addressed with questions. Every student is expected to fully participate. This requires an environment in which students feel comfortable responding. To develop such an environment, the researcher learned each student's name on the first day and kept notes about students' interests. The active questioning required students to have read the materials and prepared themselves before they attended class. In a 75-minute class with approximately 30 students, nearly every student could expect to be called upon during the course of the class.

In both treatment classes, questioning often began with a first order question such as, "What do you think about that?" Immediately afterward, the instructor moved on to second order questions that required students to explain or support their original statements. For instance, after a student said that it was acceptable to download pirated music from the Internet, the student was asked to explain the reasoning behind that moral choice. When the student replied with justifications that artists were already making plenty of money, the student was asked to consider ethical reversibility and universalizability: What if it was his or her intellectual property that was being pirated? What if there were a rule that everyone had to download pirated music?

Students sometimes responded with answers that indicated they were reasoning based on self-interest, saying, for instance, that they would not pay for music if they were not required to pay. Then a rules-based question would be posed, asking them to consider court cases against music pirates or their professional code of ethics. If students responses were based on rules or social order, they would be asked to consider why such a rule or social order existed. If possible, the researcher would ask the students to consider a hypothetical

situation in which the rule seemed to work against an accepted principle. For instance, in the case where the death of a young person became a political issue, students were asked what made it ethically acceptable for activists to use the name or image of the person without the family's permission. That would be contrasted with the students' professional codes of ethics, which generally say it is unethical to use a person's image for promotional purposes without permission.

Students often had differing responses. In such cases, they were encouraged to consider the logic behind their own ideas as compared to the logic behind the ideas of others. This sometimes led to arguments, but students were asked to be respectful of the ideas of others, even if they disagreed.

The purpose of such questioning is to force students to think deeply about moral issues and to consider the reasoning behind their responses to ethical dilemmas. However, it also creates cognitive dissonance, which is one of the principles behind the SBH Maieutic Method (Stoll & Beller, 2004). Students often experienced some discomfort because of the questioning; they would try to avoid the question or answer with an opinion rather than a reason. However, this minor moral disorientation is a critical part of moral growth (Kohlberg, 1981; Reimer, Paulitto, & Hersh, 1983). This cognitive dissonance or disorientation occurs only when students are forced to confront the reasoning behind their own ideas and the ideas of others. Neither intervention class was allowed to become a relativistic discussion in which everyone had their own opinion and every opinion was right. Students were allowed moral autonomy to come to their own conclusions, but they were directed to come to moral decisions that were supported by clear reasoning based upon established moral theories.

In some instances, students changed their ethical stance during class after being confronted with such questioning and discussion. In other instances, students responded later that their opinions had changed. One student, an aspiring filmmaker, later wrote that he would not like to see his movies pirated and criticized other students in the class for their insistence on stealing intellectual property. The best measure of changes in ethical stances is the DIT2, which shows a significant increase in principled reasoning by both the SBH Maieutic Method class and the case-study class.

In the comparison case-study class in the fall, the model instructor used a different method of directing discussion. For instance, at the beginning of each class the instructor would present stories from the daily media to illustrate ethical topics, then address a general question to the class, asking students to present their opinion. Students were not called upon directly. Participation was entirely voluntary. On some occasions, a lively discussion occurred, but some students never participated. At other times, discussion was limited and the instructor moved on to the lecture. The discussion phase of the class generally lasted 20-30 minutes, with the instructor contributing a large amount of the discussion. The instructor tried to elicit as many opinions from the class as possible and encouraged competing views, but seldom directed second order questions requiring students to explain their position.

The discussions in the treatment classes were substantially longer. The SBH Maieutic Method class often used discussion for at least 60 minutes of each 75 minute class. Discussion in the intervention case-study class generally ran 30-45 minutes, and sometimes longer. Lectures in both intervention classes were also broken up with direct questioning of students. For example, during a lecture on teleological reasoning in the case-study class, multiple students were asked to contribute their ideas about what non-moral values should be

weighed and how much weight should be attributed to each of those non-moral values. During a lecture on conflicts of interest, students were asked to place themselves in the shoes of a journalist whose spouse wanted to place a campaign sign in a yard, or an advertising representative whose personal beliefs were opposed to those of the client. Over the course of a 15-week semester, students in both treatment classes spent more than 20 hours involved in directed discussion using a Socratic or maieutic questioning style. The SBH Maieutic Method class was involved in somewhat more discussion, but students in both reached the 20 hours of discussion that some studies say is necessary for a significant gain in moral reasoning (Davidson, Garton, & Joyce, 2003).

Because students in both intervention classes could be called upon by name at any time, they were expected to be actively considering the issues under discussion even when they were not directly participating. Students were not allowed to “opt out.” The researcher used techniques recommended by Lemov (2010) to lead students to an answer, including giving them extra time to think and breaking the question into smaller parts. In addition, the researcher also used Lemov’s (2010) technique of asking the question then pausing for a moment before calling on a student. The pause encouraged every student in the class to consider how they would answer the question.

Canary (2007) discounted discussion as a critical element necessary to increase moral reasoning in media ethics classes. However, the present study not only reasserts the importance of discussion, but also suggests that the manner of discussion is important. The discussion is necessary for creating cognitive dissonance, a prerequisite to moral development (Kohlberg, 1981). This study would support the assertion that students should be directly engaged with second-order questions designed to effectively stimulate cognitive

dissonance (Stoll & Beller, 2004). In addition, the study supports the idea that classroom discussions can provide a good setting for moral learning. By explaining and defending the reasoning behind their personal ethical decisions in front of their peers, and listening to the arguments of others on the same topic, students explore the intellectual terrain and consider other possible paths. Both Piaget (1948) and Kohlberg (1981) saw this peer interaction as the most important element of moral development.

Some studies have suggested that small group discussion is essential (Bunch, 2005). Small groups allow a greater volume of discussion by each individual. However, the present study suggests that the size of the group in the discussion is less important than the engagement of the students. Certainly, involving students in class discussion is more difficult in large classes; the size of the comparison case-study class, which had approximately 45 students, may have been a contributing factor to the reduced impact of the ethics instruction. However, Stoll has used maieutic discussion in classes of nearly 40 students. Law schools often use Socratic method in classes with 100 or more. While the importance of the size of the class must not be discounted, the quality of discussion and the training of the discussion leader may be more important factors.

### **Writing and instructor response**

Canary (2007) theorized that student engagement in the case studies through their personal writing and reflection was primarily responsible for gains in moral reasoning. The present study supports the claim that student writing is important to the development of moral reasoning; however, it would not support the claim that the writing alone is sufficient for that purpose. Students in both treatment classes completed significant amounts of writing and reflection about ethical dilemmas.

Participants in the SBH Maieutic Treatment group wrote the most. They were required to submit 14 essays of 2-3 pages in length on ethical issues in media, for a total of between 28 and 42 pages per student. The students in this class did not have exams.

In the case-study method class, the students completed five essays of 3-5 pages each during the course of the semester. They also wrote several pages about case studies on their midterms and final exams. In total, each student wrote between 20 and 30 pages during the course of the term.

In the comparison case-study class taught by the model instructor, the students wrote less than in the intervention classes. The instructor required only four essays of between 3-5 pages, and asked almost no essay questions on their exams. Tests in the research case-study class had approximately 50 percent essay questions about case studies as compared to approximately 10 percent essay questions on case studies on the comparison class final and midterm exams. In total, the students in the comparison case-study class wrote between 12 and 20 pages.

Stoll and Beller (Stoll & Beller, 2004) assert that writing is critical to the development of moral reasoning and make writing a central element of the SBH Maieutic Method. However, they view writing as more than a solitary exercise. They consider the process of writing, grading, reviewing and rewriting essays as part of the ongoing discussion of the SBH Maieutic Method.

The SBH Maieutic Method uses a rigorous standard for all essays. They are graded for grammar and spelling, must adhere to APA style, and students are required to provide six references for most papers. When six references are required, two must come from the texts, two from outside sources, and two from class discussions. The requirement of sources from

class discussions encourages students to listen to what other students are saying. Most students in the SBH Maieutic Method class routinely cited each other. That did not occur in the case-study class.

The case-study method class demands rigor of another sort. Students must demonstrate that they have identified the values in conflict, determined the central ethical question, and reviewed the case through each of three philosophical theories: deontological, teleological, and Golden Mean. Essays are graded for how well they address each element, as well as on spelling and grammar. No references are required, however.

In both treatment classes, the instructor provided multiple comments on student essays. Comments were designed to question the students' ethical reasoning and challenge them to develop views that represented higher levels of reasoning. All papers were graded and returned by the next class period, and each returned paper had approximately a half-page of written comments from the instructor. Students in both classes were allowed to correct errors in their essays and return them to the instructor to earn up to 90 percent of the original grade. Samples of student writing and instructor comments have been attached as Appendix K and Appendix O.

The liberal use of writing assignments is intended to encourage deep personal reflection on ethical issues. Extensive comments and rewrites are used to create an ongoing dialogue between student and instructor, and students are encouraged to revise their opinions. This ongoing process of writing, reflection, and revision demonstrates to students that moral growth is a developmental effort rather than the mere memorization of rules of behavior or codes of ethics.

Writing assignments in both the SBH Maieutic Method class and the case-study class were designed to encourage revision of the students' ethical ideas. In the SBH Maieutic Method class, the students were asked three times to write essays about their own personal values, once at the beginning of the semester, once at the midterm, and once at the end of the semester. In the case-study class, students were asked to apply three different theories to all their writing about case studies, then write more deeply in their conclusion about the one theory they felt was the best approach to the dilemma. They were informed that all three theories were intended to lead people to the right decision. If a student's reasoning through all three theories did not agree, he or she was asked to determine whether that could be attributed to the theory or the student's personal reasoning process. The instructor's intention was to encourage students to think and rethink dilemmas, and change their own thinking as the class progressed.

In contrast, essays in the comparison case-study class by the model instructor were generally not returned with extensive comments from the instructor. In part, that was due to the larger class size; commenting on papers requires a significant commitment of time from the instructor. Grading essays for one class of 30 students in the intervention groups required approximately six hours per assignment. An instructor teaching four classes of 45 or more students would be overwhelmed by the demands of grading in the SBH Maieutic Method style with an essay required of each student every week.

However, the present study would support the assertion that significant personal writing and reflection, plus a commitment from the instructor to read and comment on the essays, is important for promoting moral growth. The present study would also support the

assertion that grading should be rigorous and that students should be assigned multiple essays totalling at least 20 pages of writing during a semester.

### **Instructor philosophy and education**

In successful studies using the SBH Maieutic Method, instructors have been subject matter experts with broad expertise in the field they are teaching. They have had significant education in moral development and education, and have been trained in the SBH Maieutic Method. They build trust and respect in the classroom, and are strong moral role models. They employ the skill of listening to students and returning questions designed to raise the students' thinking to the next step of Kohlberg's hierarchical model of moral development. They also provide quick and extensive feedback to students' writing on ethical issues.

The researcher/instructor in the present study is a subject matter expert in journalism who spent two years studying the SBH Maieutic Method. The instructor in the comparison case-study method class is also a subject matter expert, and he has approximately three more years of teaching experience than the researcher. This suggests that training in the SBH Maieutic Method and the pedagogy of moral education may be at least as important as teaching experience to the moral development of students.

The researcher and model instructor have differences in training and philosophy that may contribute to differences in pedagogy. The researcher expressed to the class an ethical philosophy that there was a right answer and a wrong answer, and informed students that all three ethical theories in use were designed to lead them to the right answer. The instructor of the comparison case-study class expressed a form of moral relativism in which students were not necessarily expected to find the right course of action, but only to seek one that was "ethically defensible" (Personal communication, 2011). The model instructor visited the

researcher's case-study class and provided a critique of the research instructor's methods. The letter from the model instructor is attached in Appendix R.

The instructor of the comparison class espoused a rigid view of ethical theories, in particular prescribing a strict Kantian view of deontological ethics. That view is in keeping with Day's textbook (Day, 2006), which condenses its primary discussion of deontological, teleological and Aristotelian virtue ethics into only four pages. Following an observation of the researcher's class, the model case-study instructor offered this observation:

I was surprised to hear you say that the case-study analysis that applies the three ethical theories needs to come to the same conclusion in the application of all three for the sake of consistency. If that's true, then there really can be no debate or discussion in a case such as West. For example, if someone works the case deontologically and concludes the deception is not acceptable because "I do not lie under any circumstances," then there can be no teleological debate or Golden Mean application. There can be no teleological balancing if the outcome has to be "no deception." The issue is resolved before ever working through it (Personal communication, 2012).

This illustrates how the strict methods ingrained in Day's method of ethical analysis can lead to relativism, and how that presented a dilemma to the researcher. An overly rigid view of principled deontological thinking compresses values into rules. Such a view fails to provide a mechanism for approaching cases where important principles and values conflict with each other. When students are confronted with difficult Kantian dilemmas, such as the case in which the Nazis come asking for Anne Frank's secret location with the intent to send

her to the death camps, the students tend to reject strict deontological thinking as inhuman and uncaring.

Similar problems occur with strict teleological interpretations. Mill saw fairness as an important part of utilitarian processes (Elliott, 2007). However, a strict teleological weighing of consequences will sometimes lead to choices that seem grossly unfair, such as in the classic dilemma where an ethical actor is asked if it would be right to kill one innocent person to save five others. This leads students to reject teleological theory. If it appears that neither teleological nor deontological theories work, students tend to return to their original process of gut instinct and rationalization.

Day's SAD method, which stands for "situation definition, analysis and decision" (Day, 2006, p. 68), calls for analyzing every ethical case through three theories: a rigid Kantian form of deontology, a utilitarian form of teleology focused on maximizing good and minimizing harm, and a limited virtue theory that emphasizes compromise solutions. After the analysis, students are then expected to pick the decision they like best. If each of the three theories leads to a different, yet apparently morally defensible, course of action, the process is less one of reasoning to find the right decision than one of justifying a decision the student reached emotionally within milliseconds after the dilemma was presented.

Intuitive decision-making followed by intellectual rationalization raises significant concerns for moral educators. Benjamin Libet's (1999) study of the brain showed that readiness potential for an unplanned event begins to occur about 500 milliseconds before the act occurs, but actual cognitive awareness did not occur until about 300 milliseconds later. Because it takes about 50 milliseconds for the message to move from the brain to the muscles' motor neurons, Libet estimated that people have about 150 milliseconds between

cognitive awareness that they are going to take an action and the action itself, and that the action is already underway by the time people are aware of it. In Libet's view, most of the processing of information leading to action is happening in the unconscious mind. He argues free will is really "free won't," the human ability to stop actions with conscious thought after the unconscious has already started the action process.

Gazzaniga (2005) says such instant decisions are based in the centers of emotion in the human brain. Day's method plays into this natural human reliance on emotional response, particularly when student execution and understanding of the ethical theories is imperfect. In class discussion, students often made an instant decision then worked their way through the theories to find one that supported their response. If students lack skill and experience in moral reasoning, they may fail to consider important aspects of the issue. For example, in the present study students had great difficulty considering all possible outcomes of teleological considerations. They tended to be nearsighted and gave greater weight to personal or institutional goods and harms. Until students had a significant amount of instruction and experience with utilitarian methods, their teleological decision-making process was often weighted to rationalize pre-existing prejudices.

With that in mind, the researcher made some changes in the case-study pedagogy. Students were asked to consciously avoid making a decision until after they had completed analyzing the case with all three ethical theories. In the class discussions of case studies, students were asked to list all the possible goods and harms that might occur. By using the contributions of multiple members of the group, students were exposed to values they had not considered themselves. In addition, Golden Mean theory was discussed using Aristotelian notions of balancing virtues and students were asked to consider all Golden

Mean examinations as though they were a virtuous agent. In the last three weeks of class, students were briefly introduced to mixed deontological and utilitarian theories. Based on the work of Deni Elliott (2007), the instructor showed how Mill's theory of utilitarianism also included use of the principle of justice. Based on the work of Frankena (1973), the instructor showed how conflicts between moral values and principles could be resolved using teleological weighing of possible outcomes.

The researcher considered it his ethical duty to provide students with as useful an understanding of ethical theory as possible, given his educational background in the subject. In addition, the researcher felt an ethical duty to follow the best practices based in the literature of teaching ethics, which included cultivating moral vision (Black, 2008). The researcher also felt he had an ethical duty to steer students away from what Fox and Demarco (2001, p. 8) describe as "individual relativism," the idea that right and wrong is determined by personal choice. Individuals have moral autonomy to decide for themselves what they believe is the right or wrong action, but morality is a mechanism for determining what is best for society, not just for the individual. As such, the instructor felt an ethical duty to teach the seeking of morally right action as a form of excellence (Frankena, 1973). Assuming there is a right and there is a wrong, all three of Day's moral theories should lead the student to the right choice; if they do not lead to the same choice, then the student faces not a choice, but a greater question: Is this truly a failing of the theory or is it a failing of the analysis? Excellent students analyze and re-analyze, leading themselves to higher levels of moral reasoning. A student less motivated by excellence will merely analyze with all three theories and choose the outcome he or she likes best, reinforcing pre-existing instincts and sustaining personal relativism.

In the researcher's classes, the codes of ethics of various media disciplines were used as a buttress against relativism. The codes of ethics embody the central values of the professions. The researcher's emphasis was not on memorization of the codes, nor did the researcher focus on distinctions between the codes. Rather, instruction focused on the values within the codes and how those values could be used as part of the moral decision making process. The instructor's philosophy was that successful professionals should embody the values of their profession, and that students must begin the process of aligning their personal beliefs with their profession's values. When students made self-interested and relativistic statements, they were often asked to consider how their professional code of ethics would apply in such a case.

This reliance on the codes of ethics as a teaching tool may help explain the success of the researcher's interventions, particularly as measured by the N2 scores. Codes of ethics can be interpreted in two ways; they can be viewed as embodying principles of the profession, but they can also be viewed as the rules of the profession. Students who accepted the values of the profession expressed by the codes of ethics and incorporated those values into their own thinking could be expected to score higher on principled thinking. Those who accepted the codes as the rules of their profession could at least be expected to reduce their reliance on personal interest considerations and move toward rules-based thinking or social order considerations.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the N2 score on the DIT2 reflects not only principled reasoning at Kohlberg's stages 5 and 6, but it is also adjusted to reflect the amount of personal interest thinking at Kohlberg's stages 2 and 3. As a student moves from personal interest considerations toward rules-based or social order considerations at Kohlberg's stage

4, the N2 score will rise even when there is no change in the amount of principled reasoning. The intervention case-study group made sharp gains on the N2 scale, and the SBH Maieutic Method group scored significantly higher than the mean for all college seniors on the post-test N2 score. In addition, the post-test N2 score for the SBH Maieutic Method group was significantly higher than the post-test N2 score for the comparison case-study group.

This increased growth on the N2 scale by the researcher's treatment groups can be explained as a move away from personal interest reasoning and toward a greater reliance on rules-based thinking. The primary set of "rules" to which the students were exposed in the intervention groups were the professional codes of ethics. Students in the comparison case-study class taught by the model instructor were also exposed to the professional codes of ethics; however, the two classes used the codes in different ways. The comparison class tended to focus on memorization of all the codes of ethics, whereas the intervention classes encouraged students to learn and adopt the code of their own profession. This was intended to help them incorporate and embody their professional codes into their personal ethics. In addition, the comparison class did not use Socratic method to challenge students to consider their codes of ethics in their ethical reasoning.

Stoll asserts that a significant personal commitment to ethics education and moral philosophy is required of a successful moral reasoning instructor (Personal communication, 2012). The present study suggests that the researcher's two years of education in moral development played a significant role in the success of both the SBH Maieutic Method class and the case-study class interventions. In addition, the researcher had ongoing support from the Center for ETHICS\* in working through pedagogical issues. Two experts from the Center

for ETHICS\* observed the class and provided feedback. In addition, the researcher had weekly discussions with those experts about educational methods and philosophy.

If character education is to be an important part of media education, philosophical education and institutional support for the instructor may be critical. As this present study observed with the control group, declines in moral reasoning are possible. The control group's mean decline in the P score was 2.67 points, which was not statistically significant ( $p=0.281$ ), but it was not unexpected. Declines in moral reasoning are not uncommon in competitive populations. Research at the Center for ETHICS\* has shown that moral reasoning among college students in competitive sports declined over the period from 1987-2004 (Gwebu, Stoll, & Beller, 2005). Significant drops in moral reasoning of competitive populations have been recorded over four-year periods in high school and college (Gwebu, Stoll, & Beller, 2005).

Other competitive fields such as media may also be subject to natural declines, and there is some evidence that this is a particular problem in media fields. Drumwright and Murphy (2004) say advertising practitioners often exhibit some degree of moral myopia or moral muteness that inhibits their recognition and response to ethical issues. The authors suggest that this moral blindness rises over time from the context and demands of the industry and that it begins very early, often as soon as students begin to engage in advertising projects and internships. Students in advertising did not show a significant difference from their peers in college in other media disciplines, which suggests that the professional culture of advertising may affect moral reasoning after students join the working world. A similar trend is evident in journalism, though in the opposite direction. Professional journalists score very high on the DIT (Wilkins & Coleman, 2005), but, as the present study shows, college

journalism students do not score significantly differently than their peers. The professional journalistic process of confronting moral dilemmas and working through them may be a career-long process of continuing moral education.

Drumwright and Murphy (2004) suggest that educators generally shy away from the educational goal of teaching ethics, allowing students to drift with the ethical culture. This study suggests that if educators chose to develop curriculums aimed at ethical instruction, they can successfully improve the moral reasoning of students. However, this study also suggests that institutions would be best served to develop strong educational programs for ethics instructors, to establish a non-relativistic ethical philosophy supporting their character education program, and to build institutional cultures of character to support both ethics instructors and students in various media fields.

#### **The Effect of Gender and Media Major**

No significant effects by gender were observed in pre-test, post-test, or  $\Delta$  on the DIT2 P scores. Females scored higher than males, which is a general characteristic of the DIT2 (Maeda, Thoma, & Bebeau, 2009). The observed gains in scores following the intervention in the present study were also greater for females than for males, but it was far from statistically significant in a two-sample T-test on the P scale ( $p=.913$ ). This appears consistent with other research in media ethics. In a study of professional journalists, Wilkins and Coleman (2005) found that men scored slightly higher, but that difference was not statistically significant.

This in no way lays to rest concerns about gender and moral reasoning. Gilligan (1982) has suggested that women based their ethical choices in care rather than in justice, as

Kohlberg asserted. However, researchers may be well served to look at ethical culture as a more important factor than gender.

Wilkins and Coleman (2005) report that journalism professionals score a mean P score of 48.68 on the DIT while professionals in advertising score 17 points lower with a mean of 31.64. However, the present study shows no statistically significant difference between advertising and journalism students on the pre-test, the post-test or  $\Delta$  on the DIT2 P score. These findings are consistent with those of Marino (2008), whose study of 80 college students found no significant difference in moral reasoning between those in journalism and advertising. However, students in her study received no moral reasoning intervention. The mean scores in her study of 35.9 for journalism ( $n=25$ ) and 32.6 for advertising ( $n=43$ ) are comparable to the present study's pre-test mean score of 37.11 for journalism ( $n=9$ ) and 35.25 for advertising ( $n=16$ ).

Marino (2008) found no impact of ethics classes on moral reasoning by students in journalism and advertising. However, the present study shows that both the SBH Maieutic Method and the case-study method had significant results on the moral reasoning development of students. Marino suggested that media ethics courses needed to be improved to produce significant results in moral development, and called for a re-evaluation of ethics courses to emphasize dilemma discussion and character development. The present study supports Marino's contention.

However, if college media students show no difference in moral reasoning based on gender or major, why would the mean moral reasoning scores of professionals in journalism and advertising be so different? In athletics, the changing culture of women's sport is suggested as the reason for declines in the moral reasoning of female athletes (Gwebu, Stoll,

& Beller, 2005). Research to identify and quantify the source of what Drumwright and Murphy (2004) call moral myopia in media professions may yield benefits for educators. Character educators who can recognize the causes of moral myopia may be able to help students guard against it.

### **Conclusions**

The present study shows that a media ethics class taught with the SBH Maieutic Method can significantly improve students' moral reasoning.

The present study also shows that a media ethics class taught with the traditional case-study method can significantly improve students' moral reasoning.

However, not all classes taught with the case-study method showed significant improvement. The present study suggests that three elements are necessary to successful moral reasoning instruction with the case-study method: at least 20 hours of in-class discussion using the Socratic or maieutic method, multiple writing assignments totalling at least 20 pages per semester for each student, and significant education for the instructor in the pedagogy of ethics instruction and the philosophy of moral reasoning. This study suggests that the preparation of the educator may be as much or more important than the curriculum. Education and training in the pedagogy of the SBH Maieutic Method could lead to significant improvements in media ethics programs.

### **Implications for Future Research**

Future research should examine which of the techniques of the SBH Maieutic Method are most important to increasing moral reasoning. The case-study class showed significant gains in moral reasoning but wrote only five papers plus essays on exams for a total of between 20-30 pages. The SBH Maieutic Method class wrote 14 essays and a total of

between 28 and 42 pages. One of the greatest burdens for an instructor using the SBH Maieutic Method is grading papers every week for every student. In large classes, such essay assignments would be impossible. Future research to determine the optimum number of essays necessary to raise moral reasoning would be an important contribution to the understanding of the pedagogy.

In addition, the importance of instructor feedback to the students has not been fully evaluated. The present study featured extensive feedback to students on their papers; that written feedback is time consuming. Canary (2007) suggests that the writing itself is important because it encourages students to think through the ethical implications of the case study. However, the feedback on papers in the comparison case-study method class was not extensive, and that class did not make significant gains in moral reasoning. A study to measure the effect of feedback to the student's moral reasoning and to ascertain an optimum level of feedback could be another important contribution to the pedagogy.

In addition, the question remains as to whether moral reasoning can be improved in short and intensive classes, and in online classes. The present study was a 16-week long intervention with in-class discussion. Can similar results be obtained in a four-week summer class or in an online class? Given the growth of summer term and online education, the educational potential for these types of classes needs to be explored.

This study supports the hypothesis that student moral reasoning can be improved in media ethics classes. However, it also suggests that specific education is necessary to prepare instructors to successfully teach ethics. Culp (2012) has demonstrated that such education may be achieved with as little as 10 hours of specific instruction — two and half hours of classroom observing and assessing technique, three hours of education on

pedagogical skills and moral schema recognition, two hours of classroom rehearsals, and two and half hours of critiquing the instructor's technique. Culp's experience with highly motivated and structured Marine Corps officers may not be applicable to mass media educators, however. Further research into educating instructors of media ethics would be another valuable contribution to the SBH Maieutic Method.

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## Appendix A

### IRB Letter of Exemption

November 11, 2011

University of Idaho

Office of Research Assurances (ORA)  
Institutional Review Board (IRB)  
PO Box 443010  
Moscow ID 83844-3010

Phone: 208-885-6162  
Fax: 208-885-5752  
irb@uidaho.edu

To: Stoll, Sharon  
Cc: Grant, Thomas

From: IRB, University of Idaho Institutional Review Board

Subject: Exempt Certification for IRB project number 11-091

Determination: November 11, 2011  
Certified as Exempt under category 1 at 45 CFR 46.101(b)(1)  
IRB project number 11-091: Comparing the SBH maieutic principle based method to traditional case study methods of teaching media ethics.

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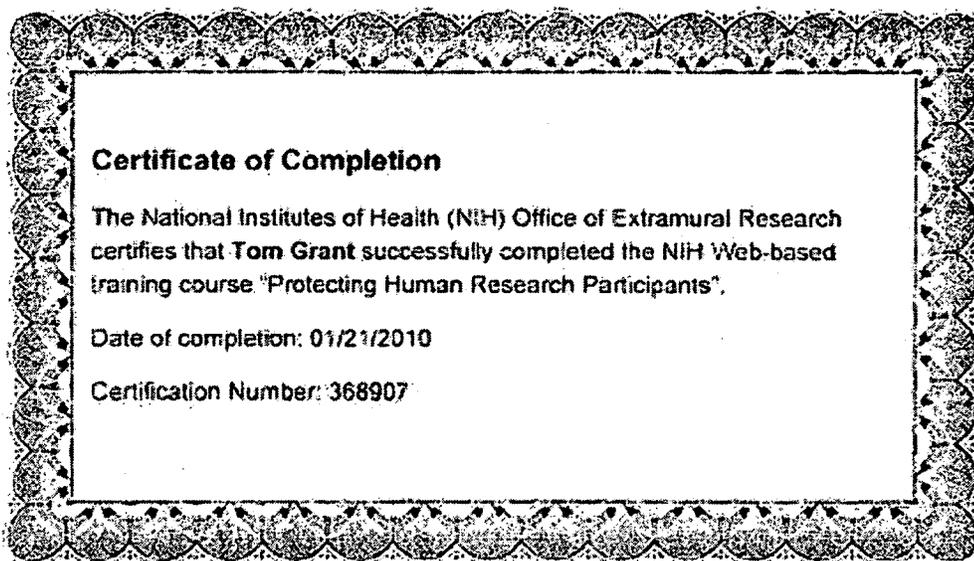
This study may be conducted according to the protocol described in the Application without further review by the IRB. As specific instruments are developed, each should be forwarded to the ORA, in order to allow the IRB to maintain current records. Every effort should be made to ensure that the project is conducted in a manner consistent with the three fundamental principles identified in the Belmont Report: respect for persons; beneficence; and justice.

It is important to note that certification of exemption is NOT approval by the IRB. Do not include the statement that the UI IRB has reviewed and approved the study for human subject participation. Remove all statements of IRB Approval and IRB contact information from study materials that will be disseminated to participants. Instead please indicate, "The University of Idaho Institutional Review Board has Certified this project as Exempt."

Certification of exemption is not to be construed as authorization to recruit participants or conduct research in schools or other institutions, including on Native Reserved lands or within Native Institutions, which have their own policies that require approvals before Human Subjects Research Projects can begin. This authorization must be obtained from the appropriate Tribal Government (or equivalent) and/or Institutional Administration. This may include independent review by a tribal or institutional IRB or equivalent. It is the investigator's responsibility to obtain all such necessary approvals and provide copies of these approvals to ORA, in order to allow the IRB to maintain current records.

This certification is valid only for the study protocol as it was submitted to the ORA. Studies certified as Exempt are not subject to continuing review (this Certification does not expire). If any changes are made to the study protocol, you must submit the changes to the ORA for determination that the study remains Exempt before implementing the changes. The IRB Modification Request Form is available online at: <http://www.uidaho.edu/ora/committees/irb/irbforms>

University of Idaho Institutional Review Board: IRB00000843, FWAD0005639

**Appendix B****NIH Certificate of Completion "Protecting Human Research Participants"**

## Appendix C

### Research Consent Form

#### Consent Form

#### Media Ethics Instruction Research Project

The University of Idaho Institutional Review Board has certified this project as exempt. The purpose of this study is to compare two methods of teaching media ethics and determine whether these methods improve moral reasoning.

As a participant in this study you will be asked to spend approximately 40 minutes to complete a survey about how you feel about certain ambiguous situations. You may feel some anxiety while taking the survey; remember, you may refuse to participate at any time with no penalty to you.

You will benefit from participating in this study by helping us help determine how best to teach media ethics classes in the future. Society will benefit because improvements in the effectiveness of media ethics training will help future communications experts avoid the ethical pitfalls that have eroded trust in media.

In the survey, you will also be asked to provide some demographic information. Responses to this survey including all personal information are anonymous. Please contact the principle investigator Tom Grant at [gran3905@vandals.uidaho.edu](mailto:gran3905@vandals.uidaho.edu) or Dr. Stoll at [stoll@uidaho.edu](mailto:stoll@uidaho.edu) if you have questions or problems.

Investigator  
Thomas Grant  
University of Idaho  
Center for ETHICS\*  
Moscow, ID 83844-3080  
Ph. 208-885-2103

Faculty Sponsor  
Dr. Sharon Kay Stoll  
University of Idaho  
Center for ETHICS\*  
Moscow, ID 83844-3080  
Ph. 208-885-2103

I have reviewed this consent form and understand and agree to its contents.

Participant Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Experimenter: Thomas Grant

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

## IRB Letter Approving Modification to Review Student Writing

## University of Idaho

April 11, 2012

Office of Research Assurances

Institutional Review Board

PO Box 443010

Moscow ID 83844-3010

Phone: 208-885-6162

Fax: 208-885-5752

irb@uidaho.edu

To: Stoll, Sharon  
 Cc: Grant, Thomas

From: Traci Craig, PhD  
 Chair, University of Idaho Institutional Review Board  
 University Research Office  
 Moscow, ID 83844-3010

IRB No.: IRB00000843

FWA: FWA00005639

Approved: 04/11/12

Title: Comparing the SBH maieutic principle based method to traditional case study methods of teaching media ethics

Your modification request has been approved.

Modification Requested: 04/04/12

Please note that this does not change your approval period.

---

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board at the University of Idaho, I am pleased to inform you that the proposed protocol modification for the above-named research project has been approved as offering no significant risk to human subjects.

A modification **does not** change your approval period. Should there be significant changes in the protocol for this project, it will be necessary for you to resubmit the protocol for review by the Committee.

Thank you for submitting your modification request.



Traci Craig

## Appendix E

### Research Consent Form to Analyze Student Writings

Essay Analysis Consent Form  
Media Ethics Instruction Research Project

The University of Idaho Institutional Review Board has approved this project. The purpose of this study is to compare two methods of teaching media ethics and determine whether these methods improve moral reasoning.

The research is being conducted as part of your normal class participation in JAMM 341. In class, you are being asked to complete numerous essays on ethical issues. Your essays may provide information about the manner and extent of your moral development in this class.

But signing this consent form, you are agreeing to allow the researcher to analyze and use your essays as part of the research into the comparison of teaching methods. Your identity will be kept confidential. Your essays will be stored in a locked file cabinet accessible only to the researchers. Parts of your essays may be used in publications, but nothing will be used that could identify your participation in the project. You may refuse to participate at any time with no penalty to you.

You will benefit from participating in this study by helping us help determine how best to teach media ethics classes in the future. Society will benefit because improvements in the effectiveness of media ethics training will help future communications experts avoid the ethical pitfalls that have eroded trust in media.

Please contact the principle investigator Tom Grant at [gran3905@vandals.uidaho.edu](mailto:gran3905@vandals.uidaho.edu) or Dr. Stoll at [stoll@uidaho.edu](mailto:stoll@uidaho.edu) if you have questions or problems.

Investigator  
Thomas Grant  
University of Idaho  
Center for ETHICS\*  
Moscow, ID 83844-3080  
Ph. 208-885-2103

Faculty Sponsor  
Dr. Sharon Kay Stoll  
University of Idaho  
Center for ETHICS\*  
Moscow, ID 83844-3080  
Ph. 208-885-2103

I have reviewed this consent form and understand and agree to its contents.

Participant Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Experimenter: Thomas Grant

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix F

### Syllabus for Case Study Method Class

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND MASS MEDIA  
UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

### JAMM 341, SECTION 1:

### MASS MEDIA ETHICS

### SPRING 2012

**Class Meeting Times:** Tuesday and Thursday, 8 a.m. to 9:15 a.m.

**Classroom:** TLC 141

**Instructor:** Tom Grant

**Instructor's Office:** 500 Memorial Gym (in the front door, up the stairs and to the left; at the top of the second level of gym seating turn right and continue up to the Center for ETHICS\*.)

**Contacting Instructor:**

**E-mail:** [tgrant@uidaho.edu](mailto:tgrant@uidaho.edu)

**Phone:** 208-885-2103 or 208-301-0147

**Instructor Office Hours:** Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 12:30-1:20 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30-10:45 a.m.; or by appointment.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS:** This is a 3-credit course in which students will undertake a critical examination of the major ethical issues affecting media practitioners across all fields. In addition, we will survey the philosophical, social, and moral qualities of ethical decision making as described in classical ethical theory. At the end of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the following:

(a) An understanding of the philosophical foundations of ethics and major ethical principles and how to apply those principles in a professional setting.

(b) A demonstrated grasp of the major contemporary ethical issues and the ethical dilemmas faced by media practitioners so as to contribute to ethical problem solving in the professional

workplace.

(c) A demonstrated ability to apply critical and creative thinking skills in resolving challenging ethical dilemmas.

(d) The ability to effectively communicate ethical concepts and practical application of ethical theory to professional and external audiences.

The importance of this course is underscored by the fact that regardless of which media profession one is engaged in, the ethical principles essentially are the same and most of the issues recur across occupations.

Nevertheless, the course unapologetically emphasizes ethical issues in journalism. That is due, in part, to the fact the instructor is a journalist and brings that experience to the class. But it is also true the practice of journalism produces a mother lode of compelling issues and cases. Their resolution has relevance to all JAMM disciplines.

**REQUIRED TEXT:** Louis Alvin Day, *Ethics in Media Communication* (ISBN: 0534637140), Thomson Wadsworth. The book is available in the University Bookstore across from the Student Union Building. Used copies can be found online at any number of outlets, including Amazon. Third, fourth or fifth editions are acceptable. A copy of the text, albeit a third edition, will be on reserve in the library.

**ADDITIONAL/SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS & MATERIALS:** Although the required text will constitute most of the book readings for the class, there will be supplementary reading materials provided in class from time to time. Furthermore, students will be expected to periodically access the following websites:

<http://www.poynter.org/category/latest-news/romenesko/>

<http://iwantmedia.com>

<http://www.poynter.org/tag/ethics/>

<http://www.ajr.org/>

<http://www.cjr.org/>

**BLACKBOARD:** Content of the course will be managed through Blackboard. Your Blackboard page will be listed as “jamm341: Mass Media Ethics (Grant, Sec 01).” Because there are two sections to this class, and the two sections are being taught using different materials, make sure that you are working from the appropriate Blackboard page and reading the appropriate materials.

**CLASS BLOG:** We have established a blog for this course, <http://jamm341ethics.wordpress.com/>. All students in the class must register on the blog using their real names and Vandal email. We will use the blog to discuss current events in media ethics. Participation on the blog and in class will constitute 10 percent of a student's grade. Deadline for registering is Jan. 25.

**CLASS ATTENDANCE:** This is a JAMM course so we will follow rigorously the school's standard attendance policies. Because the importance of attendance cannot be overemphasized, roll will be recorded at the beginning of every class session. At the heart of the course will be in-class lectures, discussions and written case studies. Participation in discussions, assignment reviews and topical lectures is essential to acceptable performance. Four unexcused absences during the course of the semester will result in a deduction of one grade level from your final grade. Beyond that, you may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for non-attendance, or habitual late arrival.

Per University of Idaho policies, absences will not be excused unless the absence is due to participation in official university activities or programs, personal illness, family illness and care or other compelling circumstances. Excused absences must be documented (e.g. with a doctor's note or a copy of a newspaper obituary or a letter from your coach). Students are expected to notify the instructor in advance of planned absences.

It is the responsibility of students who have missed a class to acquaint themselves with the material covered and to make arrangements with the instructor to makeup assignments.

This is a professional program for journalists and other media practitioners who are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. Students are expected to meet deadlines without exception. In general, assignments will be due at the start of class on the day specified when the assignment is made. Late papers will be docked one full grade for every day past deadline.

**EMAIL:** All students are required to check their University of Idaho email address (Vandal Mail) regularly. Reminders of assignments, changes in the schedule and links to related Web sites may be distributed via email. Class notes will be distributed after every class to students who attended that class. The class email distribution list will be based on your Vandal Mail address. If writing to me, please put "JAMM 341" in the subject line to assure a prompt response.

**CLASS ETIQUETTE:** Students must turn off all cell phones, pagers, beepers and other devices during class. Laptops must remain closed. iPads and other digital devices stored. Class participation is important. The instructor will e-mail class notes to all attending students shortly after class. Distracting side conversations will be discouraged. Students found napping will be asked to leave. Classroom guests, in particular, will be treated with attentive respect. Most importantly, all of us will be expected to maintain a civil demeanor during what certainly will be lively discussions of highly controversial ethical issues.

**GRADING:** There will be one mid-term exam, four case study papers and a final exam. There also will be some number of ungraded assignments at the beginning of the semester as well as an occasional extra credit opportunity.

Final grades will be determined as follows:

**Midterm exam:** 20 percent

**Case study reports:** 50 percent

**Final exam:** 20 percent

**Class, blog participation:** 10 percent

The mid-term will cover classical ethical theory and professional codes of ethics. The test will be scored on a points basis. The final will include "live-fire" case studies as well as some standard exam questions and also will be scored on a points basis. The final is scheduled for 7:30-9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, May 9.

**Exam makeups:** A substitute exam date will be granted for only three reasons:

- Your own serious illness, documented with medical records.
- Serious illness or death of a family member; documentation required.
- An official university absence (athletic contest or field trip).

Please submit your request for a makeup exam in writing or by e-mail at least one week before the exam. Makeups must be completed no later than two class days after the scheduled date. The need to depart early for a weekend trip or spring break is NOT considered a legitimate reason to request an alternative test date.

During the semester, the class will consider a significant media-related ethical topic each week. In introducing the topic, students will be asked to debate the ethical issues involved, discuss relevant cases and their resolution and occasionally role-play key stakeholders. Students are expected to actively participate in these discussions.

**A note on writing:** This is a JAMM course. In addition to covering elements required of an ethical case study, assignments will be evaluated, to the extent possible, on the quality of the writing, particularly clarity, and on accuracy. Incorrect spellings, improper grammar and errors of fact can result in a lower grade.

In addition to the in-class and written case studies, some time will be spent each week reviewing "breaking" ethics news and discussing cases and events in class.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY & INTEGRITY:** Students are responsible for compliance with, and are

expected to abide by, the Student Code of Conduct especially, but not exclusively, Article II on Academic Honesty. Consequently, any violation of the Code be it in the form of cheating, plagiarism, etc., shall be punished accordingly. Further information and additional resources on University of Idaho policy regarding academic integrity is available online at: <http://www.uihome.uidaho.edu/default.aspx?pid=45708%20>. See also p. 55, item O-2 (Academic Performance) of the University of Idaho 2010-2011 catalog.

**HELP WITH STUDY SKILLS:** Survey courses such as JAMM 341 cover a wide range of material. To earn a good grade in the course, students should attend class every day and keep up with the reading. If you have problems understanding the course content, please visit me during my office hours. If you need additional help with time management, active learning and taking tests, visit the Tutoring and Academic Assistance office on the third floor of the Idaho Commons

**ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH CHALLENGES:** Disability Support Services Reasonable Accommodations Statement: Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have documented temporary or permanent disabilities. All accommodations must be approved through Disability Support Services located in the Idaho Commons Building, Room 306 in order to notify your instructor(s) as soon as possible regarding accommodation(s) needed for the course.

Phone: 885-6307

Email at [dss@uidaho.edu](mailto:dss@uidaho.edu)

Web at [www.access.uidaho.edu](http://www.access.uidaho.edu)

Students should present a completed and signed Accommodation Checklist for the current semester from Disability Support Services when requesting accommodations. Students should present the checklist to the instructor during office hours.

## Appendix G

### Sample PowerPoints from the Case Study Class

#### JAMM 341

Media ethics  
Instructor: Tom Grant

#### Introductions

- ▶ What is the most important rule of journalism?

#### Syllabus

- ▶ Purpose:
  - Understand and apply ethical principles
  - Understand contemporary ethical issues
  - Critical thinking skills
  - Communicate and apply ethical theory
- ▶ Text:
  - Day, *Ethics in Media Communication*
- ▶ Blackboard:
  - Class materials and assignments
  - Links to additional reading and blog

#### Syllabus

- ▶ Attendance is recorded and required
- ▶ 4 unexcused absences = one grade reduction
- ▶ Check your email and Blackboard regularly
- ▶ No electronic devices, be respectful
- ▶ Grading:
  - Midterm – 20%
  - Case studies – 50%
  - Final – 20%
  - Participation in class and blog – 10%

#### Research project

- ▶ Studying ways to improve instruction in the subject of media ethics
- ▶ Section 1 and Section 2 taught using different methods
- ▶ Research shows both methods have been successful in some studies
- ▶ Never before compared their effectiveness

#### Research assignment

- ▶ Get your random number
- ▶ Write it down in a secure place
- ▶ Record your random number, mother's maiden name and first pet on sheet
- ▶ Susan Steele will maintain that sheet for possible reminders later
- ▶ [www.surveymonkey.com/s/JAMMSpring09](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JAMMSpring09)
- ▶ At the end of the survey, you'll get a completion number. Email that to me.

## Why does media ethics matter?



## Murdoch and phone hacking

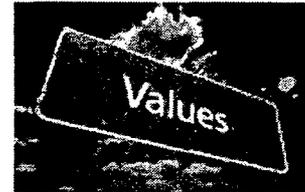
- › Fallout from the scandal
  - New police rules for fraternization with journalists
  - New regulations for British media proposed
    - Required front page retractions and apologies?
    - Removing journalists from practice?
  - One newspaper folded
  - Multiple journalists fired
  - Claims of cover-up
  - Son James received warning about phone hacking consequences in 2008

## Goals for class

- › To learn how to navigate and resolve the ethical dilemmas media professionals encounter every day.
- › To learn enough about ethical theory and decision-making to help you apply the lessons of this class to other aspects of your daily life.
- › To understand the nature of personal and professional values and how values in conflict are at the core of all ethical problems we face.

## Resolving conflicting values

- › Resolving conflicting values is at the center of ethical decision-making.
- › What are values?



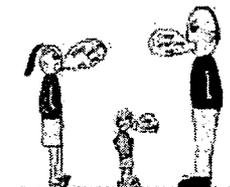
## What do you stand for?

- › Personal values
- › Community or social values
- › Professional values
  
- › Moral values
- › Non-moral values



## When values are in conflict

- › What is a conflict of values?
- › How do others involved view the conflict?
- › Can you argue passionately on both sides?
- › What if your personal values conflict with the values of your profession?



## Professional values

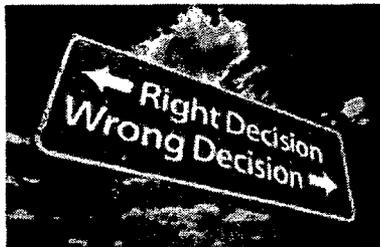
- › I am going to ask you to operate within the framework of professional values and standards.
- › Learn how journalists, public relations pros, advertising pros and digital media pros view ethical dilemmas and resolve them.



## Shades of ethics

- › Issues are rarely black and white
- › Laws: established by government
  - Legally bound to follow laws
  - May govern ethical behavior
- › Rules: established by lesser institutions
  - Contractually bound to follow rules
  - May govern ethical behavior
- › Standards: established by profession
  - Voluntarily agree to follow standards
  - Ethical codes govern ethical behavior

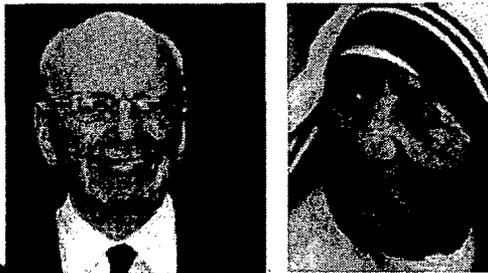
## Is there a right and wrong?



## Is there a right and wrong?

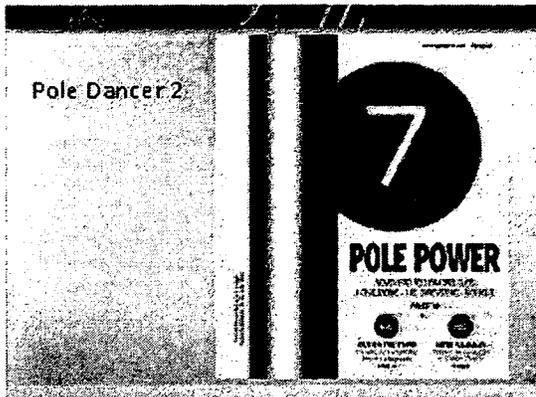
- › I believe there is a right and wrong
- › I recognize our analysis may differ
- › We need to be tolerant of opposing views and see them out
- › Morality requires a continued search
- › Moral reasoning grows in stages
  - We may use different reasoning at different times

## Common sense



## Morality is about all of us

- › Moral development requires people to think not only about themselves, but about other people and about society as a whole.



## Moral reasoning in journalism

A systematic process for making ethical decisions



Photo credit: Tim to record the class.

## Day: Ethical markers

- Credibility – believable and worthy of trust
- Integrity – discerning right from wrong, acting on what you discern, saying openly why
- Civility – self-sacrifice and respect



## Selfishness

- Day: "An entirely selfish person cannot by definition, make ethical judgments"



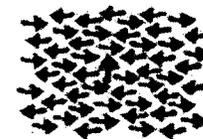
## Day's process: SAD

- Situation definition
  - Description of facts
  - Identification of principles and values
  - Statement of ethical issue or question
- Analysis
  - Weighing competing principles and values
  - Discussion of applicable ethical theories
- Decision
  - Defense of decision based on moral theory



## Identify the primary issue

- Many problems have more than one issue that need to be resolved



- Find the central, most significant conflict
- That's the starting point of analysis

### Case studies

- Pole dance aerobics
  - Key facts, parties
  - Central ethical issue
- Anti-abortion rally
  - Key facts, parties
  - Central ethical issue
- Infiltrating a 12-step program
  - Key facts, parties
  - Central ethical issue



### Identify the values in conflict

- What are the values involved?
- Who holds those values?
- Are they in conflict? (What is conflict?)
- Can you reconcile that conflict?



### What are values?

- Steve Smith:



Values are beliefs that drive action.

- Honesty is a value:
- "People should never lie."
- Others?:

- Love, Caring, Thoughtfulness, Kindness, Compassion, Respect for Life, Tolerance, Courtesy, Cooperation, Self-Discipline, Determination, Will Power, Restraint, Obedience, Perseverance, Striving, Effort, Confidence, Endurance, Purpose, Responsibility, Helpfulness, Harmony, Optimism, Co-operation, Enthusiasm, Forgiveness: Compassion, Mercy, Understanding, Gratitude, Generosity, Sharing, Thankfulness, Devotion, Concentration, Calmness, Focus, Purity, Perfection, Simplicity, Innocence, Restraint, Accountability, Good Intentions, Integrity, Truthfulness, Honesty, Courage, Sincerity, Moderation, Balance, Moderation, Inner Peace, Faith, Trust, Hope, Patience, Humility, Modesty, Sincerity, Gentleness, Acceptance, Freedom, Contentment, Discernment, Self-Awareness, Courage, Alertness, Receptivity

### Day on values

- Day: A value is "something that is esteemed, prized or regarded highly, or as a good."



### Categorizing values

- Moral values have to do with how you treat other people
- Examples: justice, kindness, gratitude, responsibility, beneficence
- Social values are characteristics valued by society, such as perseverance, loyalty
- How can social and moral values be in conflict?

### Non-moral values

- Everything else but moral values
- Money, fame, success, pride...
- Social values like loyalty and credibility?
- How can credibility be a non-moral value and an ethical marker?



### Another way to define values

- Values answer the question: "What do you stand for?"
- We all have personal values
  - Where do they come from?
  - Can you articulate them?

### Professional values

- Concepts, principles and ways of thinking that have become part of the professional culture.
- Who sets those values?
- How do you learn those values?
- What are those values?

### Which values to use?

- "The question then becomes, which do we want most to be, a private citizen or a media professional?" Tom Bivens
- For this class, operate primarily within the realm of professional values

### Case studies

- Furniture store advertising
  - Values in conflict?
- Dirt on the candidate
  - Values in conflict?
- Teenagers accused of murder
  - Values in conflict?

### Our goals

- "The goal is not to make ethical decisions with which everyone agrees but to increase our ability to defend our critical judgments on some rational basis." --Day

## 5 realistic objectives

- Stimulate moral imagination
- Recognize ethical issues
- Develop analytical skills
- Elicit a sense of moral obligation
- Tolerate disagreement

## Identifying ethical issues

A review and small group exercise



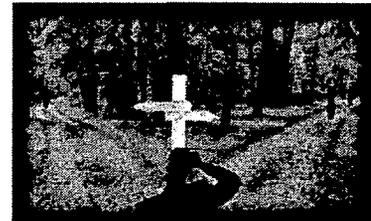
Photo provided by Tom to record the ethics

## Day's process: SAD

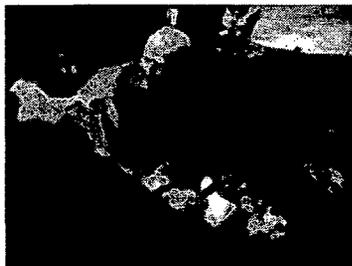
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  - Description of facts
  - Identification of principles and values
  - Statement of ethical issue or question
- Analysis
  - Weighing competing principles and values
  - Discussion of applicable ethical theories
- Decision
  - Defense of decision based on moral theory

## Determine the ethical issue.

- Look for the most significant conflict



## Identify the values in conflict



## What are values?

- Steve Smith:

Values are beliefs that drive action.

- Honesty is a value:
- "People should never lie"



### Professional values

- Principles and ways of thinking that have become part of the professional culture.



### ETHICAL THEORY

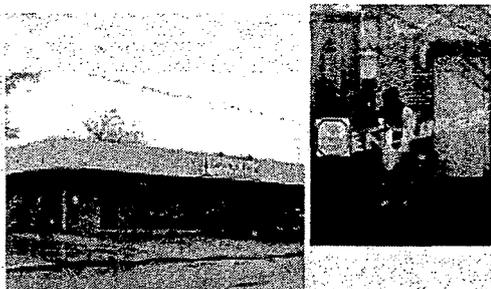
BOB WOODS AND THE MEDIA

Please refer to recording class

### TIGER'S FAMILY PROBLEMS



### TIGER GOES TO A SEX CLINIC



### HATTIESBURG CHOICE



### VALUES IN CONFLICT

I believe people have a right to privacy.



I have a duty to inform my readers about events in their city.

ETHICAL THEORY



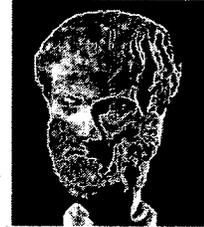
Socrates

There are moral absolutes and moral knowledge and they can be discovered by intellectually and persistently curious citizens.

ARISTOTLE

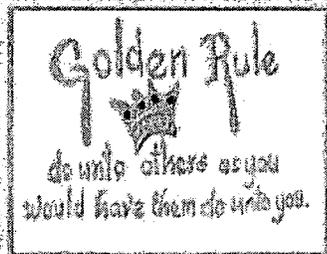
Virtue ethics

Theory of the Golden Mean

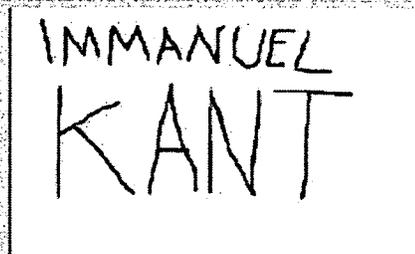


Aristotle

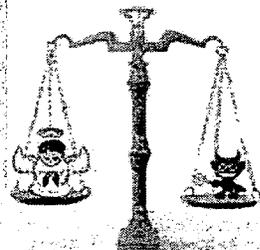
RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS



KANT: DEONTOLOGY



MILL: UTILITARIANISM



RAWLS: JUSTICE



### THREE PRIMARY THEORIES

- Deontological
- Teleological
- Virtue theory

### TIGER WOODS CASE STUDY



## CASE STUDIES

What I expect in your papers:

Please call Pam to record the class

## SAD

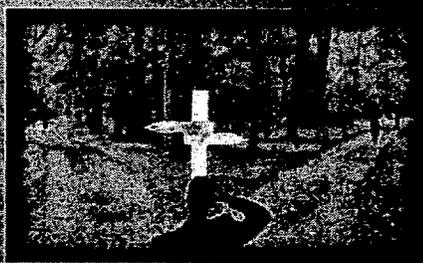
- ☐ Situation definition
  - Description of facts
  - Identification of principles and values
  - Statement of ethical issue or question
- ☐ Analysis
  - Weighing competing principles and values
  - Enumeration of applicable ethical theories
- ☐ Decision
  - Defense of decision based on moral theory

## Review the facts

☐ Ethical decisions hinge on a complete understanding of the facts in a case.

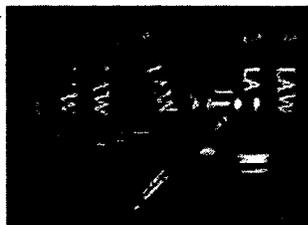


## Identifying the ethical issue

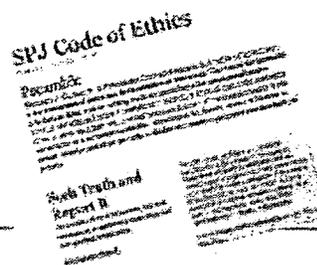




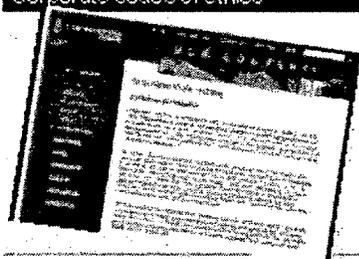
Do you have to follow the law?



Do codes of ethics have authority?



Corporate codes of ethics



SPJ Code of Ethics

- » **Seek truth and report it:** Journalists should be honest, fair and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting information.
- » **Minimize harm:** Ethical journalists treat sources, subjects and colleagues as human beings deserving of respect.
- » **Act independently:** Journalists should be free of obligation to any interest other than the public's right to know.
- » **Be accountable:** Journalists are accountable to their readers, listeners, viewers and each other.

PRSA values

- » **ADVOCACY**
- » **HONESTY**
- » **EXPERTISE**
- » **INDEPENDENCE**
- » **LOYALTY**
- » **FAIRNESS**

RTDNA

- » **PUBLIC TRUST**
- » **TRUTH**
- » **FAIRNESS**
- » **INTEGRITY**
- » **INDEPENDENCE**
- » **ACCOUNTABILITY**

American Marketing Association

- ETHICAL NORMS
  - Do no harm
  - Foster trust in the marketing system
  - Embrace ethical values:
    - Honesty
    - Responsibility
    - Fairness
    - Respect
    - Transparency
    - Citizenship

Proposed ethics of AMA

- Common objective of truth
- Exercise highest personal ethics
- Distinguish ads from news, entertainment
- Full disclosure and transparency
- Treat consumers fairly
- Never compromise consumer privacy
- Follow the law
- Freedom to express ethical concerns

For Thursday

- Quiz on codes of ethics
- Read Day, Chapter 4

Truth and Pinocchio



If The New York Times told you:



300 Die in Prison Fire in Honduras

And if the Times hired Pinocchio?

- Everybody lies.
- By their own estimate, people like about 1.65 times every day, according to Psychology Today, 2011



### Truth is a fundamental value

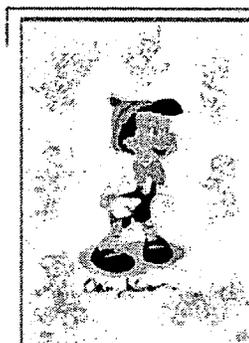
- Day says: "The commitment to truth is perhaps the most ancient and revered principle of human civilization."
- Kant says even an innocent white lie is unacceptable

### Why should we tell the truth?

- Day's points:

### Why should we tell the truth?

- Day's points:
  1. Lying undermines the autonomy of the individual.
  2. Truth demonstrates respect for persons as ends rather than means to be manipulated.
  3. Truth builds trust and relationships.
  4. Truth is essential to democracy.



- Pinocchio by Carlo Collodi (1883)
- Pinocchio defends himself by telling lies.
- What was the effect of the lying?

### Three concepts of truth in reporting:

- 1. The reporting of a story must be accurate. That is the facts should be verified and based on solid evidence.
- 2. A "true" story should promote understanding – an account should be, essentially, complete and contextual.
- 3. A truthful story should be fair and balanced.

### Accuracy of quotes

Should you clean up incorrect grammar or offensive language?



### What is deception?

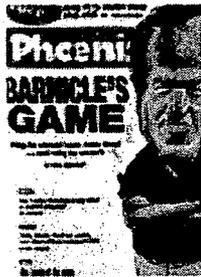
- How much context is enough?
- If someone says the Earth is round, do you have to find someone to say the Earth is flat?
- Whose estimate of the size of the crowd do you use?
- How much of the truth do you have to tell?
- Is a mistake the same as a lie?

### Broken trust

Janet Cooke;  
"Jimmy's  
World," *The  
Washington  
Post*, 1980



### More deceit



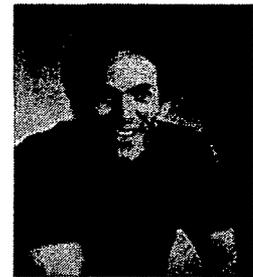
Mike Barnicle and  
Patricia Smith,  
  
The Boston Globe,  
1995 and 1998

### Oops, I made a mistake

Mitch Albom

Detroit Free  
Press

2005

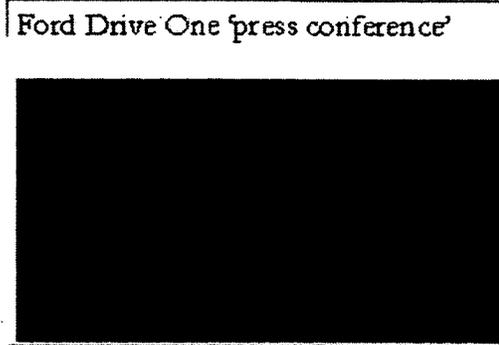
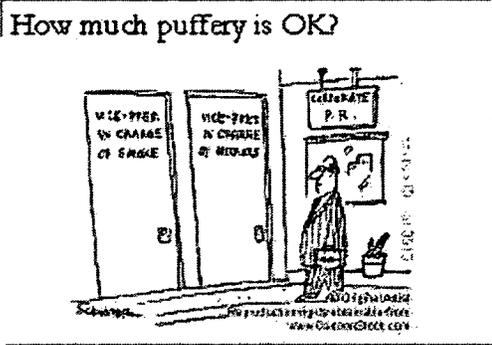


### Truth in public relations



### Advertising and Public Relations

- Threshold of truth: Do not knowingly disseminate inaccurate information.
- We do not expect balance or objectivity
- What about linguistic ambiguity and puffery?
- How much is the audience responsible?



For Tuesday

- Finish reading Chapter 4
- Expect a new case study assignment
- Jim West case on deception.

**PRIVACY**  
When does media invade personal areas?

Please tell Tom to record this class

WHAT IS PRIVACY?

- A relatively new legal right first contemplated in the 1890s

- FOUR AREAS OF PRIVACY:
- Intrusion – violation of physical solitude
  - Publicity of embarrassing private facts
  - False light
  - Appropriation of name or likeness

### PUBLIC FIGURES

- Do public figures have a legal right to privacy?



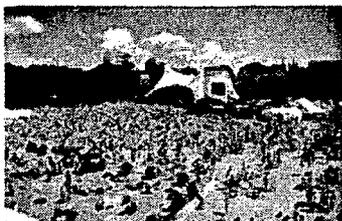
### PUBLIC FIGURES

- Do public figures have a legal right to privacy
- Do they have a moral right to privacy?



### EVENTS IN PUBLIC

- Day: "The idea is that activities that transpire in public are, by definition, not private."



### FRAMEWORK OF PRIVACY ETHICS

- Balance the right to privacy against the extent to which reported information relates to public concerns.
- What the public needs to know, not what it has a curiosity about

### PRIVACY IN SPJS CODE OF ETHICS

- "Ethical journalists treat sources, subjects and colleagues as human beings deserving of respect."
- Journalists should "show compassion for those who may be adversely affected by news coverage. Use special sensitivity when dealing with children and inexperienced news sources or subjects."
- "Be sensitive when seeking or using interviews or photographs of those affected by tragedy or grief."
- "Only an overriding public need can justify intrusion into anyone's privacy."

### PRIVACY IN RTDNA'S CODE OF ETHICS

- "Present the news fairly and impartially, placing primary value on significance and relevance."
- "Treat all subjects of news coverage with respect and dignity, showing particular compassion to victims of crime or tragedy."
- "Exercise special care when children are involved in a story and give children greater privacy protection than adults."

### PR AND ADVERTISING CODES

- PRSA: "Intent: To protect the privacy rights of clients, organizations, and individuals by safeguarding confidential information."
- AMA: "Seek to protect the private information of customers, employees and partners"
- AMA: "Treat everyone, including our competitors, as we would wish to be treated."
- AAF: "Advertisers should never compromise consumers' personal privacy in marketing communications."

### PRIVACY AND THE MARKETPLACE

- Do people have a right to privacy that extends to living in an environment free of marketing or advertising messages?



### MORAL VALUES AND PRIVACY

- 1. Respect for persons as an end in itself.
- 2. Social utility – the journalist must decide what information is most important to society.
- 3. Minimizing harm.

### COMMON PRIVACY ISSUES

- Victims of sex crimes
  - Rape victims
  - Civil suit plaintiffs



### CAUSE OF DEATH

- AIDS and suicide



### GRIEVING FAMILY AND FRIENDS

- Funerals, military and civilian
- At the crime or accident scene



### Profits and morality

1. There is nothing inherently immoral in the profit motive or the accumulation of wealth.
2. In many businesses, the profit motive and the values of the organization are in perfect sync.
3. However, media organizations may be driven by sometimes conflicting values.
4. Wendy McCaw and the Santa Barbara News-Press are an example of conflicting values.

### Wendy McCaw's perspective



What are Wendy McCaw's values?

Does Wendy McCaw believe she is acting ethically?

Is she following her value structure?

### Conflicts within McCaw herself

How would you characterize Wendy McCaw's internal values in conflict?



### External conflicts of values



What are the values that you expect a publisher to hold?

### Stated values of the News-Press

Our strength is our independence, and that independence does a lot for us well with everyone.

Newspapers must be relevant, fascinating and provocative. One of the founders of modern journalism, Civil War editor William Lloyd Garrison, coined the slogan "A newspaper's duty is to print the news and raise hell." We feel that we have achieved this in some measure and will continue to do so in the future.

I would like to assure you that we are dedicated to our continued efforts to enhance our news coverage while maintaining both the standards of Burns as well as the standards of this community with respect to personal privacy, fairness and good sense.

— Travis Armstrong, 2005 (from McCaw's Website)

### Jerry Roberts' departure

Editor Jerry Roberts was fired

Five other editors resigned

They put principle above self-interest.



### The reporters' union movement



Was it ethically sound for the reporters, in the act of unionizing, to lead an advertiser/subscriber boycott?

### Social responsibility

When does our sense of social responsibility, our vision of our professional values trump the economic self-interests of our organization or, more importantly, trump our own economic self-interest?  
When do we take a stand?

### Your social responsibility

Have you ever taken a stand for ethical reasons?

What is your social responsibility?

Is there one definition of social responsibility that works for all people?

Are any of your principles more important than your economic self-interest?

### Final words on Wendy McCaw

You must examine the situation from the position of Wendy McCaw.

You do not have to agree with Wendy McCaw.

However, you must show respect for the values that you find her to hold, based on her statements.

You must consider her to be a reasonable person who exercises her values and principles in logical manner.

The decisions you reach must reflect her values and come to logical conclusions based on those values.

## The Media and Anti-social Behavior

Day, Chapter 9

### Anti-social behavior: Two categories

- ▶ Practitioners' commission of anti-social behavior in connection with their professional obligations, i.e., journalists breaking the law.
- ▶ Media influence on anti-social behavior, i.e., advertising that seems to promote illegal activity.

## Practitioners' commission

"Like public officials, media practitioners should be expected to seek the ethical high ground in their conduct"

"Regardless of the circumstances, media practitioners are in a weak moral position when they commit serious breaches of the law."

-- Louis Day

## Practitioners' commission

Day's two reasons breaking the law is a bad idea

- Violating the law places the reporter in the position of participant. If journalists are representatives of the public, they should not engage in behavior they would find unacceptable in others.
- If commission of criminal acts in search of a story became commonplace, respect for the rule of law would be undermined.

## Practitioners' commission: The greater good

- Day is not supportive of journalists breaking the law but does consider a teleological approach

- Not applicable universally
- Valid in certain circumstances

Does the greater good outweigh the illegal conduct?

## Practitioners' commission

JAMM 341 axiom: What is legal can be unethical.

Does the reverse hold true?

What is illegal can be ethical?

## Deontological vs. Teleological

The teleological argument: It is OK to break the law if the outcome produces a greater good.

The deontological argument: It is never OK to break the law, regardless of consequences.

## Practitioners' commission

Day argues for the deontological approach; it is not OK to break the law.

What "greater goods" might we have missed in the last several years if Day's view was the standard?

### Breaking the law:

- ▶ Speeding to the scene of an accident. Justified?
- ▶ Illegally tape-recording a conversation?
- ▶ Stealing documents from a desk?
- ▶ Smuggling weapons through airport security
- ▶ Stealing documents from the government? From private business?
  - Pentagon Papers
  - Wikileaks
  - Chiquita Bananas



### Breaking the law:

- ▶ Publishing photos of illegal drug use
- ▶ Observing child sexual assault
  - The LA Times case
- ▶ Working as prostitute to expose sex trade
  - College reporter signs on as dancer/escort to expose sex business on campus
- ▶ Refusing to obey police order to leave a crime scene or site of a riot?
  - Reporters arrested at Occupy Wall Street protest



### Media impact

What is the impact of advertising that seems to promote illegal behavior?



### Media impact

What is the impact of advertising that seems to promote violence against women?



### Media impact

What is the impact of advertising that mocks religion and the clergy?



### Media impact

News questions:

- ▶ If it bleeds it leads. How does story framing skew our view of community?
- ▶ Stories have the right facts but are they the right stories?



## Media impact: A historic teleological decision

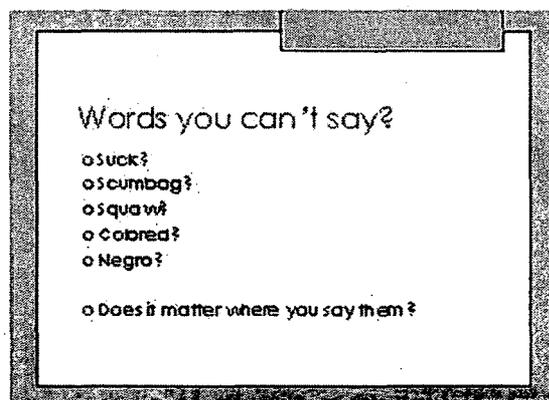
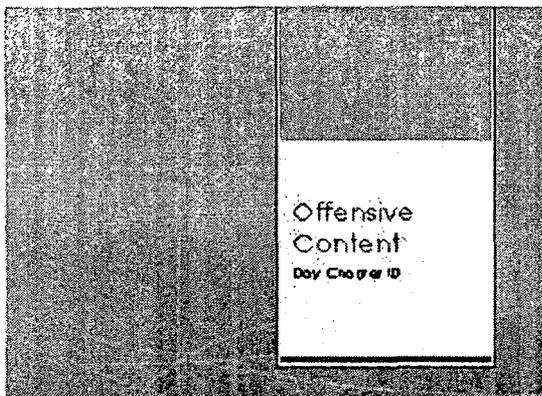
The 1995 Unabomber case

- › Unabomber demands his manifesto be printed or he will kill again
- › New York Times and Washington Post print the manifesto calling for illegal activity and defending murder
- › The manifesto leads brother to identify the Unabomber



## Media impact: The decline of civil discourse

- › Emphasis on the conflict frame
- › Political horse race coverage
- › Talk radio
- › Sports talk radio
- › Comment threads



News goes to war



Pulitzer Prize 1967 Eadie Adams

Questions to ask?

- o Would these photos run if they were from your local community?
- o What good or harm comes from the photos?
- o What does your code of ethics say?

NPPA code of ethics

- o "Treat all subjects with respect and dignity. Give special consideration to vulnerable subjects and compassion to the victims of crime or tragedy. Intrude on private moments of grief only when the public has an overriding and justifiable need to know."

News goes to war



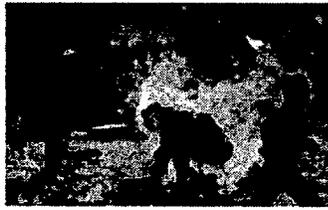
Pulitzer Prize 1972 Nick de

News and apartheid



Pulitzer Prize 1970 Gregory Markovitch

News and apartheid



Pulitzer Prize 1970 Gregory Markovitch

### Haiti earthquake



### Sudan famine



AP/Wide World 1988, Left/Center

### Principles to apply

- o The harm principle: Mill says that personal liberty must be restricted to prevent harm to others.

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### Principles to apply

- o The harm principle: Mill says that personal liberty must be restricted to prevent harm to others.
- o Paternalism: Offensive material should be controlled because it dehumanizes us.
- o Moralism: Control offensive material to prevent immoral behavior.
- o Offense: Its acceptable to protect some in society from taking offense

News and terrorism

- o Pulitzer Prize, 1996, Oklahoma City bombing



News and activism

- o Pulitzer Prize, 1970, Kent State



Can deontics work?

- o some say that finding a guiding rule or principle would seem difficult?

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- o some say that finding a guiding rule or principle would seem difficult?
- o Would a Golden Mean approach work better?

Can deontics work?

- o some say that finding a guiding rule or principle would seem difficult?
- o Would a Golden Mean approach work better?
- o Would a teleological approach be more easily applied?

Publicity stunts



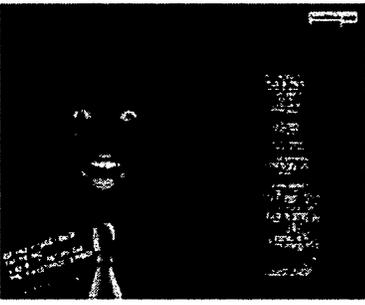
Advertising

- o Cost-benefit analysis must be added
- o Does the benefit to the client outweigh the cost of the likely offense?

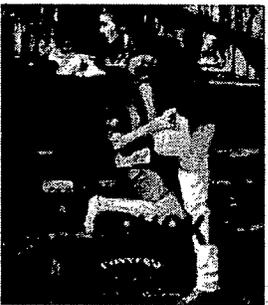
Advertising



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

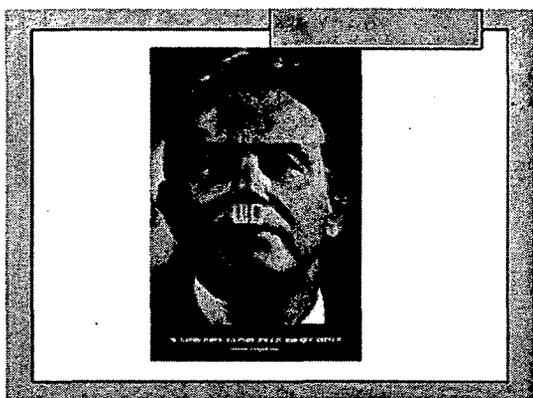
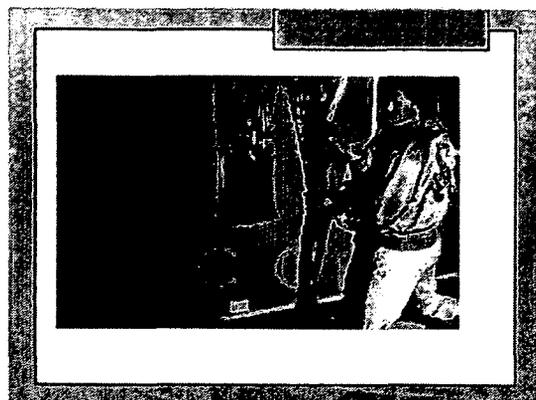
IT'S NO SECRET



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**Final Exam: JAMM 341-1**

ETHICAL SCENARIOS: WHAT WOULD YOU DO  
 AND WHY WOULD YOU DO IT?

**Scenario assignment**

- 1. What would you decide?
- 2. What are the values in conflict?
- 3. What ethical theory would you use?
- 4. How would you reason through the decision?

• You have five minutes for each scenario.

**Scenario 1**

You're the college newspaper advertising manager. A buyer wants to place this ad.

What do you do?

**Scenario 2**

You're a TV reporter at a murder scene, interviewing witnesses. A child, approximately 4 or 5 years old, comes up to your crew. To the cameras, the boy says, "I'm not scared of no thing." You ask, "When you get older are you going to stay away from all these guns?" The boy answers, "No, I'm going to have me a gun!"

What do you do?

**Scenario 3**

Your 60-year-old editorial page editor dies of a heart attack at the home of a known call girl. The editor is married with grown children. On multiple occasions in the past, he has editorialized against prostitution. You're the reporter assigned the story about his death. The editor's wife hands you keys and asks you to drive her husband's car away from where it's currently parked in front of the prostitute's house.

What do you do?

**Scenario 4**

You're a college newspaper editor. Your student can come down this editorial cartoon. What do you do?

**Scenario 5**

You're handling publicity for a parade in North Idaho. The organizer proposes that Pro Golfer Bubba Watson be brought in to lead the parade in his car, the General Lee from *The Dukes of Hazzard* TV show. The General Lee features a prominent image of the Confederate Flag on its roof. Some critics say this could be interpreted as showing support for hate groups in the area.

What do you do?

## Appendix H

### Sample Lecture Notes from the Case Study Class

Media ethics

Jan. 12, 2012

Class 1 notes

#### **Introductions:**

I'm **Tom Grant**, PhD candidate at the Center for ETHICS at the University of Idaho. I spent 30 years in journalism, both in television and print. I've worked as an editor, reporter, producer, anchor and news director, though the bulk of my career was spent as an investigative reporter. As a reporter in Spokane, my work helped 18 innocent people win their release from prison and uncovered a secret deal to provide public financing for a private mall development. I've also been a politician, community organizer, public relations professional, construction worker, lifeguard, coach, English instructor, and apple picker. I did my undergraduate work in English at Washington State University, a master's in journalism at Columbia University and a fellowship in journalism at the University of Michigan. I came to the Center for ETHICS to earn a PhD because it's one of the world's leading institutions for pedagogy and research about advancing moral reasoning in competitive populations.

**Research focus of this class:** My research is examining whether methods developed at the Center for ETHICS can be used to improve media ethics education. As part of this research, you are being asked to take a moral reasoning pre-test and post-test. Two sections of JAMM 341 are being taught with different methods. Research suggests that both can be effective at improving moral reasoning, but they've never been measured against each other in a media ethics class to see which is more effective. Here's what you need to do:

1. Get your random number as assigned on the papers passed out in class.
2. Write down your random number in a secure place.
3. Record your random number, maiden name of your mother and name of your first pet on the sheet maintained by Susan Steele. The test is anonymous. I won't have any way to connect your name with your moral reasoning assessment. Susan won't have access to the survey material. Susan will maintain the list to help people remember their random number when they take the post test at the end of the semester.
4. Go to the Internet address listed on the handout with your random number. Use your random number to sign in. You will then be asked to answer some brief demographic questions and a series of questions about ethical scenarios. The assessment should take about 45 minutes to one hour.

5. When you complete the survey, you will be directed to a Web page that will give you a completion number. You should turn this completion number in to me. You will get extra credit for taking the assessment.

**Course introduction:**

The study of media ethics is more than a self-indulgent academic exercise.

Media ethics involves real-world problems and real-world issues that cut to the heart of who and what we are as people, as professionals and, collectively, as a nation.

Who is this man?

It will be months, maybe years, before we understand all of the ramifications of the News of the World scandal. But in the meantime a number of media ethics issues are swirling around Rupert Murdoch and his News Corp. How those issues are addressed internally by Murdoch and his executives, and externally by law enforcement and legislators on both sides of the Atlantic, could determine the future of the worldwide conglomerate and even effect the future of newsgathering in Britain and the United States. The stakes are incredibly high.

The study of media ethics is not a dry, dust-covered exercise in academic navel gazing. That is why so much of our work will involve cases drawn straight from the headlines.

**About the class:** I have three goals for this class.

1. The first is very practical; to help you understand how to navigate and resolve the myriad ethical dilemmas media professionals encounter every day.
2. Second, to learn enough about ethical theory and decision-making to help you, perhaps, apply the lessons of this class to other aspects of your daily life.
3. Third, I want you to understand the nature of personal and professional values – the enormously important framework for all of the decisions we make – and how values in conflict are at the core of all ethical problems we face. Resolving conflicting values is at the center of ethical decision-making.

What do I mean by “values?”

Our values answer the question “what do you stand for?”

Some of you, confronted with the ethical question of abortion, hold a deeply held value that all human life is sacred and inviolate from the moment of conception. That deeply held value drives your response to the abortion question.

Others of you have an equally strong personal value that women have the right to choose what happens to their bodies and that includes the right to terminate a pregnancy. That deeply held value will drive your response to the abortion question.

In this class, we will talk at length about values, especially values in conflict, and how we can resolve those conflicts. Central to resolution, is learning to view a problem from the perspective of people whose values in a case are different from your own – to walk in the shoes of those who disagree with you. That is the only way we can find the common ground essential to resolving an ethical dilemma.

That is why there will be times in this class when I ask you to mount a strong, passionate argument in favor of a position opposite your own.

One last observation about values – and this is important. We all hold strong, personal values. But when we choose to enter a profession, we are asked to, expected to, in fact required in some ways, to adopt the values of that profession.

When your personal values conflict often and deeply with the values of your profession, you have a problem. It is probably time to do something else. That sort of dissonance can make work life quite tough.

As we work through ethical problems in the mass media, I am going to ask you to operate within the framework of professional values and standards. There will be times I will ask you to consider how those values might conflict with your own. But one of my responsibilities is to teach you how journalists and other media practitioners think about ethical dilemmas and how they resolve them.

Now let me make a few more important introductory observations:

Let's always remember that ethical decision-making, in the media world or in life, moves into areas of gray. Issues are rarely black and white.

Our behavior in society is governed by law, by less formal social rules that govern behavior and by standards which suggest certain behaviors in certain situations.

Laws: There are laws that govern ethical behavior: You can't kill. Never. Unless, of course, you are the state executing a criminal or a soldier engaged in combat or a police officer guarding the public safety. You can't steal. That's the law. Well, maybe. We'll talk later about the Pentagon Papers case, or more recently, WikiLeaks.

Rules: There rules that govern behavior, but violation of those rules does not carry the penalties imposed by law. In our academic world, you cannot plagiarize. If you do and are caught, you can be kicked out of school, but you can't be jailed. If you're a journalist, there are rules that say you cannot misrepresent who you are or what you are doing – mostly. But we'll spend two or three class sessions on a case in which The Spokesman-Review engaged in a deliberate deception in order to break a story we believed was of vital public interest.

Standards: Even less formal than rules, professional standards suggest how we ought to behave under certain circumstances, but always leaving room for interpretation and even disagreement. In the media world, standards are embodied in ethics codes such as those created by the Society of Professional Journalists or the Public Relations Society of America. We will study those codes in this class.

In any ethical discussion, all three of these dimensions (laws, rules and standards) can come into play, even collide.

Let me be clear: I do believe there is right and there is wrong, and that we can tell the difference between the two. But I also recognize that your analysis and my analysis may differ. In this class, we will be tolerant of others' thoughts on ethical issues. In fact, we welcome those thoughts that disagree with our own. We need to know others' thoughts so that we can measure our approach to the issue. There is rarely a clear-cut answer. Rather, there is a continued search. As individuals who really want to live an ethical life, we strive to do the right thing. But in the complex, nuanced real world, how do we always know what is right?

A student last year argued that we don't need an ethics class because all anyone has to do to resolve a problem is use common sense. That is true when our moral sense is actually common to all of us. But research suggests that we develop our moral sense in stages. We may even operate a different moral stages depending upon the situation. The common sense of Mother Teresa or Martin Luther King Jr. may be much different that the common sense of Rupert Murdoch, for instance.

But that student was certainly right that "common" sense is what we need to address moral issues. Morality is about developing an approach to the world that is good for all of us, not merely one individual or one group. That's why everyone in this class has an important role is helping us find the commonalities that can make our profession and our world a little bit better.

### **Assignments:**

**Reading for Tuesday, Jan. 17:** Day, Chapter 1, and Case Studies handout

**Looking ahead to Tuesday:** We will break into small groups to discuss the case studies in the handouts I am distributing.

**Moral reasoning test:** If you have not completed it already, you have until start of class next Thursday to complete the online ethics/moral reasoning test.

Media Ethics

Jan. 17, 2012

Class 2 notes

**Roll**

**Current events**

**Case study handout:** We will break into small groups to review the case studies described in the handout I distributed Tuesday.

Each of the 9 groups should consider the case study and answer the questions. You will have 30 minutes before we reconvene here.

Each group should have a spokesperson to represent the group's majority or consensus decisions. But each group must also designate a spokesperson to represent the opposite point of view.

In determining the right thing to do, make sure you answer the question – why? Why is this the right thing to do? Is there another “right” answer? What values or beliefs underlie your decisions?

We'll review two or three of the cases this morning, then finish up on Thursday.

**Assignments:**

The pre-test must be completed by the start of class Thursday. Email your response number to me or write it down on a piece of paper – with your name – and turn it in Tuesday.

Read Day, chapters 1, 2 and 3

Media Ethics

Jan 24, 2012

Class 4 notes

**Beginning our analysis of ethical dilemmas:**

In analyzing and resolving an ethical dilemma, we will use Day's SAD method: **S**ituation definition, **A**nalysis, and **D**ecision.

First, you describe the facts, identify the principles and values, then determine the ethical question.

Many problems have more than one issue to be resolved. We will want to bore in on the central, most significant conflict. That means taking the issue and boiling it down to an ethical question that has to

be the starting point of any analysis.

Using the case studies we worked on earlier, let's identify the central questions, much in the same way you would identify the central point for a story lede.

- a. Teen suicide
- b. Confidential sources
- c. Media and anti-social behavior

The second step is the analysis process, which involves identification of the core values in conflict. This is the most difficult concept in this class and we will go over it multiple times.

At the heart of all our ethical case studies will be core values in conflict.

Sometimes two opposing values, sometimes several. Resolving a conflict, resolving an ethical dilemma, requires reconciliation of those conflicting values.

Daniel Yankelovich – “Coming to Public Judgment” - describes this process, which he calls working through. He describes it in terms of community's coming to judgment on an issue. But I think it applies to ethical decision-making as well.

Working through requires a person to understand the values in conflict – in opposition -- with their own values and for both parties to a dispute or problem to seek out common ground. In that search, it's possible to reconcile the conflict in a way that leads to a decision.

This is not to say the process is necessarily one of compromise or collaboration. Sometimes one value will prevail over another. But absent the working through process, the issue will remain in flux and unsettled.

Day, moves pretty quickly through the concept of values, moving directly to the attitudes we display when our values are put into play.

Those attitudes, he says can be viewed as “packages of values that combine feelings, thoughts and actions.”

Steve Smith has this take on values: Values are beliefs that drive actions.

Again, values are beliefs that drive actions.

If you have a value that says, I believe that “people should never lie,” that value, that belief will drive your behavior in a particular situation involving deception. So, given the choice, you would refuse to deceive as the Minnesota alternative reporter deceived in our opening case study.

I would have another way of looking at values: There are moral values and there are non-moral values. Moral values have to do with the way you deal with other human beings. Non-moral values are everything else — money, fame, success, pride, credibility, etc.

For instance, honesty is a moral value that you hold. You believe you shouldn’t lie is an expression of that value. Or you might value Chevy trucks. That would be a non-moral value. And they could be in conflict, say, if by telling a lie you would win a Chevy truck.

Still, defining a value, and identifying it with any specificity, can be tricky, like trying to bottle fog. So let’s back up a bit and try to think of values in a more theoretical way before we move on to their application.

Another way to think of values -- they answer the question...what do you stand for?

We all have personal values: Those concepts, standards, principles we have developed as individuals over time based on factors such as education, experience, upbringing, etc.

Most of us have developed a relatively refined sense of our own values by the time we reach early adulthood...but values can change and shift over time.

Day suggests our personal values come from four different sources: family, peer groups, role models and societal institutions.

Think of your own lives. From where did you develop your values?

As you come into this class, your values will primarily reflect the influence of family and peers and, perhaps, institutions such as the church or school.

One mark of maturity is the self-awareness evident in someone who knows who they are and what they stand for – who can articulate his or her personal values.

What are some of the values you hold?

As you move through this class and the university and then into your professional roles, you also will be exposed to the values of a new set of peers – your professional colleagues; a new set of role models – mentors, your bosses, perhaps; new institutions – such as the newspaper or ad agency.

Over time, your personal values will begin to blend with what you come to recognize as professional values. If they do not, you have some issues to resolve. But as they do, those professional values will form the framework for the decisions you make when dealing with an ethical problem.

Here is what I mean by professional or craft values: Concepts, principles, ways of thinking that have become part of the professional culture. They may be incorporated into formal codes and regulations. They may be informal. They are generally knowable; generally accepted by practitioners.

And they are relatively consistent over time.

What are some of the professional values of journalism and its various disciplines and how might they be different from your personal values at this stage in your life?

For this class, I am going to ask you to operate primarily in the world of professional values although I may often ask you to analyze how those values conflict with your personal value sets.

This is how Day puts it: “Professions, by their very nature often demand that practitioners subordinate their personal values or ethics to the standards of the profession....As citizens, journalists might enter the profession with a deep appreciation of the value of privacy, but their professional obligations frequently require painful intrusions upon the personal solitude of others, sometimes resulting in harm to innocent third parties.”

Day quotes Tom Bivens, media ethics professor at the University of Oregon: “The question then becomes, which do we want most to be, a private citizen or a media professional? Although the two roles are not mutually exclusive, there is an awareness that one assumes the mantle of professionalism willingly, accepting that a muting of personal values is part of the payment for doing so.”

Inevitably, we will talk at greater length about this values transaction later in the semester.

In the professional world, there may be agreement on values, but inevitably there is wide variation in interpretation and in the actions that result.

So the professional value may be “we do not deceive,” but the interpretation of that value might allow

for deception under certain extraordinary conditions.

Look for the disconnect between your personal values and professional values and norms.  
Dissonance results.

On Thursday we will wrap up this discussion and break into groups to work on developing a central question and identifying values in conflict.

## Media Ethics

Jan 31, 2012

Class 5 notes

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How do you know if you're ethical?

Day gives you three markers:

- **Credibility** – Are you believable and worthy of trust?
- **Integrity** – Can you discern right from wrong, act on what you discern, and say openly why you made that decision?
- **Civility** – Do your actions demonstrate self-sacrifice and respect for others?

These are hints to yourself, for as we'll discuss, ethics may be about how we deal with the world, but they have to be governed internally. You have to think of others, then use those thoughts to guide your actions.

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Day says, "An entirely selfish person cannot, by definition, make ethical judgments."

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### **In review:**

In analyzing and resolving an ethical dilemma, we will use Day's SAD method: **S**ituation definition, **A**nalysis, and **D**ecision.

First, you describe the facts, identify the principles and values, and then determine the ethical question.

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Many problems have more than one issue to be resolved. We will want to bore in on the central, most significant conflict. That means taking the issue and boiling it down to an ethical question that has to be the starting point of any analysis.

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-----Using the case studies we worked on earlier, let's identify the central questions, much in the same way you would identify the central point for a story lede.

- a. Pole dance aerobics
  - b. Anti-abortion rally
  - c. Infiltrating a 12-step program
- 

The second step is the analysis process, which involves identification of the core values in conflict. This is the most difficult concept in this class and we will go over it multiple times.

At the heart of all our ethical case studies will be core values in conflict.

Sometimes two opposing values, sometimes several. Resolving a conflict, resolving an ethical dilemma, requires reconciliation of those conflicting values.

Working through requires a person to understand the values in conflict – in opposition -- with their own values and for both parties to a dispute or problem to seek out common ground. In that search, it's possible to reconcile the conflict in a way that leads to a decision.

This is not to say the process is necessarily one of compromise or collaboration. Sometimes one value will prevail over another. But absent the working through process, the issue will remain in flux and unsettled.

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Day, moves pretty quickly through the concept of values, moving directly to the attitudes we display when our values are put into play.

Those attitudes, he says can be viewed as “packages of values that combine feelings, thoughts and actions.”

Steve Smith has this take on values: Values are beliefs that drive actions.

Again, values are beliefs that drive actions.

If you have a value that says, I believe that “people should never lie,” that value, that belief will drive your behavior in a particular situation involving deception. So, given the choice, you would refuse to deceive.... in all instances... because never means never.

What are some other values?

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There are many, many values that are good values. Here are a few.

They do not always appear in neat packages, however. Good values may conflict with each other.

Purity may conflict with tolerance.

Truthfulness may conflict with compassion.

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Day says a value is something that is esteemed, prized or regarded highly, or as a good.”

Bling is a value.

What do you value highly?

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Values can be categorized.

There are moral values and there are non-moral values. Moral values have to do with the way you deal with other human beings. Non-moral values are everything else — money, fame, success, pride, credibility, etc.

Social values are characteristics prized by society such as perseverance or loyalty.

How can social and moral values be in conflict?

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Everything but moral values are non-moral values.

Money, fame, success, pride....

Even credibility is a non-moral value.

And they are often in conflict.

For instance, honesty is a moral value that you hold. You believe you shouldn't lie is an expression of that value. Or you might value Chevy trucks. That would be a non-moral value. And they could be in conflict, say, if by telling a lie you would win a Chevy truck.

What about credibility. How could credibility be a non-moral value and an ethical marker?

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Still, defining a value, and identifying it with any specificity, can be tricky, like trying to bottle fog. So let's back up a bit and try to think of values in another way before we move on to their application.

Another way to think of values -- they answer the question...what do you stand for?

We all have personal values: Those concepts, standards, principles we have developed as individuals over time based on factors such as education, experience, upbringing, etc.

Most of us have developed a relatively refined sense of our own values by the time we reach early adulthood...but values can change and shift over time.

Day suggests our personal values come from four different sources: family, peer groups, role models and societal institutions.

Think of your own lives. From where did you develop your values?

As you come into this class, your values will primarily reflect the influence of family and peers and, perhaps, institutions such as the church or school.

One mark of maturity is the self-awareness evident in someone who knows who they are and what they stand for -- who can articulate his or her personal values.

What are some of the values you hold?

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As you move through this class and the university and then into your professional roles, you also will be exposed to the values of a new set of peers -- your professional colleagues; a new set of role models -- mentors, your bosses, perhaps; new institutions -- such as the newspaper or ad agency.

Over time, your personal values will begin to blend with what you come to recognize as professional values. If they do not, you have some issues to resolve. But as they do, those professional values will form the framework for the decisions you make when dealing with an ethical problem.

Here is what I mean by professional or craft values: Concepts, principles, ways of thinking that have become part of the professional culture. They may be incorporated into formal codes and regulations. They may be informal. They are generally knowable; generally accepted by practitioners.

And they are relatively consistent over time.

What are some of the professional values of journalism and its various disciplines and how might they be different from your personal values at this stage in your life?

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For this class, I am going to ask you to operate primarily in the world of professional values although I may often ask you to analyze how those values conflict with your personal value sets.

This is how Day puts it: "Professions, by their very nature often demand that practitioners subordinate their personal values or ethics to the standards of the profession....As citizens, journalists might enter the profession with a deep appreciation of the value of privacy, but their professional obligations frequently require painful intrusions upon the personal solitude of others, sometimes resulting in harm to innocent third parties."

Day quotes Tom Bivens, media ethics professor at the University of Oregon: "The question then becomes, which do we want most to be, a private citizen or a media professional? Although the two roles are not mutually exclusive, there is an awareness that one assumes the mantle of professionalism willingly, accepting that a muting of personal values is part of the payment for doing so."

Inevitably, we will talk at greater length about this values transaction later in the semester.

In the professional world, there may be agreement on values, but inevitably there is wide variation in interpretation and in the actions that result.

So the professional value may be "we do not deceive," but the interpretation of that value might allow for deception under certain extraordinary conditions.

Look for any disconnect between your personal values and professional values and norms.

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Now let's try one more time to find the values in conflict.

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On Thursday we will wrap up this discussion and break into groups to work on developing a central question and identifying values in conflict.

JAMM 341 Media Ethics

Feb. 2, 1012

Class 6 notes

**Reviewing central questions/core values:**

What is Day's formula for making an ethical decision?

SAD: Situation, Analysis, Decision

In analyzing and resolving an ethical dilemma, there are two critical first steps.  
You can outline the facts. You're in the media.

But right after that, you have to (1) determine the ethical question.

Many problems have more than one issue to be resolved. We will want to bore in on the central, most significant conflict. That means taking the issue and boiling it down to an ethical question that has to be the starting point of any analysis.

The second step in the process involves (2) identification of the core values in conflict. This is the most difficult concept I teach in this class and we will go over it multiple times.

At the heart of all our ethical case studies will be core values in conflict.

Sometimes there are two opposing values, and sometimes several. Sometimes one party will be struggling with two opposing values. Sometimes the values will be in the hands of opposing parties. Resolving a conflict, resolving an ethical dilemma, requires reconciliation of those conflicting values.

Day describes values as beliefs and attitudes, “packages of values that combine feelings, thoughts and actions.”

I believe values are beliefs that drive actions.

If you have a value that says, I believe that “people should never lie,” that value, that belief will drive your behavior in a particular situation involving deception. So, given the choice, you would refuse to deceive as the Minnesota alternative reporter deceived in our opening case study.

Values are beliefs that drive actions.

We hold personal values, derived from family, peers and important institutions such as church or school.

And we eventually incorporate professional values specific to our disciplines.

Professional values (or craft values) are concepts, principles, ways of thinking that have become part of the professional culture. They may be incorporated into formal codes and regulations. They may be informal. They are generally knowable; generally accepted by practitioners.

And they are relatively consistent over time.

In the professional world, there may be agreement on values, but inevitably there is wide variation in interpretation and in the actions that result.

So the professional value may be “we do not deceive,” but the interpretation of that value might allow for deception under certain extraordinary conditions.

Today we are going to break into smaller groups to deal with the identification of a central question and core values in conflict. Each group will have a case to analyze and 30 minutes to identify the central question and core values in conflict. Pick a spokesperson to report back to the class.

For most of these cases, there are multiple questions possible. But remember, this is a media ethics class, so focus on questions related to media practice.

And as you sort out conflicting values, look for the collision of personal and professional or craft values.

Media Ethics

Feb. 7, 2012

Class 7 notes

**Ethical theories, first look:**

We have discussed some general ethical issues confronting mass media.

And we have talked about values and the value conflicts at the heart of ethical problems.

But understanding values and values in conflict is not the end of the matter. That would be as if we understood numbers but lacked mathematical principles out of which we can make sense of them.

We know what the number "4" means. But how do we solve the problem of "4 plus 4" without some sort of mathematical principle. We can randomly decide that today the solution is "7" because we think we like the number "7" better than we like "8." Tomorrow, maybe "10" feels better.

Mathematics provides a framework for resolving problems involving numbers.

Moral theories provide a framework for resolving problems involving ethical principles and values in conflict.

Let's take a privacy case from last year involving Tiger Woods.

Tiger Woods is involved in an auto accident outside his Florida home. It's early in the morning. There are rumors he was leaving the home after a fight with his wife. There are rumors she was chasing him down the driveway with a golf club, even that she hit him.

As events unfold, the circumstances surrounding the crash remain murky, but Woods's core problem begins to reveal itself as several news organizations begin to report his liaisons with women other than his wife.

"The National Enquirer" leads the way. But soon mainstream news organizations follow in a frenzy the likes of which we see only rarely.

Woods seems to be trying to save his marriage, at least initially. He and his wife beg for privacy. At one point it appears as if he has checked himself into a sex-addiction clinic in Hattiesburg, MS, probably under an assumed name.

That story leaks and is picked up by various gossip and mainstream organizations.

But the editor of the Hattiesburg, MS, paper refuses to run a story, arguing that Woods is entitled to some level of privacy.

As we begin to shape this set of facts and circumstances into an ethics case, we begin with the two steps already discussed in class.

First, we focus on the central question. There were countless potential ethical issues raised by the Woods case. But for purposes of a case, we'll go back to the dilemma faced by the Hattiesburg editor.

So the question is this: Do we publish a story telling our readers Tiger Woods has checked into a sex addiction rehab center in our community? Publish/not publish

The next step is to identify the values in conflict at the heart of our question.

The Hattiesburg editor could express his values in this way: "I believe Tiger Woods has a right to his privacy. What is happening in his marriage is between Woods and his wife. It has nothing to do with his public life as a golfer. It is nobody's business. My strong and sincere belief in his right to privacy in this case is going to drive my behavior -- to decide against publishing a story in my paper."

Or, alternatively, The Hattiesburg editor might express conflicting values in this way: "My job is to tell people what is happening in my community without fear or favor. If an internationally known figure arrives in my town to deal with problems that have been the focus of news coverage around the world, I owe it to my readers to tell them what I know. My sincere and strong belief in the public's need to know what is happening in their community will drive my behavior -- to decide to publish a story in my paper."

So the values in conflict: The public's right to know vs. Woods' right to privacy. Notice that these are values, not outcomes. We will worry about outcomes later. Right now, we're looking at the values in conflict. To resolve this problem, we have to reconcile the conflicting values.

So we have completed steps one and two in the decision making process; we have identified the central question and we have identified the values in conflict.

Now, the third step: How do we resolve this values conflict?

It cannot be random. To be defensible, the decision must reflect the decision maker's personal and professional values as filtered through some sort of operative moral theory.

In our text, Louis Day first discusses the philosophical foundations of moral theory.

He takes us back to the ancient Greeks, where the study of ethics essentially began. As with so much of Western philosophy, we begin with Socrates who believed “that there are moral absolutes and moral knowledge and that they can be discovered by intellectually and persistently curious citizens.”

Plato – yes another Greek – argued, according to Day, that good was a value “independent of the standards of behavior prevalent at any moment in society.” An individual who brought wisdom, temperance and courage to ethical decisions was likely to do “good,” according to Plato.

Aristotle, our next great Greek, was, according to Day, more pragmatic than Plato. “He believed that moral virtue was obtainable but that tough choices had to be made in the process.

Aristotle’s moral philosophy is sometimes referred to as “virtue ethics,” and gives us the “theory of the golden mean,” one of the three basic moral theories we will apply to our case studies.

The theory of the golden mean suggests that “virtue lies between the extremes of excess and deficiency, or overdoing and underdoing,” according to Day.

As Day notes, in contemporary media ethics, concepts of balance and fairness reflect this theory of the golden mean, the compromise between extremes.

Day briefly explores other ethical perspectives and traditions, and you need to familiarize yourself with those.

For example, he notes the ubiquitous care-based “golden rule,” which is a part of most religious traditions: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” Is that a valid moral theory for the resolution of mass media ethical issues?

More important to us, are the moral theories of Immanuel Kant and John Stuart Mill.

Kant, according to Day, ushered in the modern era of ethical thought. His theories were based on the notion of duty and what he referred to as the “categorical imperative.”

According to Day, Kant believed “that moral behavior was measured by living up to standards of conduct because they are good, not because of the consequences that might result. He argued that although individuals should be free to act, they have a responsibility to live up to moral principles.

“Because Kant’s theories emphasize duty, his ideas are sometimes referred to as duty-based moral philosophy.”

Kant argues that following one’s moral duty might well result in doing some harm to others, but that adhering to the principle has a higher value. Now this can get muddy relatively quickly, because Kant also moderated his views to the extent that the person acting on principle should also respect and acknowledge the dignity of others. As I read that and interpret it for the media world, it seems to me that adhering to Kant’s philosophy might well mean making a decision that is right but that has harmful consequences, but the decision cannot be entered into lightly and must be implemented with respect for and in consideration of the dignity of those affected by it.

While Kant argues for a duty-based ethical framework, John Stuart Mill and others crafted a theory referred to as “utilitarian.” Essentially, this is a consequence-based theory of moral behavior that rejects Kant’s notion of duty regardless of consequences and suggests decisions should produce the greatest good for the greatest number of people. This theory sometimes is thought of as “the ends justify the means.”

The text more or less boils down millennia of Western philosophical brain scratching to three essential moral theories that can help us resolve ethical problems and that will be at the foundation of our mass media ethical discussion.

There is a fourth moral theory to consider, though, in my view, its application – when we deal with the practical and pragmatic -- is supplemental to the other three. This is the theory of social justice articulated by a contemporary philosopher, John Rawls, who died in 2002.

Rawls's social justice theory is based on a presumption that all moral problems should be solved in a way that is fair – that provides justice – to all parties regardless of their stakeholder position. If all parties to a problem approached the solution without any knowledge of their specific place among the stakeholders, the parties would be inclined to produce an outcome fair to everyone – self-interest not only would not prevail, it could not be ascertained.

Day spend almost no time on this contemporary theory. And it can seem dense. But if you distill it to its essence, Rawls is saying ethical dilemmas should be resolved in way that is fair, that brings justice to those involved.

He articulates a decision making process he describes as the “veil of ignorance.” In media circles, we tend to boil this idea down to something we call a “stakeholder analysis.” We'll deal with that concept a bit later in the semester.

I think of the social justice theory as adding one more question to the decision making process. I will almost always ask you, as you consider a problem, “what is the right thing to do?” Rawls would then ask, “Is it fair? Does it provide justice? Are all parties to the problem treated equally, governed by the same standards?”

This gets trebly complicated when we apply Rawls to advertising and public relations problems. By their very nature, those disciplines do not deal with all parties equally – the primary responsibility of the advertising or public relations specialist is to represent the interests of the client for whom they advocate. Can that ever be “fair” to all potential stakeholders?

For purposes of our case studies, we'll work with the three theories Day articulates at greater length in our text. They will be part of every case study we do in this class. Here they are:

1. Deontological – Practitioners are sometimes called “nonconsequentialists.” Emphasizes acting on principle or according to certain universal moral duties without regard to the good or bad consequences of their actions. This is based on Immanuel Kant; people should always be treated with respect and as ends unto themselves, never as a means to an end. The ends do NOT justify the means.
2. Teleological - The ethically correct decision is the one that produces the best consequences. Not whether or not a practice is right or wrong, but will it lead to positive results? Variations: Egoists believe those positive results should accrue to the individual, looking out for No. 1. Utilitarians believe people should attempt to promote the greatest good for the greatest number of people. When confronting an ethical dilemma, moral agents should analyze the benefits and harms to everyone (including themselves) affected by the decision and then choose the course of action that results in the most favorable outcome for the greatest number. This construction is based on the work John Stuart Mill.
3. Virtue theory – Concerned less with standards and principles for evaluating moral behavior. Practitioners focus on what we should do. Aristotle's virtue theory is more about the kind of person we should strive to become. As the text notes, ethicists have a mixed view of the practicality of this line of thought in everyday life. But the author suggests Aristotle's rule of the golden mean can be useful. Under that rule, the best decision is somewhere between the extremes; excess and deficiency, overdoing and underdoing. We can think of it in terms of finding the middle ground, or even a compromise that balances the competing interests.

Let's go back to the Tiger Woods case and see how moral theories might influence our final decision.

We have the central question and we have the values conflict.

Filtered through deontological theory, the outcome might be as follows: The individual's right to privacy is an important moral principle, fundamental to our lives as citizens in a free society. We must protect that right in all cases, regardless of the transient consequences. Protecting Tiger Woods' privacy trumps any journalistic or news values and so we will not report on the story even though it means the larger community will not receive news of important events in their community.

Filtered through teleological theory, the outcome might be as follows: Yes it is important to protect Tiger Woods's privacy and Woods will benefit if we do not report the story. But if in protecting Woods we deny citizens in our community of news about important events unfolding near them, then we subordinate the interests of the mass audience for the sake of a single individual. Of course, Woods isn't the only person staying at the sex addiction clinic and holding the story protects them from possible exposure and humiliation. And so on. In the end, which of these outcomes will produce the greatest good for the greater number of people? The decision that supports that outcome will be the ethical decision.

Filtered through the rule of the golden mean, the outcome might be as follows: Well, both sides have a point here. But why should we be forced into an all or nothing decision. Is there a middle ground that satisfies the primary interests of all sides? We could tell our readers that Tiger Woods is receiving therapy in our community. But we will not join our competitors in trying to obtain details of his treatment or photos of him at the rehab center.

Clearly, even in this sort of analytical process, the juggling of values and application of moral theories is subjective. But there is a sensibility that lends the process some moral credibility.

So, these three theories are vital building blocks in our case study template.

On Thursday, we will divide into small groups to consider the cases we dealt with last week and apply the moral theories in establishing an outcome.

And on Thursday, I will assign the first of four graded case studies.

## Media Ethics

Feb. 9, 2012

### Class 8 notes

Mid-term will be March 8. You must be prepared to analyze the 9 case studies that we used at the beginning of this term. You should be able to identify the ethical question and values in conflict. You should be able to analyze those 9 case studies from deontic, teleological and virtue ethics positions. The midterm will also contain some multiple choice and T/F questions. The mid-term will cover the first five chapters of the book plus your codes of ethics.

Today, Group case studies using ethical theories:

Quick review:

1. Deontological – Practitioners are sometimes called “nonconsequentialists.” Emphasizes acting on principle or according to certain universal moral duties without regard to the good or bad consequences of their actions. This is based on Immanuel Kant; people should always be treated with respect and as ends unto themselves, never as a means to an end. The ends do NOT justify the means.
2. Teleological - The ethically correct decision is the one that produces the best consequences. Not whether or not a practice is right or wrong, but will it lead to positive results? Utilitarians believe people should attempt to promote the greatest good for the greatest number of people. When confronting an ethical dilemma, moral agents should analyze the benefits and harms to everyone (including themselves) affected by the decision and then choose the course of action that results in the most favorable outcome for the greatest number. This construction is based on the work John Stuart Mill.
3. Virtue theory/Theory of the Golden Mean – Concerned less with standards and principles for evaluating moral behavior. Practitioners focus on the virtues of we should do. Aristotle's virtue theory is more about the kind of person we should strive to become. As the text notes, ethicists have a mixed view of the practicality of this line of thought in everyday

life. But the author suggests Aristotle's rule of the golden mean can be useful. Under that rule, the best decision is somewhere between the extremes; excess and deficiency, overdoing and underdoing. We can think of it in terms of finding the middle ground, or even a compromise that balances the competing interests. But always consider creating the most virtuous path for yourself, the prime actor in the exercise.

Break into the same groups we had last week and re-consider your case. You have the central question and values in conflict. Now I will ask you to resolve the case based on one of the three theories.

For Tuesday, please review the ethics codes for our various disciplines. Here are the links:

<http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp> -- The Society of Professional Journalists

<http://www.prsa.org/AboutPRSA/Ethics/> -- The Public Relations Society of America

<http://www.prsa.org/AboutPRSA/Ethics/ProfessionalStandardsAdvisories/> -- PRSA Professional Standards Advisories

[http://www.rtdna.org/pages/media\\_items/code-of-ethics-and-professional-conduct48.php](http://www.rtdna.org/pages/media_items/code-of-ethics-and-professional-conduct48.php) -- The Radio, Television, Digital News Association

<http://www.marketingpower.com/AboutAMA/Pages/Statement%20of%20Ethics.aspx> --- The American Marketing Association

Case study: Due Tuesday, Feb. 14, at the start of class. Follow standard JAMM format and style. Case studies generally run three to five pages.

Remember each case study begins with a short case summary and then includes EACH of the following four elements:

1. Identification of the central question to be resolved.
2. Statement of the values in conflict. Remember, there has to be conflict so look for value that would drive each of the possible decisions. Values are beliefs that drive actions – beliefs that drive one decision or another.
3. Filtering the case through each of the three operative moral theories.
  - a. Deontological – Looking for a rule, value or principle that drives the decision, but without regard to the consequences, good or ill.
  - b. Teleological – Looking for a balancing between possible outcomes with the decision driven by a determination that the specified outcome represents the greater good.
  - c. Theory of the Golden Mean – A decision that lands somewhere between the extremes.
4. Your resolution of the case, tied to a specific moral theory.

“A” papers will cover all four elements thoroughly, looking at the ramifications of all possible decisions and outcomes and will explain the “why” behind conclusions. They will demonstrate a clear understanding of the elements of a case study and the applicable moral theories.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Media Ethics

Feb. 14, 2012

Class 9 notes

**Quiz Thursday on codes of ethics:** On Thursday, there will be a closed-book, 10-question test on the professional codes of ethics. You will need to study the codes for this test. Once again, here are the links:

<http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp> -- The Society of Professional Journalists

<http://www.prsa.org/AboutPRSA/Ethics/> -- The Public Relations Society of America

<http://www.prsa.org/AboutPRSA/Ethics/ProfessionalStandardsAdvisories/> -- Supplemental PRSA Professional Standards Advisories

[http://www.rtdna.org/pages/media\\_items/code-of-ethics-and-professional-conduct48.php](http://www.rtdna.org/pages/media_items/code-of-ethics-and-professional-conduct48.php) -- The Radio, Television, Digital News Association

<http://www.marketingpower.com/AboutAMA/Pages/Statement%20of%20Ethics.aspx> --- The American Marketing Association

[http://www.aaf.org/images/public/aaf\\_content/images/ad%20ethics/IAE Principles Practices.pdf](http://www.aaf.org/images/public/aaf_content/images/ad%20ethics/IAE_Principles_Practices.pdf) - The Reynolds Journalism Institute and American Advertising Federation proposed statement of principles, with commentary (PDF)

There are also links to all the codes on Blackboard under Web Links. And you can find some of the codes in the back of your textbook.

**Codes of ethics:** As I said in our first class meeting, journalists' behavior can be dictated by law, by rules and by professional standards.

Laws are relatively unambiguous. You cannot kill someone in pursuit of a story. That is murder. You cannot steal – or if you do steal for some higher purpose, you still must accept the consequences that come from breaking the law.

Rules are not law – you don't go to jail for breaking a rule. But if you do break a rule, there can be consequences – professional consequences such as losing your job.

Standards tend to be somewhat less formal than rules. A professional is expected to treat people with respect, even on the phone. A reporter who is rude, slams the phone down, yells or swears is violating a standard but is unlikely to face severe discipline.

We know where to find laws – local, state and national statutes, court case law, etc.

Professional rules and standards are found in the professional codes of ethics created for the appropriate discipline.

Individual organizations often will have their own ethics code. When I was a WCAX, we operated under the CBS code of ethics. The New York Times has its own code of ethics.

But for journalists, the mother code comes from The Society for Professional Journalists, SPJ. First developed in the 1920s, the code has been updated many times. JAMM's own Becky Tallent was part of an SPJ committee that produced the last update seven or eight years ago.

When we talk of a code of ethics for journalists, most often we'll be referencing the SPJ code.

But there are “master” codes for most of our professions.

The Public Relations Society of America code for PR professionals. The Radio, Television Digital News Association code for broadcasters and web managers. The American Marketing Association and American Advertising Federation Codes for ad professionals.

Let's look at the key elements of a few of those.

Truth and honesty

Fairness or justice

Responsibility or accountability

Integrity

Transparency

Independence

Now break into small groups with peers from your area of specialty and consider the five scenarios and how your code of ethics applies.

15 minutes for discussion, then return to the group to talk about your decision and why you came to it.

For Thursday, read Day Chapter 4 on Truth.

Mass Media Ethics

Feb. 16, 2012

Class notes

**Truth and honesty:**

What is truth and how do you know when you see it?

If The New York Times reports that 300 people died in a prison fire in Honduras, how do you know it is true?

You were not there? You don't know anyone who was there?

How do you know it really happened?

You have a few ways of confirming the information.

1. You can report it yourself. You can contact Honduran officials and try to speak to someone who was there. You might get the report from a designated spokesman,

but absent independent reporting, you might not believe what you are told. You might have to travel to Honduras and interview victims.

2. You can double check the Times' information with other third-party sources. You can check other news organizations and compare and contrast reports. You can check Honduran sources and compare what you find with the Times' report.
3. You can take the Times' at its word and trust the report on the basis of its reputation for accurate reporting. You can rely on the Times' credibility.

What makes a news organization credible?

One possible answer: A news organization is credible if it has developed, over time, a reputation for telling the truth insofar as the truth can be determined.

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But what if Pinocchio worked for the Times?

On average, people lie 1.65 times per day, by their own admission.

Does that make lying acceptable?

If everybody downloads music, that's acceptable, right?

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Day says: **Truth as a fundamental value:**

According to Day, "The commitment to truth is perhaps the most ancient and revered ethical principle of human civilization."

Yet we fudge the truth all of the time.

We live by the rule of the white lie.

The great married-male white lie: "Of course that dress doesn't make you look fat."

Kant would argue even an "innocent" white lie, a lie told to make someone feel better, is not justified.

Day makes the following argument in asserting that society should embrace truth as a fundamental principle:

1. A lack of integrity in human communications undermines the autonomy of the individual. As rational beings we depend on truthful and accurate information to make informed judgments in our lives.
2. A commitment to truth demonstrates respect for persons as ends rather than as tools to be manipulated. Deception places self-interest over the interests of others.
3. Truth in communications builds trust between individuals and between individuals and institutions. Deception constitutes a breach of faith and makes it less likely that relationships based on trust and credibility will succeed in the future.
4. Truth is essential to the democratic process. Democracy depends on an informed citizenry armed with accurate information that inspires studious deliberation.

In theory, then, absolute truth is an ideal to which all media practitioners should strive, according to Day. But real-world experience tells us this is an ideal impossible to achieve.

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Story of Pinocchio

He defended himself by telling lies.

What did it do to him?

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Day offers three concepts that underlie the notion of truth in reporting.

1. The reporting of a story must be accurate. That is the facts should be verified and based on solid evidence.
2. A “true” story should promote understanding – an account should be, essentially, complete and contextual.
3. A truthful story should be fair and balanced.

But there may be circumstances where any or all of those principles might be compromised, yet the resulting story might still be, essentially, true.

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Quotes must be accurate --- But should they be cleaned up to correct grammar or avoid offensive language.

Sports writers and athletes: “We whipped their ass” becomes “we whipped them.”

“Goddamn” becomes “damn.”

“I seen it,” becomes “I saw it.”

And so on. Is this a lie?

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Context is necessary...but how do you provide context to a health-care story that has to be reported in 45 seconds? You don't. You use shorthand language and simplify the most complex debates into a few words. Is this deception?

Is a story fair and balanced if both sides of a controversy are quoted? But what if one side is simply wrong? If you report “A” and “Z” are you telling the truth? Holocaust denials? The earth is flat? Climate change? Things can fall into the gray zone pretty quickly.

There are lies of commission. Glenn Beck asserting over and over his rally drew 500,000 people.

There are lies of omission. BP “journalists” reporting on the amazing work ethic of oil skimming crews but failing to note they are able to skim a bare fraction of the bubbling oil.

There is deception. A reporter posing as an alcoholic to attend an AA meeting in order to out an anti-gay minister.

There is reporting half-truths. Shirley Sherrod.

There is a distinction between a mistake and a lie or deception, but often that distinction is lost on information consumers because the bad information has a life of its own in either case.

When caught in a mistake or a lie, should discipline be the same?

Let’s go back to The New York Times report on Honduran casualties. Assuming you cannot re-report the Times account...assuming you can’t go to Honduras...assuming you don’t independently contact the government or go online to check a dozen other news sources for corroboration...you must accept the Times report on trust...because you believe the Times to be credible.

What happens when the trust is broken? What happens to a news organization’s credibility when it is caught in a lie?

Let's look at a few cases from recent history, more or less:

**Janet Cooke** – Feature writer for The Washington Post. In 1980, wrote a feature column about an 8-year-old heroin addict in Washington, D.C., titled “Jimmy’s World.” Story was full of vivid and troubling descriptions of the boy’s life. Had a profound impact on readers and even had an impact on public policy.

Her editor, Bob Woodward, submitted the story for a Pulitzer Prize and she won in April 1981. Two days later, The Post announced the story was a fake, made up. She returned the Pulitzer. Faded into anonymity.

How did The Post restore credibility?

Fired the miscreant.

Transparency.

Apology.

New procedures and rules re: editing and sourcing.

What else could they do?

**Patricia Smith and Mike Barnicle:**

Patricia Smith was a columnist for The Boston Globe. Great writer. Told great human interest stories. But in 1995, questions were raised about some of the people named in her columns. Nothing proven, but she was put on an editing program by her immediate editor

and was required to submit documentation on her subjects. But her editor never told others in the chain of command even though she was frequently edited by other editors.

Monday, May 11 1995: Column focused on a cancer victim named "Claire," who had just learned about cancer therapies tested in mice. She was quoted as saying, "I'm not proud. Right away, I said, 'Rub it on my skin, pop it to me in a pill, shoot me up with it.' If I could find a way to steal it, I would. Hell, if I could get my hands on it, I'd swallow the whole...mouse."

Some Globe staff thought the quote and other parts of the story were too good to be true. Her editor began to more vigorously check her columns.

According to an American Journalism Review piece by Sinead O'Brien, "*Robinson (her editor), this time turning to voter registration, telephone and Registry of Motor Vehicles databases, had the same experience he had before: People could not be found. But now there was a difference: This time he could prove they were bogus. Smith had cited people with occupations that require licensing and therefore should be able to be tracked down, like the fictitious cosmetologist Janine Byrne. When they couldn't be located, the game was over.*"

It took several weeks before Smith was actually fired, the delay blamed on miscommunication and busy schedules.

But Smith was fired. The paper apologized and instituted procedures to make certain there could not be a repeat incident.

Then in August 1998, renowned columnist Mike Barnicle was found to have lifted sections of a George Carlin book for a Globe column. He was publicly called to account and was suspended without pay for two months.

But some Globe staffers wondered why he wasn't fired for doing what Smith had done. There were cries of racism, sexism and even ageism.

But then editors discovered that Barnicle had fabricated parts of a 1995 column.

This from the boston.com report: *"The column, titled "Through pain, a common bond," recounts the story of two sets of parents with cancer-stricken children who had struck up a friendship during a stint at Children's Hospital in Boston in the summer of 1994. When one of the boys, a black child, dies, the parents of the other boy, a white child who had begun to recover, send the down-on-their-luck parents a check for \$10,000.*

*"When Storin and Walter V. Robinson, who last week was named as the new editor in charge of Barnicle's columns, confronted the columnist with charges of fabrication, Barnicle said he did not obtain the story from either of the parents, but from a nurse at another hospital. When Barnicle did not produce the name of the nurse, and Robinson could not find a death that matched that of the child, Barnicle was again asked to resign. This time, he complied."*

How did The Boston Globe go about repairing its reputation?

Transparency.

Swift action. (Not really)

New procedures. (Had not worked)

Let's look at a more complicated case:

**Mitch Albom**, columnist, author, TV pundit. April 2005.

Albom works for the Detroit Free Press. Started as a sports columnist. Became an ESPN star. Wrote books. "Tuesdays with Morrie," and "The Five People You Meet in Heaven."

April 2005, Albom writes a column about the NCAA Final Four basketball game between Michigan State and North Carolina. It begins this way:

*In the audience Saturday at the Final Four, among the 46,000 hoop junkies, sales executives, movie producers, parents, contest winners, beer guzzlers, hip-hop stars and lucky locals who knew somebody who knew somebody, there were two former stars for Michigan State, Mateen Cleaves and Jason Richardson.*

*They sat in the stands, in their MSU clothing, and rooted on their alma mater. They were teammates in the magical 2000 season, when the Spartans won it all. Both now play in the NBA, Richardson for Golden State, Cleaves for Seattle.*

*And both made it a point to fly in from wherever they were in their professional schedule just to sit together Saturday. Richardson, who earns millions, flew by private plane. Cleaves, who's on his fourth team in five years, bought a ticket and flew commercial.*

*It was loyalty, sure. And it was exciting, no doubt. But in talking to both players, it was more than that. It was a chance to do something almost all of us would love to do: recapture, for a few hours, the best time of their lives.*

*"In the pros, you don't hang out with your teammates; everybody has their own life, their wife or their kids or their girlfriends," Richardson said. "And anyhow, you're together on the plane, at the arena, on the bus, 82 games a season. When you have time, you're just looking to get away."*

*"You gotta miss those college days," Cleaves said. "We were a family at Michigan State. In the NBA, you're just not as close."*

But there was a problem, as reported by James Joyner in an "Outside the Beltway" column on Huffington Post:

*"What Albom did was write a column as if his two interview subjects were at the Michigan State-North Carolina NCAA tournament Final Four game in St. Louis on April 2. In earlier interviews, former Michigan State players Jason Richardson and Mateen Cleaves told Albom they planned to attend the game, but they did not. Filing on Friday for a section that was printed by Saturday morning, several hours before the game, Albom wrote, and copy editors did not change, that Richardson and Cleaves had flown in for the game and were in the stands wearing Michigan State clothing. The column emphasized how much Cleaves and*

*Richardson missed their college experiences. It turned out schedule conflicts kept both players from attending the game.”*

After being called on the carpet by readers and journalists from around the country, Albom issued the following apology, published in the Free Press:

*To our readers: I made an assumption in a column this past weekend. It was a bad move. In a column written Friday for our Sunday newspaper, I assumed that what I had been told by Mateen Cleaves and Jason Richardson had indeed happened, that they had indeed flown to the Final Four, sat in the stands together rooting on Michigan State in Saturday’s game. That was their plan. Both told me so in separate interviews. Because the column had to be filed on Friday afternoon, but appeared on Sunday, I wrote it in the past tense, as if it already had happened.*

*While it was hardly the thrust of the column — which was about nostalgia and college athletes — it was wrong just the same. You can’t write that something happened that didn’t, even if it’s just who sat in the stands. Perhaps, it seems a small detail to you — the players still love their teams, they are still nostalgic, they simply decided not to go after the column had been filed — but details are the backbone of journalism, and planning to be somewhere is not the same as being there.*

*So I owe you and the Free Press an apology, and you have it right here. It wasn’t thorough journalism. While our deadlines would have required some weird writing — something like, “By the time you read this, if Mateen and Jason stuck to their plans, they would have sat in the stands for Saturday’s game” — it should have been done. We have high standards at this newspaper, and I have high standards for myself. We — the editors and I — got caught in an assumption that shouldn’t have happened. It won’t again. Thanks.*

Did Albom make a mistake? Or did he fabricate a lie? Does it make a difference?

Was his lie similar in scope or impact to the lies of Cooke, Smith and Barnicle?

Is there a justification for Albom’s actions?

If you were Albom’s editors, would you be satisfied by his assertion that he bent his standards because of deadline pressure?

Are his editors as guilty as he for allowing the column to run?

What steps would you take, as Albom's editors, to restore credibility?

Would you fire Albom?

There is a post script. Earlier this year, Albom received the Associated Press Sports Editors Red Smith Award, a career achievement award recognizing Albom as the industry's best, as valued by a sportswriter as any Pulitzer.

The award generated a mini-firestorm. Here is the closing graf from a column (<http://sportsjournalism.org/sports-media-news/raising-a-little-hell-about-this-years-red-smith-award-winner/>) by Dave Kindred of the Sports Journalism Center, a column in which he recounts all of the sage advice Albom offered journalism students in his Red Smith acceptance speech.

Recounting the made-up April 2005 column, Kindred wrote:

That meant Albom had written as fact on Friday a Sunday column leading with events of Saturday that never happened.

Note to journalism students: This is known as fiction. It can get you expelled.

Albom had his defenders, too, of course.

Not me.

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Thank you for smoking

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Advertising and public relations standards

- Threshold of truth: Do not knowingly disseminate inaccurate information.
  - We do not expect balance or objectivity
  - What about linguistic ambiguity and puffery?
  - How much is the audience responsible?
- 

How credible is a public relations campaign that is based on partial information or that misrepresents itself?

Consider the BP oil spill case: As we know from our reading of the codes of ethics, public relations practitioners have commitments that ought not to be competing – a commitment to the truth and a commitment to represent the best interests of the client. But BP was criticized for using doctored photos and misleading video press releases.

When certain facts are omitted from a public relations initiative, is this deception? Is it dishonest?

And let's take a look at the Ford Drive One press conference commercials.

What happens when the trust is broken? What happens to a news organization's credibility when it is caught in a lie? Can a lie ever be justified? Can a lie lead to a greater good?

Those are some of the questions behind the Jim West case, coming Tuesday.

**Quiz:**

If you did poorly on the quiz, you can retake it. But you must schedule to do it outside of class.

**Case Study #1**

If you scored less than 9 on the case study, you can correct the errors and resubmit it along with the original. You can get up to 9.

**Jim West case**

Read about the Jim West and the Spokesman Review's investigation of the former mayor of Spokane. You will probably get another case study assignment on the West case on Thursday.

**Media Ethics**

Feb. 28, 2102

Class 13 notes

**Roll****Current events**

Case study questions

**Invasion of privacy:**

What do we mean by privacy? What about our lives is private?

As Louis Day notes in the text, privacy is a relatively new concept, both in terms of values and law. As society has grown more complex, we have come to see ourselves as requiring more privacy, a retreat from the constant association and intimacy that was part of everyday life.

As a legal concept, Day notes the right to privacy goes back only to the 1890s and a Harvard Law Review paper that outlined for the first time the right of people to be left alone.

Day notes there are four areas of law generally considered to be related to the right to privacy.

1. **Intrusion** – a violation of one’s physical solitude. The home is considered a private place. Reporters cannot enter a home without the occupant’s permission.
2. **Publicity of embarrassing, private facts.** Two standards must be met. First, is the information of the sort that would be highly offensive to a reasonable person? Second, is the information of legitimate concern to the public?
3. **Information that places the person in a false light.** Somewhat softer standard than libel.
4. **Appropriation, the use of someone’s name, picture or likeness for commercial purposes but without permission.** But use of private information or images in news is not appropriation but rather fair use.

In general, legally, the media get the benefit of the doubt in these cases, 2, 3 and 4.

Journalists routinely report on embarrassing private facts of public figures. Goes back to our earlier questions about public officials – do they ever have a right to privacy? Legally, they do not.

Take a look at the tabloids for covers that routinely paint individuals in a false light – the actress who is photographed to appear fat or without makeup; the innocent cheek kiss between married celebrities used to illustrate a headline about marital infidelity.

Is it appropriation to use the president’s likeness to sell a name-brand coat in billboard ads?

But in terms of news coverage, fundamentally, from a legal standpoint, “the general rule is that anything that takes place in public view can be reported on. The idea is that activities that transpire in public are, by definition, not private,” according to Day.

That is why Day suggests that adherence to privacy laws is not enough. Journalists must develop an ethics framework to manage issues of privacy and invasion of privacy.

He begins with the suggestion that an ethical privacy framework balances the subject’s right to privacy against the extent to which the reported information relates to public concerns. And he argues “more attention should be paid to what the public needs to know rather than merely to what it has a curiosity about.”

The need to know vs. mere curiosity: A subjective standard, but a starting point.

Privacy is addressed in most professional codes of conduct.

Here is the appropriate section of the SPJ code:

*Minimize Harm:*

*Ethical journalists treat sources, subjects and colleagues as human beings deserving of respect.*

*Journalists should:*

— *Show compassion for those who may be affected adversely by news coverage. Use special sensitivity when dealing with children and inexperienced sources or subjects.*

— *Be sensitive when seeking or using interviews or photographs of those affected by tragedy or grief.*

— *Recognize that private people have a greater right to control information about themselves than do public officials and others who seek power, influence or attention. Only an overriding public need can justify intrusion into anyone's privacy.*

— *Be cautious about identifying juvenile suspects or victims of sex crimes.*

Here is a section from the RTDNA

***FAIRNESS:*** *Professional electronic journalists should present the news fairly and impartially, placing primary value on significance and relevance.*

*Professional electronic journalists should:*

- *Treat all subjects of news coverage with respect and dignity, showing particular compassion to victims of crime or tragedy.*
  
- *Exercise special care when children are involved in a story and give children greater privacy protection than adults.*

What do PR and advertising codes say about privacy?

Truth? Endorsements and testimonials? Appropriation of images?

Social media – Facebook collects data and its user's habits and sells to advertisers and other interests? Amazon does it. Google does it. What is the responsibility of the media platform to protect privacy? What is the responsibility of advertising reps when it comes to using/accessing such information?

Do people have a right to privacy that extends to living in an environment free of marketing or advertising messages?

Day suggests three moral values might help journalists sort through privacy issues.

1. Respect for persons as an end in itself.
2. Social utility – the journalist must decide what information is most important or useful to society.
3. Minimization of harm.

Common privacy issues:

1. Victims of sex crimes
  - a. Rape victims
  - b. Civil suit plaintiffs
2. Cause of death
  - a. AIDS
  - b. Suicide
3. The grieving family/friends
  - a. Funerals, military and civilian
  - b. At the crime or accident scene
4. Juveniles
  - a. As suspects
  - b. As news subjects
  - c. In photos
5. Criminal suspects/informants

## 6. Public records information

- a. Public employee salaries
- b. Petition signatures
- c. Public servant e-mails

Media Ethics

March 1, 2012

Class 14 notes

Privacy continued.

Let's work through the Mark Tatje/Alison Stephens case.

<http://jimromenesko.com/2012/02/29/j-profs-class-material-creates-controversy/>

Here's the central question: Do we distribute the materials outlining the details of Stephens' arrest and life, all available publicly, a month after Stephens' arrest?

This could apply to any of you in any profession. You could be a public relations intern for the team that Stephens is about to play in the Big Game. You could be an advertising intern helping to build a campaign for an opposing school and you want to show that your school is more reputable. You could be the editor of the newspaper for the opposing school. You could be a play-by-play announcer for the radio station. You could be someone like me, a teacher in a school.

I asked you to consider the central question: Does Stephens have a right to privacy or does the public need to know about Stephens' public intoxication arrest?

Case studies require the following elements:

1. A summary of the case
2. Identification of the central question. What is the right thing to do?
3. Identification of the values in conflict
4. Filtering of the case through the three operative moral theories

5. Your resolution specifically tied to one of the theories

You have the summary and the central question in hand.

Let's work on identifying the values. Values are beliefs that drive actions. In this case you have two possible actions that you can take, to publish or not publish – or as I put it, to distribute or not distribute.

What beliefs would you have to hold to support a decision to publish? I will publish this report because I believe....

What beliefs would you have to hold to support a decision not to publish? I will not publish this material because I believe...

We start with values and values in conflict for two reasons. First, moving to solve any ethical problem, we first must be aware of our own values and beliefs. That is the starting point. But when we have values and beliefs, equally important, that are in conflict, then we have to dig a bit deeper.

I might believe that the public needs to know about certain events in lives of people who represent the school in athletics. We may believe that every criminal encounter of an athlete needs to be made public. We may also believe that the public needs to know about any event that smacks of corruption in the athletic department. Those are values I might bring to this debate.

But I also may believe that even athletes have a right to privacy when it comes to information that isn't relevant to their athletic life. I may believe that an arrest for intoxication by an athlete in a minor sport (or any women's sport) is insignificant as news. I may believe reporting stories about intoxication of students will cause undue harm to the student.

I have two deeply held beliefs that are in conflict. How do I resolve the conflict?

That is where the theories come into play.

Let's take those conflicting values and work through the theories.

Deontological – Rule or principle. One good reason to understand your code of ethics.

Teleological – A balance of outcomes to determine the greater good

Theory of the Golden Mean – A middle ground, but not necessarily a compromise, and one that respects all individuals involved.

Then we resolve.

Let's walk through another privacy case.

<http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/mediawire/152551/the-daily-names-original-cain-accuser-others-follow/>

<http://jimromenesko.com/2012/01/10/kent-state-alum-pulls-1m-gift-after-student-paper-asks-questions/>

For next week, read Day, Chapter 6, confidentiality.

Media Ethics

March 20, 2011

Class 16 notes

**Confidentiality and the public interest:**

From Louis Day: “The consensus among philosophers is that confidentiality is a prima facie duty that can be overridden only by other, weightier considerations. Thus the burden of proof is generally on those who wish to override it.”

Confidentiality can involve protection of anonymous sources. But it also can involve publication of confidential information, government secrets, grand jury reports, etc.

According to Day, an assumption that disclosure is always appropriate is inappropriate. There are times when the court of public opinion is not entitled to information the release of which could offend or perhaps even cause harm to other parties.

Confidential relationships arise in three circumstances, according to Day.

- Express promises, as when a reporter offers anonymity to a source.
  - Off the record
  - Not for attribution
  - Background only
- Situations of loyalty where the promise is implied rather than explicit. Day talks about the loyalty of the PR practitioner or the advertising executive to the company he represents.
- Legal obligation – lawyer/client, doctor/patient, priest/penitent. “In addition, many states and courts now recognize a privilege for reporters to maintain the confidentiality of their sources, a tacit acknowledgment of the role of the media as representatives of the public.”

Idaho and Washington have limited shield laws, Washington by statute, Idaho by case law, a case right out of Moscow. There continue to be efforts made to pass a federal shield law.

How do news organizations decide when to grant anonymity? There are rules and standards...although some reporters/organizations do so routinely while others are less fulsome.

Remember the Minnesota case where the source/reporter relationship was given cover of contract law.

As a result, most organizations require reporters to obtain permission from editors before granting anonymity.

Anonymity granted if the source is providing information that can be obtained in no other way or if the source could be subject to threat or retaliation.

Here is how the anonymity clause in The Spokesman-Review code of ethics reads:

*The casual use of anonymous sources is not acceptable because it denies readers the ability to assess the credibility and accuracy of our information. Whenever possible, reporters must use sources on the record in print, on camera or on video.*

*There are limited circumstances when anonymous sources are permitted, including situations in which divulging information leaves a person vulnerable to retribution or harm. Anonymity may also be the only way to secure information that is vital to a story. Readers must be told why we're granting anonymity.*

*We will also describe the source briefly, such as the person's position or qualification for being quoted, without giving away the person's identity. In certain situations, confidential*

*sources may be asked to sign an agreement pledging to come forward in the event of litigation or other court action.*

*The use of an anonymous source must be approved by an editor. Rarely, there will be situations in which a reporter asks to withhold the name of an anonymous source from editors. But in such circumstances, editors may insist the information not be used in the story.*

The Associated Press policy on anonymity adds a prohibition for using anonymous sources for speculation and opinion.

*“...we always strive to identify all the sources of our information, shielding them with anonymity only when they insist upon it and when they provide vital information – not opinion or speculation; when there is no other way to obtain that information; and when we know the source is knowledgeable and reliable.”*

One problem local news organizations face is the incessant use of anonymous sources by the national media in Washington and, sometimes, elsewhere.

The Spokesman-review policy empowers editors to kill national stories if they believe the use of anonymous sources violates local guidelines.

The irony is papers such as The New York Times and The Washington Post have tough policies on anonymous sourcing. But both papers violate their own policies with impunity. Clark Hoyt, the former public editor for The Times, told this class last year that the most common reader complaint against the paper – and his most frequent criticism – involved inappropriate use of anonymous sources for even the most mundane stories.

Nevertheless, in general, organizations require information provided by anonymous sources to be confirmed by at least one other source and/or corroborated by information obtained elsewhere.

Use of confidential information is more complicated.

Fundamentally, is the information so important that its publication outweighs the manner in which it was obtained?

In general, media cannot be prosecuted for using such information unless it actually committed an illegal act or caused one to occur.

So the National Enquirer might be legally liable if it promised to pay medical workers for private medical files, whereas they would not be prosecuted if they simply used information that was provided them through a back channel.

There can be exceptions in cases of national security where publication of secret documents can be a crime...but again, media have been given great leeway – see the Pentagon papers case.

Many of you saw the documentary “Page One” earlier this semester about The New York Times. Almost in passing, the movie made reference to the paper’s partnership with Wikileaks. Editors fully understood that the documents they were receiving from Wikileaks were not just confidential -- and in some cases, highly classified – but they also clearly understood they were stolen.

During the first two major Wikileaks document dumps, members of Congress demanded that Julian Assange be charged with criminal activity up to and including espionage – if only they could get him on U.S. soil.

But there also were demands by some that New York Times editors be prosecuted for treason. That talk went nowhere because the Pentagon Papers set such a high bar on the use of stolen national security materials.

But, as the Gizmodo iPhone 4 theft case reveals, the courts must be persuaded the information obtained through illegal means is of sufficient public importance to outweigh the fact of the crime.

According to Day, there are three justifications for confidentiality:

- Concern for human autonomy. Maintaining or divulging secrets is one manifestation of personal will and autonomy.
- Confidentiality establishes a feeling of trust among individuals within society.
- Confidentiality serves the ends of social utility. Institutions and relationships work when people can trust.

Because society has placed such a high value on confidentiality, the burden is on the person or institution seeking to override confidential agreements – such as the commitment to maintain a source’s anonymity – or to make use of confidential information, Day says.

“Public interest, as opposed to merely private or self-interest is perhaps the most compelling justification for disclosure.”

In other words, if there is a demonstrable public interest to be achieved through disclosure of information or the breaking of a reporter/source agreement, then the information should be disclosed.

But it works the other way, too. If the public interest is served by a reporter protecting an anonymous source, that confidentiality should be protected. If the public interest is served by publication of confidential information, then the press is protected.

In terms of individual agreements, under what circumstances can a promise of confidentiality be broken?

- Disclosure can be compelled by law. Even with shield laws, reporters often are subpoenaed to divulge sources of information.
- Disclosure can be compelled by change in circumstances...the source lied to the reporter in whole or in part, the source's motivation becomes apparent and suspect, etc.
- The source comes forward.
- The reporter obtains information – such as the imminent commission of a crime – that changes the ethical balance of public vs. private interest.

Common confidential source issues:

- A public official wants to provide information on a significant issue but doesn't want his or her name attached. What is the motivation? The agenda? The Anne Kirkpatrick case in Spokane.
- A whistleblower wants to give a reporter a report detailing wrongdoing within his/her organization, but releasing the report could lead to dismissal or even constitute a crime. Back door methods may be used. (Martha Mendoza and the congressman who read as report to her in a parking garage while her back was turned.)
- A witness to a crime wants to tell a reporter what they saw but doesn't want to be quoted.
- A lower-level employee wants to talk to the press about an issue – a fireman or police officer, for example – but otherwise has to go through the PIO.

Questions of anonymity are less common in public relations and even less common in advertising.

The codes of ethics for both require practitioners to disclose the identities of the clients they represent. It is unethical to produce advertising that does not identify the identity of the people or institutions behind the product or service being sold.

Public relations practitioners are not serving as fronts for anonymous clients, although there are cases, such as the Nashville op-ed case we discussed, where it happens.

There are exceptions, particularly in the world of politics where it is possible now to represent anonymous political action committees, financial interests or other interested parties because of changes in election finance disclosure laws.

But it strikes me that advertising and public relations practitioners who sign on for such efforts must do so with one eye to the obligations of their profession and an ethical justification that supports disregarding ethics codes.

Media Ethics

March 22, 2012

Class 17 notes

**Conflicts of Interest:**

A conflict occurs when there are two competing interests, often representing two sets of conflicting values.

Day puts it this way, in relation to media-related conflicts: "Simply stated, a conflict of interest is a clash between professional loyalties and outside interests that undermines the credibility of the moral agent (in this case, the journalist attempting to negotiate the conflict)."

Day notes that there, at first blush, appear to be no absolute moral values attached to conflicts of interest. As he says, parents tell us not to lie, cheat or steal, but they say nothing about avoiding conflicts of interest.

But he says moral issues of fairness and justice do apply. He cites the judge who owns stock in a company involved in a lawsuit in his courtroom. That conflict of interest can absolutely affect the course of justice.

Most of our professional codes deal with conflicts of interest.

The PRSA code admonishes PR practitioners from representing competing interests – such as working for two competitive clients at the same time – or allowing personal interests to interfere with the representation of the client.

That is why, for example, PR professionals and advertising reps are discouraged from owning stock in the companies they represent – or stock in competing companies. Many PR and advertising firms and agencies require employees to disclose their financial holdings, such as stocks. News companies can require the same, though often only at the executive level.

For journalists, the SPJ code puts it this way:

Journalists should:

- Avoid conflicts of interest, real or perceived.
- Remain free of associations and activities that may compromise integrity or damage credibility.
- Refuse gifts, favors, fees, free travel and special treatment, and shun secondary employment, political involvement, public office and service in community organizations if they compromise journalistic integrity.
- Disclose unavoidable conflicts.
- Be vigilant and courageous about holding those with power accountable.
- Deny favored treatment to advertisers and special interests and resist their pressure to influence news coverage.
- Be wary of sources offering information for favors or money; avoid bidding for news.

As we have learned, mass media ethics is generally painted in shades of gray. But the concept of “real or perceived” conflicts really complicates matters.

Day writes that conflicts of interest confronting media practitioners tend to fall into three broad areas:

- Conflicting relationships – family, gifts and perks, checkbook journalism
- Conflicting public participation – Personal, institutional (civic journalism), sponsoring community events
- Vested interests and hidden agendas – advertiser influences, ownership influence, stock ownership, etc.

Conflicts can ensnare an individual. But they can be institutional as well.

As we have discussed, a newspaper or TV station is a business beholden to advertisers. There is a built-in conflict with editors who must make decisions independent of advertiser pressure.

Let’s walk through some cases that illustrate each of the three Day-referenced areas.

**Conflicting relationships:** The art director who wants to march in the anti-abortion parade, the female reporters who want to march in the pro-abortion rights parade. The TV anchor who dates the mayor. The husband and wife who are both principals in competing PR agencies representing competing clients. Mary Matalan and James Carville. White House press secretary Jay Carney and his wife, ABC national correspondent Claire Shipman.

Consider this case: Reporter Joe Jones covers the city hall beat for his hometown paper. He is married to a school teacher and has three kids in school. Upset by budget cuts imposed by the school board, the wife decides to support a candidate challenging for an open school board position. She puts a campaign sign in her front yard.

Is this a conflict of interest?

Does it interfere with the ability of the reporter to cover city hall?

Reporters at Joe Jones' newspaper are prohibited from participating in any sort of political activity. Does this extend to the wife?

Does the calculation change if the wife decides to run for the school board herself?

Does the calculation change if she is running for city council instead of school board?

How do you mitigate Jones' conflict of interest?

Jones has a reputation for fairness and balance. Does this mitigate the conflict?

**Conflicting public participation:**

Joe Jones covers schools for his hometown newspaper. He lives in a growing suburban neighborhood where traffic is getting more congested daily and where schools already are overcrowded because of new construction.

The city planning commission is considering approval of yet another massive subdivision in the area. Joe and his wife are concerned for their property values and the safety and education of their children. They want to join dozens of their neighbors testifying against the new development at a planning commission hearing.

Is this a conflict of interest? Does it interfere with Jones' ability to cover local schools? Is it OK for Jones to attend but not testify? What if his wife testifies?

Would the calculation change if Joe covered city hall instead of the school board?

**Vested interests and hidden agendas:**

The ESPN shoe controversy. The Metro government agency in Portland hires a reporter to cover itself. The Portland Press Herald in Portland, Maine, donates ad space to a political action group.

River Park Square: For Thursday, please read the Washington News Council report on The Spokesman-Review's coverage of River Park Square in Spokane. Be prepared to discuss the conflict-of-interest issues raised by the report. I will send you the link.

**Small group exercise:**

We will now break into five small groups to work through a conflict-of-interest case. This case is adapted from a case developed by Linda Kay for Concordia University in the Twin Cities and published in "Media Management in the Age of Giants," by Dennis Herrick. It is based on an actual case.

Bill Stanford is the sports editor of the largest daily newspaper in the state. A few days ago, the editor-in-chief dropped a bombshell on him. He told Stanford that the paper, which owns a handful of other newspapers around the country and several large broadcast outlets in the Midwest, hoped to purchase the National Basketball Association franchise in his city within a

week. Stanford was told to keep mum about the purchase and not leak a word of it to his staff.

He agreed.

But already one of his staffers has gotten wind of the purchase. He's the senior sports columnist on the paper and has sources that reach far and wide. As Stanford peers out his office window into the sports department, he sees the columnist on the telephone trying to track down comment on the impending purchase.

Another young sportswriter, working with the columnist, tells Stanford she has been trying to obtain a comment from the paper's publisher and corporate officials. But the publisher has declined to comment and corporate officials are all "out of town and unavailable."

The sports editor has kept his word to the editor to not say anything about the purchase. But his staff has discovered the sale using independent sources and they are preparing an immediate Twitter report and a post on the paper's website, both a news story and blog report by the columnist. They want to run a detailed analysis of the pending sale in the next day's paper, including details on the complicated financial agreements that also involve transfer of title to the city's downtown basketball arena to the newspaper's corporate owners.

The sports editor understands early release of the pending sale could jeopardize his company's position, if not killing the sale outright, possibly leading to a steep increase in the price as other bidders enter the picture or potential partners in the purchase back out. There also are potential legal challenges ahead regarding the arena transfer and even the local telecast rights to the team's games could pose a legal problem.

But he also feels a commitment to the paper's sports readers who are heavily invested in their NBA team.

The question: Should Stanford tell his reporters to proceed with their stories now or wait for the official company announcement when the sale agreement is complete?

Remember to focus on the question and not get caught up with peripheral issues. Remember, our unit here is conflict of interest. Look to the codes of ethics for guidance. But also remember that company executives have a legal, fiduciary duty not to jeopardize their company's financial health.

Outline the values in conflict. Filter through all three moral theories and then resolve the case through the application of one of those three theories.

Media Ethics

March 27, 2012

Class 21 notes

**River Park Square case:**

Guest: Steve Smith

Into which broad conflict-of-interest area does the RPS case fall? The answer is vested interests and hidden agendas.

Of the media players in this case, who has vested interests? The newspaper editors? The owner/publisher? The owners' family? Who has a hidden agenda?

Think about the Washington News Council report and its frame of reference. Its primary focus is on the newspaper's journalism. That suggests the central question we must develop to handle this case revolves around the journalists, not the owners.

Then think about what Day says when he describes the three steps media practitioners can take to deal with a conflict. If a conflict is unavoidable, he writes, the moral agent (the journalists in our case) should do all in their power to resolve the dilemma, even after the fact.

That suggests a central question that asks what steps the journalists could have, should have taken to mitigate the unavoidable conflict of interest in the RPS case.

Questions to be asked:

1. What is the nature of the publisher's conflict of interest? What is his ethical obligation? To the newspaper? To the family business?
2. What is the nature of the editor's conflict of interest? What is his ethical obligation? To the newspaper? To his boss? To readers?
3. Could this conflict have been avoided?
4. Would greater transparency mitigate the credibility issues that arose?

Those of you who wish to write about this case should do so from the perspective of the editor of the Spokesman Review.

Media Ethics

March 29, 2102

Class 19 notes

**Wrap-up conflict of interest:**

As Day notes, there are three steps to dealing with conflicts of interest, real or perceived.

First, the goal should be to avoid conflicts before they occur.

Second, if the conflict cannot be anticipated every effort should be made to resolve the dilemma, even after the fact.

Third, if a conflict cannot be avoided it should be acknowledged to the public or clients.

Let's take a look at a few recent conflict cases that made the news and apply Day's principles to each.

**RPS wrapup:**

We dealt with the River Park Square/Spokesman-Review case as a conflict of interest case. But it could as easily have been a case in our economics and social responsibility unit.

What is the responsibility of a news organization to its community? How does a news organization balance economic self-interest with ethical standards of public service?

For Tuesday, read Day, Chapter 8.

**Today, we'll begin our discussion of Economics and Social Responsibility, and begin our viewing of Citizen McCaw... upon which you should expect to write a case study.**

**Economics and Social Responsibility:**

Louis Day begins the discussion with the clear pronouncement that there is nothing inherently immoral in the profit motive or the accumulation of wealth. However, he adds this disclaimer:

“...one who is motivated primarily by self interest in situations calling for a moral judgment cannot, by definition, behave ethically.”

Ethical questions arise, Day argues, “when commercial interests are allowed to dominate other social obligations. The issue, in any given situation, is how to balance economic pressures against individual or institutional duties to others.”

We live in a capitalist society where the pursuit of profit and the accumulation of wealth has produced, in general, the world’s most prosperous society.

In many businesses, the values embodied by capitalism and the pursuit of profit are perfectly in sync with the values of the organization.

But the media world is a bit more complex.

In terms of advertising and public relations, it is not very difficult to reconcile professional values with the commercial/business values of both the media organizations and their customers.

In both PR and advertising, the professional’s first commitment is to the business/financial success of the client. There can be values conflict – as in conflict-of-interest cases or offensive content or even social responsibility.

But fundamentally, advertising and PR professionals have a great deal of leeway in defaulting to business and commercial imperatives.

On the news side, things are fuzzier.

While news organizations are businesses that exist to make money for owners and shareholders, the people who work within those organizations often are driven by a different, sometimes conflicting, set of values. And society, in general, has expected from the news media as level of social responsibility in return for the special protections afforded journalists by the First Amendment.

So the publisher of a newspaper is obligated to make sound financial decisions that benefit his company financially. But the editor of the newspaper operates under a set of values that allow – even encourage and reward her – for making decisions divorced from the business values of the organization.

I have talked briefly about The Spokesman-Review and the tire company case.

In refusing to give in to the tire company's demand that their logo be included in coverage of the Gonzaga home basketball games, editors cost the company tens of thousands of dollar in revenue.

That is a classic case of advertising/editorial conflict, with news values trumping economic pressure.

Last year, the Los Angeles Times in effect sold its front page to Disney for an advertisement that cost a reported \$700,000 --- a good example of internal commercial values – and the need for revenue – trumping news values.

But these are fairly clear-cut examples of economic values colliding with news values. As individuals, we can find ourselves dealing with larger, more significant issues of social responsibility.

When does our sense of social responsibility, our vision of our professional values trump the economic self-interests of our organization or, more importantly, trump our own economic self-interest?

This is the most basic of personal ethical debates: When do my values and principles override self-interest? When do I take a stand?

Is there a definition of “social responsibility” that works for all people at all times?

**The McCaw case:**

Is a newspaper – any news organization -- a “public trust” to be managed in a way that preserves the professional values of journalists or is it a private business to be managed in whatever way the owner considers appropriate?

As we have learned in this class, ethical questions can exist outside the law. Yes, the law gives newspaper owners the same rights given any business owner. But approach this problem not as a legal issue, but an ethical dilemma.

The documentary you will see today chronicles the bitter dispute between the staff of a California daily newspaper and the paper’s owner. The documentary makes no effort to be impartial. It is a bit over the top. But it raises some fascinating questions about the collision of values – the values of journalists and the values of business owners – in a media organization.

As you watch, try to put yourself in the shoes of Wendy McCaw as well as the shoes of her editor, Jerry Roberts. Some of what you see will be black and white. But there are enough shades of gray to keep us talking.

Thursday, we will finish the video and take up the case.

Media Ethics

April 10, 2102

Class 21 notes

### **Current events**

#### **Economics and Social Responsibility:**

To review, Louis Day begins the discussion with the clear pronouncement that there is nothing inherently immoral in the profit motive or the accumulation of wealth.

We live in a capitalist society where the pursuit of profit and the accumulation of wealth have produced, in general, the world's most prosperous society.

In many businesses, the values embodied by capitalism and the pursuit of profit are perfectly in sync with the values of the organization.

But the media world is a bit more complex.

While media organizations are businesses that exist to make money for owners and shareholders, the people who work within those organizations often are driven by a different, sometimes conflicting, set of values.

This is illustrated, in the starkest of ways, by the debacle in Santa Barbara

In your case study, I have asked you to think of the Santa Barbara controversy from the perspective of Wendy McCaw. I know some of you are having a hard time with that perspective.

But start by asking yourself these questions:

Does Wendy McCaw believe she is acting in an ethical way? What values is she embodying in her actions? As media practitioners, we tend to relate to the journalists who are standing up to McCaw on principle? But, if you are Wendy McCaw, how do you respond to the sight of your employees calling for a subscriber/advertiser boycott of your paper? Is it possible for McCaw to view such a protest as a stand for principle rather than an attack on her business?

Answering those questions will help you begin to develop a set of core values – McCaw’s values – that sit on one side of the conflict.

In thinking of the values in conflict, it is easy to describe the values that drive McCaw’s employees. But articulating their values is NOT describing the values in conflict in this case. The conflict we need to analyze is the conflict within McCaw herself.

If the first set of questions produce values on one side of the conflict, these questions might get us to the values on the other side.

What beliefs would McCaw have to hold that would cause her to act differently? What beliefs would she have to hold as publisher to give her editors complete editorial freedom?

Think about that question and its frame of reference. The answer to that question is not the same as the answer to a question about the values Jerry Roberts would have to hold in order to fight for editorial freedom.

After we have spent some time in McCaw’s shoes, we should come back to the newsroom employees in Santa Barbara. Roberts was fired. But five of his editors resigned on principle and in protest.

They put principle above self-interest.

Later, reporters in Santa Barbara, rather than resign in protest, brought in a union to protect their jobs. And in the process of unionizing, they mounted an advertiser/subscriber boycott.

Are their actions as ethically sound as the actions of those who quit?

When does our sense of social responsibility, our vision of our professional values trump the economic self-interests of our organization or, more importantly, trump our own economic self-interest?

This is the most basic of personal ethical debates: When do my values and principles override self-interest? When do I take a stand?

How does this question play out in your current lives as students? Have any of you faced such an ethical crisis? If so, how did you resolve it?

Is there a definition of "social responsibility" that works for all people at all times?

Some would say that doing anything to promote Planned Parenthood and its services is socially irresponsible because abortion is morally unacceptable. Others would say that promoting birth control information, pregnancy counseling and abortion services is serving the needs of women and is a critical public service?

Inevitably, defining and resolving these problems is a deeply personal issue.

How do we define our sense of social responsibility? How far do we go to compromise when confronted by a conflict between our principles and our economic self-interest?

Media Ethics

April 12, 2012

Class 22 notes

**Case study #4 due Friday, April 13, 5 p.m.**

**Final exam is Wednesday, May 9, 7:30 a.m.** I will not be giving the test in advance. If you must miss the test you can take an incomplete for the semester and make it up before the start of summer term. Those arrangements **MUST** be made well in advance.

**Clinton Culp will teach the class on Tuesday, April 17. Read Day, Chapter 10, Morally Offensive Content. On Tuesday, you will have a 5-point quiz on Chapter 9.**

**Chapter 9: The media and anti-social behavior:**

Louis Day says issues surrounding the media in this area fall into two categories:

1. Practitioners' commission of anti-social behavior in connection with their professional obligations, i.e., journalists breaking the law.

2. Media influence on anti-social behavior

**Practitioners' commission:**

Day argues that media professionals share a standard for ethical performance with other professionals.

“Like public officials, media practitioners should be expected to seek the ethical high ground in their conduct,” Day argues

Day says, “Regardless of the circumstances, media practitioners are in a weak moral position when they commit serious breaches of the law.”

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He says, first, violating the law often places the reporter in the position of participant rather than observer. If journalists are truly representatives of the public, they should not engage in behavior they would find unacceptable in others.

Second, he says, if commission of criminal acts in search of a story became commonplace, respect for the rule of law within society would be undermined.

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While Day is not supportive of journalists breaking the law, he does suggest a teleological approach to such problems, while not applicable universally, may be valid in certain circumstances. Does the greater good outweigh the illegal conduct?

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We have examined a variety of ethical issues involving a balance between an action that may have negative repercussions. But does the calculus change when we are talking about breaking the law? Offending readers with a brutal image may be counterproductive, but it is not illegal. Deceiving to obtain a story may be unethical, but it is not illegal. A teleological argument can be made.

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But Day’s own view seems to be deontological -- that the rule or principle should apply -- don’t break the law.

Is that construction too narrow? If we were to apply that rule under all scenarios, what greater goods might we have missed in the last several years? For example, is it OK for reporters to violate the law in order to get an important story?

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1. Speeding to the scene of an accident. Justified?

2. Illegally tape-recording a conversation. Justified?

3. Stealing documents from a desk (as opposed to reading them when someone is out of the room or reading them backwards and upside down.) Justified?

4. How about stealing documents from the government, as in the Wikileaks case? Pentagon Papers?

5. Cincinnati Enquirer reporter Mike Gallagher stole internal voice mail messages – a violation of federal law – which he used as the basis for a series on Chiquita (bananas) Brands International.

6. New Zealand case; smuggling weapons into a rugby stadium before the Rugby World Cup in 2010. Breaching airport security. Justified?

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7. How about the student newspaper that does an “expose” on the school’s drug problem sitting down and interviewing – and photographing – students while they use illegal drugs?

8. The young college newspaper reporter who goes to work for a nude dancing/escort service – and so works as a prostitute – to report on the illegal sex trade on campus.

9. When NYC police order people to leave Zucotti Park where the Occupy Wall Street protests are centered, is it OK for journalists to ignore the order because they are "reporting" the story?

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**What about the media impact on anti-social behavior?**

We won't go into the effects of popular entertainment on behavior --- that is for a social science class.

But consider the areas that should concern us, advertising and news coverage.

In our unit on offensive content, we'll look at advertisements that seemed to promote violence against women, the sexualization of children and drug use. We'll look at ads that mocked religion and the clergy.

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Does such advertising have an impact on society? Does it promote anti-social behavior?

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What is the responsibility of the advertising practitioner who is asked to participate in such advertising campaigns?

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On the news side, the questions are equally serious.

With staff and budget cuts, local TV news is becoming more than ever, a place for endless reports on crime, violence and societal dysfunction. The hackneyed phrase "if it bleeds, it leads," is more than a cliché.

What is the impact on citizens when their sense of life in a community is framed in that way? Are our communities as unsafe as TV story framing would suggest?

Crime stories may meet every standard of journalistic quality -- but their overall impact may be, in effect, deceitful. Stories have the right facts, but are they the right stories.

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Can the news media contribute to antisocial behavior in coverage of major crime or crisis stories? Remember the Unabomber, the anti-technology bomber who killed three people and injured two dozen more with mail bombs sent to universities, think tanks and airlines during a 20-year period.

In 1995, to promote his ideology, he contacted several media organizations and demanded they print his manifesto or he would kill again. The New York Times and The Washington Post made the decision to print the document, even though it advocated illegal activity and defended murder.

But it was the printing of the document that brought the Unabomber's brother forward to identify him

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Then we have the issue of uncivil behavior. How has journalism contributed to the decline in civil discourse?

1. Talk radio
2. Anonymous chat and comment threads
3. Reporting from the extremes

JAMM 341 Media Ethics

Class 23 notes on Offensive Content

**Morally offensive content: Freedom and responsibility:**

Relaxation of obscenity, pornography and other so-called blue laws has eliminated nearly all legal sanctions that could be imposed against a newspaper or magazine for publication of content some would consider offensive.

In broadcast, the waters are somewhat muddier because broadcast falls under federal regulation and the FCC. The dustup over Janet Jackson's wardrobe malfunction a couple of Super Bowls back led the FCC to issue a hefty fine against CBS even though the network, in all likelihood, was not responsible for the incident.

But less clear is how the FCC would respond to the broadcast of offensive content in a news context, such as 60 Minutes.

Nevertheless, broadcasters are certainly more chilled than their print counterparts.

Of course there are absolutely no limits on the Internet and few on cable or Satellite radio or TV content.

What about offensive content in advertising?

In an effort to be ever hipper, some advertisers and their agencies routinely push the boundaries of what we might consider good taste.

What about ad campaigns that sexualize children? For example, Abercrombie & Fitch selling sexy underwear to young girls through magazine and catalog ads. Or the French clothing designer of lingerie for little girls.

Or ads that feature anorexic models? Or picture sexual bondage or even gang rape? Or that depict casual drug use?

The producers of the last Shrek movie were kicking themselves last year for giving men's' online magazine VMan permission to use the Shrek characters in a magazine spread. They anticipated something like a Simpson's campaign that featured Homer, Marge, et al modeling Versace and Calvin Klein. Instead, the spread showed Shrek, Donkey and Fiona cuddling up to nearly naked models in leather and chains.

It was a network-approved public relations campaign that led Fox to give the Glee cast permission to promote the hit show in GQ last fall.

The resulting story and photo spread sparked outrage from individuals and groups upset the magazine package sexualized high school-age characters even though the actors are in their mid- to late-20s.

What are the standards and who sets them?

### **Typical news issues:**

Use of language: Standards have changed. "Suck" and "scumbag" were once off limits. But they are common now.

Ethnic language changes. "Squaw." "Colored." "Negro," etc.

Some terms seems still seem to be off limits, the vile seven or so. Yet use of the F-word in mainstream media is more common.

How do we mitigate use of dirty words? Is there a difference between using "f-word," or "f---" or the actual word? N-word? Does it make any difference if the word is used online only? Are the standards different?

Graphic information in a news report. How far do you go? The Joseph Duncan/Groene case? Haiti photos. Depictions of war.

But is there a difference between that and, say, Vanity fair's graphic depiction of Tiger Woods' sexual escapades?

Offensive speech. We have talked about Holocaust denial and offensive chats and comment posts. Can the free marketplace go too far, be too free?

Louis Day suggests four principles that might apply to determining how far is too far.

1. The Harm Principle: Mill -- that personal liberty must be restricted in order to prevent harm to others. Does the offensive material or content threaten harm?

2. The Principle of Paternalism: Offensive material should be controlled because it can harm self. Exposure to this material dehumanizes us and so those in the media should not contribute to that possibility.

3. The Principle of Moralism: Offensive material should be controlled so as to prevent immoral behavior or the spread of immorality.

4. The Offense Principle: Restriction of offensive material is acceptable in order to protect some in society from taking offense even if others find the material perfectly acceptable.

Some would say that a deontological approach doesn't work in this area. Finding a guiding rule or principle that applies generally would seem difficult. However, application of a golden mean -- a compromise between extremes -- or a teleological approach that seeks the greater good seems more easily applied here.

Let's focus on the issue of offensive photos, focusing on advertising and news photos that generate controversy.

Let's talk about some publicity stunts gone bad -- stunts that were offensive on their face.

Nazi humans

Breast milk ice cream

BBC "Top Gear"

Let's look at some more advertising some would consider offensive. If the central question surrounding these ads is run/air or don't run/air, how do we justify our answer? There is a cost/benefit element to offensive content questions in advertising and PR – does the benefit to the client outweigh the cost of the likely offense.

Let's look at some important Pulitzer Prize-winning news photos and talk about the issues to be considered in deciding whether or not to publish them.

Do these photos make your front page? What would be the justification?

1. Would these photos run if the images were from our local community?
2. What good comes from these photos? Harm?
3. The National Press Photographers Association: "Treat all subjects with respect and dignity. Give special consideration to vulnerable subjects and compassion to victims of crime or tragedy. Intrude on private moments of grief only when the public has an overriding and justifiable need to see."
4. But no overriding policy for all media outlets

Your final case study comes out of this unit on offensive content.

You are going to have two cases to choose from. Choose the case that most interests you. BUT PICK ONLY ONE.

Case No. 1: The first is an advertising case. I will show you in class a TV ad for a feminine hygiene product, a ladies' shaver. The ad was highly controversial at the time it was produced and aired. I will send you a link to the ad so that you can review it for this case.

For purposes of this case, you are the ad acceptance manager for a local TV station, KLEW in Lewiston, a small-market station. (This case isn't about network TV or a TV station in New York, but about a tiny station just down the road and serving this region.)

As the ad acceptance manager, your job is to review potentially troublesome ads before the station agrees to air them. Even though the advertiser is paying to run the commercial, your station has standards and may well turn down good money if you decide the commercial is not appropriate for your market. The advertiser, working through a broker, wants to air the commercial during the local evening news for five consecutive days.

You have viewed the commercial, several times in fact. It is undeniably clever, but is unsettling and will be offensive to some viewers.

So that is your central question: As the ad acceptance manager for KLEW you must decide whether or not to air the commercial. Your word is final. What is the right thing to do?

Case No. 2: This is a photojournalism case.

U.S. forces landed in Somalia on Dec. 9, 1992. Their mission: To enforce United Nations resolutions aimed at curbing widespread tribal violence, even genocide, in order to help restore some form of government and end a massive famine.

The decision to deploy was made by the first President George Bush. But the brush-fire war was inherited and then prosecuted by the newly installed President Clinton.

The conflict, such as it was, was well covered by the press. Reporters and photographers were on the beach to record the landing of troops on Dec. 9.

America's involvement in Somalia ended abruptly, ironically because of photos taken by Canadian photographer Paul Watson, on Oct. 3, 1993, of a dead American soldier being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu.

It was the image of U.S. Staff Sgt. William David Cleveland being dragged through the streets by cheering mobs that turned public opinion against the use of American troops and caused President Clinton to abandon the pursuit of warlord Mohammed Aideed, the mission that cost Cleveland his life. In all, 18 Americans were killed in the action that day, a horrific toll for a dirty little war. But it was the photo of David Cleveland that changed history.

By March 31, 1994, all American troops were out of Somalia.

Let's look at three of Watson's photos.

David Cleveland was born in Peoria, AZ.

After the action in Mogadishu, he was awarded posthumously the Silver Star, the Army's second-highest award for valor. Here is how his citation reads:

*The President of the United States takes pride in presenting the Silver Star Medal (Posthumously) to William David Cleveland, Jr., Staff Sergeant, U.S. Army, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action against hostile enemy forces while serving as a Crew Chief on board "Super 64," an MH-60 Black Hawk helicopter in Company D, 1st Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne), during combat operations in Mogadishu, Somalia, on 3 October 1993. Staff Sergeant Cleveland's helicopter was hit by a Rocket Propelled Grenade while providing protective fires for a downed helicopter from his unit and crashed into the street where the downed air crew was surrounded by a numerically superior enemy force. Staff Sergeant Cleveland was mortally wounded while gallantly defending his aircraft, fellow crew members, and ground force members of Task Force RANGER in the vicinity of the crash site. His courage and determination in the face of grave danger were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military forces and reflect great credit on himself and the United States Army.*

Fourteen years later, Watson himself wrote about the photos in his memoir, "Where War Lives."

"The crowd parted, forming a manic horseshoe around the corpse. My eyes panned the frenzy like a camera guided by invisible hands. I looked to the ground. And that is how I came to know Staff-Sgt. William David Cleveland. In less than the time it took to breathe, I had to decide whether to steal a dead man's last shred of dignity. The moment of choice, in the swirl of dust and sweat, hatred and fear, is still trapped in my mind, denying me peace: just as I was about to press the shutter on my camera, the world went quiet, everything around me melted into a slow-motion blur, and I heard the voice: 'If you do this, I will own you forever.' "

Watson wrote that from that day to this he lives with a guilty conscience.

"Over time, Staff-Sgt. Cleveland's power over me had weakened," Watson writes. "His voice had faded, his visits grown less frequent. But he was still there. I had just learned to live with him."

So now you know a bit about Somalia and Staff Sgt. Cleveland and photographer Tony Watson. And, in hindsight, you know the pictures Watson took that day changed history.

But for purposes of this case study, you do not know that last bit of information.

You need to step back and decide, on deadline, knowing only what was known on Oct. 4, 1993, whether or not to publish Watson's photo(s) of Cleveland being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu.

You are the editor of a local newspaper or the producer of a local TV station news show. The photos are in front of you. You have a decision to make based only on what you know right now. Among the things you don't know ... Cleveland's identity. At this point you have a photo of an unidentified American soldier whose corpse is being abused.

History will look back on this event...but you have no idea what history will say. It is here and now. What is the right thing to do?

Your case studies are due Thursday, Oct. 13 at the beginning of class.

Remember, each case must include the following elements:

1. An accurate and well-written summary of the case
2. Identification of a central question
3. Identification and explanation of values in conflict
4. A filtering of the case through all three moral theories and arguing both sides of the question for each theory
5. Your resolution tied to a specific theory

Class 30 May 3

Final Exam Review

**UI course evaluations: 59% completion at present, due by Sunday**

**Moral reasoning post test: Must be done ASAP**

**Final exam: Final is Wednesday, May 9, 7:30-9:30 a.m. Know your Vandal ID number.**

You will be asked to analyze and decide five scenarios. You must identify the values in conflict, explain your reasoning based on one of your ethical theories and make your decision. **THIS SECTION WILL BE TIMED AND WILL START AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FINALS PERIOD. BE ON TIME.** You will be allowed five minutes for each scenario. The scenarios will come from examples we have

discussed in class. The facts in the class scenarios will not be identical, but you could benefit from reviewing the following cases:

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/06/roland-martin-david-beckham-glaad-super-bowl\\_n\\_1257036.html?ref=media](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/06/roland-martin-david-beckham-glaad-super-bowl_n_1257036.html?ref=media)

<http://www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/photo-news/534352/photographers-face-copyright-threat-after-shock-ruling>

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/end-of-lance-armstrong-probe-raises-questions-about-medias-reporting/2012/02/07/gIQAcHOXxQ\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/end-of-lance-armstrong-probe-raises-questions-about-medias-reporting/2012/02/07/gIQAcHOXxQ_story.html)

<http://www.abc15.com/dpp/news/now/mcdonalds-re-thinking-pit-bull-ad>

[http://articles.nydailynews.com/2012-02-19/news/31078173\\_1\\_headline-knicks-phenom-jeremy-lin-sportscenter](http://articles.nydailynews.com/2012-02-19/news/31078173_1_headline-knicks-phenom-jeremy-lin-sportscenter)

[http://espn.go.com/racing/nascar/cup/story/\\_/id/7586239/nascar-turns-bubba-watson-general-lee-car-phoenix-race](http://espn.go.com/racing/nascar/cup/story/_/id/7586239/nascar-turns-bubba-watson-general-lee-car-phoenix-race)

<http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/mediawire/164501/news-site-says-it-published-name-of-dead-teen-because-it-was-already-known-on-social-media/>

<http://jimromenesko.com/2012/03/05/school-board-warns-reporter-after-he-violates-civility-policy/>

<http://jimromenesko.com/2012/03/21/woman-who-was-with-oregonian-editor-is-an-internet-call-girl/>

<http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/swsx-ad-agency-turns-homeless-wi-fi-hotspots/story?id=15910344#.T6HQ8sUpnfU>

<http://www.latimes.com/business/money/la-fi-mo-belvedere-rihanna-mondelez-20120326,0,6197194.story>

<http://jimromenesko.com/2012/03/28/daily-texan-editors-respond-to-trayvon-martin-cartoon-controversy/>

<http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/als-morning-meeting/141052/chicago-tv-station-admits-mistakes-in-airing-misleading-interview-with-4-year-old-boy/>

The remainder of the test will be made up of short answer, true-false, definitions and articulation of values and principles. The test draws from Day's text and lectures and notes I sent to you during the semester.

Specifically, be prepared to answer questions related to the following:

- Know the three moral theories.
- Be able to define values and values in conflict.
- Know what professional organization has developed a code of ethics for your profession.
- Know the key values of that code of ethics.
- Know the definition of conflict of interest.
- Know the three approaches media practitioners should follow in resolving a conflict of interest.
- Know Day's three moral values that help journalists sort through privacy issues.
- Know Day's four principles that help determine how far is too far in publishing offensive content.
- Know areas where media practitioners encounter conflicts.
- Know the values that help media practitioners sort through privacy issues.
- Principles that underlie the notion of truth in news reporting.
- Reasons confidentiality agreements might be broken.
- Know the justifications for confidentiality.

## Appendix I

### Sample Case Study Assignments for the Case Study Class

Case Study #1 – Yale quarterback Patrick Witt

JAMM 341 Media Ethics, Sec. 1

Feb. 2, 2012 / Due Feb. 9, 2012

On Nov. 13, 2011, Yale quarterback Patrick Witt announced that he had withdrawn his application for a Rhodes scholarship. He was a finalist, but the Rhodes interview date conflicted with the Yale-Harvard game. The star QB had apparently chosen his loyalty to his football teammates over the possibility of an individual academic honor.

But on Jan. 26, *The New York Times* reported that by Nov. 13 Witt had been already suspended from consideration for the Rhodes scholarship. The *Times* reports that Rhodes trustees had learned through unofficial channels that Witt had been accused of sexual assault by another student. The Rhodes Trust then told Yale that the university needed to re-endorse Witt for the interview invitation to be revived.

The accusation against Witt was not a public matter. There was no police complaint nor was there a formal complaint made with the university. According to anonymous sources, the complaint went through an informal process. No finding of guilt or innocence is determined in such a process, the matter is confidential, and the University will neither confirm nor deny that any such complaint against Witt exists. Neither Witt nor the accuser has spoken publicly to the *Times* or any other media about the case.

Following the *Times* article, a public relations specialist hired by Witt released a press release in which he denied that his Rhodes candidacy was suspended. He said he withdrew his candidacy. He said the Rhodes trust had been contacted by an anonymous source with false information about the sexual assault allegation. He said he had already informed the athletic department that he intended to withdraw from the Rhodes before that time.

Witt's statement says there was no burden of proof required for filing an informal sexual assault complaint and that he was denied the opportunity to request a formal hearing to defend himself because no formal complaint was filed. The informal process prohibits him from discussing details of the matter. However, his statement says that the accuser was

someone with whom he'd had an "on-again, off-again relationship" that had ended two months before the complaint was filed.

Following the *Times* story, *The Yale Daily News* admitted that it had been aware of the allegation against him in mid-November. The Yale Daily News sat on the story for at least two months before the Times reported it.

**Assignment choice 1:** Assume the role of editor of *The Yale Daily News*. Assume that all the information discovered by the *Times* is also available to you before the *Times* publishes. Use the SAD method to analyze the case. Describe the facts and identify the relevant conflicting facts and principles, make a clear statement of the ethical question involved, discuss the weights of the various conflicting values and principles, consider any external factors, examine various individuals and groups likely to be affected, discuss how the three ethical theories (deontology, teleology, and Golden Mean) may apply, render your own decision and defend your recommendation based on one of the three preceding moral theories.

**Assignment choice 2:** Assume the role of a public relations person Witt tries to hire to represent him. Assume all the information available in the existing press release is available to you. Use the SAD method to analyze the case. Describe the facts and identify the relevant conflicting facts and principles, make a clear statement of the ethical question involved, discuss the weights of the various conflicting values and principles, consider any external factors, examine various individuals and groups likely to be affected, discuss how the three ethical theories (deontology, teleology, and Golden Mean) may apply, render your own decision and defend your recommendation based on one of the three preceding moral theories.

Each of these assignment choices has multiple possible issues. For instance, *The Yale Daily News* has issues of anonymous sources; privacy; harm to the accuser, victim and university; and ongoing problems with the sexual assault investigation process at the university. The public relations professional has issues of how much truth to tell (for you'll see that the press release writes around certain holes in the time line), whether to use any material that could potentially identify the accuser, and whether to keep the promise of confidentiality made during the complaint process.

Your essays should be 3-5 pages long and typed double spaced. Please source your factual material clearly. Do your own thinking and do not formulate your decision until you have completed the Situation and Analysis portion of your paper. Be cautious about using arguments borrowed from pundits, bloggers, and other commentators. Your paper is due Feb. 9 at the beginning of class.

Case Study #2 – Deception

JAMM 341 Media Ethics, Sec. 1

Feb. 23, 2012 / Due March 1, 2012

The Spokesman-Review received a tip that Spokane Mayor Jim West was involved in online chats on Gay.com. The newspaper hired a private detective who posed as a teenage boy on Gay.com and engaged in conversations online conversations with the mayor. The ethical question for your consideration is whether deception is justified in the pursuit of this story.

You are responsible for researching the facts of the case. The Frontline video that we watched in class, along with additional materials, is available for your viewing online at this address:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/hiddenlife/>

The Spokesman-Review stories may be read at:

<http://www.spokesmanreview.com/jimwest/>

Use the SAD method to analyze the case. Describe the facts and identify the relevant conflicting facts and principles, make a clear statement of the ethical question involved, discuss the weights of the various conflicting values and principles, consider any external factors, examine various individuals and groups likely to be affected, discuss how the three ethical theories (deontology, teleology, and Golden Mean) may apply, render your own decision and defend your recommendation based on one of the three preceding moral theories.

Your essay should be 3-5 pages long and typed double spaced. Source your factual material clearly with as citations within the text and with reference page with complete Web site addresses appended to your essay. Do your own thinking and do not formulate your decision until you have completed the Situation and Analysis portion of your paper. Be

cautious about using arguments borrowed from pundits, bloggers, and other commentators. You will be graded on spelling and grammar as well as the reasoning and completeness of your thinking. Your paper is due March 1 at the beginning of class.

#### Media Ethics Case Study #4

April 5, 2010, Class 20 notes / Assignment

Is a newspaper a “public trust” to be managed in a way that preserves the professional values of journalists or is it a private business to be managed in whatever way the owner considers appropriate?

As we have learned in this class, ethical questions can exist outside the law. Yes, the law gives newspaper owners the same rights given any business owner. But approach this problem not as a legal issue, but as an ethical dilemma.

The documentary you just watched chronicles the bitter dispute between the staff of a California daily newspaper and the paper’s owner. The documentary makes no effort to be impartial. It is a bit over the top. But it raises some fascinating questions about the collision of values – the values of journalists and the values of business owners – in a media organization.

For purposes of this case study, you must walk in the (very expensive) shoes of Wendy McCaw. As JAMM majors, it is far easier for us to understand and sympathize with Jerry Roberts and his staff. My sympathies rest there as well.

But to resolve an ethical problem, you must understand values and ideals other than your own. In this case, you need to understand Wendy McCaw even if you might disagree with her actions.

So your next written case study is the McCaw/Santa-Barbara News Press case.

This is a case of professional values versus business values. Is a newspaper a public trust to be managed in a way that preserves the professional values of journalists or is it a private business to be managed in whatever way the owner considers appropriate? You must analyze the case from the role of owner Wendy McCaw. You have purchased the Santa-Barbara News Press. You must frame the ethical question and analyze it from her perspective. We know what Jerry Roberts would say. You tell me what Wendy McCaw would say.

In working through this case, review Day, Chapter 8 and apply his social responsibility theories to the case. And ask yourselves this question – if the owner/publisher of a newspaper is not morally obligated to recognize journalism codes of ethics – such as the SPJ code – what ethical standards is that person obligated to recognize?

“A” papers will recognize the complexity of the case, showing how each theory could support an ethically defensible outcome. As always, you must lay out the situation, ethical question, values in conflict (and do not merely mimic my statements), analysis with three

theories (deontic, teleological and Golden Mean), and your final decision. Papers are expected to be well reasoned with accurate spelling and grammar, and to incorporate Day into the analysis.

The case study is due on Friday, April 13, at 5 p.m. To avoid the possibility of bad luck, try getting it in earlier. If you can't turn it in in class on Thursday, please bring a hard copy of your paper to my office at 500 Memorial Gym. Late papers will be assessed a 10% penalty.

Remember the purpose of the exercise. As imperious and tone-deaf as we might think Wendy McCaw's behavior was throughout this episode, we need to understand, if not respect, her point of view. We must empathize with her position and try to see the world as she sees it. We must try to ascertain the values guiding her life. Only if we understand the parties can we reasonably expect to resolve difficult conflicts of values.

JAMM 341 Case study #5

Due Friday, April 30, by 5 p.m. at 500 Memorial Gym

Choose the case that most interests you. **BUT PICK ONLY ONE.**

**Case No. 1:** The first is an advertising case. I will show you in class a TV ad for a feminine hygiene product, a ladies' shaver. The ad was highly controversial at the time it was produced and aired. Here is the link to the ad so that you can review it for this case.

<http://www.lemondrop.com/2009/04/08/more-ridiculously-offensive-ads/>

For purposes of this case, you are the ad acceptance manager for a local TV station, KLEW in Lewiston, a small-market station. (This case isn't about network TV or a TV station in New York, but about a tiny station just down the road and serving this region.)

As the ad acceptance manager, your job is to review potentially troublesome ads before the station agrees to air them. Even though the advertiser is paying to run the commercial, your station has standards and may well turn down good money if you decide the commercial is not appropriate for your market. The advertiser, working through a broker, wants to air the commercial during the local evening news for five consecutive days.

You have viewed the commercial, several times in fact. It is undeniably clever, but is unsettling and will be offensive to some viewers.

So that is your central question: As the ad acceptance manager for KLEW you must decide whether or not to air the commercial. Your word is final. What is the right thing to do?

**Case No. 2:** This is a photojournalism case.

U.S. forces landed in Somalia on Dec. 9, 1992. Their mission: To enforce United Nations resolutions aimed at curbing widespread tribal violence, even genocide, in order to help restore some form of government and end a massive famine.

The decision to deploy was made by the first President George Bush. But the brush-fire war was inherited and then prosecuted by the newly installed President Clinton.

The conflict, such as it was, was well covered by the press. Reporters and photographers were on the beach to record the landing of troops on Dec. 9.

America's involvement in Somalia ended abruptly, ironically because of photos taken by Canadian photographer Paul Watson, on Oct. 3, 1993, of a dead American soldier being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu.

It was the image of U.S. Staff Sgt. William David Cleveland being dragged through the streets by cheering mobs that turned public opinion against the use of American troops and caused President Clinton to abandon the pursuit of warlord Mohammed Aideed, the mission that cost Cleveland his life. In all, 18 Americans were killed in the action that day, a horrific toll for a dirty little war. But it was the photo of David Cleveland that changed history.

By March 31, 1994, all American troops were out of Somalia.

Let's look at three of Watson's photos.

David Cleveland was born in Peoria, AZ.

After the action in Mogadishu, he was awarded posthumously the Silver Star, the Army's second-highest award for valor. Here is how his citation reads:

The President of the United States takes pride in presenting the Silver Star Medal (Posthumously) to William David Cleveland, Jr., Staff Sergeant, U.S. Army, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action against hostile enemy forces while serving as a Crew Chief on board "Super 64," an MH-60 Black Hawk helicopter in Company D, 1st Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne), during combat operations in Mogadishu, Somalia, on 3 October 1993. Staff Sergeant Cleveland's helicopter was hit by a Rocket Propelled Grenade while providing protective fires for a downed helicopter from his unit and crashed into the street where the downed air crew was surrounded by a numerically superior enemy force. Staff Sergeant Cleveland was mortally wounded while gallantly defending his aircraft, fellow crew members, and ground force members of Task Force RANGER in the vicinity of the crash site. His courage and determination in the face of grave danger were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military forces and reflect great credit on himself and the United States Army.

Fourteen years later, Watson himself wrote about the photos in his memoir, "Where War Lives."

"The crowd parted, forming a manic horseshoe around the corpse. My eyes panned the frenzy like a camera guided by invisible hands. I looked to the ground. And that is how I came to know Staff-Sgt. William David Cleveland. In less than the time it took to breathe, I had to decide whether to steal a dead man's last shred of dignity. The moment of choice, in the swirl of dust and sweat, hatred and fear, is still trapped in my mind, denying me peace: just as I was about to press the shutter on my camera, the world went quiet, everything around me melted into a slow-motion blur, and I heard the voice: 'If you do this, I will own you forever.' "

Watson wrote that from that day to this he lives with a guilty conscience.

"Over time, Staff-Sgt. Cleveland's power over me had weakened," Watson writes. "His voice had faded, his visits grown less frequent. But he was still there. I had just learned to live with him."

So now you know a bit about Somalia and Staff Sgt. Cleveland and photographer Tony Watson. And, in hindsight, you know the pictures Watson took that day changed history.

But for purposes of this case study, you do not know that last bit of information.

You need to step back and decide, on deadline, knowing only what was known on Oct. 4, 1993, whether or not to publish Watson's photo(s) of Cleveland being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu.

You are the editor of a local newspaper or the producer of a local TV station news show. The photos are in front of you. You have a decision to make based only on what you know right now. Among the things you don't know ... Cleveland's identity. At this point you have a photo of an unidentified American soldier whose corpse is being abused.

History will look back on this event...but you have no idea what history will say. It is here and now. What is the right thing to do?

Remember, each case must include the following elements:

1. An accurate and well-written summary of the case
2. Identification of a central question
3. Identification and explanation of values in conflict
4. A filtering of the case through all three moral theories and arguing both sides of the question for each theory
5. Your resolution tied to a specific theory

## Appendix J

### Mid-Term and Final Exam for the Case Study Method Class

Media Ethics

March 8, 2010

Mid-term test

NAME:

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*There are 101 points possible on this test. Your grade will be based on the points scale outlined in the course syllabus. Please answer the questions on additional sheets of paper. Make sure your name is on any such additions. Staple the test and the addition sheet together.*

1. You edit a newspaper in a small city. A prominent evangelical minister is leading the regional opposition to any expansion of gay rights. Your reporter tells you he has received a tip that the minister is, in fact, gay and that he regularly attends a sexual addictions 12-step program (similar to Alcoholics Anonymous) sponsored by a different church. The reporter wants to attend the next 12-step meeting and pose as a troubled sex addict to identify the minister and then out him in a news story. Identify (a) the central ethical issue in the case and identify (b) the values in conflict. (5 points each, 10 points total)
2. You are the advertising director of a radio station. A religious group, the White Christian Brotherhood, asks to purchase advertisements on your station. It articulates the group's belief the Holocaust never occurred and was, rather, a "Zionist fabrication." To support the assertion, the ad cites several "academic" sources who were known for their Holocaust-denial arguments. The ad calls for "white patriots" to join the group in picketing a Jewish synagogue's memorial service for Holocaust victims and to distribute White Christian Brotherhood literature. The central issue is whether you will accept the group's advertisement. Analyze the issue from a deontic perspective and come to a decision. (10 points)
3. You are the leader of an ad agency's creative team. The client, an airline, wants to position the company as youthful, vigorous, and sexy. Your team comes up with a storyboard showing attractive female flight attendants in tight and revealing uniforms providing service to male travelers, depicted as successful businessmen. At the end of each spot, a super-model-type flight attendant looks directly into the camera and huskily breathes the airline's new slogan: "Fly Me." The ethical issue is whether the

value of a successful ad campaign outweighs the harm of the gender stereotypes portrayed in the advertisement. Analyze the issue from a teleological viewpoint and come to a decision. (10 points)

4. You are a newspaper editor. An anti-abortion group is staging a series of protests against the clinic of a local physician who performs abortions. It is a major story in the community. A member of your staff, the art and design editor, tells you he will be joining an anti-abortion march later in the week. As an active member of his congregation and as a lay officer in his church, the design editor says he is "called" to march, that voicing his anti-abortion views is more important to him than journalistic neutrality. The design editor isn't precisely asking for permission, but he does want to know if there will be any repercussions if he chooses to march. Analyze the issue from a Golden Mean perspective and come to a decision. (10 points)
5. You are the public relations representative for a water district. The client proposes creating a news Web site to promote the district's positive work. The site will be called Central Basin News and the site will be registered through a third-party so that nothing on the site will indicate ownership by the water district or the public relations firm. The site will appear as an independent entity containing a mix of news aggregation and extended features on issues related to the water district. The features will be written by the PR firm's employees under pseudonyms. Identify the ethical issue and analyze it under one of the three ethical theories (deontological, teleological or golden mean – your choice) and come to a decision. (10 points)
6. Define the following moral theories that can be applied to contemporary ethical problems (5 points each):
  - a. Deontological theory
  - b. Teleological theory
  - c. Theory of the golden mean
7. As we analyze ethical dilemmas, we talk about values in conflict. Define values and what do we mean by values in conflict? (10 points)
8. What are the elements in an ethics case study? Organize the steps in order (10 points)
9. We have discussed the codes of ethics. Name the organization governing your specialty, providing full name (not just initials), and tell all the major values of your code of ethics. (10 points)

10. Louis Day suggests there are three moral values might help journalists sort through privacy issues. Name them. (2 points each)

**Scenario 1**

You're the college newspaper advertising manager. A buyer wants to place this ad.



What do you do?

**Scenario 2**

You're a TV reporter at a murder scene, interviewing witnesses. A child, approximately 4 or 5 years old, comes up to your crew. To the cameras, the boy says, "I'm not scared of no thing." You ask, "When you get older are you going to stay away from all these guns?" The boy answers, "No, I'm going to have me a gun!"

What do you do?

**Scenario 3**

Your 60-year-old editorial page editor dies of a heart attack at the home of a known call girl. The editor is married with grown children. On multiple occasions in the past, he has editorialized against prostitution. You're the reporter assigned the story about his death. The editor's wife hands you keys and asks you to drive her husband's car away from where it's currently parked in front of the prostitute's house.

What do you do?

**Scenario 4**



You're a college newspaper editor. Your edition can contain drive this editorial cartoon. What do you do?

**Scenario 5**

You're handling publicity for a parade in North Idaho. The organizer proposes that Pro Golfer Bubba Watson be brought in to lead the parade in his car, the General Lee from *The Dukes of Hazzard* TV show. The General Lee features a prominent image of the Confederate Flag on its roof. Some critics say this could be interpreted as showing support for hate groups in the area.

What do you do?

**NAME:**

---

**VANDAL ID** \_\_\_\_\_

*There are 110 points possible on this test. If you need more room for any answer, write on the back of the test pages.*

**1. Scenario One (10 points):**

- a. Action:
- b. Values in conflict, theory and reasoning:

**2. Scenario 2 (10 points):**

- a. Action:
- b. Values in conflict, theory and reasoning:

**3. Scenario 3 (10 points):**

- a. Action:
- b. Values in conflict, theory and reasoning:

**4. Scenario 4 (10 points)**

- a. Action:
- b. Values in conflict, theory and reasoning:







## Appendix K

### Samples of Case Study Class Student Papers with Grades and Comments

10  
9.7

See  
last  
page  
Tide  
or  
Dell  
JAMM 341  
Media Ethics, Sec.1  
04-26-12  
Clemson

#### Case Study #5-Advertising: Schick Quattro TrimStyle for Women

For this assignment, I took on the role of the ad acceptance manager for KLEW, the news station in Lewiston, ID.

In 2009, an advertisement was created by the Schick company for their new product the Schick Quattro TrimStyle for Women. This product was meant for women so they could not only shave their legs, but also their bikini line. The issue that came about sprouted from the content of the commercial. The commercial depicted different women walking by bushes and them transforming into different shapes. These shapes included a triangle, an oval, and a "landing strip". The 30-second commercial implied that the women featured in the commercial had used the product to "trim" or "shape" their bikini area. This commercial was meant to be light hearted and funny, but many people took offense to it.

For this case, I took two different values into account:

1. Allowing anyone to advertise promotes fairness
2. Will my company have a monetary loss if I don't let the advertisement be viewed by the public?

The central issue to be resolved for this case is: as the ad acceptance manager, should I put this commercial on the air, or should I cut it.

While looking at this case with a deontological view from the ad acceptance manager's view, I have to base my decision purely on the facts that I have. I am not allowed to think about the possible consequences of my actions. These potential consequences could include: the

feelings of the public and the reputation of my TV station. Based on the facts, I know that the advertisement is in fact offensive. I know that if I were to let the advertisement be on air, that I would possibly receive complaints due to the nature of the advertisement. I also know that the company is paying for the advertisement, but my news station has denied advertisements/money before, if the advertisement has been considered not appropriate for my audience. Since I am viewing this case from a deontological view, I would not put the advertisement on air. I think that if I'm offended by the advertisement, and I know it would offend others, I definitely wouldn't let it be aired.

*Some of these are  
outreach  
the money  
& Corp. lists  
to better serve  
to telegraph  
offer.*

*Is there a  
rule to be  
formed?*

*(-2)*

While looking at this case with a teleological view from the ad acceptance manager's view, it is very important to look at not only the facts of the case, but also the potential outcomes. I want to make my decision based upon what will please the most people, and cause the least harm. In this case, if I allow the advertisement to be aired, it is almost guaranteed that people will be offended by it, and would complain to my television station. If this happened, I could possibly lose credibility, and possibly viewership depending on how offended some people were. The positives of airing the advertisement would definitely be the monetary gain. The company is willing to pay for the advertisement to be run for five consecutive days during the evening news, which is a high traffic time. If I didn't run the advertisement, there would be almost no harm done to my customers because nobody would be offended. Some people could possibly be angry with me for not airing it because it could be seen as a form of censorship. Lastly, I would not have the monetary gain from the advertisement. Something to consider is that I can always fill those open spots with other advertisements, which would make up for the loss of the Schick commercials. When viewing this case from a <sup>teleological</sup> deontological view, I would not put the advertisement on air because I really see no need for it. Not putting the advertisement on air is

*Good look  
as  
commercial  
value.*

the best thing to do because the least amount of people would be harmed. *Good!*

While looking at this case with a Golden Mean view from the ad acceptance manager's view, I would need to look at both values and make a decision that pleases both sides. This means trying to be fair, while also not having a monetary loss. I could do this by asking the Schick company if they would be willing to change the time of the advertisement. If we put the advertisement on later at night, when it is mostly adults viewing the television shows, it would offend less people. I think that people would still be offended, but it wouldn't be as extreme. If we did this, I would still be fair by allowing them to advertise, and I would still gain the money from the advertisements. Overall, I feel like the best thing to do would be to just not run the advertisement so nobody would be offended, but if I needed to fulfill both values, I would definitely see if I could change the times of the ad. *Just!* *Excellent!*

After running this case through all three theories, I definitely feel like I would make my decision based upon a teleological view. I really feel that it is important to consider my potential viewers when looking at this case. Many families watch the evening news together, and it could possibly be detrimental to children who saw this advertisement. Sure, it is very clever, but it is definitely not for everyone. For example, my mother saw this advertisement and was appalled by it. She felt that it was disgusting and that the "shape" of a woman's private areas is extremely intimate. I definitely agree with her and feel that they could have advertised this product in a different way.

One major thing to take into consideration is that this advertisement is going to a very select group of people in a very small town, which tends to be very conservative. If this were presented to a larger television company, it would be a different story. With a larger audience I'm sure you would still get complaints, but if you had people decide to not do business with

your company anymore, it would make a very small impact compared to the smaller business.

Another thing I took into consideration was the fact that if viewers found out that the advertisement was not aired, it may be seen as a form of censorship. Personally, I don't think that it is censorship because there is other ways that this advertisement could be viewed. I viewed this advertisement both on television and on the Internet.

No matter what theory I used, I would not let the advertisement to run, especially since it is being run in such a small area.

Good teleological + Golden Mean  
reasoning. The ~~se~~ factors were considered carefully  
& weighed appropriately. The Realistic argument  
would benefit by constructing a rule to guide you  
into the future, but it was OK, Semely. Good work

Tom Grant  
Case Study #5

10  
-1.8  
9.1

Jet -0  
Q -2  
vid -0  
Deen -2  
Tele -2  
GT -2  
Ree -0  
Rm -0  
-8

KLEW TV in Lewiston, Idaho is a small- market, local station. Lewiston compared to a lot of other communities would be considered a small town where a lot of elderly people reside. As the ad acceptance manager for KLEW, the job requires you to make a lot of tough decisions including deciding what ads to run and is appropriate for the local viewers.

An ad for a new feminine hygiene product, a ladies' shaver, made by Shick Qauto was brought to KLEW and asked for their ad to be run during the local evening news for five consecutive days. The ad is highly controversial, with images on screen depicting different plants and shrubs, changing their shape to more of a triangle shape. Obviously the ad is referring to the plants as being a woman's pubic region.

The ethical question is whether or not the ad manager should run a controversial commercial on a local, small-market news station.

In this case study there are a lot of conflicting values. The advertisers are willing to pay quite a bit of money for the ad to be run, but KLEW is willing to turn down any commercial regardless of the money if they find it inappropriate to be run. Which asks the question if money outweighs the ad manager's morals. The ad is also asking to be run in a small town where many elderly people live, and may be seen as highly offensive. Although the ad may seem offensive to some people, times are changing and media in general has become more sexual in the last couple of years and more people are becoming comfortable with it. Which may be the reason the commercial is run all over

This question is too vague. You have all the info here to frame it better -2

Grant

the country. Another factor that comes in to play in making this decision is the length of time the advertisement is used. The company is only asking for it to be played for five consecutive days. For some people who watch the evening news every night, they probably would take notice to the commercial sexual innuendos. At the same time it would only be played for a short amount of time. You would have to decide if the commercial would cause a substantial amount of harm and damage to the news station's credibility in that short amount of time. Another factor that would come in to play is if the ad goes against the ad acceptance manager's morals.

*Value.*

If I was the ad acceptance manager and I was to look at this dilemma from a deontological perspective, which is a duty-based theory, the decision would be simple. The job requires you to manage and control ads and most importantly make money for the station. If morals weren't a factor which include causing harm to the viewers and damaging the station's credibility running the ad would not be a problem at all.

*So no ethical value at play here? (-2)*

From a teleological perspective the decision to run it would be a little more difficult. This perspective requires you to make a decision that has the best possible outcome. You do this by weighing out the positives and the negatives by running the ad. By running the ad, 1. Many people in the community who watch the evening news every night might find the commercial to be highly offensive, and could possibly stop viewing the station, which in turn loses money for KLEW. 2. The advertisers are willing to pay a substantial amount of money for a commercial to be run for only a short period of time, although it is said to be controversial by some, know one really knows if the local viewers would actually find it offensive. This would also generate more money for the station.

*What's your decision? (-2)*

The Golden Mean theory asks you to weigh out your morals. In this situation, the company who created the ad obviously have low morals themselves and decided that creating a highly offensive commercial to generate money was more important than offending viewers. As the ad manager some morals that would come in to be play are: causing harm to viewers, credibility, and loyalty to long time viewers. An ad manager has obviously viewed many commercials, and has probably turned down several in which he thought was offensive himself and or to the stations viewers. If the ad manager found this commercial to be offensive to himself then he probably wouldn't run the ad, regardless of the money lost, or how long the commercial is played.

*1.5 for  
2 Compromis  
Solution?  
-2*

If I were the ad manager I would look at this situation from a Golden Mean theory. To me holding a high standard of class at a new station would be very important not only to the news station but the viewers and myself as well. At the same time, I don't find this ad to be highly controversial. The ad does make an obvious sexual reference, but in media today sexual references are becoming more acceptable in today's society. The ad is only being run for a short period of time and would be generating a lot of money. I personally don't think KLEW would lose a substantial amount of viewers; therefore I would run the advertisement.

*You did a good job of setting up the case  
and discussing value or conflict. However, your decision  
judgment was abbreviated; your teleological decision was unclear  
and your Golden Mean decision failed to consider any possible  
compromis. For instance, did you run the ad at another time,  
perhaps in late evening television - or during women-focused  
programming?*

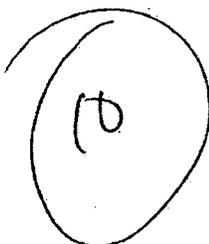


JAMM 341

27 April 2012

Case Study #5

**Situation**



Sit ->  
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President George Bush made the decision to deploy U.S. forces into Somalia to offer humanitarian relief to people of their country. The goal of the mission was to restore Somalia's government and to assist the United Nations on the resolutions of ending violence, genocide, and famine in the small African country. On Dec. 2, 1992, U.S. forces landed in Somalia to begin operations. The war and aid was continued through Clinton's presidency, but came to an abrupt end in 1993.

On Oct. 3, 1993, Canadian photographer Paul Watson captured the image of a dead American soldier being dragged down the streets of Mogadishu. Images of the naked soldier were graphic and disturbing visuals of a man being dragged by ropes through cheering mobs. The dead soldier was later identified as U.S. Staff Sgt. William David Cleveland. The release of the images caused President Clinton to leave the mission of capturing the warlord Mohammed Aideed, the same mission that unfortunately cost Cleveland his life. By March 31, 1994, all troops had been pulled out of Somalia.

The ethical question that arises regarding the photographs is whether as an editor one should publish the photographs. When considering this ethical dilemma one is confronted with many values in conflict. The values of respect to the individual's dignity and respect towards the public and family are in conflict, as is the value of responsibility because of the role the editor has in the newsroom along with the responsibility an editor has towards the public. The value of



fairness is contradicting between being fair to both the public and the family of the victim as well as the readers of the paper. All conflicting values make this ethical dilemma a complicated concern. *Joseph*

### Analysis

Using the deontological theory one can create several different types of principles. A general principle could be that no graphic images should ever be published in any type of media. While avoiding all graphic images would be a rule that would avoid many conflicts, one would never be able to justify this principle with every image brought into the newsroom. The term "graphic" is hard to define and it would be near impossible to label images either graphic or non-graphic. While some images are obviously too explicit to print, others may be considered graphic but are still necessary to publish. Another principle could be that a paper should never publish a picture that could cause harm. This rule may appear to be concrete, but one cannot determine what images will offend particular audiences. Perhaps the rule could be made more specific and be directed to special interest groups. However, if one decided to not publish anything that would cause harm to a particular group nothing would ever be able to be printed. Another rule that could be established is that no image containing nudity or victims of crime should ever be published. This rule I feel is very appropriate, images of both violent crime acts and nudity, are very offensive and harmful to readers. While none of the rules are precise enough to be applied to all scenarios, I would choose to not publish the photos, because they fall under the principles that do not allow nudity and violent crimes or photographs that could potentially cause harm to many people. *Joseph*

Using the teleology theory to examine the ethical dilemma, one is confronted with many positive and negative outcomes that could arise by publishing the photos. As an editor, publishing the photos would mean revealing a newsworthy story to the public. The images are detrimental in the explaining of what is occurring in Somalia and show visual representation of a darker side of war. These dark, gory images are not typically what the public is exposed to and could result in a great change in perspective. The images would not only inform readers of the harsh realities of war, but also help them understand the severity of war, and the issues still going on in Somalia. While reporting the images would fulfill the journalistic expectations of transparency and reporting the truth, it could also create many negative outcomes.

Publishing the photos would risk putting many people at harm. If published, the photographs could potentially cause harm to the American public, fellow troops, and most importantly, the family of the soldier. The images are graphic and disturbing and are ones that should not be seen by children or other fragile individuals. The images would be disrespectful to the family and create more sorrow to their already painful loss. The photographs could also cause harm to the war efforts U.S. troops are making in Somalia, or cause more outbreaks of violence by the citizens of Somalia. While war efforts could be changed in a negative way, the photographs could also cause positive change in relation to the war.

Considering both the positive and negatives of publishing the photos, as the editor of the paper, and using the teleology theory I would choose to not to run the images. The value of harm outweighs all other benefits the photographs would produce. While informing the public is important, I feel one can do so without printing the photos.

Using the Golden Mean theory, and following the virtue of fairness, one would be the fairest editor if they chose to report the story to the public, while also respecting the family's

*good analysis*

feelings. While reporting the story is necessary, publishing the photographs would not be fair to the family of the soldier. Respecting the feelings of the family and not publishing the images would also meet the virtue of respect. One could attain this balance by publishing the information of the story, but not including the images. To fulfill the value of compassion one must consider all parties involved. To show compassion to the soldier would mean acknowledging his dignity as a deceased human being and as a deceased soldier. To show compassion to those who also may be affected by the images would mean to consider how the gruesome photos may affect them and be sympathetic of their feelings. One would be the most compassionate if they respected the values and considered the harm the photos would cause the family. To fulfill the value of honesty would mean to report the images and be upfront with activities happening in the war. To be transparent and honest with the readers would mean one could not withhold the photographs from the paper. Overall, to be the most virtuous person would mean reporting the story, but not publishing the pictures with it. By doing this, you are being both fair and respectful to all conflicting parties.

*David Miller*

External factors may include the expectations and standards the paper has in place regarding photos of death, nudity, and violence. Other external factors could be the demographic of the newspaper one is working for.

#### **Definition**

While a picture is a better visual and a more descriptive way to explain or show a story, it may not always be the best. In this particular case as the editor of the paper, I have concluded that I would not publish the photographs. Using the teleology theory I decided that causing harm to so many people outweighs the value of newsworthiness of the images. I believe one would still be able to inform the public of the story using only writing and could leave the images out.

Publishing the photos would mean contradicting my values of respect, fairness, and compassion. The photos would likely cause permanent trauma to the family of the victim, which would not only be disrespectful but would also not follow my virtue of being compassionate towards others. Analyzing through the Golden Mean theory heavily influenced my final decision. Choosing to print the photos would mean going against a few of my most highly held values. While being honest and transparent are important to me, the values of compassion and respect weigh much heavier. While informing the public is important to any editor, the good that would be made from publishing the photos is hard to predict or determine, and the harm that would be caused is obvious by seeing just one of the three images.

*Excellent analysis!  
Strong reasoning, clear and  
complete thinking. I really  
liked this essay. Thanks  
for letting me read it.*

[Redacted]

Media Ethics

Tom Grant

April 27, 2012

18  
-2  
9.8

Set -1  
Set -1

**Case Study #5: Offensive Advertising**

In 2009, Schick Quattro ran an ad for their TrimStyle razor for women. The commercial was highly controversial with many people because of its inappropriate content. In the advertisement, women walk by bushes that then go from wild and unkempt to neatly trimmed bushes. As different women walked by the bushes, each bush would transform into a different shape, similar to that which the woman's pubic hair might be shaved.

As the ad acceptance manager for KLEW in Lewiston, a small market station, I have to understand this commercial could offend a lot of people. It is my job to review controversial advertisements before our station airs them. Schick, working through a broker, has offered to pay good money for this commercial to be played during the local evening news for five consecutive days. The station, however, has standards and would turn down the advertising opportunity if I decide the commercial is not appropriate for my market. Therein lies the central ethical question, "Do I as the ad acceptance manager run this potentially offensive commercial?"

Q

This question brings numerous values into conflict. The most obvious argument against running the advertisement is to protect the public from offensive material. Running an offensive commercial could harm people, and cause the station to lose credibility with a portion of its viewers. On the side of running the advertisement is obviously the value of money. The value of advertising freedom also calls for me to allow this commercial to run on my station as the company wishes. When looking at it from the libertarian standpoint, the commercials

Johnson

[REDACTED]

effectiveness will determine for the company if it was too offensive for the market. With all these values in conflict, the ad acceptance manager must weigh all the connected values and make a judgment on whether or not the advertisement will run on this local station.

In the Deontological Theory of ethics, people are called on to make decisions based on the values alone, regardless of the outcome. Each decision should also be boiled down to a concrete, universal rule. I believe wholeheartedly in the value of advertising business autonomy; however, KLEW has a social responsibility to protect its viewers from harm. The advertisers, or in this case their broker, has a duty to get this commercial air time during peak viewing hours. As the ad acceptance director, however, it is my job to concern myself with my social responsibility to the public rather than the relative freedom of advertisers. I believe, therefore, that this commercial should not be run during the evening news, because people have an expectation of appropriate content during times when the entire family is often around the television. The deontological rule I would use is <sup>primetime</sup> offensive commercials should not be allowed to run during daytime or primetime hours on network television. *John*

The Teleological Theory of ethics, or Utilitarianism, is the counterpart to Deontic thinking. This view calls for people to make decisions based off of the likely outcomes of actions without regard to their associated values. The money made from this commercial would be a significant boon to the station. The question is whether or not that economic value outweighs the long-term costs of running offensive material. Consistently running such commercials could break the trust of our viewers, the most important aspect of any business. Beyond the economic harm, we must also look at the harm caused to viewers by the commercial itself. Such offensive material running while children are awake could create uncomfortable situations for parents who have to explain things to children before they are ready to understand

them. When balancing all of these outcomes, it becomes obvious that the risks to credibility as well as the potential harm to viewers outweigh the short-term benefits that come from running this advertisement while children are watching television. I would, therefore, not allow this commercial to run during the evening news as the advertisers requested. *good*

The Virtue Theory of ethics, or the Golden Mean, is the idea that all values should be kept in balance whenever possible, and that practitioners should do whatever is necessary to maintain their character. This theory also looks to find middle ground to can allow for the complexities of competing values. Under this value, the ad acceptance manager would have to balance the rights of advertisers to run their (FCC compliant) commercials when and how they wish with the social responsibility of KLEW to protect its viewers from the harm of offensive content. The best way to keep these values balanced and find a middle ground is to not allow the commercial run during the evening news. The station, however, should run the advertisement during the nightly news when most young children and others who would be offended by the commercials are not watching television. This allows the advertiser to get their information out to consumers while maintaining the social integrity of the station. It would also allow the station to receive at least a portion of the money it would have received from Schick. *good*

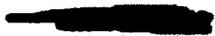
*Do you mean the 11 o'clock news?*

Of the three theories, the Golden Mean Theory seems to give the most reasonable answer to the question: Advertisers and ad acceptance managers will consistently be at odds over certain commercials. Ad acceptance managers have a social responsibility to protect their consumers from offensive material, but if they go too far, the company will lose a lot of advertising money in the hopes that no one will ever be offended by any of their commercials.

This Golden Mean answer allows for potentially offensive commercials to run at a time where they will still have a significant impact on the target demographic, without the negative

side-effects towards groups that were not the target demographic to start with. Essentially, this is the best of both worlds: the advertiser still runs an effective campaign and KLEW maintains its high standards of social responsibility to its viewers. This is honestly the way most stations already work, and those that do not are often not as economically viable.

Good thinking, the  
essay has well reasoned  
and complete.



March 26, 2012  
Ethics Version 3.0

10  
1.1  
1.2  
9.7

Det - 0  
Q - 0  
Val - 0  
Dear - 0  
Tele - 0  
GM - 0  
Dec - 0  
Recs - 0

Often times in life people are faced with tough decisions. To come to a decision that is deemed ethical, one may want to turn to a formula in which they can run an issue through to determine whether or not a choice is indeed ethical. The objective of this paper is to examine one particular case study involving the life of a man. The decision will not be made lightly nor will it be made off the cuff. Instead it will go through a method designed to weigh out ethical decisions. The first way the paper will do so is by using the SAD method. Next it will apply three very different ethical theories to the scenario, and finally it will reach an arguable and defensible decision.

The situation definition is designed to identify the ethical issue and to list or examine those facts, principles, and values that will be important to the decision making process (Day 64). The situation includes a man by the name of Washington Brown, an inmate who has been on death row for the last 12 years for a crime he claims he did not commit. A local reporter, Karl Greenberg, tends to believe him. Greenberg was not satisfied with the complete investigation.

At the time, the state the murder of the college freshman girl took place in did not require a DNA conformation in order to submit someone to the death penalty. Consequently, the investigation concluded that Brown was guilty and was sentenced to death. Just three weeks before the execution date, Greenberg went to his superior and asked the news station to fund a DNA report to prove with certainty whether or not Brown was indeed guilty.

Phonetic?  
Value?

Now that the facts have been stated, this paper will now analyze the situation by looking through the lens of three different ethical theories. First up will be the deontological scope, then the teleological view and finally will be the golden mean. The ethical issue at hand is whether or not that paper can pay to help defend a convicted criminal and still remain neutral and objective. In other words, if the paper decides to go forth with this idea and pay for DNA results, they would be acting as if they were defense lawyers as opposed to an objective news source. Q

Looking at this issue deontologically, there first needs to be some sort of rule that would be applicable to all people at all times and still be considered morally sound. In order to come up with a concrete and appropriate rule the rule needs to be broad enough to be universal, but not so broad it doesn't say much. For this particular case a good rule might be something like the following: as a journalist/reporter/news source the only time you should be involved with a criminal case that could sway a decision is if by doing so, it may prevent ill-deserved and life-threatening damage to another person *and* there is no other alternative for the same results.

In this particular case because a human life is in jeopardy, the actions to pay for the DNA results would be deemed ethically reasonable assuming that there is simply *no other way* for the outcome to come about. Therefore, the paper may pay for the results and remain ethically sound. Additionally, this does obligate the paper and other news sources to act in the same manner under the same circumstances. True, But  
your limited then  
to common.

Viewing this issue teleologically, the issues must be weighed out in order to reach an ethically rational decision. The outcome that is deemed ethical will be the conclusion that provides the most amount of good to the most amount of people. The things to

weigh in this case are simple: one man's life and potentially others in jeopardy versus remaining objective and neutral as a news source.

Although acting as a news source does require a certain level of neutrality, when pitted against a potential wrongful execution, it doesn't pack much clout. Under these circumstances the paper needs to abandon their fears of not acting objectively and attempt to present factual evidence that could likely save an innocent man's life.

The final view this paper will run the issue through is that of the golden mean. Within the constructs of this theory, the results reached are to be the most virtuous decision possible. The two competing virtues within this situation are that of integrity to the paper and their readers and benevolence, compassion, courage and selflessness. In order to find the most virtuous decision, the paper would need to examine the situation and see which decision is indeed the most virtuous.

Given the circumstances, the virtues of benevolence, compassion, courage and selflessness are more important than the integrity to the paper. When two sets of important virtues compete only one may take precedence. In this case, the paper ought to pay for the DNA results and worry about their reputation later.

Now that this paper has examined the situation and applied three very different ethical theories to the situation, it is decision time. On one hand the paper is morally obligated to remain neutral and seek the truth and report it. On the other hand, a man's life hangs in the balance.

In this case study, Washington Brown, a man with violent crimes found no where in his history has three weeks to live. He claims innocence. The investigation while concluded may not be complete. The state Brown was convicted in requires no DNA

*Is there a middle ground anywhere?*

proof for execution. Instead they are going off of a rough sketch and some finger prints on a tire iron Brown himself admits he touched. Brown, a man with an IQ of 82, is on death row for a murder by strangulation when the only link to the victim were his finger prints on a tire iron that had nothing to do with the murder at all. Beyond the obvious leaks in the evidence, the news organization has to put their selfishness to the side and attempt to save this man.

While the paper may not be able to give Brown the 12 years of his life the state has already taken from him, they have the opportunity to give him the chance to live the rest of his life a free man. And if the opportunity to save a person's life as a news organization isn't enough, the moral obligation as a human being to show enough compassion to get off the side lines and save an innocent should be.

The idea alone of letting another person perish because of selfishness and fear of your own reputation is not only sickening, it's immoral.

You came to the same conclusion with all three theories! Good! My only quibble is that you didn't clearly state the values in conflicts, though they are here. I just had to go back under deontic thoughts. How can your ~~Golden Rule~~ Golden Rule analysis, I thought you might ~~have~~ have considered a middle ground. Maybe the paper would pay for this DNA and establish a fund to ~~fund~~ pay for other tests. The only purpose of the fund would be to find the truth, if such truth could be found in DNA, maybe even some other agency should lead on that front.

  
 Tom Grant  
 Jamm 341  
 Feb. 28, 2012  
 Case study 2

Spokane Mayor Jim West

Following the publication of a story regarding the sexual misconduct of a Spokane County Sherriff Department employee David Haun, many reports filed into *The Spokesman-Review* referencing similar activities by Spokane Mayor Jim West.

These reports may give *The Spokesman-Review* probable cause to investigate West's involvement in an online homosexual chat room. By understanding and analyzing the issues involved in the story, I, as the editor of *The Spokesman-Review*, am going to make a decision on whether the use of deception will be justified in pursuing the validity of claims against West.

The situation that has been placed in front of *The Spokesman-Review* is that the Mayor of Spokane, Jim West, has been reported to be involved with a homosexual chat room known as Gay.com. Following reports of prior sexual misconduct by West, there is a concern that West could be using this website to engage underage boys into sexual encounters.

West has previously been alleged to be affiliated with sexual misconduct in local Boy Scout troops with Sherriff Department employee David Haun. Further, *The Spokesman-Review* has received an anonymous source describing a date with West which culminated in a sexual encounter.

In order to understand any bias on the part of the editor, the background of the issue and previous coverage by *The Spokesman-Review* must be acknowledged.

Recently *The Spokesman-Review* has previously been investigating the actions of the Catholic Church concerning the placement of known pedophiles inside the Church being placed

in Spokane to continue their service to the Church. Further *The Spokesman-Review* has investigated how this pedophilia has spread into the local Boy Scout troops. Given West's alleged involvement in these prior instances, the reports of continued sexual misconduct by West through the internet raise many issues with the use of deceit to determine West's goals in his involvement with Gay.com.

One of the first and most important steps in determining further investigative action into West's actions on Gay.com is being able to validate the accuracy of the allegations against him. Given that the source reporting a sexual encounter with West has chosen to remain anonymous in order to protect <sup>his</sup> ~~their~~ own privacy, there is a need to prove that West is actually engaging in homosexual activities with young men and whether there are any illegal-actions taking place.

After determining that West is in fact present on the website, reviewing the history of West's alleged involvement in pedophilia, as well as apparent actions involved in sexual activities with other men, and obvious political hypocrisy can all be taken into account when the decision is made to use deceptive means to discover any wrong doings by West.

Taking into account the apparent abuse of political power being reported by anonymous sources in actions of West offering internships to those affiliated with his sexual encounters, as well as the obvious political hypocrisy of West being a politically conservative, yet homosexual man, a case can be made to justify the creation of an ethical rule that would constitute the use of certain deceptive actions to determine the truth, if there could be a present danger to the community without.

Understanding that there are values associated with West's right to privacy concerning his personal life, as well as his sexual orientation, there are values that need to be weighed in order to understand how actions by *The Spokesman-Review* could be harmful to those involved.

First of all is the harm that will be done to West and his family, as well as his career. Due to the fact that West is a conservative minded politician, exposing him as a homosexual will certainly have a negative effect on his further political goals. Also exposing his sexual orientation will certainly have an effect on his private relationships with family and friends if they are currently unaware of his sexual preferences.

Weighed against these negative effects to West, are the potential negative impacts to the community. Not reporting on the presence of a politician in the community using his power to seduce underage boys would be a serious case of journalistic negligence. The community has a right to know of any danger that could be present, as well as the actions of political leaders in the area. Because West has the ability to influence public opinion and law, any misrepresentation or illegal actions must be reported on in the interest of public knowledge.

When looking at the issue from a stance of character responsibility vs. public duty, *The Spokesman-Review* must understand that the rights of one are rarely more important than the safety of the whole. While *The Spokesman-Review* has an obligation to its character credibility to insure its message is trusted by its audience by not causing harm to any one person's privacy, they have an overwhelming duty to the public to provide information as to the danger West could provide to the community.

Overall, West's previous allegations of pedophilia, as well as his influence in the community, will justify the use of deceptive means to discover any potential danger to the community. Although West will undoubtedly suffer due to the publication of his actions on the website Gay.com, his personal happiness and success are less important than the need for the community to know of a potential safety risk. Also any illegal actions thought to be taking place

by a public representative must be addressed and reported on for the fulfillment of *The Spokesman-Review's* duty to the public.

Feb. 11, 2012

Media Ethics

Case Study No. 1

### Situation Definition

On January 26, 2012, *The New York Times* printed a story contradicting Yale Quarterback Patrick Witt's claim that he had withdrawn his application for the Rhodes Scholarship in order to play in the Yale-Harvard football game. November 13, 2011, Witt announced that he would be playing in the game rather than interview for the scholarship. The *Times* reported that the Rhodes Trustees had suspended Witt's application, prior to his announcement to play in the game, due to an accusation of sexual assault against Witt. The accusation was handled internally at Yale through an informal process, and was not a public matter. No finding of guilt or innocence was determined in the process. All of the information printed was through "anonymous sources." *The Yale Daily News* is rumored to have had all the same information as the *Times* and chose not to run the story. The university will not confirm or deny the accusation against Witt or if an informal meeting took place.

The moral agents of the case are the editors of *The New York Times* and the editors of *The Yale Daily News* because they are the people responsible for the story. For this case study, the editors of *The Yale Daily News* will be the focus. The paper was posed with several conflicting ethical values. In the Code of Ethics, the journalist has a duty to "seek the truth and report it." On the other hand, the journalist also has another responsibility to minimize harm and damage. These values are obviously in conflict because, in some instances, the truth can cause more damage. Another issue that needs to be considered is the use of anonymous sources. Typically;

this practice is not used very often because it decreases credibility of the story and allows readers to question the information presented. Lastly, the "need to know" of the public lies as a reinforcement to the conflicts presented, but is still a separate entity. The "newsworthiness" of the story could be the deciding factor in the decision to print the story or not.

*The Yale Daily News* chose not to print a story on the information it had on the situation with Patrick Witt. It appears the editors felt the story did not meet the standard to print anonymous sources and cause harm to many parties involved. The harm may have played the deciding factor for the paper, considering that it is a school run newspaper and the article shines a very negative light on the school. The most important ethical question in this case is: is it ethical to print a story that causes harm and does not contain concrete facts or verifiable sources?

#### Analysis

Although the reporter writing the story could be responsible for the anonymous sources, the editor has the responsibility to address whether running a story with anonymous sources is the ethical thing to do. Typically, reporters list sources to hold people accountable for their words and actions. Without sources, the information presented is without substance, just like gossip or rumors. This is a questionable way to present a story. If nobody wants to put their name with the words in the story, how can the reader be sure they are true? A story based on rumor instead of hard fact is subject to much debate, and, ultimately, left up to the reader to interpret what is true. Also, the newspaper can lose credibility because many people do not trust anonymous sources as much as verifiable sources.

Sexual Assault is a sensitive subject, yet, in nearly all circumstances, the identities of the accuser and the accused are always made public. There is no privacy involved in these cases. But, the only reasons this particular case was published in *The New York Times* was because of

the prominence of the figure involved in the case and to expose his original claim. Had the complaint been filed with the police, the case would have become more accessible to the public. That statement seems obvious, but, because of the informal, secretive process Yale used in the situation, directly affects the "need to know" of the public. We can only hope the complaint was taken very seriously, and examined from an unbiased perspective, showing no favoritism toward Witt. For the purpose of this exercise, it will be assumed Yale looked into the severity of the incident and determined there was no actual harm, or urged the accuser to go to the police if they believed something did happen. It is possible that is what the meeting *the Times* referred to was about, but who thought of that? The point of the informal process Yale used was, most likely, to keep the situation confidential.

Because the reader does not know what the meeting between Witt, Yale, and the accuser was about, another issue is harm. Any time the author leaves open statements and uses anonymous sources, it causes the reader to speculate at what really happened. This is harmful because most readers will anticipate the worst, and then it brings the accuser, the university, or Witt to explain what happened. The accusations presented in the story obviously harm Witt as a person. The issue as the editor is whether that causes too much harm without a cause. If the cause is to destroy Witt's reputation, that is obviously unethical. Even if it is the truth, the harmful nature of the story could be too much that the editor would be discouraged to print it.

An external factor that influences the case, again, is the use of anonymous sources. This practice has a negative connotation with it, and many would say it is a no-no in journalism. It could sink a story by using them. In this case, it may be to protect school officials who would be in danger of losing their job if their name was attached to the story.

There are several main parties that are involved in this case. Starting with Witt, he is the main reason this case is even being talked about, and he is the main person involved. His prominence as a quarterback and as a student at Yale causes the case to receive national attention. He will be most affected by this story because it directly affects his reputation. Also, Witt's friends and family will be affected by this negative press. The editor can't be sure whether Witt has discussed this accusation with his friends or family. Regardless of whether the story is true or not, Witt has many people to answer to and make the situation right. Whoever released this story to the press knows who the accuser is, and it is only a matter of time before her identity is exposed. She is now a target of the media, and others who may blame her for ruining the star-quarterback's reputation. Now, she will be the subject of a lot of negative attention. Her family and friends are affected because they are associated with her. The family may not have known their daughter, sister, cousin, etc. had been a victim of a sexual assault, and that also causes problems. Yale is affected, and a negative light is shined on one of their top student athletes. In turn, the whole student body and football team are now involved, and their reputation could be damaged.

Let's look at this case through three moral theories: deontology, teleology, and the Golden Mean. In deontology, an ethical rule must be applied to the case that can be applied in any situation (The ethical-line-in-the-sand must be drawn). One rule that could be used in this case is "Never use an anonymous source." The editor of *The Yale Daily News* may believe in this as an ethical principle. If the story is so controversial that a person needs to keep their identity confidential, the story might not stand on its own. This theory is simply about the rule and whether it is ethical to break that rule. The use of anonymous sources was an issue in this case, and to run the story in the school newspaper would cause the editor to break this rule.

From a teleological perspective, the editor would weigh the anticipated consequences of printing the story or not printing the story. If the editor prints the story, harm is brought upon a substantial amount of people. These people include Witt, his family and friends, the accuser, her family and friends, Yale, the football team. If the story uses the sources' names, these individuals could lose their job, or just be harmed in general. Printing the story could be a huge publicity gain for the newspaper because it exposes a lie by a prominent figure. It has gained national attention, and that could be a huge gain for the paper. If people don't agree with how the story is presented, the story could bring negative attention on the newspaper. All these consequences must be considered in teleology. Lastly, the situation could be viewed through the Golden Means theory. Basically, this theory is what kinds of virtues people value. Involved in this case, I think one main value is integrity. By not printing the story, the editor upholds integrity by not taking the easy way out for a story and sensationalizing a private issue. The editor doesn't throw anyone under the bus, not Witt, not any other students at the school, or the sources that gave the newspaper the information.

The analysis of this case has made the decision of whether to print the story very simple. As editor of *The Yale Daily News*, I would not print the story. The harm and damage that is done by running the story far outweighs the good that comes from the story. I understand why people run the story, but I disagree with the way the story exposes a very sensitive situation. Stories like this expose people at their lowest point and causes controversy. This way of thinking would mean that I side more with the teleological theory. People in the media need to think of the pain and suffering that can be caused with words on paper.

## Appendix L

### Syllabus for SBH Maieutic Method Class

#### Syllabus

JAMM 341, Section 2, Mass Media Ethics

University of Idaho

Spring 2012

Instructor: Tom Grant

Class times: Tuesday and Thursday, 11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Classroom: TLC 031

*American traditions and the American ethic require us to be truthful, but the most important reason is that truth is the best propaganda and lies are the worst. To be persuasive we must be believable; to be believable we must be credible; to be credible we must be truthful. It is as simple as that.* – Edward R. Murrow

#### Instructor contact:

Tom Grant, PhD candidate

Center for ETHICS\*, 500 Memorial Gym, Moscow, ID 83844-3080 (Go in the front door, climb the steps going to your left, swing right at the stop of the second spectator level and continue up the steps until you can go no further.)

Phone: (208) 885-2103 or 208-301-0147 (cell)

Email: [tgrant@uidaho.edu](mailto:tgrant@uidaho.edu)

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 12:30-1:20 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30-10:45 a.m.; or by appointment.

#### **Course description:**

The purpose of this course is to develop a problem-solving approach to current ethical problems in advertising, broadcasting and digital media, journalism, and public relations.

Note: Part of this class will be conducted through the Blackboard. All assignments, feedback and so forth will occur through the Blackboard site labeled “jamm341: Mass Media Ethics (Grant, Sec 02).” Because there are two sections of JAMM 341 and each class uses different materials, please make sure you’re reading the appropriate Blackboard site. You will be expected to check Blackboard in preparation for each class.

#### **Course Objectives:**

1. To develop critical reasoning skills.
2. To understand a basic outline of systematic moral reasoning.
3. To develop a personal, systematic, principled decision-making process.
4. To understand ethical codes in various fields of communications, and the principles underlying those codes.
5. To apply personal principled reasoning to current issues in journalism, advertising, digital media and broadcasting, and public relations.

**Textbook:**

Frankena, W. K. (1973). *Ethics*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall. (Available free online at <http://www.ditext.com/frankena/ethics.html>)

Supplementary reading as assigned and provided through by the instructor will include portions of:

Fox, R.M. & DeMarco, J.P. (2001) *Moral reasoning: A philosophic approach to applied ethics*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Harcourt College Publishers, Orlando, FL. pp. 225-244;

Murrow, E. R. (1967) *In search of light: The broadcasts of Edward R. Murrow, 1938-1961*. Knopf, New York, NY. pp. 3-48

Merrill, J.C. (1994) "Immanuel Kant," *Legacy of wisdom: Great thinkers and journalism*, pp 61-66

Kovach, B. & Rosenstiel, "What is journalism for?," *The elements of journalism: What newspeople should know and the public should expect*, pp 15-35, 94-110

Reichert (2003) "Prurient Potions," *The erotic history of advertising*, pp. 291-322.

Hallahan, K. (2006) "Responsible online communication," *Ethics in public relations*, pp 107-130.

Marlin, R.(2002) "Ethics and propaganda," *Propaganda and the ethics of persuasion*, pp. 137-204

Sandel, M.(2009) "The Case for Equality: John Rawls," *Justice*, pp 140-166

Good, H. (1989) "Death of Innocence," *Outcasts*, pp. 70-119.

Peterson, T. (1966), *Social responsibility: Theory and practice, The Responsibility of the Press*, pp. 33-50

Scheuer, J. (2008), "Clean news: Journalistic excellence and independence," *The Big Picture: Why Democracies Need Journalistic Excellence*, pp. 151-170

Dillon, M. "Ethics in black and white: Good Night and Good Luck," *Journalism Ethics Goes to the Movies*, pp. 109-124

**Assignments and papers due:**

1. Two to three page weekly paper due in class each Thursday. Essays should be of a scholarly bent and should include at least six supporting arguments from the assigned formal readings, class lectures and outside research (two from each area). Specific writing assignments may be found on Blackboard.
2. A 5-6 page final paper on ethical dilemmas.
3. A 5-question quiz in each class over lectures and readings.

**Evaluation:**

Papers: 60%

Quizzes: 30%

Attendance and participation: 10%

(Scores on late papers will be reduced by 10 percent. No late papers will be accepted after Tuesday of Dead Week.)

**Movie nights:**

Two movie nights are scheduled: Monday, March 5, at 7 p.m., location TBA and Monday, April 23, at 7 p.m., location TBA. Students will be excused from Thursday classes that week.

**CLASS ATTENDANCE:**

This is a JAMM course so we will follow rigorously the school's standard attendance policies. Good attendance will be critical to your grade.

Per University of Idaho policies, absences will not be excused unless the absence is due to participation in official university activities or programs, personal illness, family illness and care or other compelling circumstances. Excused absences must be documented (e.g. with a doctor's note or a copy of a newspaper obituary or a letter from your coach). Students are expected to notify the instructor in advance of planned absences. It is the responsibility of students who have missed a class to acquaint themselves with the material covered and to make arrangements with the instructor to makeup assignments. This is a professional program for journalists and other media practitioners who are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. Students are expected to meet deadlines without exception. In general, assignments will be due at the start of class on the day specified when the assignment is made.

**EMAIL:** All students are required to check their University of Idaho email address (Vandal Mail) regularly. Reading materials, reminders of assignments, changes in the schedule and links to related Web sites may be distributed via email. If writing to me, please put "JAMM 341" in the subject line to assure a prompt response.

**CLASS ETIQUETTE:** Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, beepers and other devices during class. Class participation is important. Please treat all others in the classroom with attentive respect.

**A NOTE ON WRITING:** This is a JAMM course. In addition to covering elements required of an ethical case study, assignments will be evaluated, to the extent possible, on the quality of the writing, particularly clarity, and on accuracy. Incorrect spellings, improper grammar and errors of fact can result in a lower grade.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY & INTEGRITY:** Students are responsible for compliance with, and are expected to abide by, the Student Code of Conduct especially, but not exclusively, Article II on Academic Honesty. Consequently, any violation of the Code be it in the form of cheating, plagiarism, etc, shall be punished accordingly. Further information and additional resources on University of Idaho policy regarding academic integrity is available online at:

<http://www.uihome.uidaho.edu/default.aspx?pid=45708%20>. See also p. 55, item O-2 (Academic Performance) of the University of Idaho 2010-2011 catalog. **HELP WITH STUDY SKILLS:** Survey courses such as JAMM 341 cover a wide range of material. To earn a good grade in the course, students should attend class every day and keep up with the reading. If you have problems understanding the course content, please visit me

during my office hours. If you need additional help with time management, active learning and taking tests, visit the Tutoring and Academic Assistance office on the third floor of the Idaho Commons

**ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH CHALLENGES:** Disability Support Services Reasonable Accommodations Statement: Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have documented temporary or permanent disabilities. All accommodations must be approved through Disability Support Services located in the Idaho Commons Building, Room 306 in order to notify your instructor(s) as soon as possible regarding accommodation(s) needed for the course.

Phone: 885-6307 Email at [dss@uidaho.edu](mailto:dss@uidaho.edu) Web at [www.access.uidaho.edu](http://www.access.uidaho.edu)  
Students should present a completed and signed Accommodation Checklist for the current semester from Disability Support Services when requesting accommodations. Students should present the checklist to the instructor during office hours.

## Appendix M

### Samples of Online Discussion Board Postings and Quizzes

JAMM 341, Sec. 2

Discussion posting for Jan. 12, 2012

Welcome to JAMM 341, Section 2. I'm Tom Grant, your instructor. I'm a PhD candidate at the Center for ETHICS\* at the University of Idaho. As you'll read on the syllabus, I spent 30 years as a journalist before coming to the UI to earn a doctorate.

This first part of this class will focus on one thin book, *Ethics* by William Frankena. It's available online for free, so you don't have to buy it. (The URL for the book is in your Web links.) However, you do have to read it. Frankena is a philosopher, so his writing may be unlike other media texts. But we'll talk about it in class, and you'll have an opportunity to think deeply about some of the things he says.

We'll also have some outside readings. But I'll post those here on Blackboard or make them available by e-mail. For next week, you'll read a little bit about the purpose of journalism. I know that many of you are in other specialties, so please consider what Kovach and Rosenstiel have to say in comparison to your own area of interest.

We will have a quiz in class every day. It will generally be five questions from your readings and from class discussions. I'll give you advance notice about many of the questions. For instance, for Jan. 12, the quiz questions are:

1. What is the name of the JAMM 341 instructor?
2. What is the name of the textbook for JAMM 341, Sec. 2?
3. What field is William Frankena's specialty?
4. How often will you have a quiz in JAMM 341?

## 5. Why do you care about media ethics?

Discussion posting for Jan. 17, 2012

I enjoyed meeting you all during the first class. I think the discussion was very helpful to me, and I hope you enjoyed it, too.

[Redacted] said to me after the class that he wanted to expand on the purpose he proposed for journalism. He said one other purpose of journalism is to provide context. I agree. Journalism does need to place the facts within the context of our world so that we can better understand the meaning of the facts. Truth is sometimes lurking in the context.

Understanding the purpose of our professions can sometimes be found in mission statements of the various organizations that we work for. For instance, in marketing and advertising, firms create mission statements. Here are two:

"Johnson King is committed to delivering informed, media-savvy public relations services based on a superior industry knowledge, a real understanding of the issues that affect both our clients and their customers, and a genuine enthusiasm for what we do. Our aim is to act as a trusted extension of our clients' marketing departments, producing results that directly and positively impact on our clients' business objectives. Johnson King is also committed to providing an informal yet professional working environment that encourages and rewards creativity, insight, teamwork and enthusiasm. Johnson King's culture and philosophy is based on a 'no nonsense' approach to public relations that values clarity of thought and honesty of expression above empty promises and meaningless jargon."

"We are Meredith Corporation, a publicly held media and marketing company founded upon service to our customers and committed to building value for our shareholders.

Our cornerstone is knowledge of the home and family market. From that, we have built businesses that serve well-defined readers and viewers, deliver the messages of advertisers, and extend our brand franchises and expertise to related markets. Our products and services distinguish themselves on the basis of quality, customer service, and value that can be trusted. "

You'll see words in there like trust and honesty. Those words suggest that the purpose of the company is to do more than see short-term financial gain. They don't mean that financial gain is bad, but they recognized that moral values have to be constructed along with the non-moral values.

You might look at some of the mission statements for organizations you would like to work for following your graduation. Do their mission statements have moral components?

Here's your quiz for this week:

1. Who in your reading held the values that we ought never to harm anyone and that we ought to keep our promises?
2. "My mother is a good woman." Is this a judgment of moral obligation, judgment of moral value, judgment of nonmoral value, or judgment of non-moral obligation? (Circle one)
3. "You ought to buy an new phone." Is this a judgment of moral obligation, judgment of moral value, judgment of nonmoral value, or judgment of non-moral obligation? (Circle one)
4. "You should never cheat on a test." Is this a judgment of moral obligation, judgment of moral value, judgment of nonmoral value, or judgment of non-moral obligation? (Circle one)
5. Name your profession and tell what you think is the purpose of your profession.

Discussion posting for Jan. 19, 2012

The discussion about Socrates was very interesting today. I'm impressed with your reading of the material. As you recall, Socrates was put to death for such things as advocating a republic rather than a democracy, and for putting corrupt ideas in the heads of young people. And he had to make the decision whether to escape or die. Putting aside emotion, he rationally considered the issue and decided that he would accept his punishment and drink the hemlock.

I hope that in your careers you are never faced with such a troubling dilemma. However, I know you will be asked to make many, many ethical decisions as members of the media. I remember one of my photographers repeatedly asking me, "Are we doing the right thing?" We were covering a story about people accused of a terrible crime, but who appeared to be innocent. But the crime was so horrific – child abuse – that many people reacted emotionally. They immediately judged the accused as guilty, and found it extremely difficult to weigh the evidence in a reasoned and rational way.

I felt that way, too. I didn't want to cover the story. And because our examination of the evidence led us to a different conclusion than the police, my photographer and I found ourselves continually asking ourselves what was right and what was wrong. Is it right to simply repeat what the police say without considering anything more? The question wasn't a life and death matter to me, but it came close to that for the accused. They were looking at long prison sentences and the loss of their children.

[Redacted] said today that the circumstances matter when it comes to deciding right and wrong. Certainly [redacted] is right in that we need to know the facts of a case before we

make a decision. But when you read about Kant for Thursday, ask how Kant would approach some of the issues we discussed. Would Kant run an ad that proposed killing someone? Or, in my personal example, would Kant steer clear of covering a story about a child abuser, accused of horrific crimes, if in the court of public opinion that person was already judged to be guilty? In a Kantian newspaper world, how would non-moral values (such as my interest in preserving my own reputation or a newspaper's interest in making money) affect their judgment about selling an ad advocating killing or covering a distasteful story?

Your authors suggest that journalists say they have principles, but seem to have little trouble rationalizing those principles away. Is that a fair assessment? Or are we being too hard on journalists?

Here's your quiz:

1. What philosopher proposed the "categorical imperative"?
2. What is the categorical imperative?
3. In the middle ages, journalism was born in what form?
4. Kovach and Rosenstiel (p. 24) say the new journalist is no longer a gatekeeper and no longer decides what the public should know. So what does the new journalist do?
5. After reading Kovach and Rosenstiel, what do you think is the purpose of journalism? Why?
6. Please write down the number you got when you completed the moral reasoning assessment.

Discussion Posting for Jan 24, 2012

I hope you had a great snow day on Thursday.

The assigned paper on unfair treatment will now be due Tuesday, Jan. 24. Anyone who has completed the paper earlier can email it to me at [tgrant@uidaho.edu](mailto:tgrant@uidaho.edu).

This will not push back the other assignments. Your paper on Murrow will still be due next Thursday. That one will require APA references.

For Tuesday, you should also read the Murrow readings, which you can find on Blackboard under the weekly content.

On Tuesday, we will discuss Murrow and APA style references in addition to the purpose of journalism (from your Kovach and Rosenstiel reading).

We'll discuss Frankena Chapter 2 and Kant next Thursday.

Here's your revised quiz for Tuesday:

1. Who created the famous opening line, "This is London"?
2. (In Search of Light, p.28) A 20-year-old who weight about 115 pounds spoke very loudly. What happened to him?
3. In the middle ages, journalism was born in what form?
4. Kovach and Rosenstiel (p. 24) say the new journalist is no longer a gatekeeper and no longer decides what the public should know. So what does the new journalist do?
5. After reading Kovach and Rosenstiel, what do you think is the purpose of journalism? Why?
6. Please write down the number you got when you completed the moral reasoning assessment.

Discussion Posting for Jan. 26, 2012

I really enjoyed our discussion about advertising today. Is it honest to use a photo of a piece of plastic in an advertisement about a hamburger? [Redacted] said that as long as it represented the truth that the burger had meat, a bun, pickles, tomatoes, and all the other fixings – and indeed the burger you bought had those fixings – then it was acceptable to take a picture of a plastic burger. [Redacted] argued that creating a fictional image of a burger from plastic or other materials was deceitful in itself. As [redacted] said, no burger that you buy at a McDonald's looks as perfect as the one in the advertising. [Redacted] suggested there was a fine line in there between representation and misrepresentation.

Perhaps we should begin with the question of what is the purpose of the activity. For instance, what our purpose is to make money? Does the money we make from producing the ad justify using a plastic hamburger in an image? Or what if the thing that drives our career in advertising is to introduce people to great products that they would otherwise never have noticed and through those products to create a better life for those people? Are we fulfilling that purpose by using a plastic but perfect image of a hamburger to promote an item on McDonald's lunch menu?

And what's the principle behind our choice? [Redacted] might say that one should always be honest, as she did in class. Frankena, as you'll read later, might say that one of his principles is to do good. Is it honest to use a plastic hamburger as a representation the product? [Redacted] might say that it's honest because it truly represents what you'll get over the counter. As an artist, [redacted] could point to a hand-painted picture of a product as an example of a representation that is obviously not the real thing, but is accepted as a fair representation. Think of Andy Warhol's Campbell's soup cans, for instance. However, is there some difference between the artist's representation and the advertiser's representation?

Certainly the purpose is different. But that difference in the intention of the communication is important. The advertiser is saying this is what you'll get. The artist is saying this is my impression of what you'll get.

Frankena might ask whether we are doing good by using a plastic image of a hamburger to represent the real thing. Certainly, the ad makes money for the advertising company and the fast food chain. That's a good. It may create jobs. Some hungry people will feed themselves. What other good are we doing? Or are we harming anyone with the ad? And if we are doing a lot of good, is it enough good to make it worthwhile to use a false representation?

That's one way we might analyze the ethical issue raised by the use of plastic food to represent real food in advertising photos. One small confession: The issue made me laugh a bit because my aunt used to put fake plastic fruit in a bowl on the coffee table. I tried to eat one once. It really didn't taste like it looked.

Here's your quiz for Thursday, Jan. 26:

1. What famous philosopher wrote the Categorical Imperative?
2. (Merrill, p. 62) What is the Categorical Imperative?
3. Murrow writes (p. 41) about a person in a pub who asked for dry sherry, scrawled notes in an unrecognizable language, and responded "Yah" to a question. Who was this person?
4. (Kovach and Rosenstiel, p. 25) Even in this high-tech world, the journalist is first engaged in what function?
5. (Kovach and Rosenstiel, p. 31) What three factors are causing a shift away from the citizen-building function of journalism?

Discussion Posting for Jan. 31, 2012

There's one thing I forgot to tell you in class today. I've really enjoyed reading the papers you've turned in. They're entertaining and thoughtful, which makes my job of reading them a pleasure. Thanks.

As you may have noticed, some of the things you write come back to haunt you in class. That's because I think the words you write are often more meaningful to the people around you than the words of some crusty old philosopher. However, we will still read the words of philosophers, too. Sorry. This week, you should read Frankena, chapter 2, for Tuesday, and Frankena, chapter 3, for Thursday. It's important for your next essay.

On Thursday, we heard stories about PJ's cheerleading, [Redacted]'s experience with mean girls, and [redacted]'s volleyball. They were important lessons in empathy and trust.

[Redacted] gave us a great example of learning to feel things on both sides of an issue. When he played football or sat in the stands watching cheerleaders, he had a derogatory image of them. So when he became cheerleader, he looked into the stands and saw hundreds of people who he imagined were now looking at him the same way he once looked at cheerleaders. And it made him feel bad. He didn't have much empathy for cheerleaders until he became one. Now he realizes how athletic, dangerous, and gymnastic it is. But he had to actually become a cheerleader to learn that. But we could learn about others through empathy by placing ourselves in the shoes of others. It's an important ethical tool.

[Redacted] talked about how her trust in one other girl turned out to be misplaced, and how the hurt that caused has affected her trust of others. The other girl betrayed her trust and tried to harm her. In most cases, the breakdown of trust is precipitated by what at least

one party perceives as an ethical wrong. As [Redacted] said, breaking the trust can have long lasting consequences. She hasn't talked to that former friend in years.

For those of us in media, building and maintaining trust is a key element of our work. And it serves as external reminder that ethical behavior can be good for us – and good business, too. Over this term, I hope you'll also consider internal and social reasons for ethical behavior. Kant thinks you should always do the right thing for the right reason. But many judgments about value go into ethical decisions. And the value of how other people feel about you should not be discounted.

[Redacted] said something I've repeated several times. She said that as a journalist she had a purpose greater than herself. I think that's an amazing statement. The ethical egoists, whom you'll read about this week, say that we need think only of ourselves. But most other philosophers suggest that there should be greater considerations than self-interest. Ask yourself if you have a purpose greater than yourself.

When I was a news reporter, one photographer said to me several times: "Maybe this is the story we were put on Earth to do." I know he found great purpose in his family, but he also sought great purpose in his work.

Here's your quiz for this week:

1. (Frankena, p. 18) According to ethical egoism, what is an individual's one and only basic obligation?
2. (Frankena, p. 19) What is the argument that ethical egoism is self-contradictory?
3. (Frankena, p. 23) If you're an act-deontologist, upon what do you base your ethical decisions?
4. (Frankena, p. 25) Kant is a rule-deontologist. What does this mean?

5. Make one argument against Kant's Categorical Imperative.

Discussion Posting for Feb. 2

As you may have noticed in class today, neither Frankena nor I are fans of making ethical decisions on a case-by-case basis. [Redacted] suggested that if we had a dictionary that would tell us how to handle each case (much as we learn when to put "i" before "e"), then we wouldn't have so many problems with ethics. But as [redacted] and [redacted] pointed out, we make many of our ethical decisions very quickly. In life and death cases, it seems like we have to make decisions so fast there's no time for thinking, of course. On deadlines, it will seem like you have to make them that quickly, too. Sometimes in the media, we make these decisions so fast that they don't even seem like ethical decisions.

But they often are, as we find out when the consequences of those decisions come out later.

Sorious Samura made ethical decisions when he produced *Cry Freetown*. He decided to let innocent people die in front of his eyes rather than to speak up as it was happening. He says that he was afraid he would be killed if he said anything or tried to stop it. Some of you might see that as a practical decision, but is very much an ethical decision, too. It affected other people.

[Redacted] wants to weigh that ethical issue teleologically. But if we measure it teleologically on a case-by-case (which is act utilitarianism), then in every instance we have to weigh the possible good created by the documentary against the evil being done to the victims in front of our eyes. Or we could try to form some kind of rule. Kant would ask us to consider whether our actions could be applied as a rule universally. In other words, should all

documentarians allow evil to happen in front of their eyes when they are afraid of grave harm happening to them?

Perhaps one of you could phrase it better, of course. And I hope you will.

But I want to return to the original question derived from what [redacted] wrote: Do we adopt the morals of our audience? In Sierra Leone, Sorious had an “audience” of peacekeepers who were watching him shoot the video. He also hoped to have a worldwide audience, but that was uncertain. Did he adopt the peacekeepers’ morals by going along with them and watching them kill people? Or did his deeper purpose of showing outsiders the evil happening in Freetown allow him to set aside his moral belief in preventing harm?

Please read ahead to Frankena Chapter 3. We’ll begin discussing that on Thursday.

Here’s your quiz:

1. Where was Cry Freetown shot?
2. (Frankena, p 25, Ch. 2) What is the principle of universality?
3. (Frankena, p. 28, Ch. 2) What is Divine Command theory?
4. (Frankena, p 34, Ch. 3) What is the principle of utility?
5. (Frankena, p.37, Ch. 3) What is general utilitarianism?

Discussion posting for Feb. 7, 2012

You asked great questions today. For instance, [redacted] asked if rule deontic thinking was really reasoned ethical thinking. After all, she pointed out, once you have a rule, you don’t have to think about it again. As I see it, the reasoning goes into establishing the rule. And you have to be involved in that reasoning, or the rule you’re following isn’t really yours. It’s somebody else’s rule that you’ve adopted.

Of course, [redacted] may have another idea about that. And I could discover I was wrong. [Redacted] and others have already point out things I didn't know. That's exactly the kind of thing I want to hear in this class. We're supposed to develop better ideas and ways of thinking about ethics by listening to the people around us, and then weighing those ideas for ourselves. And all of us are supposed to do that, including me. When we have to think hard about these things, the brain gets stronger (and more ethical, too, I think).

[Redacted] and [redacted] also had me going a couple of times today, too. They were extremely clever in trying to find ways out of a utilitarian ethical dilemma. They are challenging.

As you'll see this week, Frankena poses the question about resolving an issue in which we have to decide between two acts. One act causes 99 units of good and no evil. The second act causes 199 units of good and 99 units of evil. So do we go with the act that causes the net gain of 100 units of good? That's the act utilitarian view. But isn't there something wrong with creating 99 units of evil, even if the act does create more good.

In the media, we often face similar questions. We may have to decide whether to run an ad that is going to create a lot of good, yet may cause harm to someone. Or in the alternative, we could run an ad that would do less good, but wouldn't cause any harm. Think about an attack ad for a political candidate, for instance. The ad is clearly designed to harm one candidate. However, the ad, if successful, will help advance the career of another candidate – a better candidate, we think. Is it acceptable to do a little bit of harm for the greater good?

Frankena has offered us a way to reason ourselves out of these dilemmas. He calls it a mixed deontic theory, so it's a bit of rule deontic and a bit of general utilitarianism. It starts

with clearly identifying your primary ethical values. You began that process in your essays this week. Read Frankena Chapter 3 because we'll talk about it more on Tuesday. Then we'll move on to Chapter 4 and, if all goes well, by Thursday we'll begin talking about Fox and Demarco's explanation of how you reason through a moral problem. I've posted that book chapter on Blackboard as well as placed it in Dropbox.

Here's your quiz:

1. Frankena's basic principle is beneficence (Frankena, p. 47). What are the four parts of beneficence, according to Frankena:
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
2. (Frankena, p. 48) Define justice.
3. (Extra credit, Frankena p. 56-58) Why does Frankena think love is inadequate as someone's sole basic moral principle?

Discussion posting for Feb. 7, 2012

Today's exercise with the \$10 split was interesting. It's called the ultimatum game. [Redacted] instinctively wanted to be fair. In fact, he wanted to be more than fair and give \$6 to the other person. Research with this ultimatum game shows us that people have a preference for 50-50 splits. But in the end, after consulting many other students, [Redacted] opted for a little gamesmanship. [Redacted] split the money \$7-\$3 favoring himself, knowing that the other person might reject the split and both parties might go home with nothing.

Fortunately, the other person, [redacted], accepted the deal, and [redacted] went home few dollars richer.

Of course, that's not always the way it goes. According to behavioral game theory, low offers are often rejected because people like to earn money but dislike being treated unequally.

Many researchers have studied the ultimatum game. Most people offer a split near the 50-50 range. Most offers below 30 percent (or \$3 out of \$10) are rejected. And some researchers say that in ultimatum games that are allowed to evolve through multiple iterations, where reputation becomes a factor, the trend moves toward 50-50. This is one small example of our human tendency to seek justice or fairness in transactions, even when it's not the most reasonable thing.

If we could assume both players in the ultimatum game were reasonable, [redacted] would have divided it \$9 to \$1, assuming that [redacted] would take \$1. After all, rationally, \$1 was more than [redacted] had when he walked in the door. But we place a value on justice. We want things to be fair, and we may opt for justice — for seeing things distributed equitably — even when it costs us something.

Regardless, I enjoyed the experiment, and your participation in it. We'll be talking about justice more during the semester, and this was an opportunity to look at it in different manner.

Here's your quiz:

1. If you were the second player in the ultimatum game, what's the least amount of the \$10 you would accept before nixing deal for both parties/
2. Frankena's first principle is beneficence. What's his second principle?

3. (Frankena, p. 64) Plato and other Greeks thought there were four cardinal virtues. Name one.
4. (Frankena, p. 69) What is moral autonomy?
5. (Frankena, p. 70) Kant thought that a person's actions could only be considered morally right if his motives were morally pure. Can someone do the right thing for a bad reason? Explain your reasoning.

Discussion posting for Feb. 14, 2012

On Thursday, I played a clip from *Tin Cup*, a movie about a golf pro with a predisposition to always go for it. He went for it at the U.S. Open and missed — several times. It cost him the tournament, and probably thousands of dollars. But that was who he was. His being required him to go for it.

Virtue is kind of like that. After all this thinking about principles and values, you get to the point where you incorporate your values and principles into your very being. And you go for it. You're fair, or benevolent, or loving because that virtue has become part of your being.

Of course, I'm sounding kind of idealistic, like [redacted]. We don't all become a Martin Luther King Jr. whose being is dedicated to justice or Mother Teresa whose being is dedicated to love and care. That's OK. As we saw with *Tin Cup*, there can be such a thing as too much perseverance. Aristotle suggested that we all should apply the appropriate amount of virtue at the appropriate time.

But Frankena is rather vague about how to apply moral principles. This week, we're going to read Fox and DeMarco (2001), who are a bit more specific about how to order your principles and use them in a decision-making process.

And here's your quiz:

1. What sporting event was featured in the movie *Tin Cup*?
2. Write the reference for the book Richard M. Fox and Joseph P. DeMarco called *Moral Reasoning: A Philosophic Approach to Applied Ethics*, which was published by Harcourt College Publishers of Orlando, Fla., in 2001.
3. (Fox and DeMarco, p. 226) If you subscribe to a principle of beneficence, you might restate the principle in the negative to provide guidance. What is Fox and DeMarco's first principle stated in the negative?
4. (Fox and DeMarco, p. 227) What is the first step in deciding if an act under consideration is morally right or wrong?
5. (Fox and DeMarco, p. 228) Why are exceptions necessary? Give an example using your personal principles.

Discussion Posting for Feb 16, 2012

I stumbled today on the issues of reversibility and universalizability. So I want to try to make it clear. To test the *reversibility* of your actions, determine who is going to be affected and how they will be affected, then reverse roles. Put yourself in their place and ask yourself: "If I were in their place, would I find that the action was fair and treated me with respect?"

Then there's the test of *universalizability*. Now you consider the Kantian concept of whether you would recommend the action as a universal rule. Should there be a law requiring that everyone behave as you are in this case?

These are considerations that should arise as you chose your principles, as well as when you evaluate possible exceptions to your principles.

I argued today that Fox and DeMarco offer you a relatively easy and quick method of making ethical decisions. Their method would work for Frankena's principles. If something was unfair or caused harm, Frankena wouldn't do it. However, there could be exceptions, as Frankena acknowledged. For instance, imagine that you've uncovered a story that would harm one person but exonerate another. It doesn't seem fair to keep it under wraps. There's a conflict of principles. To distribute justice equally, you would want to consider an exception. That exception should be reversible and you should be able to universalize it.

You could consider it reversible by putting yourself in the place of the person being harmed and asking if he or she would accept the harm as reasonable based on the outcome of the exoneration of another. This is not an uncommon ethical dilemma. For example, the movie *Absence of Malice* dealt with the case of a Catholic woman who was asked to admit to the sin of getting an abortion but her admission demonstrated the innocence of a family friend.

And then you'd ask if the exception can be universalized. Would it be good if there were a rule that everyone should accept harm to exonerate another? This may be a more difficult question, and the specifics matter. In the *Absence of Malice* case, the harm was so great to the Catholic woman — she killed herself — that such an exception might not be justified.

However, what if we just wanted to make an exception to our principles to benefit ourselves? And what if the people being affected were a bunch of creeps? And what if other people do it all the time. Is that exception OK? We'll discuss the difference between exceptions to our principles and moral justification on Thursday.

Here's your quiz:

1. What's reversibility?
2. What's universalizability?
3. (Prurient Potions, p. 297) What beer company rolled out a disastrous advertising campaign led by the Swedish Bikini Team?
4. (Fox & DeMarco, p. 234) Name one way in which the burden of proof on exceptions to principles may be met.
5. Does it violate the principle of honesty to download a popular song from a content sharing site such as Megaupload.com? Explain why or why not.

Discussion posting for Feb. 21, 2012

I just finished reading your essays on Buzzin. I was impressed. You all argued strongly and reasonably about the dilemma of using sexually charged advertising to sell alcohol. And you had diverse ideas. We'll talk about that more on Tuesday. I may ask some of you to explain and defend your arguments so the entire class can try to sort out the issues.

We'll also be wrapping up our use of Fox and DeMarco's process of moral reasoning to approach moral dilemmas. As you've noticed, we've looked at several ways to approaching moral problems. We've tried utilitarianism and deontic thought. We've moved

on to the mixed-deontic philosophy of Frankena. And now we've seen Fox and DeMarco lay out their straightforward process for moral reasoning.

One interesting thing about all these processes is that if we do them right, they should all come to the same conclusion. They're all designed to reach a moral decision that is best for everyone. Certainly, there may be a few differences in extreme cases, such as when the ax murderer arrives at Kant's door looking for the philosopher's children. However, if we're truly making a rational attempt to find out what is the right thing to do—and not just to justify a decision we're already arrived at through intuition, emotion or self-interest—these methods should all point us in the same direction.

Obviously, I like Frankena's mixed-deontic philosophy, and Fox and DeMarco's moral reasoning process. However, you may choose to use utilitarian or Kantian ideas. You need to find something that works for you.

Now we'll move on to a discussion of the good life. We're asking the metaphysical question of what is desirable, good, or worthwhile in life. And we'll be looking for things that are good in themselves. You might think about that. It's easy for us in our career pursuit to aim to acquire money or property. But are those things good in themselves, or are they only a means to what is good? And what is it we really want?

Here's your quiz:

1. If you use apply both utilitarian and deontic theories to a moral dilemma, what should happen most of the time?
2. (Frankena, p. 82) What is an extrinsic value?
3. (Frankena, p. 82) What is an intrinsic value?
4. (Frankena, p. 84) What does a hedonist say "the good" is?

5. How would you define “the good”? Why?

Discussion posting for Feb 23, 2012

We had an interesting discussion today about responsibility. Many of you agree that a great deal of the responsibility for the use of an advertised product, such as alcohol, rests with the consumer. But most of you also seemed to agree that some responsibility rested with the advertiser and ad creator. [Redacted] asked a good question: Where do you draw the line? You’ll face this question in every line of media work.

Your codes of ethics may offer some guidelines. SPJ, for instance, says, “Show good taste. Avoid pandering to lurid curiosity.” The AAF proposed guidelines say “exercise the highest personal ethics in the creation and dissemination of commercial information to consumers.” The PRSA uses words such as “serve the public interest” to indicate that practitioners do have social responsibility.

[Redacted] suggested he would draw the line at legality. But everything that’s legal may not be ethical. Here’s an example of a recent ad for the bar Alchemy that’s drawing fire because it promotes the club using the slogan, “If you’re not up for it, don’t cum.”

<http://jezebel.com/5886591/company-defends-rapey-ad-with-more-victim+blaming> The “rapey implications,” as Jezebel puts it, may be legal but implies that any woman who goes out drinking there is basically consenting to sex. “A bad move,” Jezebel calls it.

Does that campaign serve the public interest? Does it show the highest personal ethics? If not, then we might judge that advertising campaign as legal but unethical. And we would find we cannot set our ethical standards merely by looking at laws. We have to set our ethical standards by looking at other factors. [Redacted] wants to be able to sleep at night; his

guide is his conscience. That's good. But in this class, of course, you can't just say you live by your conscience. In your essays, you're expected to draw ethical lines and you need rational reasons for the ethical lines you draw.

By the way, I ask questions on the quizzes based on the material in this discussion and I expect you to read it. I'm going to ask questions about things from the last two paragraphs.

The essay for this week (due Feb. 23) asks you to analyze a situation you might encounter in your workplace. [Redacted] asked me what texts you might cite in your essay. Frankena and Fox & DeMarco are two possibilities, of course. But you might also look at your codes of ethics. But primarily, you are being asked to look to your own principles and values. There's a question of responsibility here, too.

Also, I want to warn you that we're coming up on another significant reading about Murrow. I've loaded the reading on Dropbox for those who have a hard time getting it from Blackboard. It's entitled Murrow McCarthy. Please download it soon and read it before Tuesday. In preparation for your next essay (due March 1), I want you to see how one reporter took a moral stand, and I want you to consider the moral stands you've taken in your life.

Here's your quiz.

1. What bar used the slogan, "If you're not up for it, don't cum."
2. Some people use their conscience as their ethical guide. What are you expected to use in this class?
3. (Frankena, p. 93) Virtue, as Socrates says in the Meno, is what?

4. (Frankena, p. 91) Frankena says there is something besides pleasure or satisfaction that makes life good. What is it?
5. You have to decide whether to run an advertisement. It's legal. But you know some people will find it distasteful. How do *you* decide? Where do *you* draw the line?

Discussion posting for Feb. 28, 2012

A student brought it to my attention that I offended someone in Thursday's class, so I want to apologize to all of you. I was wrong to do that. I know better than to harm any of you. I am truly sorry.

On Tuesday, we'll be watching a movie about Edward R. Murrow. As I think I told you once, I was once a student of Murrow's producer of *See It Now*, Fred Friendly. As Friendly relates it, Murrow's decision to take on McCarthy was an extremely risky moral stand. McCarthy wielded a great deal of power in the nation. Murrow was not only putting his own career at risk, he was also putting the network and many other employees at risk.

The excerpt from March 9, 1954, contains some of Murrow's most famous words. You can see his courage and sense of responsibility in those words. By reading Murrow's reports during those times, you'll be able to put some of what he did in perspective. You'll read about the charges against Oppenheimer and about the Supreme Court ruling on segregation in public schools. That may help you better understand Murrow when we watch a film about Murrow and McCarthy on Tuesday.

Also, please note that we will watch a film about the use of social media in Iran's green revolution on Monday, March 5, at 7 p.m. in TLC Room 28. Because of the Monday

film, you'll be excused from class on Thursday, March 8. You'll still have to turn in your paper for that week, of course. And we will have class on Tuesday, March 6, to discuss the film. If you will not be able to attend the Monday evening film, please let me know so we can make other arrangements.

Here's your quiz for Tuesday.

1. Who was Edward R. Murrow's producer?
2. What day and time will this class meet to watch a movie about the Green Revolution in Iran?
3. What room will this class meet in to watch a movie about the Green Revolution in Iran?
4. Murrow ended his speech of March 9, 1954, with a quote from Shakespeare? What characters did he mention?
5. Murrow wasn't the first reporter to take on McCarthy. Syndicated columnist and radio commentator Drew Pearson was an early and persistent critic of McCarthy. Pearson so got under McCarthy's skin that the Senator once started a physical brawl with him. Why do you think we remember Murrow more than Pearson?

Discussion posting for March 1, 2012

As I told you in class, I've modified the assignment "Paper 8: Refine your values."

You are no longer required to have references for that assignment. I do want you to think deeply about your principles and explain your reasoning, so I still expect the paper's length to be at least two full pages. You can email it to me at [tgrant@uidaho.edu](mailto:tgrant@uidaho.edu). It's due at 11 a.m. on Thursday, March 8.

Also, as you know, we'll have no class on Thursday, March 8. That's because we're going to watch a movie on Monday evening, March 5, at 7 p.m. in TLC 028. The movie is entitled *For Neda*, and it's a documentary about the Green Revolution in Iran. It's the story of Neda Agha-Soltan, who was killed in 2009. In part because of social media, Neda became the symbol of struggle in Iran.

You just watched part of Edward R. Murrow's battle with Senator Joseph McCarthy, who used the power of his Senate subcommittee to brand people as communists and ruin their lives. That battle was very risky for Murrow. But it was may not have been as risky as the battles engaged by modern youth in countries such as Iran, Syria and Egypt. Neda risked her life by asking for small freedoms, such as the right to wear the clothes she wanted to wear.

If you can't attend the Monday showing, please let me know so we can make other arrangements.

Thanks for watching Murrow. I wanted you to see Milo Radulovich, Annie Lee Moss and McCarthy himself. It's fascinating to me that stories of a widowed mother and a meteorology student were two of the most important factors in the downfall of McCarthy. In your quizzes, many of you mentioned the respect that Murrow showed for people as one of the reasons that people trusted him so much. I think that's an important insight.

Also, don't forget to take the midterm assessment on Survey Monkey. I put the link in an announcement on Blackboard. You'll need to sign in with your random number that you used for the first assessment. But this assessment is much shorter and should take you about 10-15 minutes. Write down the number you get after taking the assessment, and tell me what it is so that I can give you your extra credit points.

On Thursday, we'll be wrapping up our discussion of Frankena. Please read Chapter 6. He moves into a discussion of meta-ethics.

Here's your quiz:

1. Who is Milo Radulovich?
2. What is the subject of the documentary *For Neda*?
3. (Frankena, p. 109) What is meta-ethical relativism?
4. (Frankena, p. 113). What is the "autonomy of the moral agent"?
5. Frankena closes Chapter 6 with the words, "Morality is made for man, not man for morality." What does he mean?

Class posting for March 6, 2012

On Monday evening, March 5, at 7 p.m. in TLC 028, we'll watch the documentary "For Neda." If you can't attend the showing, please let me know so that I can provide an alternate method of viewing the movie.

Please also read Ginny Whitehouse on "Newsgathering and Privacy" and Kirk Hallahan on "Responsible Online Communication." Whitehouse discusses the case of the Spokesman-Review hiring an investigator to pose as a teenage boy on Gay.com to try to catch the mayor of Spokane picking up young men, and the case of Neda Agha Soltan.

Hallahan's 2006 article addresses issues in online public relations. He outlines eight core concerns public relations professionals face in online communications.

Your quiz on Tuesday will include questions about the film and both articles.

Here's your quiz:

1. What's the name of the singer Neda idolizes?

2. Members of the Basiji women, a paramilitary force, warned Neda that she could be in danger. What characteristic of Neda put her in danger?
3. The joint statement of 11 Public Relations Organizations says news organizations and public relations organizations share certain basic tenets. What are they?
4. Whitehouse suggests a mixed deontic rule to govern online deception and lying. What is her ethical balancing test?
5. What does Whitehouse say about news organizations that distorted Neda's face as she was dying to protect her privacy at her moment of death? Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Discussion posting for March 20, 2012

I hope you had a great spring break. I enjoyed reading your essays about your personal values and principles. During the first half of the term, our goal was to examine the nature of our personal values and attempt to develop a method of applying those values to ethical dilemmas.

Each of you has identified a set of values that suits your unique background and moral understanding. It's not unusual that we would have slightly different ideas about which values are most important. Frankena settled on beneficence and justice. Fox and DeMarco had a slightly different value set in the included freedom. John Stuart Mill is known for only one value, which he called "utility," the balance of good over evil; however, a reading of Mill's "Utilitarianism" indicates that he also valued justice as part of the utility equation.

Whatever you have chosen, those values are intended to represent your moral foundation. Based on your essays, I accept that those values and principles are your primary

guide to right and wrong. Using Fox and DeMarco's guidelines, we can examine any ethical dilemma with a few questions: Does the action violate one of our principles? Is this case an exception because following a course of action indicated by one principle would lead to violating another principle? If so, has the burden of proof been met to justify the exception? In other words, can the action we choose be generalized to other situations, or would the exception be a less serious violation than other alternatives?

Over the second half of the semester, we're going to look at the values and principles of your professions. The wording of the codes of ethics for public relations, advertising, journalism and broadcasting may be different, but they share many basic values. One value we find in every code is an insistence on truth telling.

But what is the truth? That's why you're reading an excerpt from "Propaganda and the Ethics of Persuasion" by Randal Martin. (Cite as: Marlin, R. (2002). *Propaganda and the ethics of persuasion*. Peterborough, Ont: Broadview Press.) Martin provides a clear look at various arguments about when something is truth, and when it is something else. You will be tempted during your career to bluff, equivocate, distort, exaggerate, fib, jive, obscure, pose and prevaricate. Are those things the same as lying? If you are to follow your code of ethics, you need to know the difference.

Here's your quiz:

1. What is the noble lie?
2. Augustine inclines toward a narrow definition of the lie. In his opinion, what is necessary for a falsehood to be a lie?
3. Under what conditions does Kant think lying is acceptable?

4. Why does Nyberg think tall tales told around a campfire cannot be considered lies?
5. Shortly before WWI, Gustav Le Bon stirred up support to preserve a park in Paris suburb sending an announcement to a newspaper that the park land was about to be sold to a German. The announcement was true, so why does Martin say it wasn't ethical?

Discussion posting for March 22, 2012

Commitment to truth seems easy: Don't lie. But do you think even someone like Kant could go through life without dissembling from time to time? As [redacted] said, we're human. We find many ways to dance around the truth.

Yet our codes of ethics universally call on us to tell the truth. As you're aware, you can find your codes of ethics on Blackboard under Web links. For instance, the RTDNA code says, "Professional journalists should not report anything known to be false." Yet, haven't we all seen the Christmas Eve telecasts where they report the travels of Santa Claus? We can accept such reports under the philosophical understanding that everyone knows the report about Santa Claus is false, therefore it's not really a lie. But even then, it appears to violate the code of ethics.

I would contend that this is one of the ways that codes of ethics are found lacking as media rulebooks. What they say has to be supplemented by your own ethical understanding. Consider another case.

The PRSA code requires that sponsors be revealed. That's honesty. However, these days sponsors often hide behind false fronts, and not just in political races. For instance, an

organization formed to work against the Humane Society recently advertised during the Oscars. It certainly wasn't clear from watching the ad that the people who funded the ad were from the food industry and that they were doing it to try to stop the Humane Society's efforts regulating for animal cruelty. Their reason: preventing animal cruelty may drive up food prices.

Here's what Mother Jones said about that PR effort: "The group behind the ad is the Center for Consumer Freedom, a creation of the Washington PR guru Rick Berman, who runs an array of corporate-funded front groups targeting public-interest outfits, unions, and other organizations that pose a threat to the bottom line of Berman's clients."

Berman's prosperous PR firm is consciously working to hide at least one part of the truth – who provides the financial backing. That information, if it came out, could hurt business for those in the food industry who fund the Center for Consumer Freedom. Is Berman violating the PRSA code? Or is it acceptable to create false fronts for businesses?

The PRSA code of ethics says "reveal the sponsors." Berman might argue that he revealed the direct sponsor. But does he reveal the actual sponsors who are putting up the money. The code of ethics can be played on this point. To truly answer that question, you might consider whether Berman intends to deceive, as Augustine proposed. You could consider Kantian ideas of universalizability. Would it be best for the world if everyone were required to create false fronts to hire PR firms to promote their interests? You might consider Bok. Is Berman's form of deception respectful of others and does it promote credibility? Or you might consider Habermas's notions that communication should be understandable, truthful, sincere, and appropriate.

As I've suggested, you might also apply Fox and DeMarco. Does it violate your principle of honesty? If so, don't do it – unless, of course, the honest act conflicts with another principle. And if it does, is there adequate proof to justify an exception to honesty? In other words, can the exception to honesty be generalized to cover other cases or would the violation of honesty be a less serious violation of principles than other alternatives?

My contention, of course, is that using your principles (and as a member of the media, honesty is one of your principles) can help you resolve these ethical questions. Of course, your understanding of honesty can now be informed by the likes of Bok, Augustine, Kant and Habermas.

As I told you in class, there's no quiz on Thursday. We have an exercise that will take all our class time.

Discussion posting for March 27, 2012

How do we get past the conflict between what our codes of ethics say about honesty and the lies we find ourselves driven to tell in certain situations? Last week, I pushed you all to accept lying in some circumstances. For instance, in the essay, everyone agreed to tell a lie on the air in the hopes of saving a kidnap victim. The example was loosely based on a case in Hattiesburg, Miss., where news media were asked to publicize a staged murder to help the police try to catch the person who contracted the killing.

In that case, the Hattiesburg TV station and newspaper took different approaches. The newspaper refused to tell a lie and printed only one sentence saying police were looking for information about foul play directed against the supposed victim. The TV station, however,

showed pictures of the fake bloody scene and told viewers that the supposed victim was apparently murdered.

The newspaper didn't want to hinder the investigators, but refused to tell a lie. The TV station management said that when a life was a stake, there were few ethical absolutes.

However, by telling the lie, haven't we begun a slide down the slippery slope toward dishonesty? Sissela Bok says lying in one case begets lying in another. Now that we've solved the question of whether we would ever lie – we all would – let's try to figure out where our limits are. We all would lie to save a life. In Hattiesburg, one TV station would lie to catch a killer. Some of you said you would lie to catch a pedophile. The question is not where you would draw the line, but why you would draw the line at any place at all. Such decisions cannot be arbitrary. You need reason to stop the slide down the slippery slope. Reason is like your brake.

This week's readings are about justice, or fairness. The book chapter is by Michael Sandel, who teaches at Harvard. The short article is from the Nieman Foundation.

Now here's your quiz:

1. Once you've begun the slide down the slippery slope of deceit, what can you use to put on the brakes?
2. Where does Michael Sandel teach?
3. Les Gura of the Hartford Courant won a Taylor Award for a story asking whether James Van de Velde was treated fairly. What was Van de Velde's job?
4. Hume's renter hired a contractor to repair the apartment. Hume didn't sign a contract, or even know the work was being done. Why did Hume have to pay for the work?

5. If you have never taken an oath to follow the law, why do Kant and Locke believe you are still obliged to follow it?

Discussion posting for March 29, 2012

I was impressed today that so many of you immediately subscribed to fairness when you put on Rawls' "veil of ignorance." This is the theoretical device that Rawls uses to extend reversibility to a wide group of people. Under this "veil of ignorance," you have to place yourself in the shoes of everyone else involved in the situation. Some people call it "moral musical chairs." You have to imagine the outcome not knowing what seat you will occupy when the music stops.

Of course, the hypothetical veil that Rawls imagines is impossible. We always know who we are. We almost always know who the other people are. What Rawls is trying to tell you is that when you're trying to be fair, you need to set aside all your preconceived notions. Even merit may be based in unfair circumstances. To truly be fair, you may even have to be unfair from time to time. That's the "give voice to the voiceless" part. It's unfair to give extra preference to anyone, but such preference may be necessary to create overall standards of fairness.

One example in the media might have to do with choices of experts in stories or advertising. Why are so many "experts" pictured in media as middle-aged white guys? In truth, there may be more middle-aged white guys who are experts in any given field. But every field almost always has experts who are women or people of color. Gender and race have little to do with their level of expertise. To be fair, do we need to go out of our way to find experts who are not middle-aged white men? Rawls would say, yes. As members of the

media, we not only reflect the world as it is, we create the world as it will be. To be fair to those whose worlds we shape, we need to present an image that represents a fair world, he would say.

That's an example of the "difference principle" in media. Can you think of others?

Here's your quiz.

1. Why does Rawls think that ideas of "meritocracy" are flawed?
2. What is Rawls' "veil of ignorance"?
3. Cite a line in your code of ethics which speaks to the issue of justice.
4. Give an example of use of the "difference principle" in media.
5. What do I mean by "mixed deontic" moral reasoning?

Discussion posting for April 3, 2012

We've had interesting discussions about what's fair and what's not fair. For your quiz this week, I'm going to take five of the scenarios from our in-class exercise last Thursday and ask you to individually say what's fair and why.

Fairness is justice. It's about equity in distributing good and evil. Rawls designed his "veil of ignorance" to help people see what is fair and unfair. Theoretically, if you could be in any position in society -- and you don't know which position you occupy -- you'd make decisions that would tend to favor those in lesser positions, he said.

However, some philosophers see justice as about creating the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people, some see it about maximizing freedom of choice so people can find their own greatest happiness, and others see justice as a matter of cultivating virtue

and reasoning about the common good. But all these theories are about maximizing the good for all people.

A just and fair society would have a dedication to the common good. Sandel says such a just society would respect the marketplace, but would limit the ability of the market to set the norms that govern social institutions. He says a just society would focus on ways of reversing the civic consequences of inequality. And he says a fair society would call for active and robust civic engagement of citizens.

That's where the media comes in, of course. If we believe the media is necessary for the operation of a democracy, that implies a commitment to some sort of justice and fairness.

Here's your quiz:

1. It is fair/unfair (circle one) for the newspaper to always turn to its advertiser, Hospital A, when searching for a medical expert. Why?
2. It is fair/unfair (circle one) for an advertising firm representing a politician to arrange for its other clients to purchase key ad slots in local news programming to reduce availability for the opponent. Why?
3. It is fair/unfair (circle one) for a television station to assign its first Native American reporter to cover reservations. Why?
4. It is fair/unfair (circle one) for Company A to require that employees sign an agreement that they will not accept work in a competing firm within the metro area for a period of a year after leaving Company A. Why?
5. It is fair/unfair (circle one) to select a black male to play a role as a criminal in an ad for a security firm. Why?

Discussion posting for April 5, 2012

Some of you took exception to the fact that on Paper 10 I took 0.5 points away from people who said they would do what they knew was unethical. [Redacted] suggested I penalized her for telling the truth. No, I penalized people for knowingly choosing to do the wrong thing.

[Redacted] suggested that people could lie to get a better grade. That short-term option is available. You can say what you think I want to hear. However, the point of this class is to help you find ways to make good ethical decisions in your professional life. The 0.5 points is my way of telling you that when I read your papers, I do distinguish between right and wrong.

When you are working in the media, many people will judge the ethics of your actions. The penalties they will assess are likely to be much more than 0.5 points. That's not to say you should always behave as though someone is judging you. You should be your own judge of your actions – a good judge, I hope. Based on what I see in your papers, you can tell when something is right and something is wrong. You could rationalize why it's better to do the wrong thing. Or you can do the right thing. You are autonomous moral agents, and, again, I hope that you would be a good moral agent.

I suggest to you that good ethics are the long-term option. If the good life, for you, means getting 0.5 extra points, you can email me and I'll give it to you. If the good life means something else, then I hope you'll take this 0.5 point lesson. Doing the right thing matters.

For Thursday's class, I recommend gathering the video clips with KeepVid, a free web-based program that allows you to download video from places like YouTube. If you

download the MP4, you can edit it with various programs, such as the freeware Mpeg Streamclip, which I use to compress video. Then you can email it to me or put it on a flash drive and bring it to class. If you're playing a clip in its entirety off the Web, you could just send me the link, or bring it to class.

Here's your quiz for Thursday:

1. What does the PRSA code of ethics say about harm?
2. What does the SPJ code of ethics say about harm?
3. (Outcasts, p. 83) Pulitzer Prize winner Lucinda Franks says, "Press ethics are, at best, elastic." To what action in *Absence of Malice* is she referring?
4. (Reporting on Violence, p. 15) The Reporting on Violence project recommends covering violence as if it were a public health issue. What is one of the questions they recommend asking?
5. Do you agree that ethics in your profession are "at best, elastic"? Why are elastic ethics good or bad for your industry?

Discussion posting for April 10, 2012

Now we're going begin to consider responsibility and accountability. In the United States, guarantees of a free press have changed notions of responsibility and accountability. If we drive too fast on a highway, the government can hold us accountable. If we drive negligently and hurt someone, we can be held accountable both criminally and civilly.

But if we make a negligent mistake in a story -- even a mistake that hurts someone -- the government is highly unlikely to get involved. In most cases, people can't or won't sue us

because the standards of proof are so high. So who holds us to any standard of accountability?

Consider that question in your readings this week.

Here's your quiz:

1. American has about 1,500 daily newspapers. About how many newspaper ombudsmen are there? (Circle one) 25 50 75 100 125
2. According to Plaisance, what U.S. President said that a few prosecutions would help restore the integrity of the press?
3. What does Plaisance call "indicators of fallibility"?
4. In your profession, who will hold you accountable?
5. How will they hold you accountable? How will that affect your actions?

Discussion posting for April 12, 2012

Thanks for your patience with the long discussion about the difference between what we "would" and "should" do. And thanks to [redacted] for mounting an excellent argument. She raised everyone's score. And she raised my understanding, and yours, too, I hope.

Thanks to Clinton Culp for talking about a Marine's life-and-death view of the difference between "would" and "should," too. Culp is one of the most amazing people I've ever met. Not only has he put his life on the line to protect democracy, but he has also exercised his strong moral code in an arena where some of us may not think there are any values. You've probably heard the saying, "All's fair in love and war." Culp is living proof that values and morals hold an important place even on the battlefield.

This week, you might consider Culp as you ponder the question, “Why should I be moral?” As he said, he’s moral because of his peers. They’ve promised to help keep each other from engaging in immoral acts. He’s moral because of the people he leads. He doesn’t want them to think it is acceptable to behave in immoral ways. And he’s moral because he has developed strong habits of ethical behavior.

Over the next two class periods, we’ll talk more about responsibility and accountability. On Tuesday, Dr. Sharon Stoll will lead the class because I will be out of town.

Here’s your quiz:

1. Write (or paraphrase) one item from your code of ethics having to do with accountability or responsibility.
2. In which branch of the military did Major Clinton Culp serve?
3. How does Peterson (p. 35) define the libertarian theory of the press?
4. Peterson (p. 49) says social responsibility theory puts faith in something. What?
5. What part of Major Culp’s discussion seemed most relevant to you? Why?

Discussion posting for April 17, 2012

Dr. Sharon Kay Stoll will be in class on Tuesday to lead a discussion of how you might shape your personal and professional values into a more usable form. The idea is based on something a former PhD student at the Center for ETHICS did for coaches about 10 years ago.

This discussion will be very important because this will be something you write for your final paper. Dr. Stoll will hand out the assignment and I'll post it here on Blackboard, too. It will be due on the day and time when you are to take your final.

Here is your quiz.

1. What do Kovach and Rosenstiel say is the 4th key principle of journalism?
2. What well known columnist coached Ronald Reagan to help him prepare for his presidential debate?
3. Why do Kovach and Rosenstiel say Fox News is like propaganda?
4. Kovach and Rosenstiel discuss the journalist as a "committed observer." What do they mean by that?
5. Should advertisers who pay for the news have a say in shaping news content? Why or why not?

Discussion posting for April 19, 2012

Quiz 25:

1. What world expert in the pedagogy of moral reasoning in competitive populations was your instructor on Tuesday?
2. What three questions of right action did David Hansen construct for coaches?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c. ..
3. Why do you think something like that worked in the area of sportsmanship?

Discussion posting for April 24, 2012

The semester is about completed and you've done a great job. I've made a slight adjustment in the course plans. I was going to drag you out to an evening showing of "Good Night, and Good Luck." But I've decided to show it during our regular class in three or four installments. That will still give us time to talk about your final papers and the general purpose of this class.

As you've seen, the codes of ethics of your professions are built around certain central moral values, such as honesty and fairness. As professionals, you will be expected to accept those values and act accordingly. Of course, you have your own personal values, too.

Over the last two weeks of class, I'd like to focus on how your personal values fit with your professional values. For some of us print and broadcast media, Edward R. Murrow and Fred Friendly have been models of principled thought. I remember Friendly practicing his public television seminars on media ethics on the students at Columbia University. Trying to keep up with Friendly was a daunting task, and I always felt I was a step behind. But that was part of his purpose. He wasn't trying to tell us right and wrong, but he was forcing us to think about it. As Friendly described the purpose of the seminars, they were "not to make up anybody's mind, but to open minds and to make the agony of decision making so intense that you can escape only by thinking."

Of course, neither Friendly nor Murrow were perfect, as you'll see in your reading this week.

Here's your quiz:

1. In "Ethics in Black and White," who does author Michael Dillon credit with creating McCarthy?

2. Who said, “All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing”?
3. During Murrow’s time, who was the president of the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS)?
4. During the first regular national newscast, John Cameron Swayze was required by advertisers to do what?
5. Do you agree with Dillon that journalists should “comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable”? Why or why not?

Discussion posting for April 26

About 25 years ago, when I was working at a television station in Vermont, I was one of the candidates interviewed for the job as William Paley’s personal assistant. I got to make the trip to the top of Black Rock. At the time, Paley was raising money for the Museum of Radio and Television, now the Paley Center for Media.

Paley was in his last years then and would die a couple of years later. But he was still an important figure in media. As you see in *Good Night and Good Luck*, Paley was never too far from major television decisions. Certainly, television news was less of a profit center in Murrow’s day, but it was a business. Murrow had to perform the Liberace interviews to justify the less popular (but arguably more important) news programs.

Money was certainly one of Paley’s most important values, albeit a non-moral value. Yet he had some other values, too — moral values — or he wouldn’t have given Murrow the opportunity to take on the stories he did. He had a strong streak of patriotism, hence the

loyalty oath requirement. He respected Murrow. He expected his news teams to be fair, as the exchange between Sig Mickelson and Murrow demonstrated.

Alas, I didn't get the Paley job. My mentor, Tom Phillips, a longtime CBS News writer, says that's a good thing. Mr. Phillips didn't think I would have been a good fit for the Paley suite. He's certainly right; I'm too much of a bumpkin. But I would have liked to know more about what motivates people like Paley. Paley was never a hero to me, but he created the atmosphere that allowed people such as Murrow and Friendly to flourish. That's a good thing.

Here's your quiz.

1. What value drives Murrow to do the Milo Radulovich story?
2. What value drives Paley to allow Murrow to do the Radulovich story/
3. What value drives Murrow to sign the CBS loyalty oath?
4. What value drives Joe Wershba (Robert Downey Jr.) to resist signing the CBS loyalty oath?
5. Would you sign a loyalty oath if your employer requested it? What, if any, provision of your professional code of ethics would help you decide?

## Appendix N

### Course Schedule and Writing Assignments for the SBH Maieutic Method Class

#### Course Schedule

JAMM 341, Mass Media Ethics

*This is a tentative schedule which will be adapted as the course moves along during the semester.*

Each class will begin with a short 5-question quiz covering assigned reading and in-class presentations. The questions will be posted on the class Web site prior to class, but students are expected to prepare individually and answer independently.

#### Week 1 (Jan 12) Who are you?

1. Explanation of the course.
2. Research explanation and testing: RSBH and DIT.
3. Central framing question: Who are you?
4. PowerPoint: Who are you?
5. Discuss expectations for papers and APA style. Show how to create citations in Word.

#### Week 2 (Jan 17 & 19) The good person.

1. Reading – Frankena, *Ethics*, preface and part 1, p.1-11. Merrill, J.C. (1994) “Immanuel Kant,” *Legacy of wisdom: Great thinkers and journalism*, pp 61-66; Kovach, B. & Rosenstiel, “What is journalism for?”, *The elements of journalism: What newspeople should know and the public should expect*, pp 15-35
2. PowerPoint: The good person
3. **Paper 1 (Due Jan. 19):** Unfair treatment.

Have you ever been treated unfairly or dishonestly? Tell what happened and relate it to your life and interests. How did you feel and how did it affect you? Relate that experience of being treated unfairly or dishonestly to your vision of how you will live your life during your career in journalism, advertising, public relations, digital media or broadcasting. APA style. No references required.

#### Week 3 (Jan 24 & 26) Principles and you

1. Discussion of papers
2. Reading - Fox & DeMarco, “Applying moral principles,” *Moral Reasoning*, pp. 225-244; “A question of balance: the autism-vaccine controversy in the British and

American Elite Press,” Clarke, C.E., Science Communication, June 24, 2008.;  
Murrow, *In Search of Light*, pp. 3-48.

3. Power Points: 02 Values Principles and You
4. **Paper 2, due Jan. 26** (2-3 pages, APA style, 6 references including 2 class, 2 text, and 2 outside sources):

Based on your readings of Edward R. Murrow, reflect upon the journalistic duty of impartiality. Was Murrow impartial or was he an activist journalist? In the face of Hitler, should he be impartial? Is it possible to be impartial? Are there times when partiality is acceptable? How can you tell when it's acceptable or not acceptable? Imagine yourself in the situation of someone like Murrow, the lone reporter in a foreign country, as war begins in that nation, a war in which the United States has no part. It might be Rwanda or Sierra Leon. It might be the Mexican drug war. But let's say it's the Libyan civil war, and on one side sits a leader often equated with Hitler. Could you remain the impartial observer? Would you take sides? What is your purpose? If you're to be a good person, what should a good person do? (Focus on one or two aspects of this question and reflect deeply.)

#### Week 4 (Jan 31 and Feb 2) Decision Making

1. Discussion of papers.
2. Reading – Frankena, Ch. 2, p. 12-33; Codes of Ethics of Society of Professional Journalists, American Marketing Association, American Association of Advertising Agencies, Public Relations Society of America, Radio Television Digital News Association.
3. Power Point – Frankena 2
4. Power Point, Decision Making
5. **Paper 3, due Feb. 2.** (2-3 pages, APA style, 6 references including 2 class, 2 text, and 2 outside sources)

Decide on 2 or 3 moral values and tell why you selected each one. Which one is the most important principle and why do you think it is more important than the others. Write a moral principle for each of your chosen values. Identify at least one potential problem that each of your moral principles may run into. Consider issues in your field of interest. Does this problem constitute an exception to your principle? Does your personal code always fit within the code of ethics in your field?

#### Week 5 (7& 9 Feb) Utility

1. Discussion of papers
2. Reading: Frankena, Ch. 3, 34-60
3. Power Points: Frankena Ch. 3
4. **Paper 4 Due Feb. 9** (2-3 pages, APA style, 6 references including 2 class, 2 text, and 2 outside sources):

Imagine Wikileaks on a local level. A source brings a document to you that he or she smuggled out of a classified area concealed inside their person. The source is afraid that he or she will be fired, or prosecuted, if anyone finds out who leaked the document. The document is marked classified, and conventional sources will neither confirm nor deny anything about the document. The document alleges that two Muslim men in your community are under surveillance by federal authorities. Only one man is named and the second man is described in rather generic terms. The document does not suggest that the men committed any crime, but the community has already experienced hate crimes against Muslims. You must decide whether to print a story based on the document. What are the moral issues involved? Could anyone be harmed? What principles must you apply to making a decision? How do your personal principles apply? What does your profession's code of ethics suggest about such cases? APA style, 2-3 pages with six citations: 2 from class, 2 from reading materials, 2 from outside.

#### Week 6 (14 & 16 Feb) Moral value

1. Discussion of papers
2. Reading: Frankena, Chapter 4. pp 61-78; Reichert, "Prurient Potions" from *The Erotic History of Advertising*, pp. 291-322.
3. Power Points: Frankena Ch. 4
4. **Paper 5, due Feb. 16.** (2-3 pages, APA style, 6 references including 2 class, 2 text, and 2 outside sources)

Reichert notes that the use of sexual images and innuendo to sell alcoholic beverages is becoming more brazen. Your company wins a contract to market for Buzzin, a new alcoholic beverage. Pressured by the company, your boss orders you to put together a sexy marketing campaign. The campaign is extremely brazen, but successful. Buzzin becomes very popular with the younger demographic. However, it also attracts attention for some negative side-effects. An activist group blames the advertising for Buzzin for increases in drunk driving accidents and sexual assaults against young women. In fact, your boss's daughter is hurt in a car crash with a drunken driver who had empty bottles of Buzzin in his car. Your boss asks you for a two-page memo outlining your private response to these complaints in hopes of formulating a better policy for dealing with such clients in the future. Analyze the situation using your principles and the mandates of your code of ethics. Is there anything wrong with using sex to promote drinking? Do you or your company have any responsibility in these cases?

#### Week 7 (21 & 23 Feb) The Good Life

1. Discussion of papers
2. Reading: Frankena, Chapter 5, pp 79-94
3. Power Points: Frankena Chapter 5-6
4. Video: Murrow, *The McCarthy Years*

5. **Paper 6, Due Feb. 23.** (2-3 pages, APA style, 6 references including 2 class, 2 text, and 2 outside sources)

Shannon is a video producer for a local Web site. She works hard and is well organized. She has developed many contacts in the community and has generally earned their respect. She knows most of the other media in her community and regularly sees them at news events.

In recent months, she has noticed one television reporter commit what she considers to be unethical behavior. She has witnessed him stage minor events that he portrays on air as happening live. She has seen him secretly taking video of a grieving family after a family member requested their privacy. She has seen him badger a young man into making an angry statement, which came across on air as the opposite of what the man said in statements to other reporters. And quite by accident, Shannon came across the reporter having a boozy dinner with a county commissioner, following which the commissioner picked up the tab with a county credit card.

The next day, Shannon calls the news director who supervises the reporter. Shannon asks if the conversation is confidential. The reply is, "You tell me." Shannon assumes that is an affirmative, and informs the news director about the unethical conduct. In Shannon's remarks she states that perhaps the reporter needs some emotional counseling. The conversation ends with the news director saying, "We will look into it."

Four hours later Shannon receives a call from the reporter, who swears, "Who the f...do you think you are? You don't have the right to call me unethical or sick. I don't do anything different than 90% of the media today. Get off your high horse. You got your nerve, call me unethical. What you did was totally unethical." The reporter hangs up before Shannon can reply.

She is left holding the phone and wondering why and if she should have reported the offensive behavior. What should Shannon do now? Should she call the news director and demand some sort of apology for the lack of confidentiality? Should she call the reporter back, and tell him what she thinks?

What would you do? Emotion, ethical practice, responsibility of professional practice: Shannon's problem could be in any field of endeavor. It isn't about media; it's about behavior, communication, and professional practice. What say you?

#### Week 8 (Feb. 28 & Mar1) Why be moral?

1. Discussion of papers
2. Reading: Frankena, Chapter 6, pp 95-116; Murrow, *In Search of Light*, pp 233-268.
3. PowerPoint: Frankena, Chapter 5-6
4. Video: Murrow, *The McCarthy Years*
5. **Paper 7, due Mar. 1** (2-3 pages, APA style, 6 references including 2 class, 2 text, and 2 outside sources).

Edward R. Murrow took a moral stand on McCarthyism at significant risk to himself, his staff and his network. Write about one moral stand you've taken in your life. Discuss what principles were most important and whether you placed yourself or

others at any risk. What non-moral goods were served by your stance? Reflect on how you felt about your stand and whether you made a difference in that situation. How would such a moral stance play in your branch of the media? Would it fit within your profession's code of ethics?

**Week 9 (Mar 5&6 -- no class Mar 8); Digital media**

1. Discussion of papers
2. Movie night: "The Social Network", Monday evening, Mar. 5, location TBA. (No class on Mar 8. If unable to view movie, you must obtain it and view it your own.)
3. Reading: Ginny Whitehouse (2010): Newsgathering and Privacy: Expanding Ethics Codes to Reflect Change in the Digital Media Age, *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 25:4, 310-327; Hallahan, K. "Responsible online communication," *Ethics in public relations*, pp 107-130.
4. Discussion of ethical issues in "The Social Network."
5. PowerPoint: The Social Network
6. Paper 8, due March 8 (2-3 pages, APA style, 6 references including 2 class, 2 text, and 2 outside sources):

Refine your values and principles paper, making appropriate changes if needed. Consider the course and class discussions thus far. Rank your moral values from most important to least important and tell why you rank them in that order (e.g., I value honesty because...). Provide a principle statement for that value, e.g. I will not lie. Provide at least one problem that that you may encounter following that principle (e.g. If the coach asked me if my best friend John was in class yesterday and I know he will get in trouble for not being in class. Should I lie to the coach? Does my loyalty to John override my principle of being honest to the coach?) Explain your reasoning.

**Week 10 (13 & 15 Mar) No Class due to Spring Recess**

**Week 11 (20 & 22 Mar) Truth and honesty**

1. Discussion of papers
2. Reading: Marlin, R. "Ethics and propaganda," *Propaganda and the Ethics of Persuasion*, pp. 137-204
3. PowerPoint: What is truth?
4. **Paper 9, Due March 22** (2-3 pages, APA style, 6 references including 2 class, 2 text, and 2 outside sources).

You're a radio talk show host on a local station. A young girl disappears and all the media in town are covering the story. You get a phone call on the air from a man saying he is the kidnapper. You notify police. Because of some things the man says, police want you to help them catch the suspect. The police ask you to be the lead in a sting to capture the kidnapper. You'll have to lie to the kidnapper on the air (and your listeners will hear you) and say you have a promise that he'll be given immunity if he gives the girl up unharmed. The police routinely lie to

suspects to get criminals to confess, so they think this is quite acceptable. And because the lie will be yours, not theirs, they'll have no qualms actually arresting him. In fact, if they don't arrest him, you're afraid he'll just do it again, as do other kidnapers who get what they want in one case. Will you go along with the police and lie to help save a little girl? Elaborate on your reasoning. What principles are you relying upon to make your decision? What's the cost to you and your station when people learn about your deception? How does that fit with your moral values and the ethical code of your profession?

#### Week 12 (Mar 29 & 29) Fairness

1. Discussion of papers
2. Reading: Sandel, M.(2009) Justice, "The Case for Equality: John Rawls," pp 140-166. Giles, B. (2002). Discovering What Constitutes Fairness in Newspaper Reporting. *Nieman Reports*, 56(2), 3. Retrieved from EBSCOhost.
3. PowerPoint: Fairness
4. **Paper 10, Due Mar. 29:** (2-3 pages, APA style, 6 references including 2 class, 2 text, and 2 outside sources)

You are the owner of a sophisticated line of women's sport bra clothing. Your line has been the best in the business for decades but in the past year, sales have declined from what you perceive is shoddy, yellow advertising by your closest competitor, BRZ lingerie. BRZ has maligned your reputation as well as your established product and now reigns as the number one product. As luck would have it, one of your designers brings you BRZ's fall production models. She states that through a series of dumb luck, she found the layout in a designing class she was taking. After investigation, she realizes that one of BRZ's people apparently inadvertently left it behind. She excitedly notes that the material is dated and appears to be the latest model. She also states that from what she can glean, your company can outdo BRZ easily and win back the lost market. What do you do, based on your stated principles? Address the questions below and give theoretical support from your authors on your answer to EACH question.

- a. Tell your designer to return the model to BRZ, emphatically stating that you will have no part in clandestine snooping.
- b. Tell your designer to return the model, but only after you analyze it thoroughly. You're not a thief, but you're not stupid either.
- c. Keep the model, tell your designer to be quiet about what she found, and develop a new strategy based on what was found. Losers are weepers. All's fair in love, war, and the lingerie business. And obviously, BRZ has sloppy as well as practicing unethical business practices, which now has caught up with them. It's payback time.
- d. Other options, and reasoning behind them?

#### Week 13 (Apr 3 & 5) Beneficence and harm

1. Discussion of papers

2. Reading: Good, H. "Death of Innocence," *Outcasts*, pp. 70-119. Pirkis, Bures, Francis, Blood and Jolley, (2006) *The relationship between media reporting of suicide and actual suicide in Australia*, *Science and Medicine*, 2874-2886; Stevens, J.E. (2001), *Reporting on violence: New ideas for television, print and Web*, Berkeley, CA, Berkeley Media Studies Group.
3. PowerPoint: Beneficence and harm
4. **Paper 11, Due April 5** (2-3 pages, APA style, 6 references including 2 class, 2 text, and 2 outside sources) Looking at your image:

Part 1: In your assigned team, find a 2-3 minute clip of someone from your profession represented in the movies or TV facing an ethical dilemma, preferably involving harm. You will play the clip for class and explain what moral principles may be used to justify or condemn the person's actions. You should also address how the example fits the code of ethics of the profession. Be prepared to explain your own views about how such a situation should be handled.

Part 2: Based on the clip your group selected, write an essay that summarizes and provides context for the clip, and provides your personal answer to the following questions:

What principles could be used to justify the person's actions and what principles could be used to condemn the person's actions? Explain using moral reasoning. Who is being harmed and who is being helped? Why is that good or bad? How does the characters' behavior fit the code of ethics of your profession? Imagine yourself in that character's position and explain your own views about the situation. What you would do differently? Does this character accurately represent your profession as you would like to see it represented? Why or why not? If not, why do you believe the writers represented the character that way? What purpose does it serve?

#### Week 14 (Apr. 10 & 12) Responsibility

1. Discussion of papers
2. Reading: Plaisance, P.L. (2000) "The concept of media accountability reconsidered," *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 257-268.; Hallahan, K. (2006) *Responsible online communication*, *Ethics in Public Relations: Responsible Advocacy*, pp 107-130; Peterson, T. (1966), *Social responsibility: Theory and practice*, *The Responsibility of the Press*, pp. 33-50; Organization of News Ombudsmen Mission Statement, [www.newsombudsmen.org](http://www.newsombudsmen.org).
3. PowerPoint: Responsibility
4. **Paper 12 Due 12 April 5** (2-3 pages, APA style, 6 references including 2 class, 2 text, and 2 outside sources)

You are the news director and main anchor at a television station. You've been working with one of your reporters on an investigative piece about out-of-town travel by city council members. It's a good story, but you get one significant fact wrong. At least one council member may have been unfairly accused. You learn later that a city

firefighter having a drink with your reporter hears her say she's "going to get" the council member. You didn't say it. But you're concerned that the reporter was reflecting the attitude of the newsroom, and one you have allowed to flourish, even if you didn't actively promote it. And now you not only have an error to correct, you have a potential lawsuit brewing. The reporter's statement makes it look a lot like malice. Write a correction for that mistake. Describe what you believe would be the fair and appropriate way to deliver that correction in your newscast. Should an apology be included? Explain why it is important to deliver such a correction and or apology, and what it does for the parties involved. Does it change the wrong? Does it clean the slate? How does it serve anyone to apologize? Does it matter whether it's a private apology or a public apology? How does it help the parties move on?

Week 15 (Apr 17 & 19) Independence

1. Discussion of papers
2. Reading: Kovach, B. & Rosenstiel (2001), "Independence from faction", *The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect*, pp 94-110; Scheuer, J. (2008), "Clean news: Journalistic excellence and independence," *The Big Picture: Why Democracies Need Journalistic Excellence*, pp. 151-170; Potter, D. "News for Sale," <http://www.newslab.org/articles/newsforsale.htm>.
3. Power point: Independence
4. **Paper 13, due April 19** (2-3 pages, APA style, 6 references including 2 class, 2 text, and 2 outside sources):

Harriet is a reporter at The Big Town Daily News and is respected as one of the top journalists in the community. A reporter at WXTV in Big Town, Rebecca, has been working on a significant environmental story for several months, but one that happens to be on the fringe of the Daily News' coverage area, so the newspaper hasn't devoted much coverage to it.

Rebecca comes to Harriet with an unusual offer. She's concerned that the story hasn't reached a wide enough audience, a problem exacerbated by WXTV's status as the number 3 station in the market. She believes that until the story gets greater coverage, authorities will remain reluctant to make changes. In the meantime, Rebecca believes people are being hurt by the environmental problem. So she offers to give all the original documents she has gathered on the story to Harriet, in hopes that the Daily News will begin covering the story.

Many of the documents come from sources Harriet could not easily duplicate, and what's being offered represents weeks, if not months, of work. Rebecca wants nothing in return. In fact, Harriet gets the impression that Rebecca hasn't told her boss about what she's doing.

Harriet doesn't respond but takes the offer to her editor. Her editor tells Harriet she can't accept the offer. "We do our own work here," he says. Harriet then asks for permission for a week to research the story. The editor laughs. "It's their story, not ours," he says. "Our readers don't care about it."

What should Harriet do? Analyze her options using theories of ethical decision-making. What is Harriet's purpose? What ethical issues are involved? Does

Harriet have duty in this case? What theory supports your opinion? What greater good will be served by Harriet's action?

Week 16 (Apr 24 & 26 Apr) Who are you? Part II

1. Movie Night: Monday, Apr. 23 *Good Night and Good Luck*, (No class, Thursday, Apr. 26)
2. Discussion of papers
3. Reading: Dillon, M. "Ethics in black and white: Good Night and Good Luck," *Journalism Ethics Goes to the Movies*, pp. 109-124;
4. PowerPoint: The ethical reporter
5. **Paper 14: Due 28 April** (2-3 pages, APA style, 6 references including 2 class, 2 text, and 2 outside sources):

You're working in a highly competitive media market and a story breaks. A prominent professional athlete from another city is accused in a civil lawsuit of sexually assaulting a waitress in your community. Both the athlete and the waitress are named in the litigation. A quick check with the courts reveals that the waitress had a drunk driving arrest and a divorce two years earlier.

You believe one of the other media in the city will publish the woman's name, even if you don't. And there's already a rumor of juicy stories about her divorce. However, the lawsuit against the athlete claims damages because the victim has suffered severe mental distress, loss of employment and suicidal ideation. The place where she used to work, and which she claims fired her after she raised the accusation of sexual assault, is part of local chain that advertises heavily.

Assume one of the following roles based on your current educational path: A media blogger, a television producer/reporter, a newspaper reporter/editor, or a public relations person hired by the athlete. Will you name the athlete? Will you name the waitress? Will you name the establishment where she worked? Why or why not. What decision making process did you follow in each case? What's your purpose? What principles guide you to that decision?

If you will publish those names, are there limits to how much you will publish and how deeply you will investigate? Why or why not?

Week 17 (May 1 & 3) (Dead Week) Course overview and review

1. All make up and late papers must me on my desk no later than the beginning of class, Tuesday, May 1.
2. **Paper 15, due May 3.** (2 pages, APA style, no references required):

50 years from now, they're making a movie about your life. And the director asks a young writer — George — to compile a 2-page bio describing what kind of person you are. The director doesn't care what you did. That's in the history books. He's interested in what kind of character you had. Of course, he knows you're human and that you're not perfect. And he wants to know how and why you led your life the way you did. Pretend you're George and write the bio of your character, in third person,

Appendix O

Samples of Graded Papers with Comments for the SBH Maieutic Method Class

Paper 10 Competitor's Designs  
March 21, 2012

6.0  
-1.5  
-1.2  
93

Ref # -0  
RF -0  
RF -0  
RF -0  
RF -0  
RF -0

There are times in our life when we have to look out for our self and do what is in our best interests. One of the most important times we do this is in the job market. In professional work experience, there may be times when we are presented with an opportunity to get a step up on those we are competing with. These types of instances are especially important in the mass media field, particularly in advertising and marketing. In the instance of being the owner of a women's sport bra clothing company and coming across the designs of your top competitor's product, I would go with option B and tell my designer to return the model, but only after I analyzed it thoroughly. Choosing this option does not especially clash with either of my two important moral principles of honesty and self-discipline, therefore making the choice about what to do rather simple.

no? is it honest?

John Rawls states that different people would favor different principles, reflecting their various interests, moral and religious beliefs, and social positions (Sandel, 2009). Given the situation about the fall production model and what to do with it, each person is going to have a different say on the matter. If I were to come into the possession of material that could rectify my company to its rightful position in the lingerie business, and take away the unjust actions of my competitor, I would definitely use it to some extent. You have to make a judgment and a decision (Grant, 2012). Of the list of options as to what to do with the model, I would not be completely immoral and keep the model, but I would analyze it first. I would be fair to some extent and at least return the model, but I would have no reservations in.

is it this  
just  
retribution  
An eye for  
an eye?

you'd be  
left a  
little bit  
immoral.

Looking it over first. "When individuals perceive outcomes to violate fairness, they are likely to experience anger and retaliate" (Schweitzer & Gibson, 2007). By returning the model, I would hope to prevent the possibility of retaliation from my competitor.

But aren't you doing this - you were never unhappy by BRZ. Now you're Ketchum's victim? Cycle of Retaliation?

"When money, competition, and pride are at stake, both petty and serious unfairnesses are common - taking credit for another's work, shifting blame, inequitable allocation of work load, and promotions of the less competent for political reason" (Josephson, 2010). As the owner and having lost my rightful place on top, along with my reputation being ruined due to yellow advertising, returning the model after analyzing it would still be fair. Not being fair at this moment in time is justifiable if it creates fairness in the end or future (Grant, 2012). By returning the model, I feel it would make it fair in the end. This would then hopefully even the playing field and get my company back into the competition.

I dropped my own absolute word - I so don't want Ketchum's work - agree

Taking into account my own personal moral principles of honesty and self-discipline, I don't believe that analyzing the model before returning it violates either. By returning the model, I am being self-disciplined and honest, even with analyzing the competitor's work first. "Despite our tendency to read consent into every moral claim, it is hard to make sense of our moral lives without acknowledging the independent weight of reciprocity" (Sandel, 2009). Given what Rawls says about reciprocity, as the owner, I surely deserve some sort of payback after BRZ has spoken untruly about my company, therefore ruining its reputation. Analyzing the model and using it to even the playing field can easily give that satisfaction of payback, while still not violating my very important moral principles.

Morally: Reciprocity also means payback.

Choosing the option to analyze the model yet return it in the end is the perfect choice for me. It not only gives reciprocity, but it is also not violating any of my morals.

The real world is a place where competition is frequently present, especially in the work force. When situations arise where you have to make a decision that may or may not be fair, you should consider such things as reciprocity but also your moral principles as well. If an action does not violate your morals and you are even a little in the right, you should take advantage of the situation.

Reciprocity in the moral sense does not mean "an eye for an eye." The moral rules of reciprocity are the Golden Rule, to behave as you would want others to behave, or the Kantian ideal, to behave as though it should be a rule that people always behave that way. In this case, your planning on stealing your opponent's intellectual property, she designs. Would you want a rule that everyone should take the intellectual property of others if they "found" it ~~laying~~ lying around? Or would you want the opponent to steal your intellectual property if they "found" it somewhere? You know what your doing is not "completely" right. Why do it? Your only reasons are selfish and revengeful, and poor justifications for abandoning honesty.

-5

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UNFAIR TREATMENT: A LOOK AT HONESTY IN MASS MEDIA

Unfair Treatment: A Look at Honesty in Mass Media

Throughout my four year<sup>s</sup> in high school, I was involved in almost every music group possible. I was in the advanced handbell choir, the chamber orchestra, the marching band, the concert band, the jazz band, the drumline, and the worship band for church services. Basically, music, both listening to it and performing it, is a love of mine and is such a great influence in my life. I had a lot of my classmates tell me how I was definitely going to win the Excellence in Performing Arts for Music Award during the baccalaureate ceremony. I knew in my mind that I had exemplified the type of musical ability that deserves the award. When it came to the ceremony, I was waiting for the administration to call out my name to get the award. When it came to performing arts awards, I was getting ready to stand up when I heard them NOT call my name. I was shocked. While I was happy that my friend was the one <sup>who</sup> that got the award, I was thinking to myself, "How did she get it? She is only in orchestra!" Some of my friends <sup>who</sup> that were sitting around me looked at me with looks that said, "How did you not get that award?" One of my friends, who was senior class president, was one of those in the committee of faculty and staff who decided the participants of the awards. She ~~had~~ <sup>it</sup> told me a couple weeks after graduation that while the committee agreed that I had the most talent and was involved in the most music groups and that she was trying to tell them that I deserved the award, because my friend was a legacy and because her sisters had won that award in years before, that she deserved the award because of that. At my high school, legacies were a big deal, and I understand that, but at the same time, that award was supposed to be based on talent and dedication, not family relations.

*Being happy  
your friend  
said for  
youself!  
The same  
is a very  
difficult  
position  
emphatic*

*awkward - try backing into 2 sections*

*very true!*

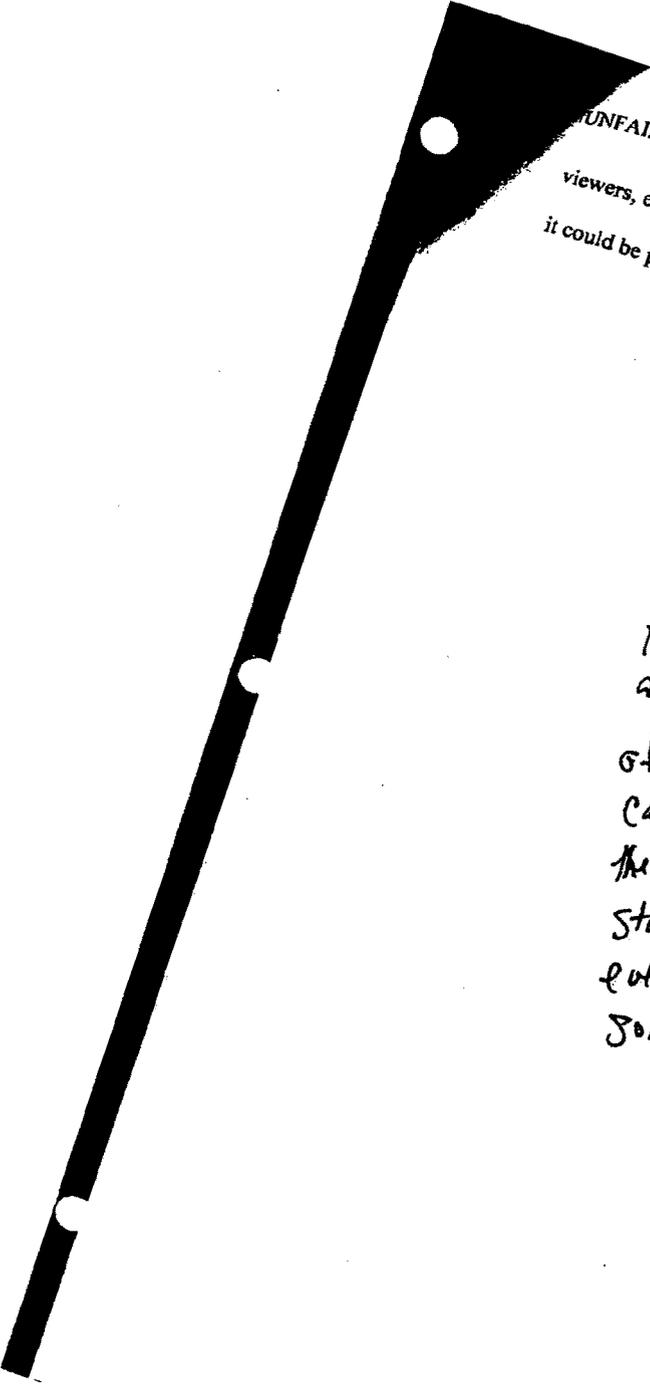
UNFAIR TREATMENT: A LOOK AT HONESTY IN MASS MEDIA

I felt cheated in this situation because I know what it takes to get that award and had achieved those expectations, yet it was given to someone who frankly did not have the same talent that I did. The award was not given based on its meaning, which was very frustrating. I felt that the administration was being unfair in their decision, and <sup>was</sup> ~~were~~ also being dishonest because <sup>it</sup> ~~they~~ gave the award to someone who didn't deserve that particular award. I guess you can say that I am still bitter about not receiving this award, but on the other hand, it is comforting to me that I, along with a lot of others, know that I truly deserved that award, which shows that my talents were appreciated and valued. That knowledge doesn't need an award.

*Good point. Awards and accomplishments are hard things*

Since my major is broadcasting and digital media, I will be handling both on-camera material as well as off-camera duties. In relation to the on-camera material, especially as a television news anchor, I must not only look presentable, but also give the news in ways that are interesting and factual. This sort of duty can be related back to my situation in high school because even if there are other anchors that receive awards or acknowledgment for their performances that may not be as good as mine, I will know deep down that I am doing the best that I can and that I don't need the encouragement of others to know that I am good at what I do. This can also be applied to off-camera duties, but in a different way. A lot of people don't really think of the technical aspects of a television show unless there are malfunctions, such as awkward cuts in scenes or inappropriate commercial placements. As a technical director, it is my responsibility to make sure that everything runs smoothly, and even if there aren't any errors during a show, I will know that I made that happen and don't need people to congratulate me on it. In the television industry <sup>Awkward: relationship of this phrase doesn't work.</sup> as a whole, the situation in high school can relate to it because I will be honest in the information I provide to the

*Good. Setting standards is the best way to measure yourself.*

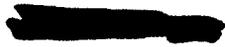


UNFAIR TREATMENT: A LOOK AT HONESTY IN MASS MEDIA  
viewers, even if they do not think I am providing that information in the best way they think  
it could be provided.

344

Excellent essay.

In journalism, they hand out a lot  
of awards. But the best work may  
often go unnoticed. You're picked up on  
the difficulty of measuring yourself  
internally when external measures are being  
applied by other people. ~~The~~ Moral questions  
often affect us in the same way. We  
can judge for ourselves, or let others do  
the judging. And it is often a struggle to  
stand up for what we know is right  
even when everyone else seems to think  
something else.



Professor Tom Grant

April 4, 2012

AD  
-1.0 late  
-1.5  
-2  
8.3

Mad Morality

Mad Morality 1

Ref # -0  
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text -0  
clm -0  
date -0.5

Television shows and movies tend to portray the advertising profession in many different positive, negative or neutral lights. As for the case of *Mad Men*, these guys are seen as sleazy, manipulative and crass. They are at the top of the food chain and have no sight of coming down. This tends to play up in the way they advertise as well. In one particular case, Don Draper, an advertising executive, has the challenge of continuing to positively advertise for Lucky Strike cigarettes even after a study has come out to link diseases and death to the product. The issue here would be whether or not to continue the ads with a different spin or give up on the advertising campaign completely. The American Advertising Federation says, "Advertising shall tell the truth, and shall reveal significant facts, the omission of which would mislead the public" (Grant, 2012). Should Draper go against the code of ethics or find a way to please his client and his boss for manipulative creativity?

Don Draper, however, took the benefit of how tobacco is grown to show the value of Lucky Strike instead of focusing on the negative and poisonous connotation. One could say that he has a duty to his company and to himself to produce the ads in order to make his money and living. This is a kind of Kantian theory that states what one ought to do based on rationality. According to Randal Marlin, author of *Propaganda*, part of Kantian theory involves "whether the action shows respect for other people as ends in themselves rather than simply as means to ends of our own" (Marlin, 2002). Don Draper is essentially thinking of himself but also thinking of his client and keeping them happy. He's looking at this advertising campaign as an end for the

## Mad Morality 2

client instead of for an end for himself. He will have many more clients in the future but he had a duty to Lucky Strike and he chose to find a way to successfully advertise. It can also be argued that Draper found a way around the health issues because, in the past, smoking was a way of life and a way to relax at the end of the day like enjoying a nice scotch was. Scotch can also cause similarly devastating effects on the body but the fault does not land on the alcohol company for producing the product. It's a social way to interact and unwind much like a cigarette. He is going off of the fact that other things in life have potential to kill you but we continue on our day and use those products and services hoping for the best. Why scare people when other things have the same potential to harm? *Do you really buy his line of thinking? Is it honest?*

There are other principles though that Draper didn't consider and could be condemned for his actions. There's the principle of utilitarianism where one tries to do the greatest amount of good for the greatest amount of people and, according to Marlin, produce the greatest amount of overall happiness (Marlin, 2002). The problem here is that the consumer will find pain in the long run as the side effects of smoking tobacco could cause a person to lose friends and loved ones. Draper doesn't look at the long term consequences but rather, short term gain. Does this then produce happiness more than pain? Second, Draper is creating a false sense of trust and faith in advertising that encourages people to continue using the product. Sissela Bok, as presented on an in-class powerpoint, says that lying "violates the respect of others and undermines credibility" (Grant, 2012). Marlin and other philosophers argue, though, that lying may not be morally wrong and that "lying is wrong only to those to whom truth is 'owed'" (Marlin, 2002). Does the general population of consumers deserve the truth? In my opinion, yes they deserve to know what criticism the tobacco industry is coming across. It could essentially save their lives. *Good point.*  
*Excellent observation*

## Mad Morality 3

If I were in Don Draper's shoes, it might be hard for me to step away from such a big campaign. Smoking has gotten such bad publicity in the last few years that it might be difficult now to place myself positively representing tobacco. Let's take a more recent example, say texting and driving. If I am to represent the cell phone companies who want to push their texting features, I should find a way to exclude motor vehicles from my ad campaign. In a way, I am doing what Draper did while avoiding the big issue. I can do something that Draper did not add a warning at the end of my commercial to warn about the dangers in using a cell phone while driving. I am still telling the truth without trying to deceive my audience. If I were to completely tell a lie I would do what St. Augustine defines a lie as "a person must saying something false with the intention to deceive" (Grant, 2012). Draper was hoping to deceive his audience where I am hoping to encourage consumers from engaging in a bad activity. Granted, cell phone use doesn't inherently <sup>sp</sup> danger anyone from simply using the product whereas tobacco does.

I may run across these ethical dilemmas when I start to advertise for local and national campaigns. Don Draper may have chosen to continue to work on the campaign because he, himself used cigarettes. I may choose to work on a campaign or I may choose to remove myself. In the end, I hope I can choose to represent campaigns that I would find myself using and engaging in without the outright manipulation that Don Draper engages in.

*Draper: brilliant advertising mind, not so ethical man.  
I think you'll do better than that. One can be  
brilliant and ethical, can't one?*

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Outside refs?

Jan 25, 2012  
Murrow Essay

(10 2/2)  
9.4

He/H/Co  
K/C  
K/E  
T/F/F  
H/L  
C/B

It is important to clarify that it is not a journalist's responsibility to be impartial so much as it is to report the truth. Often, a journalist can remain impartial by simply reporting the facts of the matter and letting the reader make up his or her mind. However, another responsibility of a journalist is to act as a watchdog, to check facts, to report injustices, and to provide this information in such a way that readers can understand it.

So one is more important than the other OR is it not important to be impartial?

Murrow was more of an activist journalist than most, but he did remain impartial. During his radio broadcasts from Europe, he specifically noted this, saying "And for what will it be fought, and what will be the position of the U.S.? Of course, that is a matter for you to decide" (Bliss 1973).

how could he do both?

One could argue that Murrow is not being truly impartial here that a truly impartial journalist would simply report on the facts and nothing more. But Murrow is not giving his opinion, or telling people what to think; he is only saying that people need to decide something. "What you will decide will be important" (Bliss 1973) Murrow says, and he is right, it was important.

To that extent, partiality is acceptable. It is nearly impossible for any journalist to remain completely impartial, regardless of the circumstances; and in any situation where a journalist is attempting to help his audience understand what is going on, partiality on the side of understanding is not only acceptable, it is good. And this is what Murrow did.

Partiality is OK if it makes things more understandable?

"He made clear choices that directed an audience's definition of the event" (Godfrey 1993)

is that impartial? No. Does it help understanding? how or does it just create a meaning that may or may not be true?

If there was a situation where I was put into a position like Murrow's, I do not

I think that I could remain impartial. I would, of course, do my best to not let my personal opinions or beliefs cloud my judgment or effect my reporting, but I think that in essentially any conflict there is a side that is objectively better to take, and that side is on the opposite side from a Hitler character. It is good to remain objective, but, "Great journalists are not always objective. Great journalism does not require objectivity." (Byrne, 2006).

*Good  
But how  
do we  
tell?*

*That's pretty strong.  
Do you believe that? What  
if a great journalist  
is blinded by  
bias?*

If I am truly a good person, I must make ethical decisions (Grant 2012). In this hypothetical decision, where I am opposing Hitler, remaining impartial is not an ethical decision I can make. My goal, as a journalist, is to educate individuals about the truth. If the truth is that Hitler is a bad person who should be stopped at all costs, my job is then to communicate that to the general public, even if doing so technically puts me outside of the "impartiality" that journalists should adhere to. I do not feel that doing so is wrong. Would I be a better person if I remained completely impartial and saw Hitler succeed because of it? Of course not. I would need to maintain my journalistic integrity by seeking the truth and reporting it, but in the course of those actions I would be presenting my opinion, on some level, to my audience.

During class we discussed the quote that "My purpose is greater than them and greater than myself" (Grant 2012). I believe that this is true. I believe that all of us have some purpose, whether we are rationally aware of it or not. For some, our purpose may be to oppose evil, unethical behavior. Where would we be if, as journalists and gatekeepers for society, we did not take a stand against actions that we knew to be wrong? What might happen if we remained so impartial that no one was able to understand the true gravity of what we reported? I think that the world would be a much

worse place. And so, as journalists, we must, in some ways, be impartial. We must be like Edward R. Murrow and act as an activist journalist. We must be truthful, of course, but we cannot be completely impartial.

Nice Argument. I like the point that we must stand up against evil. The question then becomes how do we recognize evil? And how do we know that we are correct in our assessment? In retrospect, we know Hitler was Evil with a capital 'E.' But did Murrow know that in 1939? In our lives, we will have to make judgments about what's good and what's evil. How much evidence do we need to move from impartial to activist journalist? Maybe we should be more transparent and admit our biases. Or maybe we should just plunge ahead with our biases in full bloom. The danger only comes in those cases where our bias makes it difficult to see the truth.

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*Murrow & E.*  
*Bliss to the*  
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JAMM 341  
Paper # 14  
4/27/12

10.0  
-17  
-11  
9.2

Ref # -0  
RC -0  
RF -0  
task -0  
class -0  
update -0  
.1

*Naming Names*

A news reporter, for a highly competitive media outlet, breaks a story that a prominent athlete from another city is charged with sexually assaulting a waitress from your community. Both the athlete and waitress are named in the litigation. After doing some research, the courts reveal that the waitress had been arrested for drunk driving and had filed for divorce the year prior. Other media outlets will publish the woman's name, and there are rumors of juicy stories surrounding her divorce. The lawsuit against the athletes claims damages for mental distress, loss of employment, and suicidal ideation. Not only that, but the place she used to work says that she was fired after the accusations were made. The question arises, if I was a news reporter do I report the names of both parties, do I use the divorce and her mental instability as something to further my story, or do I name the place where she worked and all the baggage that comes with that? This paper will explore the ethical dilemma proposed, and offer opinion on how I would handle the situation as a news reporter.

The Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) code of ethics asks that every news reporter seek the truth, minimize harm, and be accountable for one's actions (Society of Professional Journalists, 1996). This situation is sensitive and must be carefully handled in order to retain credibility as a reporter and a media organization. According to SPJ, a reporter needs to be honest, fair, and courageous when interpreting news information (Society of Professional Journalists, 1996). I think this piece is important to the situation, because a news reporter does more than inform the public; <sup>he or she</sup> gives them the information necessary to make their own educated

reporters should show  
decision. Furthermore, SPJ states that <sup>reporters should show</sup> showing compassion for those who may be affected by the news reporting (Society of Professional Journalists, 1996). This is especially true for private people like the waitress in this situation, because they have a more privacy than that of a public figure. It is also important to recognize that as a news reporter, I must be accountable for everything I put out, and must take precaution not to impede upon the right to a fair trial for each. These are all important points in my decision making process.

To further the discussion it is important to understand what the role of a news reporter is in today's culture. Kovach & Rosenstiel (2007) state that a news reporter is no longer a gatekeeper of information, rather, a news reporter makes sense of a story, verifies the information, and presents it in a way so the public can grasp it effectively. Additionally, the purpose of journalism is to decipher what is and isn't credible, while still informing the public of the information that is necessary to put the story together and make an educated decision (Kovach, 2007). This is important in conveying the seriousness of the situation, especially with rumors swirling about the waitress, and deciphering what is truly credible is easier said than done.

As a news reporter credibility is something that can make me successful or hinder my ability if I don't seek out true and honest sources. In this circumstance, I would announce who the athlete was, because all the information about the case is open to the public if they feel the need to investigate. I believe that because we have a free and open society, and because I am a news reporter, I have a duty to my readers and public to inform them about what is happening in their community. Using honesty as one of my moral principles in the decision making process, justifies my rationale. I also believe that in order to fully understand the magnitude of the case, I would present the information that is presented in the case. For example, the charges filed in the

civil lawsuit, and what the <sup>plaintiff</sup> defendant is trying to recover in damages. I think this allows the public to make an informed and educated decision.

In regards to the waitress, using her name and her <sup>yes</sup> company's name is a little harder to determine how to properly give the information while minimizing overall harm. As a reporter I truly believe that I owe it to my readers to give them everything they need to make a decision, including the name of the waitress. I would forgo the information about where she worked and what her employers said about her, because I don't think that is relevant to the story, and could be hearsay. Like stated before, honesty helps to justify my reasoning, and I don't think withholding the name of the waitress is being honest to the public. [redacted] (2012) states that we must empathize with those who we expose, in order to know how others feel, and ultimately to minimize harm. I believe this to be true, but the waitress has filed formal civil charges against the athlete and therefore her side of the story needs to be presented. [redacted] (2012) confirms my rationale, and states that every person deserves their story to be told, and we as media people have to give them their day in court. The waitress's side has to be presented in the story and thus I think putting her name in the story is important to understanding the seriousness of what is happening.

*Good point, she made it all public. Did she actually consent to have her name used?*

A news reporter is responsible for seeking the truth, reporting it, minimizing overall harm, and being accountable for his or her actions. This case presents challenges of credibility and exposing people who aren't used to the media. I chose to use both the athlete's name and the name of the waitress in my story, because my readers have a right to know the whole story and make a decision on their own. In conclusion, I believe that as a news reporter I am more than a provider of information, I am a sense-maker and a decipherer for my community to help give them the facts to make their own decisions.

*Good. You have a purpose that leads to your ethical decision.*

## References

[REDACTED] (2012). Personal Communication. *Personal Communication*.

Kovach, B. &. (2007). *Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect*. New York: Crown Publishers.

[REDACTED] (2012). Personal Communication.

Society of Professional Journalists. (1996). *Code of ethics*. Retrieved Feb. 6, 2012, from Society of professional journalists: <http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp>

Excellent essay. I think the decision to name the waitress makes the decision to name the defendant easier. And your reliance on honesty can help make both decisions. I also wonder if the signature of the legal case - a civil lawsuit by the waitress - is tacit approval to name her. If she is named, it seems only fair to name her.

## Appendix P

### Sample PowerPoints for SBH Maieutic Method Class

#### JAMM 341, Sec 2

- Tom Grant, Center for ETHICS+
- Names and photos
- Syllabus
- Research: Moral reasoning
- Complete online assessment

#### JAMM 341, Sec 2

- What's the most important rule in journalism?

#### Class expectations

- Quiz every day on readings, class
- Write one essay each week
- Correct spelling and grammar
- 2-3 pages means 2 full pages at least
- Six sources, APA citation style
  - Two from class
  - Two from required readings or Web site
  - Two from outside sources

#### Reading

- *Ethics* by Frankena
- Supplementary readings by email or posting on Blackboard
- Daily reading on Blackboard

#### Who are you?

#### What do you do?

- What you do defines who you are.
- Heidegger:

We become who we are  
through our everyday  
coping with the world.



## We do not live alone

- We are social creatures...
- Heidegger said we sometimes dissolve into society, become like everyone else
- "... Both necessary and dangerous."
- What is your role in information services?
- Do you define who we are?

## What is morality?

What is moral reasoning?  
What does it have to do with media?

## Why do you do what you do?

## Why do you do what you do?



- Niebuhr: Three parts of moral reasoning are relationship with others, relationship with God and relationship with self.

## Some vocabulary

- Teleology – the end purpose
- Deontology – duties and obligations
- Realism -- reality is independent of us
- Idealism -- existence is ultimately mental

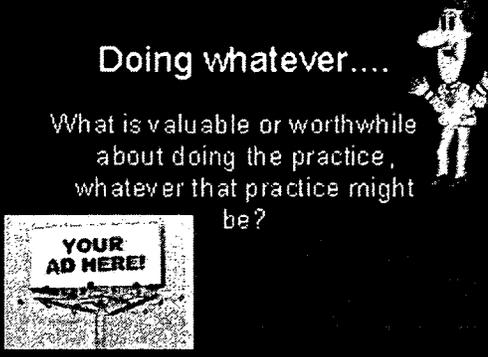
## What is the purpose of...

- Journalism?
- Advertising?
- Broadcasting?
- Public relations?
- Digital media?



## Doing whatever....

What is valuable or worthwhile about doing the practice, whatever that practice might be?



## Five Steps to Follow...

- # 1. Becoming sensitive to moral issues
- # 2. Respecting and loving yourself
- # 3. Looking for win-win solutions
- # 4. Respecting and loving your craft
- # 5. Searching for Moral Excellence.

R. Scott Perich, Practical Philosophy, p. 235.



## Becoming Sensitive..

- # Moral Callouses - how they develop
  - frequent appeals to "everybody else is doing it."
  - inability to distinguish between what is acceptable and what is not (no rules against it, behavior must be okay).
  - difficulty in telling morally sound concepts from tricky.



## Becoming sensitive....

# if not caught, nothing wrong happened...whatever works is right.



## Removing Callouses

- # Making Promises
- # Looking Out for Harm
- # Looking Out for Selfishness



## Removing moral callouses

- # Making promises
  - to work hard
  - to follow the rules
  - all of the rules
  - all of the time
  - what else?



### Making promises ...

- To work only when we feel like it?
- To honor the letter and spirit of the contract.
- To keep the interests of the client/viewer/reader foremost
- Anything else?

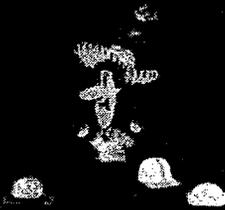


### Step 2: Respecting and Loving Yourself...

- #Loving Yourself Psychologically
- #Loving Yourself Philosophically
- #Humans at Their Best

- Seeking internal goods
- Developing a cohort life story
- Promoting good and avoiding harm

### Step 3: Looking for Win-Win Solutions



### Step 4: Respecting the craft

- #Preserving your field of communication

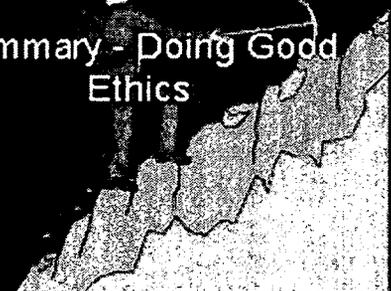
- Observing standards
- Understanding your code of ethics
- Committing to your profession
- Focusing on your purpose

### Step 5: Looking for Moral Excellence



Fred Friendly and Edward R. Murrow

### Summary - Doing Good Ethics



### Five Steps to Follow...

- ◆ 1. Becoming sensitive to moral issues
- ◆ 2. Respecting and Loving Yourself
- ◆ 3. Looking for Win-win solutions
- ◆ 4. Respecting and Loving Your Craft
- ◆ 5. Searching for Moral Excellence. *s.*

*From* Krautman, *Practical Philosophy*, p. 233.

### Chapter One: Dr. Frankena

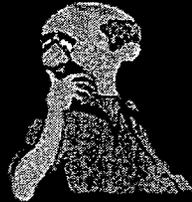
Tom Grant

JAHM 341: Media Ethics



Chapter One: Frankena: 26

### Introduction



- Our goal in this session: - To understand the nature and purpose of morality and moral philosophy according to Frankena.

Chapter One: Frankena: 27

### Topics of Discussion



- An unexamined life is not worth living. Socrates

Chapter One: Frankena: 28

### Topic One

- According to Socrates: what are the requisites of ethical thinking:
  - ◆ We ought never to harm anyone
  - ◆ We ought to keep our promises



Chapter One: Frankena: 29

### Topic two - The nature of ethics

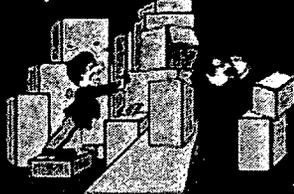
- Descriptive, empirical
- Normative
- Analytical



Chapter One: Frankena: 30

## Descriptive Philosophy

- To describe and explain, or...
- To work out a theory of human nature



Chapter One: Frankfurt: 31

## Normative ethics

- Asking "what is right" and "why is it right"?



Chapter One: Frankfurt: 32

## Analytical ethics

- also called critical ethics, or meta-ethics, or just ethics.
- it asks epistemological or semantical questions, like:
  - What is the meaning of "right" or "good"?
  - How can ethical or value judgments be made?
  - Can they be justified?
  - What is the nature of morality?
  - What is the difference between moral and non-moral?
  - What is the meaning of free will or determinism?

Chapter One: Frankfurt: 33

## Topic Three - the nature of morality

- Why is it different from ethics?



Chapter One: Frankfurt: 34

## Factors in Morality - p. 9

1. Certain forms of judgment are said to have moral quality, obligation, or responsibility.
2. Possible to give reasons for these judgments.
3. Some rules, principles, ideas, and virtues can be expressed in more general judgments and form a background of knowledge.

Chapter One: Frankfurt: 35

## Factors - continued

4. Certain ways of feeling accompany these judgments and help us act.
5. Certain Sanctions of holding responsible, praising, and blaming.
6. A point of view that is different in other types of judging.

Chapter One: Frankfurt: 36

## Kinds of normative judgment

- Judgment of moral obligation or deontic judgment.
- Judgments of moral value or aretaic judgments.
- Judgments of nonmoral value.
- Judgments of nonmoral obligation.

Chapter One: Frankfurt: 37

## Examples:

- I ought to wash my car today.
- I ought to do my homework.
- I ought to tell the truth, even if she doesn't.
- What you did was wrong!
- Coach Smith is a good coach.
- Coach Smith is a good man.

Chapter One: Frankfurt: 38

## Examples:

- You should go to the rock concert.
- You should wear the skimpy bikini.
- You should honor your word.
- The movie, "Rosemary's Baby", would have been a better movie without the sex.

Chapter One: Frankfurt: 39

## Dr. Frankena's goal...

- A little normative mixed in toward a meta-ethical approach.



Chapter One: Frankfurt: 40

## Essays in moral reasoning

The dance of knowing, knowing and knowing. - Jeremy Gill



Jean Piaget



Lawrence Kohlberg

### What I learned from you

- "I think that the most important thing is to report the facts of the situation while looking past your own moral beliefs and instead taking on the moral expectations of the public." -- [Redacted]

### What I learned from you

- "If I was in the middle of the Libyan civil war, I don't know what my course of action or purpose would be. I would want to stop it all and let my actions encourage others.... In a more realistic setting, with bombs, gunshots and the act of killing occurring, I would grab the ones I love, run and hide." -- [Redacted]

### What I learned from you

- "Hitler intended to exterminate the Jewish citizens, the homosexuals and the gypsies. He sought to harm innocent people, which does not reflect the character of a good person. But in Hitler's mind, the idea would better his country and his fellow men by creating a single dominant race to make everyone equal." -- [Redacted]

### What I learned from you

- "It is human nature to become emotionally invested in the things we take interest in. It is what separates us from all the other species on the planet.... I personally do not have the control over my emotions that would be required to keep impartiality in that situation, as I doubt most would." -- [Redacted]

What is Frankena's focus in his discussion of chapter two?



### Normative Ethics

Which is what?



In our mock problems we have been practicing casuistry...



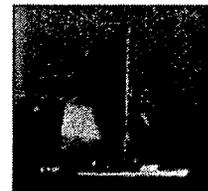
"a moralist trying to provide ethical guidance by making a long list of specific situations, describing them and telling us what we should do in each case."

What is a teleological case?

- Teleological theory says that the basic or ultimate criterion or standard of what is morally right, wrong, obligatory is the non-moral value that is brought into being?
- What does this mean?

What are nonmoral values?

- experiences, paintings, forms of government, things, and what not:



We do not make moral decisions upon moral values why?

- Circular arguments....what are they?



What is a deontological argument?

According to Frankena?



Contend that it is possible for an action or rule of action to be the morally right or obligatory one even if it does not promote the greatest possible balance of good over evil for self, society, or universe.

What is an act deontological theory?

Different classes of deontic and teleological theories...

Extreme act deontic - the golden mean is the decision rests with the perception. No criterion or guiding light.

What is rule deontological theory?

The standard of right and wrong consists of one or more rules. Basic rules independent of amount of good derived.

What is an ethical egoist?

Does not allow for the possibility of being necessary but in the moral field.

## Ethical Egoist...

- one and only basic obligation is to promote the greatest possible balance of good over evil for self. He/she alone is the moral spectator, advisor and judge.
- in making second/third person judgments, an ethical egoist makes judgments based on what is to his or her own advantage.

## Ethical egoists..hedonist

- Epicurean way of life...good or welfare = happiness and happiness with pleasure. Pleasure may also be knowledge, self-realization, life of pleasure, knowledge and other good things.



Everyone must act or judge by the standard of his own advantage in terms of good and evil.



What is psychological egoism?

What does it have to say about it?



is not acceptable in any terms.....



What is wrong with an act - deontological theory?

## Errors....

- It is practically impossible to do in any consistent or reliable fashion.
- How often do we have time to think through the problem?
- We need rules to live by.

## Rule Deontology

- An exception to a rule is no more than giving way to another rule, the only problem is rank ordering according to importance.

Explain W. D. Ross prima facie and actual duty obligations.

## Prima Facie/Actual Duty

- Prima Facie Duty - a set of rules that have no exceptions; by conceiving of them as rules of prima facie.
- Actual Duty: rules that occur in actual situations.
- Problem: Can we set down all the rules?

## What is Divine Command?

How is it a rule deontological theory?  
How is it an ethical egoist theory?

## Divine Command

- The rules are made by the divine will of God; It is a rule deontological theory because the rules are set by God and man is not to undo the rules.
- It can be an ethical egoist rule because man does so as God wills or "man will suffer the consequences".

## What is Kant's Categorical Imperative?



## Kant's Categorical Imperative

- Act only on that maxim which you can at the same time will to be universal law.
  - acting voluntarily
  - freely choose
- judging from the moral point of view to universalize
- action, right or wrong, if can be consistent in similar circumstances.

## For Thursday

- Frankena, Ch. 3
- Papers on your values

## Frankena, Chapter Three

Utilitarianism: Justice and Love

## Teleological Thought

- ◆ The right is to promote the general good. That our actions and our rules, if we must have rules, are to be decided upon by determining which of them produces or may be expected to produce the greatest general balance of good over evil.
- ◆ *If you gotta have rules, choose the ones that should produce greater balance of good over evil.*

## Utilitarianism Standard

- ◆ The sole ultimate standard of right, wrong, and obligation is the principle of utility, which says that the moral end to be sought in all we do is the greatest possible balance of good over evil. Jeremy Bentham (1748-1820), University College, London
- ◆ *Principle of Utility: Greatest balance of good over evil.*

## Physical Determinism

Events are determined by eternal and immutable laws of nature.

A move away from people making decisions, or god writing out the decisions to the decisions are really not decisions at all.

Holtzard, Charles

## Psychological Determinism

All voluntary human action is caused by the alternate operation of motives, desires, and aversions...which are varieties of physical forces.

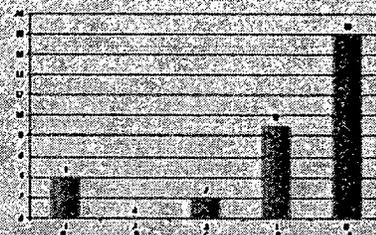
The immediate cause of a voluntary motion is an act of will, but it is never free, it is caused...by psychological training. *Hobbsian thought*

Holtzard, Charles

## VALUES, PRINCIPLES AND YOU

Toward  
Critical  
Decision  
Analysis

## CURRENT GRADES



## WHAT I LEARNED FROM YOU

■ "First, I would need to be honest. In this situation, being honest is hard to do because the facts are somewhat skewed... If this is truly one of my base values, it would only make sense that this story is already un-doable."

- [Redacted]

## WHAT I LEARNED FROM YOU

■ "I would be rather skeptical if someone handed me a document that was stamped classified. Because no other sources can confirm or deny the information, how much I trust the source would really come into play."

- [Redacted]

## THINGS I LEARNED FROM YOU

- "This situation is interesting because while I think the government needs to be more transparent with issues such as these (although I do not believe citizens need to know everything the government does), I think publishing a story of this caliber would cause more harm to everyone involved than good."

- [Redacted]

## WHAT I LEARNED FROM YOU

- "Moral courage is explained by Frankena (1973) as 'courage when moral issues are at stake.' As a news publisher, it would take courage to stick to my morals when I have access to such a controversial document. It would take moral courage to stick to my principles of beneficence, justice and fairness."

- [Redacted]

## OBJECTIVES

- • What are ethical dilemmas?
- • What are ethical principles?
- • What makes a situation ethical?
- • What is a prime principle?
- • What are secondary principle?

## VALUES

- What do you value most?
- How do these values determine how you:
  - Think
  - Feel
  - Judge
  - Decide
  - Act
- Are these primary or secondary moral or social?

## VALUES

- Primary Values (moral):
  - - Honesty, Respect, Justice, Fairness, Responsibility, Beneficence, Caring
- Secondary Values (social):
  - - Loyalty, Commitment, Dedication, Sacrifice, Hard Work, Determination, Friendship

## VALUES

- Narrow your list of values to 2 or 3.
  - Ensure they are primary values.
  - Ask yourself - Can each one stand alone?
- Are you willing to apply Reversibility to each one?
- Are they Universal?
  - Can you think of times when, if standing alone and all things being equal, it would not stand?

## REFLECTION ON JUSTICE

- **Equality & Equity**
  - Are they the same thing?
  - **Equality** - rights, treatment, quantity, quality, equal to all in a specific group.
  - **Equity** - actions, treatment of others, or a general condition characterized by justice, fairness, and impartiality.
- **Do we want equality in communication?**
  - Why or why not?
  - What might be the ramifications of equality?

## WHAT IS FAIR (OR JUST)?

- **Autism and vaccine's coverage**
  - When both sides are covered, does it favor weak claims?
- "Although almost all scientific experts rejected the claim of a link between MMR and autism, 53% of those surveyed at the height of the media coverage [in 2002] assumed that because both sides of the debate received equal media coverage, there must [have been] equal evidence for both. Only 23% of the population was aware that the bulk of evidence favored supporters of the vaccine."

## WHAT IS FAIR (OR JUST)?

- **Is fairness a matter of quality or quantity?**
  - Which kind of fairness do you favor?
- **Does fairness depend who is eventually proved right?**
- **By being fair, can you distort your accuracy?**
- **Global warming? Criminal trials?**

## VALUES: JUSTICE

- **Justice** - is the essential nature of fairness and equity and should be applied to all people.
  - **Distributive Justice** - Allocating coverage
  - **Procedural Justice** - Rules for reporting, Don't cross police line, request interviews through the public information office, meet your time limitations
  - **Retributive Justice** - Losing your press pass, banned from press box
  - **Compensatory Justice** - Paying off a libel lawsuit

## VALUES: HONESTY &amp; RESPONSIBILITY

- **Honesty** - the quality of trustworthiness
  - An individual can be depended on to "not lie, cheat, or steal."
- **Responsibility** - is one being accountable, and possibly liable, for one's actions.
  - In the past, present, and future
  - You are also responsible for your motives & intentions.

## VALUES: BENEFICENCE &amp; CARING

- **Beneficence** - the ethical position whereby one attempts and is actually obligated to do no harm, to remove and prevent harm, to do good.
- **Caring** - the ethical principle that prioritizes concerns for relationships. You want be receptive to relationships, motivated by the welfare of the other and follow through with what the other needs, provided a relationship is formed.

### ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

- Principles put values into action.
  - Usually put in the negative, why?
  - It is easier to quantify the things we should not do because these are fewer than all the things we should do.
- Justice -
  - Do be fair (a myriad of things to do)
  - Do not be unfair (a few things not to do)

### ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

- Justice - Do not be unfair
- Honesty - Do not lie, cheat or steal
- Responsibility - Do not be irresponsible
- Beneficence - Do not cause harm, do not be uncivil
- Caring - Do not reject the other
  - Are your principles...
  - Reversible?
  - Universal?

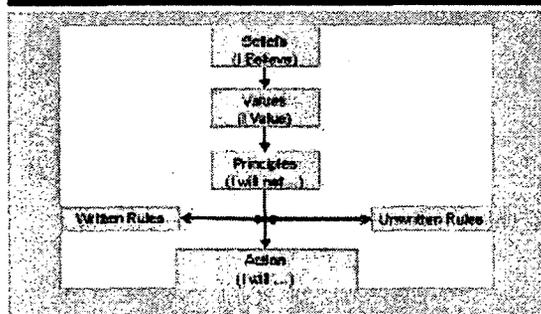
### PRIORITIZING YOUR ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

- \_\_\_\_ Do not be unjust
- \_\_\_\_ Do not lie, cheat or steal
- \_\_\_\_ Do not be irresponsible
- \_\_\_\_ Do not be uncivil
- \_\_\_\_ Do not reject the other
- Why should be prioritize our principles?
- Can we live up to ALL of them ALL the time? If not how should we act?

### PROBLEMS WITH PRINCIPLES

- Are there any problems with your principles? Any foreseeable "sticky" situations?
  - What are they?
  - Does this constitute an exception?
- Reversibility and universality
- Should we have an exception?
- Why? What is the drawback of having an exception?

### PARADIGM: FROM BELIEF TO ACTION



### ETHICAL DILEMMAS

- An ethical dilemma involves making a moral decision and then acting on that decision based on competing values.
- Both non-moral and moral values can affect moral decisions

## ETHICAL DILEMMAS

• As public relations manager for Big Hill Ski Area, Carol wants people in the community to know how great conditions are at the resort. She sends free ski passes to the weather-caster at a television station asking that he and others from the newsroom come up and ski for a day.

• Dilemma or not?

## ETHICAL DILEMMAS

Carol is a reporter at The Bigtown Record. Her editor tells her that she needs to do a January story about dieting and he wants an expert to discuss bariatric surgery. Valley Clinic does most of the bariatric surgery in the community. However, Hilltop Hospital has been a major advertiser with the Bigtown Record. The editor has already arranged for an expert at Hilltop to do the interview. The editor sends a photographer along with Carol to get a photo of the expert.

• Dilemma or not?

## ETHICAL DECISION MAKING PROCESS

- Is there an ethical dilemma?
- Are any principles violated? Or in conflict?
- Is an exception justified by a "lower" principle being placed before a "higher" principle?
- Is the burden of proof for an exception satisfied?
- Do you operate by a professional code of ethics?
- Is the code violated?
- What should you do?
- What will you do, i.e., what is your action?

## EXCEPTIONS: BURDEN OF PROOF

- Is it in keeping with one or more of the principles?
- Can the exception be generalized to cover other cases?
- Would the exception be a less serious violation of the principle than other alternatives?
- Is the violation indirect?
- Is the violation highly improbable or uncertain?

## A NOTE ON INTEGRITY

- • Integrity
  - - Free from corruption,
  - completeness, wholeness
  - - A watertight boat

## A NOTE ON INTEGRITY &amp; CHARACTER

- • Watch your thoughts they become your words
- • Watch your words they become your actions
- • Watch your actions they become your habits
- • Watch your habits they become your character
- • Watch your character because it is how others see you
- • Aristotle

What I learned from you

"I believe in following certain principles such as honesty, self-respect, having compassion, being strongly convicted in my faith, etc. This can also be hard to do because I am human..." - [Redacted]

What I learned from you

"There are times when I don't want to have to be mature and proper all the time, and just want to lay back and enjoy myself. I believe that if this is done in moderation, strict moderation, then it is still morally all right." - [Redacted]

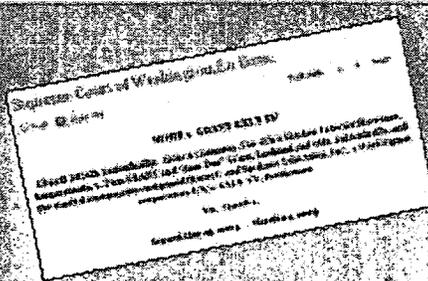
Things I learned from you

"I may want to punch the girl in the face who talked bad about me behind my back, but in my mind, being kind to her may be the best defense I have. You never know who will interview you for a job position in the future." - [Redacted]

Things I learned from you

"Love can be defined as seeking the highest good for the other. Loving others does not include lying and hiding the truth." - [Redacted]

How much honesty is OK?



Why be honest?



Honesty in ethical codes

- SPJ Code: Seek Truth and Report It  
"Journalists should be honest, fair and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting information."
- AMA Code: "Strive to be truthful in all situations and at all times."
- AAF Code: "Advertising shall tell the truth, and shall reveal significant facts, the omission of which would mislead the public."
- NPA Code: "Accurate representation is the benchmark of our profession."

Honesty derives from beneficence

- Frankena: "Given the principle of beneficence and the fact that knowing the truth is a good (in itself or as a means), it follows that telling the truth is a prima facie duty."
- "The principles of beneficence and equality have corollaries like telling the truth, keeping promises, etc. It follows that character traits like honesty and fidelity are virtues, though subordinate ones, and should be acquired and fostered."

St. Augustine

- Truth is vital
- Narrow definition of lying:  
A person must say something false with the intention to deceive
- So it is not a lie if you don't know it to be false
- And it's not a lie if you don't expect people to believe it



Immanuel Kant

- Principle of universality
- If everyone told lies to get out of a tough spot, then no one could be believed, and lying would be self-defeating



Grotius

Honesty based in the right of others to the truth

- Right can be waived by
1. Express consent
  2. Tacit consent on reasonable grounds
  3. Overruled by other right

So acceptable lies:  
Verbal abuse  
Telling fables to children  
"White lies" of the same

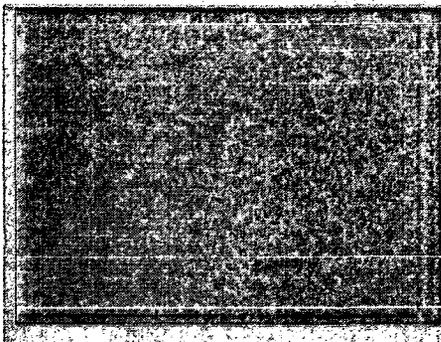


Plato

- The "noble lie" is acceptable because the guardians of the state are entitled to deceive people into behaving in ways that are good for them



## A Few Good Men (1992)



## Plato

- The "noble lie" is acceptable because the guardians of the state are entitled to deceive people into behaving in ways that are good for them.

- Eugenics is OK, too.



## Sissela Bok

- Almost absolutist about lying
- 1. Societal need for trust
- 2. Violates respect of others
- 3. Undermines credibility
- 4. Lying begets lying



## David Nyberg

Lies are part of life  
Don't sweat the small stuff  
Focus on damaging and reprehensible lies

What are acceptable lies?  
Is this casuistry?



## What do you think about lying?



## Misleading without lying

- Ignoring
- Presupposing
- Associating
- Examples?

Jurgen Habermas

- Truth is linked to the intention to promote the good and true life.
- Truth is necessary for freedom and justice.



Jurgen Habermas

Rules for communication:

- 1. Utterance is understandable.
- 2. Propositional content is true.
- 3. Speaker is sincere.
- 4. It is appropriate for the speaker to be performing the speech act.

(Meaningfulness, truthfulness, sincerity, and appropriateness)

Appeals to emotion

- Are appeals to emotion manipulative because they circumvent reason?
- What does Richard Whately say?
- How do you tell if an emotion is rightly called forth?



Appeals to tribalism



Does truth take sides?

Big questions

- Are you manipulating?
- Or are you informing?

Rawls and the veil of ignorance  
 Fairness,  
 Justice,  
 Equality



#### Fairness in ethical codes:

- SPJ: "Journalists should be honest, fair and courageous..."
- "Tell the story of diversity and magnitude of the human experience boldly, even when it is unpopular to do so."
- "Examine their own cultural values and avoid imposing those values on others."
- "Avoid stereotyping..."
- "Support the open exchange of views, even views they find repugnant."
- "Give voice to the voiceless..."



#### American Marketing Association

- Fairness – to balance justly the needs of the buyer with the interests of the seller. To this end, we will:
- Represent products in a clear way in selling, advertising and other forms of communication; this includes the avoidance of false, misleading and deceptive promotion.
- Reject manipulations and sales tactics that harm customer trust.



#### RTNDA

- FAIRNESS: Professional electronic journalists should present the news fairly and impartially, placing primary value on significance and relevance...
- Treat all subjects of news coverage with respect and dignity, showing particular compassion to victims of crime or tragedy.
- Seek to understand the diversity of their community and inform the public without bias or stereotype.



#### PRSA

- FAIRNESS:
- We deal fairly with clients, employers, competitors, peers, vendors, the media, and the general public. We respect all opinions and support the right of free expression.



#### What is fairness?

- Frankena: Distributive justice, the comparative treatment of individuals
- The basic standard of distributive justice is equality of treatment, making the same relative contribution to the goodness of their lives
- Unequal treatment may be justified by beneficence because it will promote greater equality in the long run.
- Example?



#### Basis of equality

- How many have agreed to abide by the Constitution of the United States?
- If you haven't agreed, why are you obliged to follow the law?

### Social consent

- Locke – if you enjoy a benefit of government, you tacitly consent to be bound by the government's laws.
- Kant – Hypothetical consent. The law is just as if it had been agreed to by everyone.

### John Rawls

"Veil of Ignorance"

Social contract arises from taking this theoretical position of equality.



Exercise: The captain's dilemma.

### Rawls principles of justice

- Equal basic liberties such as freedom of speech and religion
- Permitted social and economic inequalities must work to the advantage of the least well off members of society
- Question: Can those principles be derived from an agreement that never took place?

### What is your social contract?

- Does a contract require consent?
- Are all contracts made by parties with equal bargaining positions?
- Paying for lobsters
  - Obligations carry weight because we take them on freely
  - Obligation to repay others for the benefits they provide us

### Unequal parties

- Are media equal parties?



### Consent

- What kind of consent do media have?



### Four theories of distributive justice

- 1. Feudal: Fixed hierarchy based on birth
- 2. Libertarian: Free market formal equality of opportunity
- 3. Meritocratic: Free market with fair equality of opportunity
- 4. Egalitarian: Rawls difference principle (shared benefits)

### Birth order poll

- How many are the first born in their family?
- At Harvard, 75-80% are first born (Sandel)
- Is that merit?

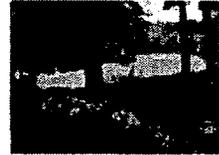
### Applications for communications

- How does distributive justice apply to communications?
- Access to media?
- Reach of media?
- Appearance?
- Acceptance?
- Is media equal/fair?



### Fairness within media

- What kind of fairness is practiced within the ranks of the media?
- In pay?
- In opportunity?
- In side benefits?
- Does media practice what it preaches?



What are your chances of playing Augusta National? The media gets a shot every year.

### Veil of Ignorance

- Can you apply the veil of ignorance to a communications dilemma?
- Examples of the day?

### Fairness in life

- Milton Friedman wrote that life is not fair and that government can't fix what nature created.
- But should journalists and others in communications simply accept that?
- Or do they have a duty to make life more fair?
- If so, what are you going to do?

## The wild, wild Web

1. No attribution
2. No identity
3. No rules

How do people act on the Web?

Page 827

## The wild, wild Web

1. No attribution
2. No identity
3. No rules

How do people act on the Web?

If a lot of people do it, does that make it acceptable?

Page 828

## Character

Character is how you act when no one is looking.

Page 828

## INDEPENDENCE

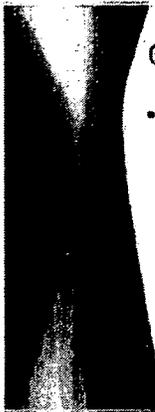
Operating free of obligation to any interest other than that of the public

## Codes of ethics:

- SPI: Journalists should:
  - Avoid conflicts of interest, real or perceived.
  - Refuse gifts, favors, fees, free travel and special treatment
  - Deny favored treatment to advertisers and special interests and resist their pressure to influence news coverage

## Codes of ethics:

- RTNDA: Gather and report news without fear or favor, and vigorously resist undue influence from any outside forces, including advertisers, sources, story subjects, powerful individuals, and special interest groups.
  - \* Resist those who would seek to buy or politically influence news...



### Codes of ethics

- NPPA: Avoid political, civic and business involvements or other employment that compromise or give the appearance of compromising one's own journalistic independence.

### Independence vs. impartiality

- Impartial: Not partial or biased; unprejudiced
- Independent: Free from influence, guidance or control of others.
- What's the difference in practice?

### Independence vs. impartiality

- Impartiality is derived from the principle of justice and asserts that all decisions should be based upon objective criteria.
- Is that possible?
- Objectivity is system of evidence and verification

### Independence vs. impartiality

- Independence refers to self-governing authority.
- Are media autonomous?
- Are reporters autonomous?
- What do we really mean by independent?

### Independence vs. impartiality

- Independence refers to self-governing authority.
- Are media autonomous?
- Are reporters autonomous?
- What do we really mean by independent?
- **Journalists must be independent from those they cover.**

### Can you have political views?

- George Will coached Ronald Reagan for the presidential debates
- Walter Lippman wrote speeches for Lyndon Johnson
- William Kristol was an informal advisor to John McCain
- Can journalists take such roles?

### Can you have a life?

- New York Times reporter Todd Purdum had a relationship and eventually married White House Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers
- CNN's Christianne Amanpour was engaged to and later married US State Department spokesman James Rubin
- Can journalists date their sources?

### Must you forget who you are?

- John Hockenberry refused to do stories about disabilities for much of his career.
- Do you need to be a minority to cover minority issues?
- Does background dictate your work, or inform it?

### Where's the boundary?

- « Engaged independence »
- « Committed observer »
- The idea that journalists can be deeply engaged in the community and yet not activists within the community.

### Good judgment

- « In the end it is good judgment, and an abiding commitment to the principle of first allegiance to citizens, that separates the journalist from the partisan. » Kovach and Rosenstie.

### Clean news

- Can news be free from economic influence?
- Does that matter?
- Is Fox News « fair and balanced »?
- Does The New York Times carry « All the news that's fit to print »?

### Clean news

- « News for sale » -- Are there stories that you may not be allowed to cover?
- Does the new world of Internet journalism further blur the distinctions between news and advertising?
- Is non-profit news an improvement?

## Who are you?

Defining your values and priorities in your professional life

## Last two weeks

- 3 more papers, including final
- Permission to use images in research
- Monday is set day to turn in late papers/corrected papers
- After Thursday's class, I'll email you a link to take the post-assignment for moral reasoning research. After you complete it, which should take about 45 minutes, you will be taken to a page where you will get a number. Record that number and e-mail it to me. Those who complete the post-assignment and provide me their number will be excused from more papers at your choice.
- UI class acceptance: 23% response

## Value: Love

- "Having love as a personal principle, I think that it is important to apologize in person to any member of the council who might feel like they are being harmed by my actions as a reporter." - [Redacted]

## Value: Honesty, beneficence

- "Even though it is important to make an apology so people know the truth about the situation as well as hearing you say you are sorry, there are other parts to the apology that are equally important. Nowhere in the apology does it name the people that made the mistake. If you tell people exactly who made the mistake, then you are just throwing them under the bus." - [Redacted]

## Value: Responsibility

- "An apology is necessary because it is my duty as the news director and main anchor to take social responsibility. I am responsible to the public and to my employees. I am responsible for making the TV station reliable and trustworthy." - [Redacted]

## Reversibility

- "If you were in the shoes of the wrongfully accused city council members, you would want a correction and an apology so that the public you serve would know that you are an ethical person, unlike your representation in the story." - [Redacted]

### Assignment

1. What are the values in conflict?
2. How would you reason through the decision?
3. What do you decide?

### Scenario 1

- You are a television executive. Your sports reporter watches a revealing men's underwear commercial featuring a male sports star and immediately tweets that "real men" wouldn't wear underwear like that. He tweets that people should "snack the ish" out of any men who liked the ad. He's immediately criticized for homophobia. The reporter apologizes and says he's sorry people took it that way.

- Question: Do you fire the reporter?

### Scenario 2

- You're an ad executive. The top photo appeared in a news illustration two weeks ago. Today your photog brought you the second photo for a travel ad.

- Do you accept the photo?



### Scenario 3

- A federal prosecutor, speaking on conditions of anonymity, says a top athlete is under investigation for using steroids. The athlete has been tested many times but never tested positive. However, a former teammate did test positive and was banned. Now the teammate, who just signed a book deal, admits he took performance enhancing drugs, and alleges the top athlete used the drugs, too. The top athlete says that's a lie.

- As the editor, do you run the story?

### Scenario 4

- Your PR agency represents a popular restaurant chain. The restaurant has been accused of selling food that is high in fat and sugars, and causing long-term health problems for customers. Your client, in a moment of levity during a radio interview, says many things are a little risky. For instance, she says, if you pet a pit bull, there's a chance you could get bitten. Pit bull owners are outraged.

- Do you say the owner misspoke and issue an apology to pit bull owners?

### Scenario 5

- A teenager dies after being struck by a train. The parents ask that the boy's name be withheld and the police comply. However, the identity of the popular teen spreads widely through social media.

- Reporter, should you name the boy in your story?

Scenario 6

- You're handling publicity for a parade in North Idaho. The organizer proposes that Pro Golfer Bubba Watson to lead the parade in his car, the General Lee from *The Dukes of Hazzard* TV show. The General Lee features a prominent image of the Confederate Flag on its roof. You advise the organizer that some will think the flag symbolizes racist attitudes of certain North Idaho hate groups. The organizer disagrees.
- Do you promote the parade or quit?

Scenario 7

- Your 60-year-old editorial page editor dies of a heart attack at the home of a known call girl (not his wife). The editor is married with grown children. On multiple occasions in the past, he has editorialized against prostitution as degrading to society. You're the reporter assigned the story about his death. The editor's wife hands you keys and asks you to drive her husband's car from where it's currently parked in front of the prostitute's house.
- Do you move the car?

Scenario 8

- You work for an advertising company representing a manufacturer of wireless hotspots. A major festival is being held in the city that will draw thousands of high-tech wireless users. Your company devises a plan to outfit homeless people as wireless hotspots in the festival area. The homeless will wear T-shirts "Hi, I'm Melvin. I'm a Wi-Fi Hotspot." They'll be paid with donations from nearby wireless users.
- Do you support the promotional plan?

Scenario 9

You're the college newspaper ad manager. Do you run this ad?



Scenario 10



College editor. Your student anchors from biased news. Do you run it?

Scenario 11

- You're a TV reporter at a murder scene, interviewing witnesses. A child, approximately 4 or 5 years old, comes up to your crew. To the cameras, the boy says, "I'm not scared of nothing." You ask, "When you get older are you going to stay away from all these guns?" The boy answers, "No, I'm going to have me a gun!"
- Do you run the sound bite?

**Appendix Q****IRB Approval for Previous Study on “Moral Decision Making: Reason or Intuition”**

Clinton A Culp  
HPERD  
University of Idaho  
Moscow, ID 83844-3080

January 11, 2011

University of Idaho  
Office of Research Assurance  
Institutional Review Board  
PO Box 443010  
Moscow, ID 83844-3010

Ref: IRB No: IRB00000843  
FWA: FWA00005639  
Date: August 16, 2010  
Project: Approval of “Moral Decision Making: Reason or Intuition” Number  
10-001 – Approved August 16, 2010  
Modification  
FWA: FWA00005639  
Date: January 14, 2011

Dear IRB Committee:

Section I Subjects/Participants, paragraph C. How will participants be selected or recruited currently states “participants will be selected from 3 University of Idaho Fall 2010 semester courses: CORE 119, REC 260, and HPRD 570. All students will receive credit for going to the web site regardless of whether or not they complete the survey.” As amended on January 14, 2001, adding PHIL 240 and CORE 169 students and a modification of the instrument.

I request that the additional course JAMM 341 Mass Media Ethics be added as participants in this study.

It is also requested that Tom Grant a Graduate Student in HPERD, Campus Zip Code 3080, Phone 5-2103, be added as a co-investigator, see attachment for NIH certificate.

All other stipulations of the study, as approved by the IRB with previously approved modifications, remain the same.

Sincerely,

/s/ Clinton A. Culp

# University of Idaho

Office of Research Assurance  
Institutional Review Board  
PO Box 003010  
Moscow, ID 83844-3010

Phone: 208-885-6162  
Fax: 208-885-5752  
hac@uidaho.edu

To: Clinton Culp  
HPERD  
University of Idaho  
Moscow, ID 83844-3080

Cc: Dr. Sharon Stoll, Faculty Sponsor

From: Traci Craig, PhD  
Chair, University of Idaho Institutional Review Board  
University Research Office  
Moscow Idaho 83844-3010

IRB No: IRB00000843

FWA: FWA00005639

Date: August 16, 2010

Project: Approval of "Moral Decision Making: Reason or Intuition" Number 10-001 - Approved  
August 16, 2010

---

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board at the University of Idaho, I am pleased to inform you that the above-named research project is approved as offering no significant risk to human subjects.

This approval is valid for one year from the approval date listed above. If you continue with the project after this time, you will need to request extension approval from the IRB committee. Should there be significant changes in the protocol for this project, it will be necessary for you to resubmit the protocol for review by the Committee.



Traci Craig

# University of Idaho

Office of Research Assurance  
Institutional Review Board  
PO Box 443010  
Moscow ID 83844-3010

Phone: 208-885-6162  
Fax: 208-885-5752  
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Chair, University of Idaho Institutional Review Board  
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Traci Craig

## Appendix R

### Notes of Observations by Outside Experts

#### Tom Grant

---

**From:** Smith, Steven <sasmith@uidaho.edu>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 23, 2012 10:26 AM  
**To:** Tom Grant  
**Subject:** Quick thoughts

Tom,

While things are fresh in my mind, I have a couple of thoughts from this morning's class, but unrelated to the West discussion which I thought went well.

Re: current events. I am trying in my management class to place the responsibility for choosing current events on the students. A couple of students present every class. But it is a struggle keeping them on point. About two thirds have been items unrelated to our work. I had that same reaction this morning on the General Lee discussion.

I think issues of that sort have to be tied closely to media concerns, which is, after all, the core of our class. So a lively discussion on the morality of displaying the Confederate battle flag at a NASCAR race is fun, but somewhat off point in my view. The ethical calculus for NASCAR is different from the calculus of a media professional.

It's possible to recraft the case to focus on a media issue. For example, if NASCAR were to allow the General Lee to participate, would Fox (which broadcasts NASCAR, I believe) have an ethical issue related to broadcasting that spectacle. NASCAR might approve, but the network could decide not to show the parade lap because it would offend some viewers. That might make for an interesting offensive content case. But if you have to redraw a current event to fit the focus of the class then you have more or less defeated the purpose. It really isn't a current event at that point, it is a hypothetical.

There are so many good current media cases that resorting to hypotheticals isn't necessary.

The "Chink in the Armor" headline is a good case, but I thought the framing failed to really focus the issue for media practitioners.

Context is everything. "Chink in the armor" is a hoary cliché, lazy, but in the proper context not really a problem. A "chink" in this case is a dent or crack in a medieval knight's armor making the knight vulnerable to attack and defeat. While using such a hackneyed cliché is lazy, it would not be offensive on its face if applied to, say, Kobe Bryant.

"Bryant's advancing age and declining skills have become a chink in the armor of the previously invulnerable Lakers."

But while the term "chink" is technically accurate and not related to ethnicity, its application to a Chinese-American ball player is immediately, inarguably racially offensive.

Media practitioners need to understand the nature of offensive material, and how definitions, practices and applications change rapidly and according to context.

This entire case reminded me of the controversy over the word "niggardly" in a Washington Post headline a few years ago. The word is not related to the ethnic slur. And it was used in an appropriate and accurate way in a headline ... but on a story dealing with issues that had racial overtones. The word, in that context, was not viewed from a linguistic standpoint at all and The Post took enormous heat. The Post's ombudsman later wrote that editors needed to understand how the word would be perceived and avoid using it at all, in any story or headline.

So, in my view, a nuanced discussion on that current event would have had considerably more value in this class than the General Lee discussion. But relying on students for current events can send us off on odd directions. I am not happy with my experiment in media management. Getting on track takes too much time and so I doubt I will continue it in the future.

The hot-button media ethics case today involves the National Enquirer paying some anonymous slime ball up to \$500,000 for a photo of Whitney Houston in her casket. The photo will run on the Enquirer front page tomorrow and is all over the Internet today. A conversation around that case ties into something students are talking about right now.

One other thought – but always keeping in mind I lack your philosophical background and bring only a street reporter's understanding to these issues – I was surprised to hear you say that the case study analysis that applies the three ethical theories needs to come to the

same conclusion in the application of all three for the sake of consistency.

If that's true, then there really can be no debate or discussion in a case such as West. For example, if someone works the case deontologically and concludes the deception is not acceptable because "I do not lie under any circumstances," then there can be no teleological debate or Golden Mean application. There can be no teleological balancing if the outcome has to be "no deception." The issue is resolved before ever working through it.

Maybe it is the wrong approach, but I think our students should understand that these theories CAN produce different outcomes and that each outcome can be ethically defensible. In fact, that is how it works in the real world.

Anyway, those are just some quick thoughts that relate to a couple of differences in our approach. I am not suggesting your approach is wrong, but it is different.

Please accept these thoughts in the spirit in which they are offered. And I would be delighted to discuss them more thoroughly any time.

Thanks for inviting me to the class. As a guest, I felt I could be more assertive about the West case than I can be as the instructor. It was fun to let go a bit.

steve

-----Original Message-----

From: Tom Grant [<mailto:gran3905@vandals.uidaho.edu>]  
Sent: Wed 2/22/2012 12:49 PM  
To: Smith, Steven  
Subject: Class tomorrow

Steve,

Just a reminder that my JAMM 341 class is expecting you at 8 a.m. tomorrow.

I'll drop by your office after my last class today ends at 2:30.

I showed the Frontline documentary. At the beginning of class, we'll discuss some current ethical issues. Then we'll move into a discussion of the ethical issues surrounding Jim West. I plan to have them write a case study focusing on the issue of deception.

Tom

Tom Grant

PhD candidate

Center for ETHICS\*

[http://www.educ.uidaho.edu/center\\_for\\_ethics/](http://www.educ.uidaho.edu/center_for_ethics/)<[https://sn2prd0402.outlook.com/owa/redir.aspx?C=dnE5Jf\\_uPUej7RKV-YExN2-PIdVOh84I-MQcvc5SsGsV7y9wiVpsnprMc8ESbCv\\_a283kIvynSU.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.educ.uidaho.edu%2fcenter\\_for\\_ethics%2f](https://sn2prd0402.outlook.com/owa/redir.aspx?C=dnE5Jf_uPUej7RKV-YExN2-PIdVOh84I-MQcvc5SsGsV7y9wiVpsnprMc8ESbCv_a283kIvynSU.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.educ.uidaho.edu%2fcenter_for_ethics%2f)

University of Idaho

500 Memorial Gym

Moscow, ID 83844-2429

Phone: (208) 885-2103

Skype: tomgrant.idaho

9 Feb 12

Tom's class: WAMM 341-2 1100-1215

quiz

- went over 9 w/ class and called people by name
- why questions
- put student's feedback and talked why. (loyalty)
- could you use loyalty to make a right or wrong decision
- recalled student's observations
- asked they were correct
- followed up with why?
- explain + justify reasons
- how do you become the <sup>virtues</sup> value?
- what is the trait that you do to embody the value/priorities
- action vs intention. what is more important.
- what does a good person do?
- video - Tin Cup
- Mike analogy what he did was because it was who he was (internal self judge, external judge)
- how do we judge on someone else's motives + intention.
- Ask questions the gives on a person amount of useful time.

overall great use of the Socratic method

XI Benevolence vs Beneficance

Clinton A.C.

11:00 Tuesday, March 6, 2012

TLC 31.

The Good stuff: Class was respectful. There was a very specific direction and curricular intent for the lesson. The students responded, were articulate. The discussion was busy.

1. The slide format and the content was excellent with a purpose and intent, and followed good reasoning process.
2. Students were engaged.
3. Lesson was organized and focused.
4. The overall climate was much better than in the 8 o'clock class.

Points to think about:

1. Class beginning – probably could be more definitive and directive.
2. Because many did not see the film, perhaps you could review what the content of the film was.
3. Theory to support the discussion –
  - a. One of the ways to give a solution is to give a solution of an expert in the field – or an example of an expert in the field to support the better answer.

## Appendix S

### Analysis of DIT2 N2 Scores in Present Study

In the present study, the researcher obtained DIT2 N2 scores for all participants. N2 scores measure principled reasoning, but they also combine that measurement with an assessment of personal interest reasoning. For instance, an individual may base 50 percent of his or her decisions on principles, 25 percent on personal interest, and 25 percent on the middle ground of rules and social order. That person would score lower on the N2 scale than someone who based 50 percent of her decisions on principles, 50 percent on rules and social order, and none on personal interest considerations.

The researcher used P scores as a basis for assessments in this study because the P score has been used for a longer period of time and comparisons with other research could be made more easily. However, many modern researchers use N2 scores in their assessments. To assist with future comparisons, the researcher is presenting the data for the N2 scores from the present study in this appendix.

#### **Comparing DIT2 N2 Scores SBH Maieutic Method Group and Control Group.**

On the DIT2 pre-test, the SBH Maieutic Method group mean N2 score was 38.53. As shown in Table 9, the mean N2 score on the pre-test for the control group was 35.07. A general linear model ANOVA indicates there is no significant difference between the group means on the pre-test,  $F(2, 70) = 0.3, p=0.595$ .

The post-test of the DIT2 shows the SBH Maieutic Method group with a mean N2 score of 45.19. The mean N2 score on the post-test for the control group was 33.85. A general linear model ANOVA indicates a significant difference between groups,  $F(2, 70) =$

3.75,  $p=0.028$ . Dunnett's test shows the mean post-test N2 score on SBH Maieutic Method group is significantly greater than the mean of the control group ( $p=0.0098$ ).

The  $\Delta$  in N2 scores between the pre-test and the post-test was 6.59 for the SBH Maieutic Method group and -1.22 for the control group. A general linear ANOVA comparing  $\Delta$  between groups (see Table 10) shows that at least one group mean is significantly different,  $F(2, 70) = 4.06$ ,  $p=0.021$ . Dunnett's test indicates that  $\Delta$  of the SBH Maieutic Method group is significantly greater than  $\Delta$  for the control group ( $p=0.0260$ ).

**Table 9: DIT2 N2 Scores by Group (Standard Deviation in Parenthesis)**

Participant groups	<i>N</i>	Pre-test (St. Dev.)	Post-test (St. Dev.)	Gain (St. Dev.)
Group 1 (Case study)	27	34.55 (14.47)	42.66 (14.76)	8.10 (12.28)
Group 2 (SBH Maieutic)	25	38.53 (17.31)	45.12 (15.88)	6.59 (11.66)
Group 3 (control)	21	35.07 (12.31)	33.85 (12.18)	-1.22 (11.39)
Comparison group				
Group 4 (Case study fall)	24	32.62 (14.72)	33.62 (13.15)	1.00 (9.45)

**Table 10: ANOVA for  $\Delta$  of N2 Scores by Group**

Analysis of Variance for N2 $\Delta$ , using Adjusted SS for Tests						
Source	DF	Seq SS	Adj SS	Adj MS	F	P-value
group	2	1135.2	1135.2	567.6	4.06	0.021
Error	70	9777.4	9777.4	139.7		
Total	72	10912.7				

**Dunnett Simultaneous Tests**

Response Variable N2-gain

Comparisons with Control Level

group = 3 subtracted from:

group	Difference of means	SE of mean difference	Adjusted T-Value	P-Value
1	9.323	3.439	2.711	0.0079
2	7.814	3.498	2.233	0.026

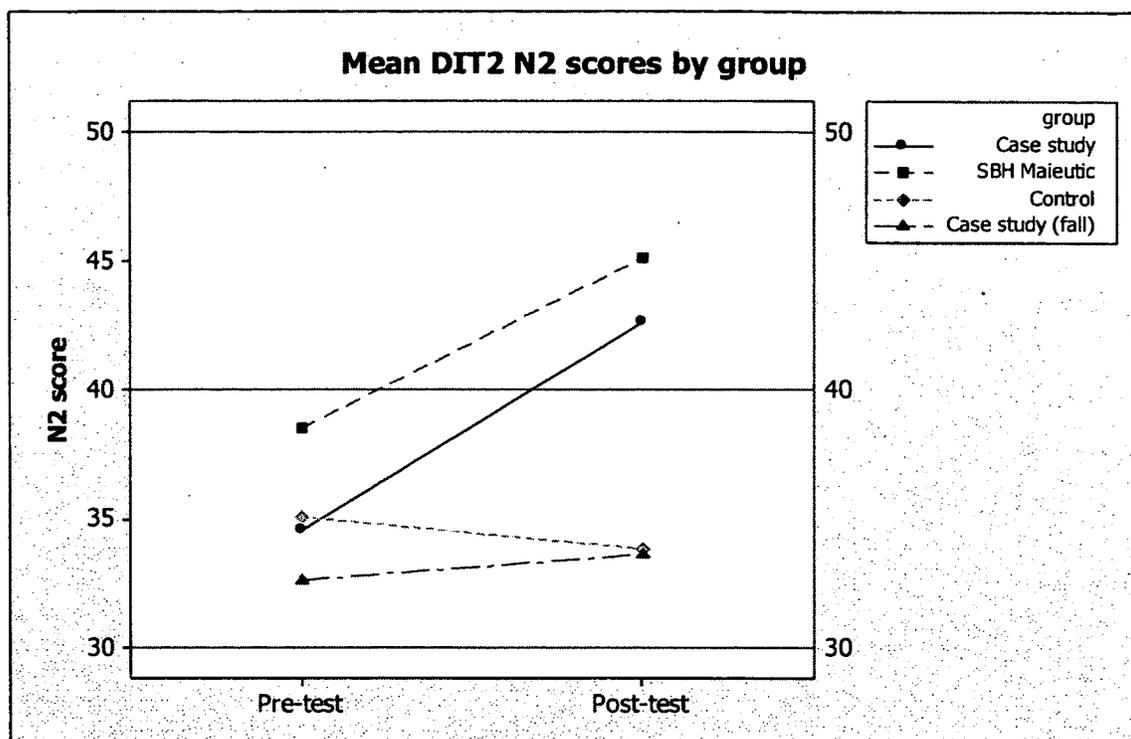
The SHB Maieutic Method group mean N2 score on the post-test of 45.19 is significantly higher than the college senior mean of 37.80. A two-sample t-test shows with greater than 95% certainty that the difference between the mean of the post-test N2 score for the SBH Maieutic Sample group is significantly greater than mean for all college seniors ( $p=0.016$ ).

#### **Comparing DIT2 N2 Scores of the Case Study Group and Control Group.**

As shown in Table 9, the mean pre-test DIT2 N2 score for the case study group was 34.55. The mean pre-test N2 score for the control group was 34.55. A general linear model ANOVA shows no significant difference between the means on the pre-test,  $F(2, 70) = .52$ ,  $p=0.595$ .

The mean post-test N2 score for the case study group was 42.66. The mean post-test N2 score for the control group was 33.85. Figure 3 provides a chart of the pre-test and post-test N2 means by group. As shown in Table 10, a general linear model ANOVA using Dunnett's comparison with a control indicates that the mean post-test N2 score for the case study group was significantly higher than that of the control group ( $p=0.0361$ ).

The  $\Delta$  between pre-test and post-test N2 scores in the case study group was 8.1 points. The  $\Delta$  between pre-test and post-test N2 scores for the control group was -1.22 points. A general linear model ANOVA using Dunnett's simultaneous test shows the mean difference in  $\Delta$  for the N2 scores for the case study group is significantly greater than  $\Delta$  for the control group ( $P=0.0079$ ).



**Figure 4: Change in DIT2 N2 Scores Pre-test to Post-test by Group**

**Comparing DIT2 N2 Scores of SBH Maieutic Method and Case Study Groups.**

The mean N2 score on the DIT2 pre-test for the case study group was 34.55. The mean N2 score on the pre-test for the SBH Maieutic Method group was 38.53. A general linear model ANOVA shows no significant difference between the group means,  $F(2, 70) = 0.52, p=0.595$ .

The mean N2 score on the DIT2 post-test for the case study group was 42.66. The mean N2 score on the DIT2 post-test for the SBH Maieutic Method group was 45.12. A general linear model ANOVA using Tukey's simultaneous test shows no significant difference on the post test between the case study and SBH maieutic groups ( $p=.8138$ ).

The  $\Delta$  between the pre-test DIT2 N2 score and the post-test DIT2 N2 score for the case study group was 8.1 points. The  $\Delta$  in N2 scores for the SBH Maieutic Method group was 6.59 points. A general linear model ANOVA using Tukey's simultaneous test shows no

significant difference in the mean differences ( $\Delta$ ) in N2 scores between the two groups ( $p=0.8901$ ).

#### Comparing DIT2 N2 Scores by Gender.

The mean for males on the pre-test DIT2 N2 score is 35.8 and for females the mean is 36.28. A general linear model ANOVA shows no significant difference between the mean scores on the N2 pre-test by gender,  $F(1, 71) = .02, p=0.894$ .

The mean N2 score of males on the post-test is 38.67 and the mean for females is 42.86. A general linear model ANOVA shows no significant difference between the mean scores on the N2 post test by gender,  $F(1, 71) = 1.41, p=0.239$ .

The mean difference between pre-test and post-test N2 scores is 2.87 for males and 6.58 for females. A general linear model ANOVA shows no significant difference between the mean differences on N2 scores by gender,  $F(1, 71) = 1.66, p=0.201$ .

**Table 11: Change in DIT2 Scores by Gender (Standard Deviation in Parenthesis)**

	DIT2 N2 scores		
	Pre-test (St. Dev.)	Post-test (St. Dev.)	$\Delta$
Male	35.90 (15.03)	38.67 (15.47)	2.77
Female	36.28 (14.91)	42.86 (14.58)	6.58

#### Comparing DIT2 N2 Scores by Media Status.

The mean DIT2 N2 score on the pre-test for advertising majors was 37.53. The mean N2 score on the pre-test for broadcasting and digital media majors was 30.21. The mean N2 score on the pre-test for journalism majors was 41.08. The mean N2 score on the pre-test for public relations majors was 36.54. The mean N2 score on the pre-test for other majors was 46.08. A general linear model ANOVA indicates there is no significant pre-test difference by major in the DIT2 N2 score,  $F(4, 68) = 1.41, p=.240$ .

The mean DIT2 N2 score on the post-test for advertising majors was 42.15. The mean N2 score on the post test for broadcasting and digital media majors was 39.05. The mean N2 score on the post test for journalism majors was 45.11. The mean N2 score on the post-test for public relations majors was 40.82. The mean N2 score on the post test for other majors was 35.6. A general linear model ANOVA shows no significant difference in post-test DIT N2 scores by major,  $F(4, 68) = .36, p=0.839$ .

The  $\Delta$  in DIT2 N2 scores between the pre-test and post-test for advertising majors was 4.61 points. The  $\Delta$  in N2 scores for broadcasting and digital media majors was 8.84. The  $\Delta$  in N2 scores for journalism majors was 4.03 and the  $\Delta$  for public relations majors was 4.28. The  $\Delta$  in N2 scores for participants from other majors was -10.48. A general linear model ANOVA shows no significant difference in the  $\Delta$  of DIT2 N2 scores by major,  $F(4, 68) = 1.76, p=0.148$ .

## Appendix T

### Sample of Socratic Discussion in Case Study Method Class

This is a transcript of a portion of the discussion in the case study methods class. It illustrates the manner in which discussions were conducted in the class using Socratic method to help students reach new understanding of the issue. To preserve anonymity, names have been eliminated and a letter has been used to identify each student who spoke.

This discussion occurred following a discussion about whether it would be ethically appropriate to interview a five-year old child at a crime scene. Some members of the class had suggested that it would be unethical to conduct such an interview because the child does not have the mental capacity to agree to an interview. Then one of the members of the class members brought up a related scenario: Would it be ethical to interview someone who is drunk or inebriated? The specific case involved the television star Charlie Sheen showing up inebriated for an interview on talk show. Sheen got an immense amount of publicity from his drunken appearances, his show's ratings soared, and even though the network eventually fired him for self-destructive conduct he sued to get more than \$100 million in ongoing pay from the show. Because some of the class members are public relations students, the issue is considered both from the point of view of someone interviewing Sheen and also from the point of view of someone representing Sheen.

Instructor: That's a really good question. B--, would you do an interview with a drunken Charlie Sheen.

Student B--: It just seems wrong to me because he doesn't have the mental capability at the time make that agreement, to know what he's getting into. When you ask him if he's

on drugs and he's like, oh yeah I'm on dope, like Charlie Sheen did, you know the guy's not right in the head.

Instructor: K--, you're a PR person, what do you think.

Student K--: I don't know that it's entirely his decision. He had a part in it, but what about his agent, what about other people who had a say about his actions?

Instructor: If you're his PR agent, could you, ethically, allow your drunk client to go on the air?

Student K--: I don't know. I don't think that's unethical. Your job is to make money, and if it's going to make money for your client, you have to do it.

Instructor: But you have to have an agreement that he understands what you ask him to do. If he's drunk, how can he make an agreement?

Student K--: He can't, but...

Student C--: Obviously, it's a problem when he's drunk, but with a client like Charlie Sheen it's my way or the highway, and if you're a PR agency and he threatens to fire you, you're not going to have a client.

Instructor: I see a couple of issues. You're worried about harm....

Student C--: Harm to your client and harm to you. If he fires you, you lose a lot of money.

Instructor: So that's another value, money. That would matter in a teleological argument. And there's the agreement you have to think about. S--?

Student S--: Did Sheen complain about the interviews afterwards? Did he say I can't believe I did that?

Instructor: Does it matter what he said later? You have to make a decision on the ethical issue at the time.

Student S--: No, but maybe he wanted to get more publicity like this. Act more crazy and get more interviews. I think maybe he had a part in knowing what he was doing.

Instructor: If the client is on drugs, how do you know that is what he really wants?

Student S--: You have to be responsible for your actions, no matter what they are.

Instructor: Do you mean *you* have to be responsible for *your* actions, or *he* has to be responsible for *his* actions?

Student S--: He can't blame it on anybody else. He's the one who did it.

Instructor: No, but can you rely on his agreement? Can you rely on him being of sound mind to make a contract? L--?

Student L--: Let's look at the journalist part of this, too. I don't know — it's easy ratings, and you can ask questions that in a way — especially if that person is off their rocker — that makes them look crazy, but I don't think that person is being treated fairly.

Instructor: You see fairness as a critical issue. N--?

Student N--: I think he really wanted to make money. He made triple the amount of money he made on *Two and a Half Men* afterwards. I think he used it to make money. He asked for something. So I don't feel ethically bad about putting him on the air.

Instructor: How you feel is important, but the ethical issue isn't really whether we feel bad. The ethical issue is whether it was right or wrong to put him on the air. You say it was right to put him on camera and let him keep talking. Is it only right for Charlie Sheen or would it also be right for anyone, for instance, even for your crazy uncle?

Student N--: I think it depends on the situation.

Instructor: So then we couldn't form a rule to guide us. Do we have to look at it case by case and decide whether the crazy person is going to make enough money for us to justify it?

Student N--: I think he knew what he was doing.

Instructor: So you disagree with my statement of the facts. He wasn't crazy and out of his mind. He was lucid and just doing this to make money.

Student N--: There's got to be somehow that there was a plan to do this.

Instructor: You think he was of sound mind.

Student N--: Not on camera, but off camera.

Instructor: What we want to do in these cases is find a way not just to deal with Charlie Sheen, but to deal with other cases in the future that we may encounter. If our lesson from Charlie Sheen is only that I'm going to take every case as it comes along, and the outcome is going to depend upon my guess about whether he's going to make a lot of money by appearing drunk or on drugs, and the outcome is going to depend on my guess that he's not going to be upset about it in the future, will that really work as a guiding rule for us? M--?

Student M--: Don't they, in places like ABC, make judgments based on news value? If a man dragged someone out of a burning building, I'd still interview him if he was crazy. Sheen got fired from the number one show on television, in spectacular fashion, so you'd interview him regardless of whether he's crazy just because of news value.

Instructor: So you'd look at it in a utilitarian sense, considering news value as one of the values you weigh in making a decision, along with money and harm. L--?

Student L--: I think you need to consider expectations. When you put yourself in the public eye you're going to be followed by the media, and things that might be personal are going to become news because you're now the news, you've made yourself the news.

Instructor: Are you thinking ethically, or are you thinking pragmatically?

Student L--: I think that is ethical, because he chose to become a public figure and he understands the positive and negative that comes with it.

Instructor: So it is okay to trash people who are public figures?

Student L--: I wouldn't call it trashing. He's doing it to himself. You're allowing him to do it.

Instructor: You're just the vehicle for him doing it. Do you have any responsibility?

Student L--: Well, you have to tell the truth. And be fair.

Instructor: Are you being fair?

Student L--: I think so.

At this point, because of time, the class moved to another topic. However, the issue of fairness was revisited many times during the course of the semester. This discussion is typical of the way discussion led to fairness. Students generally considered personal interest issues such as money and rules such a public figure laws before reaching considerations of principles such as fairness.

## Appendix U

### Reflection on Guided Training in the SBH Maieutic Method

I first watched Dr. Sharon Kay Stoll teaching using the SBH Maieutic Method in 1992, while reporting for KREM-2 television in Spokane, WA. I was working on a documentary about ethics in athletics based on Stoll's research. Stoll's class included mostly upperclassmen and a large number of athletes. They met in her office/classroom on the top floor of Memorial Gym at the University of Idaho. The students sprawled in chairs or on the couch. They were comfortable and discussed things openly. In many ways, it didn't feel like a class. It felt like a meeting of friends and acquaintances.

At the time, I believed the setting was a part of Stoll's plan to build trust and put the students at ease. Now, after guided training with Stoll as part of the Ph.D. program at the University of Idaho Center for ETHICS\*, I have a slightly different view. As a Ph.D. student, I spent more than two years serving as a teaching assistant, observer, and student in Stoll's classes. She almost always taught in an ordinary classroom. Yet there was still a familiarity in the way she created the class as a comfortable setting for conversation. She did not tell students where to sit. Rather, she allowed them to choose their own place. The seating was generally conventional, with Stoll in the teacher's position in the front of several rows of students. However, I also saw her work comfortably with a group of students around a table, and in a half-circle of students in a room (which was arranged in that manner when she arrived).

The issue was not the layout of the seats nor the structure of a particular place. As I have come to see it, Stoll recognizes that students at the college level are already quite comfortable with traditional classrooms. So she focuses not on furniture, but on creating a

comfortable feeling for the people in the room and on establishing open lines of communication between everyone involved.

When Stoll enters a room, she immediately begins talking with the students who are already there. Stoll generally arrives 10 minutes early, and there are usually only a few students who arrive before her. Because she knows the students by name and knows something about their lives, she often says something to directly engage them in conversation. Because many of Stoll's classes involve sport, she will have read the sports news of the day and prepared herself to discuss several topical issues. She will ask the students if they have seen stories about one of the issues in question. Then she'll ask them to say what they think about it. Stoll will usually laugh and smile at what the students say. If she doesn't like something, she may purse her lips in an imitation of an old schoolmarm, but she never criticizes them. Her idea seems to be to loosen up the the class with some patter before the official period begins.

Stoll knows the name of every student and knows something about their life and interests. On the first day of class, she asks each student to make a paper tent for their desk with their name on it. Then she takes a photograph of each student with their name visible. The photos are printed on regular paper, six photos to a page, with space to write in notes. Stoll schedules a five-minute meeting with each student during the first week of class. During that time, she asks them about their hometowns, their sports and activities, their academic interests, and their families. She will also learn about the students through their essays, many of which turn toward personal topics. By the end of the first week, Stoll knows students by name and knows something about their background. She will retain much of this

knowledge for years, and while walking across campus she will say hello to students by name even though she hasn't had them in class for years.

Her dedication to learning the names and backgrounds of students derives from Stoll's belief that trust is essential to creating an atmosphere where students can engage in open discussion conducive to developing better moral reasoning. She wants the students to know that she cares about them as persons, and the first step is getting to know their names and interests. Over the course of the semester, she builds on that knowledge. My impression is that students accept Stoll as an authority figure, but see her as helpful, non-threatening, and having the students' best interests at heart.

Stoll establishes clear expectations for students on the first day of class. In her syllabus, she delineates all the lessons and assignments for the semester. The standards for grades are set. In most classes, students are assigned to write one essay per week. The length of essays varies depending upon the goal of the assignment. If Stoll expects students to think deeply about an ethical issue, she will generally assign a 2-3 page essay. If she wants students to reflect upon a personal experience, she may ask for only 1-2 pages. In graduate classes, writing assignments tend to be longer, but not by a great amount. However, for all essays she maintains rigorous standards for APA citations and references, as well as for spelling and grammar. Students are allowed to correct errors in papers, and to turn in late papers, although in both cases a 10 percent penalty is assessed. Writing assignments are generally worth 60 percent of the grade.

Reading assignments for the semester are established in the syllabus. The amount of reading varies by class. However, a rule of thumb might be that students are expected to read three books at the appropriate level for their grade during a semester. Every student is

expected to complete the day's assigned reading before class. A quiz is given at the beginning of each class, and most of the questions are based on the reading. Some questions may also be based on class lectures and discussion. The quizzes are short, generally five questions. The quiz scores account for 30 percent of the grade. Stoll uses a class Web site to tell students in advance what the questions will be. However, students must do the reading to find the answers. The quizzes are meant as a way to ensure that students are prepared to take part in class discussions.

Reading, writing, and reflection are central to the SBH Maieutic Method. Reading is necessary to lay the groundwork for the writing and reflection. Reading is also necessary to meet the rigor of APA citations and references. If Stoll has questions about a reference, she routinely looks it up. If students misinterpret a reading, Stoll notes that in the margins of their essays. Students are held accountable for the reading they say they have done.

Readings are designed to fulfill multiple goals. First, they must serve the content of the class. If the subject matter of the class is involved with the sociology of sport, the reading must address sociological considerations such as race or gender in sport. However, the reading must also serve the purpose of building character. Readings may do so by addressing ethical issues in a narrative presentation, as many sports stories do, or they may address ethical issues in a philosophical manner. She can teach successfully even from texts that take an ethical approach with which she does not agree. However, Stoll would be unsatisfied with texts that promote a relativistic approach to ethical dilemmas.

Stoll's underlying goal in each class is that students build character. Certainly her classes have multiple goals, many of which are related to the subject matter. In the freshman level sports sociology class in which I served as teaching assistant, the goals included

developing understanding of the interplay of race, gender, media, money, and power in modern sport. Another goal was to help students develop study habits, writing skills, and personal relationships necessary for a successful college career. However, Stoll also wanted each student to become a better person during the course of the class. As she tells students, they are at an age when their minds are growing rapidly. Their college experience plays a large part in determining who they will become in life. Stoll's goal is always that her students become good people who make the world a better place. That's why she aims at developing moral character.

Oddly enough, however, Stoll does not grade students on their moral character. Grades are primarily dependent upon good grammar and spelling, and proper use of APA format, as well as upon satisfactory completion of all the assigned tasks. Most of Stoll's students get good grades, although a few may fail. Those who fail almost always do so because they did not complete the assignments. I have heard Stoll say that students with lower-level moral reasoning should not get top grades, but I observed nothing in her manner of grading to indicate that she reduced grades based on moral values. It appeared that a student with strong social values such as a good work ethic and perseverance could earn top grades even if he or she based moral decisions on self-interest. Certainly that person would have to endure many written questions from Stoll in the comments sections of papers and quizzes, but Stoll never forces students into positions that she believes have greater moral value.

Instead, Stoll trusts the process of moral growth that Kohlberg and Piaget observed. Students are placed in a comfortable and caring situation where they can freely express their opinions about moral issues. Stoll asks them questions that stimulate cognitive dissonance.

That shakes the students' belief in their own moral stances. Then the students listen to the moral views of others in the class, and in their readings, and examine the reasoning behind those moral views. In most cases, the students make subtle shifts in their own moral beliefs. Those students who do the readings, write the essays, and actively take part in class discussions are the students who see the greatest gains in both content learned and moral reasoning ability gained. If the students have done that work diligently, they will also tend to get good grades.

Stoll begins each class with a call to the class, to which the class is expected to respond. It may be, "Good morning!" If the class does not respond vigorously enough, she'll smile and ask again. It signals the students to pay attention. Then she starts a short discussion, often about something topical in sport. The quiz generally follows this short discussion.

Few of the students take notes in the traditional sense and Stoll does not require it. In quizzes, she does ask questions about the content of previous classes, but the questions are generally designed so that any student who attended and paid attention can answer correctly.

Stoll's classes often contain stories from her personal experience. For instance, she commonly tells stories about teaching and coaching volleyball in an inner city school in Ohio. The stories are designed to connect class lessons with the real world, as well as to give Stoll some credibility with the students. The stories often place Stoll in the position of doing something right in a difficult situation, but being too young or inexperienced to know exactly why she was doing it. Then she tries to relate her stories to the students in the class. The creation of these links between the lesson, Stoll's personal experience and the personal experience of the students appears to be an important part of Stoll's teaching method.

For example, one lesson about sport and race began with a viewing of a movie called *Hoop Dreams*, a documentary about two young basketball players in the projects in Chicago. To open the discussion, Stoll told a story her experience teaching and coaching volleyball at an inner city school in Ohio. In this story, members of her team are visiting another school when a fight breaks out. One girl gets bitten and “a hunk of skin is gone,” Stoll recalls. The referees disappear. The crowd gets out of hand. Someone is being choked with a scarf. The team’s vehicle is defaced. Stoll says she feels like a “vanilla wafer,” the lone white person in the room trying to stop two sides from fighting. Fortunately, as she tells it, the boys’ basketball team shows up and stops the fight.

Stoll used that story to launch two discussions, one about fighting and one about race. She asked the students if they had ever been in a fight in sports. Several of the students, loosened up by Stoll’s story, felt comfortable telling their own tales. One talked about how he responded to a “cheap shot” by hitting his opponent. Another talked about his emotion taking over, leading him to jump on top of an opponent. Stoll steered the discussion toward the students’ impression of the opponent and whether they saw the opponent as a person. Then Stoll turned the story toward the race angle. She pointed out that her principle at the inner city school, who was white, responded to the difficulty of assigning responsibility for the fight with a racial stereotype, saying, “You know, they all look alike.” This led students into a discussion of how they identify other people, and how they lump them into groups, either as opponents or as racial cohorts. That led to two students talking openly about racial divides on the Indian reservation.

This narrative approach by Stoll helps students remember the lesson. Generally, Stoll is trying to get across only one or two points. In the case above, she wanted them to identify

the emotional responses that drive people into fights, and she wanted the students to reconsider that response rationally. She also wanted the students to reconsider their images of their opponents and of people of other races. Her goal for the day would be for students could begin to recognize the difference between seeing the other as a thing and seeing the other as a person.

Because Stoll knows her students and their interests, she directs topical conversations toward subjects that will appeal to them. In Stoll's class, she had both swimmers and football players. During a lesson about the financial aspects of school sports, Stoll compared the salaries of the university football coach and the university swimming coach. Then Stoll compared the overall cost of each sport. That started a lively discussion. Now, with the students interested, Stoll pointed out that an expert in sports financing says sport is a "window on the university," and asked students what they thought the public saw through that window.

That turned into a discussion of the values of sport. She asked one of the football players if the school had any responsibility to him. He responded that the school had a responsibility to pay his tuition, at least for this year, because he only had a one-year agreement with the school. Stoll pressed him on what responsibility the school had if an athlete injured a knee. One student responded with rules-based thinking that the school has to meet the requirements of the contract, but that was all. Stoll pushed for a principled response, however, asking what was fair, which led the students in a discussion of justice in athletics. The debate ranged from whether it was fair to drop an athlete's scholarship because of injury, to whether it was fair for football players to get tutoring and study hall

when other students do not get such assistance, and back to whether it was fair to pay swimming coaches and football coaches different salaries.

The point of the lesson was to help students recognize the fundamental idea that sports promotes motor skills and physical prowess, and that athletes are treated differently because of those skills and abilities. Students gained an opportunity to see that moral obligations and values were often given a low priority. And Stoll also led them to see that even educational values are given a lower priority, quoting sociologist Harry Edwards: “The dumb jock is not born. He is systematically made.”

Stoll also engages the class in multiple forms of instruction. She brings in speakers and plays movies. During one term, she had a former Russian volleyball coach, a mountain climber and two athletic trainers address the class. The movies included *A League of Their Own* and *Chariots of Fire*. The movies were presented in small chunks, perhaps 20 minutes to a class. Discussion was then used to focus on the issues developed by the movie or the speaker.

Speakers and movies added important ingredients to the class. They allowed for personal contact and involvement. An outside speaker changed the dynamic of the class for a day, creating a new pace and an opportunity for new connections with the material. Stoll encouraged the students to ask questions of speakers, and began the questioning herself if the students did not jump in.

Movies are another narrative format used to help students retain information. Movies also provided visceral and emotional context to the subject matter. For instance, Stoll used the emotional content in *Hoop Dreams* to build memorable lessons about race and sport.

Stoll tries to connect the students' essays to the class discussion. For instance, she assigned a paper about the Barry Bonds case, then used the essays to launch a discussion about the ethics of doping. After writing their essay on Bonds, the students had a deep understanding of the facts of the case. They needed that background to consider the deeper question of why the use of performance enhancing drugs is cheating. She used the discussion to move students beyond the idea that drugs are "not natural," pointing out that neither pitching machines nor weights are natural, but they are both legal. Stoll pointed out that people have tried to use dope to gain advantage for years, and used an example from the first Olympic Games.

Students had already formed an opinion about Bonds, and this gave Stoll an opportunity to create cognitive dissonance about the subject of doping. If students said it was cheating because it was against the rules, Stoll pointed out rules are sometimes bad, such as the one that said black athletes couldn't play. If student said it was cheating because steroids are unhealthy, Stoll pointed out that doctors commonly use one form of steroid to increase healing. She gradually led them to concepts of fairness such as the level playing field and to the concept of respect for the game rather than the outcome. But success in this exercise required both that the students arrived prepared for discussion, and that the instructor arrived well prepared to lead the class through its deliberations. This was learning in the sense envisioned by Jerry Gill when he wrote of the dance of the knowing, the knower and the known. This was the birthing of knowledge.

Stoll works to keep the students involved for the entire class period. She may prod one student with repeated questions until she thinks the student had made some progress, but then she'll ask something that requires full class involvement. For instance, she may ask

everyone to put their hands up to take sides on an issue. This, in turn, opens up a new round of questioning for the class.

As she questions students, Stoll will allow them to wander off on tangents if it appears to be for the good of the student. However, she tries to keep them on track with her main points. She gets close to them by moving out from behind the lectern and focusing closely on the students. She looks directly at them and addresses them by name. She writes key words on the blackboard. Sometimes she uses crude language — which is generally quite out of character for her — to gain students' attention.

She's a good actor, using pantomime to accentuate her stories. She drops the names of well know figures she has met. She talks of her youth in the days of "free love and nickel beer" as a way of helping the students identify with her. Yet she subtly sets herself up as a moral role model who could still be cool. If you listen closely to her stories, you sense that even though she went to the bar, she was never a drinker. You sense that even though she sat in the same philosophy class as the pot-smokers, she was completely straight. And you can sense that "free love" was a concept that she rejected early; for Stoll, relationships are the moral foundation of life and they are never free. As an ethics instructor, she must walk a fine line in presenting her image. She must be human enough for students to identify with her, but she must also be strong enough that people see it is possible to be a good person even in a world where everyone else makes bad choices.

Stoll provides extremely positive feedback both in class and in grading papers. She rarely uses negative feedback, and when she does it is often foisted off on a third party. For instance, she told students at one point that they could get arrested for the choice they made. However, she didn't say it was the wrong choice. On papers, she may point out what some

expert said or she may ask students to reconsider their statement, but she doesn't pronounce it wrong. Students are provided room for their own moral autonomy, even if Stoll disagrees with their thinking. But they are expected to defend their reasoning.

I see this as a critical part of the SBH Maieutic Method. The class is a group of people all with their own moral autonomy and their own responsibility to provide good reasoning for their moral choices. If they are actively engaging in the reasoning process, Stoll expects their moral reasoning ability to grow. Her job as the instructor is to create a setting in which discussion of ethical issues is comfortable and non-threatening, and yet also one in which students are challenged to reach new and higher levels of principled thinking.

Two structural considerations are important in building that process. First, Stoll must establish an open and trusting environment before anything else can be done. That means that the first two or three weeks are devoted to getting to know every student, encouraging them to get to know their classmates, and building a relationship in the classroom. Early in the term, essays are personal and people get to know one another. However, as the term goes on, Stoll must develop in the class a sense that they can and must do better. Stoll, as the instructor, embodies a notion of moral excellence, one suggesting that dedication to the purpose of building character can result in personal improvement just as surely as lifting weights can build muscle. She encourages ideas that reflect principled ethical thinking, yet never discourages the contributions of those who offer only self-interest or social-order based reasoning. She listens to her students, and she asks them to listen to each other. Her classes are ongoing discussions of moral issues in which the group shares its ideas of the best solutions and reasoning, but, ultimately, her classes are also a place where the individual must take personal responsibility.

Based on my observations, the success of the SBH Maieutic Method appears to hinge on a few central factors. The instructor must create an open and trusting environment in which students can freely discuss personal moral issues. The instructor must present rigorous ethical challenges to the students that require deep thinking, and use maieutic dialogue to create cognitive dissonance in the minds of the students. This paves the way for moral learning. The instructor must be non-judgmental and yet possess deep knowledge of the subject area and moral theory. Rather than tell students how to behave, the instructor uses reading assignments and references to outside moral experts to provide students with the means to guide themselves. The instructor must use weekly writing assignments to encourage the students to reflect deeply on moral issues, and to establish an ongoing dialogue with each student. Finally, the instructor must patiently trust the students to make their own personal moral gains. The SBH Maieutic Method works because moral change is allowed to grow from within the student, and not forced on them from outside.